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Truth of the Christian Religion in Six Books

Hugo Grotius



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**The Truth of the Christian Religion in Six Books
by Hugo Grotius. Corrected and Illustrated with
Notes by Mr. Le Clerc to which is Added Two Books
by the Said Mr. Le Clerc.**

Author(s): Grotius, Hugo (1583-1645)

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Contents

Title Page	1
Prefatory Material	3
Dedication, by Mr. Le Clerc.	3
To the Reader John Le Clerc Wisheth All Health.	4
To the Reader.	6
The Translator's Preface to the Christian Reader.	7
The Original Dedication by Grotius.	11
Contents.	12
The Truth of the Christian Religion.	20
Book I.	21
Section I. The occasion of this work.	22
SECT. II. That there is a God.	24
SECT. III. That there is but one God.	26
SECT. IV. All perfection is in God.	27
SECT. V. And in an infinite degree.	28
SECT. VI. That God is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and completely good.	29
SECT. VII. That God is the cause of all things.	30
SECT. VIII. The objection concerning the cause of evil, answered.	35
SECT. IX. Against two principles.	36
SECT. X. That God governs the universe.	37
SECT. XI. And the affairs of this lower world.	38
SECT. XII. This is further proved by the preservation of empires.	39
SECT. XIII. And by miracles.	40
SECT. XIV. But more especially amongst the Jews, who ought to be credited upon the account of the long continuance of their religion.	41
SECT. XV. From the truth and antiquity of Moses.	43

SECT. XVI. From foreign testimonies.	45
SECT. XVII. The same proved also from predictions.	82
SECT. XVIII. The objection, of miracles not being seen now, answered.	85
SECT. XIX. And of there being so much wickedness.	86
SECT. XX. And that so great, as to oppress good men.	87
SECT. XXI. This may be turned upon them, so as to prove, that souls survive bodies.	88
SECT. XXII. Which is confirmed by tradition.	89
SECT. XXIII. And no way repugnant to reason.	91
SECT. XXIV. But many things favour it.	93
SECT. XXV. From whence it follows, that the end of man is happiness after this life.	94
SECT. XXVI. Which we must secure, by finding out the true religion.	95
Book II.	96
SECT. I. That the Christian religion is true.	97
SECT. II. The proof that there was such a person as Jesus.	98
SECT. III. And yet, after his death, was worshipped by wise men.	100
SECT. IV. The cause of which could be no other but those miracles which were done by him.	101
SECT. V. Which miracles cannot be ascribed to any natural or diabolical power, but must be from God.	102
SECT. VI. The resurrection of Christ proved from credible testimony.	104
SECT. VII. The objection drawn from the seeming impossibility of a resurrection, answered.	107
SECT. VIII. That the Christian religion exceeds all others.	109
SECT. IX. The excellency of the reward proposed.	110
SECT. X. A solution of the objection taken from hence, that the bodies after their dissolution cannot be restored.	113
SECT. XI. The exceeding purity of its precepts, with respect to the worship of God.	116
SECT. XII. Concerning those duties of humanity which owe to our neighbour, though he has injured us.	119
SECT. XIII. About the conjunction of male and female.	122

SECT. XIV. About the use of temporal goods.	124
SECT. XV. Concerning oaths.	126
SECT. XVI. Concerning other actions.	127
SECT. XVII. An answer to time objection drawn from the many controversies amongst Christians.	128
SECT. XVIII. The excellency of the Christian religion farther proved from the excellency of its Teacher.	129
SECT. XIX. And the great impediments that hindered men from embracing it, or deterred them from professing it.	135
Book III.	138
SECT. I. Of the authority of the books of the New Testament.	139
SECT. II. The books, that have any names affixed to them, were writ by those persons whose names they bear.	140
SECT. III. The doubt of those books that were formerly doubtful, taken away.	141
SECT. IV. The authority of those books which hare no name to them evident from the nature of the writings.	142
SECT. V. That these authors wrote what was true, because they knew the things they wrote about.	143
SECT. VI. And because they would not say what was false.	145
SECT. VII. The credibility of these writers further confirmed, from their being famous for miracles.	146
SECT. VIII. And of their writings; because in them are contained many things which the event proved to be revealed by a Divine Power.	148
SECT. IX. And also from the care, that it was fit God should take, that false writings should not be forged.	149
SECT. XI. An answer to the objection, of some things being contained in these books that are impossible.	152
SECT. XII. Or disagreeable to reason.	153
SECT. XIII. An answer to this objection, that some things are contained in these books which are inconsistent with one another.	154
SECT. XIV. An answer to the objection from external testimonies: where it is shewn that they make more for these books.	156
SECT. XV. An answer to the objection of the Scripture being altered.	157
SECT. XVI. The authority of the books of the Old Testament.	159

Book IV.	168
SECT. I. A particular confutation of the religions that differ from Christianity.	169
SECT. II. And, first, of Paganism. That there is but one God. That created beings are either good or bad. That the good are not to be worshipped without the command of the supreme God.	170
SECT. III. A proof that evil spirits were worshipped by the heathen, and the unfitness of it shewn.	171
SECT. IV. Against the heathen worship paid to departed men.	173
SECT. V. Against the worship given to the stars and elements.	174
SECT. VI. Against the worship given to brute creatures.	175
SECT. VII. Against the worship given to those things which have no real existence.	176
SECT. VIII. An answer to the objection of the heathens taken from the miracles done amongst them.	178
SECT. IX. And from oracles.	181
SECT. X. The heathen religion rejected, because it failed of its own accord, as soon as human assistance was wanting	184
SECT. XI. An answer to this, that the rise and decay of religion is owing to the stars.	185
Book V.	190
SECT. I. A confutation of Judaism, beginning with an address to the Jews.	191
SECT. II. That the Jews ought to look upon the miracles of Christ as sufficiently attested.	192
SECT. III. An answer to the objection, that those miracles were done by the help of devils.	193
SECT. IV. Or by the power of word.	194
SECT. V. That the miracles of Jesus were divine, proved from hence, because he taught the worship of one God, the Maker of the world.	195
SECT. VII. The law of Moses was observed by Jesus when on earth; neither was any part of it abolished afterwards, but only those precepts which had no intrinsic goodness in them.	198
SECT. VIII. As sacrifices, which were never acceptable to God upon their own account.	201
SECT. IX. And the difference of meats.	204
SECT. X. And of days.	207

SECT. XI. And circumcision of the flesh.	209
SECT. XII. And yet the apostles of Jesus easily allowed of those things.	210
SECT. XIII. A proof against the Jews, taken from their own confession of the extraordinary promise of the Messiah.	211
SECT. XIV. That he is already come, appears from the time foretold.	212
SECT. XV. (With an answer to what is alleged, that his coming was deferred upon the account of the sins of the people.)	215
SECT. XVI. Also from the present state of the Jews, compared with the promises of the law.	216
SECT. XVII. Jesus proved to be the Messiah, from those things that were predicted of the Messiah.	218
SECT. XVIII. An answer to what is alleged, that some things were not fulfilled.	220
SECT. XIX. And to that which is objected of the low condition and death of Jesus.	222
SECT. XX. And as though they were good men who delivered him to death.	225
SECT. XXI. An answer to the objection of the Christians worshipping many gods.	227
SECT. XXII. And that human nature is worshipped by them.	230
SECT. XXIII. The conclusion of this part, with a prayer for the Jews.	232
Book VI.	233
SECT. I. A confutation of Mahometanism: the original thereof.	234
SECT. II. The Mahometans' foundation overturned, in that they do not examine into religion.	237
SECT. III. A proof against the Mahometans, taken out of the sacred books of the Hebrews and Christians; and that they are not corrupted.	238
SECT. IV. From comparing Mahomet with Christ.	240
SECT. V. And the works of each of them.	241
SECT. VI. And those who first embraced each of these religions.	242
SECT. VII. And of the methods by which each law was propagated.	243
SECT. VIII. And of their precepts compared with one another.	245
SECT. IX. A solution of the Mahometans' objection concerning the Son of God.	246
SECT. X. There are many absurd things in the Mahometan books.	247
SECT. XI. The conclusion to the Christians; who are admonished of their duty upon occasion of the foregoing things.	248

Two Books by Monsieur Le Clerc.	253
Book I. Concerning the Choice of Our Opinion Amongst the Different Sects of Christians.	254
SECT. I. We must enquire amongst what Christians the true doctrine of Christ flourisheth most at this time.	255
SECT. II. We are to join ourselves with those who are most worthy the name of Christians.	258
SECT. III. They are most worthy the name of Christians who, in the purest manner of all, profess the doctrine the truth of which hath been proved by Grotius.	260
SECT. IV. Concerning the agreement and disagreement of Christians.	261
SECT. V. Whence every one ought to learn the knowledge of the Christian.	264
SECT. VI. Nothing else ought to be imposed upon Christian, but what they can gather from the New Testament.	265
SECT. VII. The providence of God in preserving the Christian doctrine is very wonderful.	267
SECT. VIII. An answer to that question, Why God permits differences and errors to arise amongst Christians.	269
SECT. IX. They profess and teach the Christian doctrine in the purest manner of all, who propose those things only as necessary to be believed, practised, or hoped for, which Christians are agreed in.	271
SECT. X. All prudent persons ought to partake of the sacrament with those who require nothing else of Christians but what every one finds in the books of the New Testament.	272
SECT. XI. Concerning church-government.	274
SECT. XII. The ancient church-government was highly esteemed by Grotius, without condemning others.	276
SECT. XIII. An exhortation to all Christians who differ from each other, not to require of one another any points of doctrine, but such as every one finds in the New Testament, and have always been believed.	277
Book II. Against Indifference in the Choice of Our Religion.	279
SECT. I. That we ought to have a love for truth in all things, but more especially in such as are of great moment.	280
SECT. II. Nothing can be of greater moment than religion; and therefore we ought to use our utmost endeavours to come at the true knowledge of it.	281

SECT. III. That an indifference in religion is in its own nature unlawful, forbidden by the laws of God, and condemned by all sects of Christians.	283
SECT. IV. We ought not hastily to condemn those who differ from us, as if they were guilty of such a crime, or such unlawful worship, as is inconsistent with eternal life; so that none who admit such persons should be capable of the mercy of God; nor yet, on the other hand, is it lawful for us to profess that we believe what we do not really believe, or to do what, at the same time, we condemn.	286
SECT. V. A man that commits a sin by mistake may be accepted of God, but a hypocrite cannot.	289
Testimonies Concerning Hugo Grotius's Affection for the Church of England.	290
To the Reader.	291
Letter I. Henry Newton to Peter Hieron. Barcellinus, Abbot of St. Eusebius de Urbe.	292
Letter II. Henry Newton to John Clerc.	295
Letter III. Francis Cholmondly to Alexander Forrester.	296
From Another Letter, Dated Oct. 6, MDCCVII.	297
Indexes	298
Index of Scripture References	299
Greek Words and Phrases	304
Hebrew Words and Phrases	307
Index of Pages of the Print Edition	312



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**THE TRUTH
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.
IN SIX BOOKS.**

BY HUGO GROTIUS.

CORRECTED, AND ILLUSTRATED WITH NOTES,

BY MR. LE CLERC.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

TWO BOOKS BY THE SAID MR. LE CLERC.

BOOK I.

Concerning the choice of our opinion amongst the different Sects of Christians.

BOOK II.

Against Indifference in the choice of our Religion.

TRANSLATED BY JOHN CLARKE, D.D.

DEAN OF SARUM.

A New Edition.



LONDON:
WILLIAM BAYNES, 54, PATERNOSTER ROW;
ADAM CLARKE BAYNES, LIVERPOOL,
J. & J. JACKSON, LOUTH.
1829.



DEDICATION, BY MR. LE CLERC.

TO THE MOST REVEREND PRELATE,

THOMAS,

LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND AND METROPOLITAN, AND PRIVY COUNSELLOR
TO HER MOST SERENE MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN.

UPON the reprinting this excellent piece of that great man Hugo Grotius, concerning the Truth of the Christian Religion, (whereunto I thought fit to add something of my own, and also some testimonies, from which the good opinion he had of the Church of England is evident), there was no other person, most reverend Prelate, to whom I thought it so proper for me to dedicate this edition, with the additions, as the Primate and Metropolitan of the whole Church of England. I therefore present it to you, as worthy your protection upon its own account, and as an instance of my respect and duty towards you. I will not attempt here either to praise or defend Grotius; his own virtue and distinguishing merits in the commonwealth of Christians do sufficiently commend and justify him amongst all good and learned men. Neither will I say any thing of the Appendix which I have added; it is so short that it may be read over almost in an hour's time. If it be beneath Grotius, nothing that I can say about it will vindicate me to the censorious; but if it be thought not beneath him, I need not give any reasons for joining it with a piece of his. Perhaps it might be expected, most illustrious Prelate, that I should, as usual, commend you and your Church; but I have more than once performed this part, and declared a thing known to all: wherefore, forbearing that, I conclude with wishing that both you and the reverend Prelates, and the rest of the Clergy of the Church of England, who are such brave defenders of the true Christian Religion, and whose conversations are answerable to it, may long prosper and flourish; which I earnestly desire of Almighty God.

JOHN LE CLERC.

Amsterdam,
the Calends of March,
MDCCIX.



TO THE READER

JOHN LE CLERC WISHETH ALL HEALTH.

THE bookseller having a design to reprint this piece of Grotius's, I gave him to understand that there were many great faults in the former editions; especially in the testimonies of the ancients, which it was his business should be mended, and that something useful might be added to the notes: neither would it be unacceptable or unprofitable to the reader, if a book were added, to shew where the Christian religion, the truth of which this great man has demonstrated, is to be found in its greatest purity. He immediately desired me to do this upon his account, which I willingly undertook, out of the reverence I had for the memory of Grotius, and because of the usefulness of the thing. How I have succeeded in it, I must leave to the candid reader's judgment. I have corrected many errors of the press, and perhaps should have done more, could I have found all the places. I have added some, but very short notes, there being very many before, and the thing not seeming to require more. My name adjoined, distinguishes them from Grotius's. I have also added to Grotius a small book, concerning choosing our opinion and church amongst so many different sects of Christians; in which I hope I have offered nothing contrary to the sense of that great man, or at least to truth. I have used such arguments as will recommend themselves to any prudent person, easy and not far-fetched; and I have determined that Christians ought to manage themselves so in this matter as the most prudent men usually do in the most weighty affairs of life. I have abstained from all sharp controversy, and from all severe words, which ought never to enter into our determinations of religion, if our adversaries would suffer it. I have declared the sense of my mind in a familiar style, without any flourish of words, in a matter where strength of argument, and not the enticement of words, is required. And herein I have imitated Grotius, whom I think all ought to imitate, who attempt to write seriously, and with a mind deeply affected with the gravity of the argument upon such subjects.

As I was thinking upon these things, the letters which you will see at the end were sent me by that honourable and learned person, (to whose singular good-nature I am much indebted), the most serene Queen of Great Britain's Ambassador Extraordinary to his Royal Highness the most serene Great Duke of Tuscany. I thought, with his leave, they might conveniently be published at the end of this volume, that it might appear what opinion Grotius had of the church of England, which is obliged to him, notwithstanding the snarling of some men, who object those inconsistent opinions, Socinianism, Popery, nay, even Atheism itself, against this most learned and religious man; for fear, I suppose, his immortal writings should be read, in which their foolish opinions are entirely confuted. In which matter, as in many other things of the like nature, they have in vain attempted to blind the eyes of others; but God forgive them, (for I wish them nothing worse), and put better thoughts into their minds, that we may



at last be all joined by the love of truth and peace, and be united into one flock, under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ. This, kind reader, is what you ought to desire and wish with me; and may God so be with you, and all that belong to you, as you promote this matter as far as can be, and assist to the utmost of your power.

Farewell.

*Amsterdam,
the Calends of March,
MDCCIX.*

TO THE READER.

I HAVE nothing to add to what I said eight years since, but only, that in this my second edition of Grotius I have put some short notes, and corrected a great many faults in the ancient testimonies.

J. C.

Amsterdam,
the Calends of March,
MDCCXVII.



THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER.

THE general acceptance this piece of Grotius has met with in the world encouraged this translation of it, together with the notes, which, being a collection of ancient testimonies, upon whose authority and truth the genuineness of the books of holy Scripture depends, are very useful in order to the convincing any one of the truth of the Christian religion. These notes are for the most part Grotius's own, except some few of mr. Le Clerc's, which I have, therefore, translated also, because I have followed his edition, as the most correct.

The design of the book is to shew the reasonableness of believing and embracing the Christian Religion above any other; which our author does, by laying before us all the evidence that can be brought, both internal and external, and declaring the sufficiency of it; by enumerating all the marks of genuineness in any books, and applying them to the sacred writings; and by making appear the deficiency of all other institutions of religion, whether Pagan, Jewish, or Mahometan. So that the substance of the whole is briefly this: That as certain as is the truth of natural principles, and that the mind can judge of what is agreeable to them; as certain as is the evidence of men's bodily senses, in the most plain and obvious matters of fact; and as certainly as men's integrity and sincerity may be discovered, and their accounts delivered down to posterity faithfully; so certain are we of the truth of the Christian religion; and that, if it be not true, there is no such thing as true religion in the world; neither was there ever, or can there ever be, any revelation proved to be from heaven.

This is the author's design, to prove the truth of the Christian religion in general, against Atheists, Deists, Jews, or Mahometans; and he does not enter into any of the disputes which Christians have among themselves, but confines himself wholly to the other. Now, as the state of Christianity at present is, were a heathen or Mahometan convinced of the truth of the Christian religion in general, he would yet be exceedingly at a loss to know what society of Christians to join himself with; so miserably divided are they amongst themselves, and separated into so many sects and parties, which differ almost as widely from each other as heathens from Christians, and who are so zealous and contentious for their own particular opinions, and bear so much hatred and towards those that differ from them, that there is very little of the true spirit of charity, which is the bond of peace, to be found amongst any of them: this is a very great scandal to the professors of Christianity, and has been exceedingly disserviceable to the Christian religion; insomuch that great numbers have been hindered from embracing the gospel, and many tempted to cast it off, because they saw the professors of it in general agree so little amongst themselves: this consideration induced mr. Le Clerc to add a seventh book to those of Grotius; wherein he treats of this matter, and shews what

it becomes every honest man to do in such a case; and I have translated it for the same reason. All that I shall here add, shall be only briefly to inquire into the cause of so much division in the church of Christ, and to shew what seems to me the only remedy to heal it. First, to examine into the cause why the church of Christ is so much divided: A man needs but a little knowledge of the state of the Christian church, to see that there is just reason for the same complaint St. Paul made in the primitive times of the church of Corinth: that some were for Paul, some for Apollos, and some for Cephas; so very early did the spirit of faction creep into the church of God, and disturb the peace of it, by setting its members at variance with each other, who ought to have been all of the same common faith into which they were baptized; and I wish it could not be said that the same spirit has too much remained amongst Christians ever since. It is evident that the foundation of the divisions in the church of Corinth was their forsaking their common Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, into whose name alone they were baptized, and uniting themselves, some under one eminent apostle or teacher, and some under another, by whom they had been instructed in the doctrine of Christ, whereby they were distinguished into different sects, under their several denominations: this St. Paul complains of as a thing in itself very bad, and of pernicious consequence; for hereby the body of Christ, that is, the Christian church, the doctrine of which is one and the same at all times and in all places, is rent and divided into several parts, that clash and interfere with each other; which is the only method, if permitted to have its natural effect, that can overthrow and destroy it. And from the same cause have arisen all the divisions that are or have been in the church ever since. Had Christians been contented to own but one Lord, even Jesus Christ, and made the doctrine delivered by him the sole rule of faith, without any fictions or inventions of men, it had been impossible but that the church of Christ must have been one universal, regular, uniform thing, and not such a mixture and confusion as we now behold it. But when Christians once began to establish doctrines of their own, and to impose them upon others by human authority, as rules of faith, (which is the foundation of Antichrist), then there began to be as many schemes of religion as there were parties of men who had different judgment, and got the power into their hands. A very little acquaintance with ecclesiastical history does but too sadly confirm the truth of this, by giving us an account of the several doctrines in fashion in the several ages of the Christian church, according to the then present humour. And if it be not so now, how comes it to pass that the generality of Christians are so zealous for that scheme of religion which is received by that particular church of which they profess themselves members? How is it that the generality of Christians in one country are zealous for Calvinism, and in another country as zealous for Arminianism? It is not because men have any natural disposition more to the one than the other, or perhaps that one has much more foundation to support it from Scripture than the other; but the reason is plain, viz. because they are the established doctrines of the places they live in; they are by authority made the rule and standard of religion, and



men are taught them from the beginning by this means they are so deeply fixed and rooted in their minds that they become prejudiced in favour of them, and have so strong a relish of them, that they cannot read a chapter in the Bible, but it appears exactly agreeable to the received notions of them both, though perhaps those notions are directly contradictory to each other; thus, instead of making the Scripture the only rule of faith, men make rules of faith of their own, and interpret Scripture according to them; which being an easy way of coming to the knowledge of what they esteem the truth, the generality of Christians sit down very well satisfied with it. But whoever is, indeed, convinced of the truth of the gospel, and has any regard for the honour of it, cannot but be deeply concerned to see its sacred truths thus prostituted to the power and interests of men; and think it his duty to do the utmost he is able to take it out of their hands, and fix it on its own immovable bottom. In order to contribute to which, I shall, in the second place, shew what seems to be the only remedy that can heal these divisions amongst Christians; and that is, in one word, making the Scripture the only rule of faith. Whatever is necessary for a Christian to believe, in order to everlasting salvation, is there declared, in such a way and manner as the wisdom of God, who best knows the circumstances and conditions of mankind, has thought fit. This, God himself has made the standard for all ranks or orders, for all capacities and abilities; and to set up any other above, or upon the level with it, is dishonouring God, and abusing of men. All the authority in the world cannot make any thing an article of faith, but what God has made so; neither can any power establish or impose upon men, more or less, or otherwise than what the Scripture commands. God has given every man proportionable faculties and abilities of mind, some stronger and some weaker; and he has by his own authority made the Scripture the rule of religion to them all: it is, therefore, their indispensable duty to examine diligently and study attentively this rule, to instruct themselves in the knowledge of religious truths front hence, and to form the best judgment they can of the nature of them. The Scripture will extend or contract itself according to the capacities of men; the strongest and largest understanding will there find enough to fill and improve it, and the narrowest and meanest capacity will fully acquiesce in what is there required of it. Thus all men are obliged to form a judgment of religion for themselves, and to be continually rectifying and improving it: they may be very helpful and assisting to each other in the means of coming to this divine knowledge, but no one can finally determine for another; every man must judge for himself; and for the sincerity of his judgment he is accountable to God only, who knows the secrets of all hearts, which are beyond the reach of human power: this must be left till the final day of account, when every man shall be acquitted or condemned according as he has acted by the dictates of his conscience or no. Were all Christians to go upon this principle, we should soon see an end of all the fierce controversies and unhappy divisions which now rend and confound the church of Christ: were every man allowed to take the Scripture for his only guide in matters of faith and, after all the means of knowledge and



instruction used, all the ways of assurance and conviction tried, permitted quietly to enjoy his own opinion, the foundation of all divisions would be taken away at once: and, till Christians do arrive at this temper of mind, let them not boast that they are endued with that excellent virtue of charity, which is the distinguishing mark of their profession; for, if what St. Paul says be true, that charity is greater than faith, it is evident no Christian ought to be guilty of the breach of a greater duty upon account of a lesser; they ought not to disturb that peace and unity which ought to be amongst all Christians, for the sake of any matters of faith, any differences of opinion; because it is contrary to the known law of charity: and how the far greatest part of Christians will clear themselves of transgressing this plain law, I know not. Wherefore, if ever we expect to have our petitions answered, when we pray that God would make us one flock under one Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, Jesus Christ, we must cease to make needless fences of our own, and to divide ourselves into small separate flocks, and distinguish them by that whereby Christ has not distinguished them. When this spirit of love and unity, of forbearing one another in meekness, once becomes the prevailing principle amongst Christians, then, and not till then, will the kingdom of Christ in its highest perfection and purity flourish upon the earth, and all the powers of darkness fall before it.

JOHN CLARK E.



THE ORIGINAL DEDICATION,

BY GROTIUS.

TO THE MOST NOBLE AND MOST EXCELLENT

HIERONYMUS BIGNONIUS,

**THE KING'S SOLICITOR IN THE
SUPREME COURT OF AUDIENCE AT PARIS.**

MOST NOBLE AND EXCELLENT SIR,

I SHOULD offend against justice, if I should divert another way that time which you employ in the exercise of justice in your high station: but I am encouraged in this work because it is for the advancement of the Christian Religion, which is a great part of justice, and of your office; neither would justice permit me to approach any one else so soon as you, whose name my book glories in the title of. I do not say I desire to employ part of your leisure; for the discharge of so extensive an office allows you no leisure. But, since change of business is instead of leisure to them that are fully employed, I desire you would, in the midst of your forensic affairs, bestow some hours upon these papers. Even then you will not be out of the way of your business. Hear the witnesses, weigh the force of their testimony, make a judgment, and I will stand by the determination.

HUGO Grotius.

Paris, *August 27,*

CI I C XXXIX.

[1639.]



THE CONTENTS.

BOOK I.

Sect.		Page
I.	THE occasion of this work	1
II.	That there is a God	3
III.	That there is but one God	5
IV.	All perfection is in God	6
V.	And in an infinite degree	7
VI.	That God is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and completely good	<i>ib.</i>
VII.	That God is the cause of all things	<i>ib.</i>
VIII.	The objection, concerning the cause of evil, answered	12
IX.	Against two principles	15
X.	That God governs the universe	<i>ib.</i>
XI.	And the affairs of this lower world	16
	And the particulars in it	<i>ib.</i>
XII.	This is further proved by the preservation of empires	17
XIII.	And by miracles	18
XIV.	But more especially amongst the Jews, who ought to be credited upon the account of the long continuance of their religion	<i>ib.</i>
XV.	From the truth and antiquity of Moses	20
XVI.	From foreign testimonies	22
XVII.	The same proved also from predictions	66
	And by other arguments	67
XVIII.	The objection, of miracles not being seen now, answered	69
XIX.	And of there being so much wickedness	<i>ib.</i>
XX.	And that so great, as to oppress good men	71
XXI.	This may be turned upon them, so as to prove that souls survive bodies	<i>ib.</i>

XXII.	Which is confirmed by tradition	<i>ib.</i>
XXIII.	And no way repugnant to reason	74
XXIV.	But many things favour it	77
XXV.	From whence it follows, that the end of man is happiness after this life	78
XXVI.	Which we must secure, by finding out the true religion	<i>ib.</i>

BOOK II.



I.	That the Christian religion is true	79
II.	The proof that there was such a person as Jesus	<i>ib.</i>
	That he died an ignominious death	80
III.	And yet, after his death, was worshipped by wise men	81
IV.	The cause of which could he no other but those miracles which were done by him	<i>ib.</i>
V.	Which miracles cannot be ascribed to any natural or diabolical power, but must be from God	82
VI.	The resurrection of Christ proved from credible testimony	85
VII.	The objection drawn from the seeming impossibility of a resur- rection, answered	88
	The truth of Jesus's doctrine proved from his resurrection	90
VIII.	That the Christian religion exceeds all others	<i>ib.</i>
IX.	The excellency of the reward proposed	91
X.	A solution of the objection taken from hence, that the bodies after their dissolution cannot be restored	94
XI.	The exceeding purity of its precepts, with respect to the worship of God	97
XII.	Concerning those duties of humanity which we owe to our neighbour, though he has injured us	101
XIII.	About the conjunction of male and female	104
XIV.	About the use of temporal goods	107
XV.	Concerning oaths	109

XVI.	Concerning other actions	<i>ib.</i>
XVII.	An answer to the objection drawn from the many controversies amongst Christians	110
XVIII.	The excellency of the Christian religion further proved from the excellency of its Teacher	111
	From the wonderful propagation of this religion	115
	Considering the weakness and simplicity of those who taught it in the first ages	119
XIX.	And the great impediments that hindered men from embracing it, or deterred them from professing it	120
	An answer to those who require more and stronger arguments	122

BOOK III.

I.	Of the authority of the books of the New Testament	125
II.	The books, that have any names affixed to them, were writ by those persons whose names they bear	126
III.	The doubt of those books that were formerly doubtful, taken away	127
IV.	The authority of those books which have no name to them evident from the nature of the writings	127
V.	That these authors wrote what was true, because they knew the things they wrote about	128
VI.	And because they would not say what was false	130
VII.	The credibility of these writers further confirmed, from their being famous for miracles	131
VIII.	And of their writings; because in them are contained many things which the event proved to be revealed by a Divine Power	132
IX.	And also from the care, that it was fit God should take, that false writings should not be forged	133
X.	A solution of that objection, that many books were rejected by some	<i>ib.</i>
XI.	An answer to the objection, of some things being contained in these books that are impossible	136
XII.	Or disagreeable to reason	<i>ib.</i>

XIII.	An answer to this objection, that some things are contained in these books which are inconsistent with one another	133
XIV.	An answer to the objection from external testimonies; where it is shewn that they make more for these books	140
XV.	An answer to the objection of the Scriptures being altered	141
XVI.	The authority of the books of the Old Testament	143

BOOK IV.

I.	A particular confutation of the religions that differ from Christianity	156
II.	And, first, of Paganism. That there is but one God. That created beings are either good or bad. That the good are not to be worshipped without the command of the Supreme God	157
III.	A proof that evil spirits were worshipped by the heathen, and the unfitness of it shewn	158
IV.	Against the heathen worship paid to departed men	160
V.	Against the worship given to the stars and elements	161
VI.	Against the worship given to brute creatures	162
VII.	Against the worship given to those things which have no real existence	163
VIII.	An answer to the objection of the heathens taken from the miracles done amongst them	165
IX.	And from oracles	168
X.	The heathen religion rejected, because it failed of its own accord, as soon as human assistance was wanting	172
XI.	An answer to this, that the rise and decay of religion is owing to the stars	172
XII.	The principal things of the Christian religion were approved of by the wisest heathens: and if there be any thing in it hard to be believed, the like is to be found amongst the heathen	174

BOOK V.

I	.A confutation of Judaism, beginning with an address to the Jews	181
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II.	That the Jews ought to look upon the miracles of Christ as sufficiently attested	182
III.	An answer to the objection, that those miracles were done by the help of devils	188
IV.	Or by the power of words	184
V.	That the miracles of Jesus were divine, proved from hence, because he taught the worship of one God, the Maker of the world	<i>ib.</i>
VI.	An answer to the objection drawn from the difference betwixt the law of Moses and the law of Christ; where it is shewn, that there might be given a more perfect law than that of Moses	186
VII.	The law of Moses was observed by Jesus when on earth, neither was any part of it abolished afterwards, but only those precepts which had no intrinsic goodness in them	188
VIII.	As sacrifices, which were never acceptable to God upon their own account	191
IX.	And the difference of meats	196
X.	And of days	199
XI.	And circumcision of the flesh	201
XII.	And yet the apostles of Jesus easily allowed of those things	203
XIII.	A proof against the Jews, taken from their own confession of the extraordinary promise of the Messiah	<i>ib.</i>
XIV.	That he is already come, appears from the time foretold	204
XV.	(With an answer to what is alleged, that his coming was deferred upon the account of the sins of the people)	207
XVI.	Also from the present state of the Jews, compared with the promises of the law	208
XVII.	Jesus proved to be the Messiah, from those things that were predicted of the Messiah	210
XVIII.	An answer to what is alleged, that some things were not fulfilled	218
XIX.	And to that which is objected of the low condition and death of Jesus	214

XX.	And as though they were good men who delivered him to death	218
XXI.	An answer to the objection of the Christians worshipping many gods	221
XXII.	And that human nature is worshipped by them	224
XXIII.	The conclusion of this part, with a prayer for the Jews	226

BOOK VI.

I.	A confutation of Mahometanism: the original thereof	227
II.	The Mahometans' foundation overturned, in that they do not examine into religion	231
III.	A proof against the Mahometans, taken out of the sacred books of the Hebrews and Christians; and that they are not corrupted	232
IV.	From comparing Mahomet with Christ	234
V.	And the works of each of them	235
VI.	And of those who first embraced each of these religions	236
VII.	And of the methods by which each law was propagated	<i>ib.</i>
VIII.	And of their precepts compared with one another	238
IX.	A solution of the Mahometans' objection concerning the Son of God	239
X.	There are many absurd things in the Mahometan books	240
XI.	The conclusion to the Christians, who are admonished of their duty upon occasion of the foregoing things	241

MR. LE CLERC'S TWO BOOKS.

BOOK I.

I.	WE must inquire amongst what Christians the trite doctrine of Christ flourished most at this time	249
II.	We are to join ourselves with those who are most worthy the name of Christians	252

III.	They are most worthy the name of Christians who, in the purest manner of all, profess the doctrine the truth of which hath been proved by Grail's	254
IV.	Concerning the agreement and disagreement of Christians	256
V.	Whence every one ought to learn the knowledge of the Christian religion	260
VI.	Nothing else ought to be imposed upon Christians but what they can gather from the New Testament	261
VII.	The providence of God in preserving the Christian doctrine is very wonderful	261
VIII.	An answer to that question, Why God permits differences and errors to arise amongst Christians?	265
IX.	They profess and teach the Christian doctrine in the purest manner of all, who propose those things only as necessary to be believed, practised, or hoped for, which Christians are agreed in	268
X.	All prudent persons ought to partake of the sacrament with those who require nothing else of Christians but what every one finds in the books of the New Testament	269
XI.	Concerning church-government	271
XII.	The ancient church-government was highly esteemed by Grotius, without condemning others	271
XIII.	An exhortation to all Christians who differ from each other, not to require of one another any points of doctrine but such as every one finds in the New Testament, and have always been believed	274

BOOK II.

I.	That we ought to have a love for truth in all things, but more especially in such as are of great moment	277
II.	Nothing can be of greater moment than religion; and therefore we ought to use our utmost endeavours to come at the true knowledge of it	278

III.	That an indifference in religion is in its own nature unlawful, forbidden by the laws of God, and condemned by all sects of Christians	280
IV.	We ought not hastily to condemn those who differ from us, as if they were guilty of such a crime, or such unlawful worship, as is inconsistent with eternal life; so that none who admit such persons should be capable of the mercy of God; nor yet, on the other hand, is it lawful for us to profess that we believe what we do not really believe, or to do what, at the same time, we condemn	285
V.	A man that commits a sin by mistake may be accepted of God, but a hypocrite cannot	288
TESTIMONIES concerning Hugo Grotius's affection for the Church of England		293



THE TRUTH

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

TO THE HONOURABLE

HIERONYMUS BIGNONIUS,

His Majesty's Solicitor in the Chief Court at Paris.

BOOK I.

SECTION I. The occasion of this work.

YOU have frequently inquired of me, worthy sir, (whom I know to be a gentleman that highly deserves the esteem of your country, of the learned world, and, if you will allow me to say it, of myself also), what the substance of those books is, which I wrote in defence of the Christian religion, in my own language. Nor do I wonder at your inquiry; for you, who have with so great judgment read every thing that is worth reading, cannot but be sensible with how much philosophic nicety Ræmuudus Sebundus, with what entertaining dialogues Ludovicus Vives, and with how great eloquence your Mornæus, have illustrated this matter.¹ For which reason, it might seem more useful to translate some of them into our own language, than to undertake any thing new upon this subject. But though I know not what judgment others will pass upon me, yet have I very good reason to hope that you, who are so fair and candid a judge, will easily acquit me, if I should say, that, after having read not only the fore-mentioned writings, but also those that have been written by the Jews in behalf of the ancient Jewish dispensation, and those of Christians for Christianity, I choose to make use of my own judgment, such as it is; and to give my mind that liberty which at present is denied my body: for I am persuaded, that truth is no other way to be defended but by truth, and that such as the mind is fully satisfied with; it being in vain to attempt to persuade others to that which you yourself are not convinced of. Wherefore I selected, both from the ancients and moderns, what appeared to me most conclusive; leaving such arguments as seemed of small weight, and rejecting such books as I know to be spurious, or had reason to suspect to be so. Those which I approved of I explained, and put in a regular method, and in as popular a manner as I could, and likewise turned them into verse, that they might the easier be remembered. For my design was to undertake something that might be useful to my countrymen, especially seamen; that they might have an opportunity to employ that time which, in long voyages, lies upon their hands, and is usually thrown away: wherefore I began with an encomium upon our nation, which so far excels others in the skill of navigation; that, by this means, I might excite them to make use of this art, as a peculiar favour of Heaven, not only to their own profit, but also to the propagating the Christian religion: for they can never want matter; but, in their long voyages, will every where meet either with pagans, as in China or Guinea; or Mahometans, as in the Turkish and Persian empires, and in the kingdoms of Fez and Morocco; and also with Jews, who are the professed enemies of Christianity, and are dispersed over the greatest part of the world: and there are never wanting profane persons,



¹ These were the chief writers upon this subject in Grotius's time; but, since then, a great number have wrote concerning the truth of the Christian religion, especially in French and English; moved thereto by the example of Grotius, whom they imitated, and sometimes borrowed from him: so that the glory of so pious and necessary a method of writing chiefly redounds to him. *Le Clerc.*

who, upon occasion, are ready to scatter their poison amongst the weak and simple, which fear had forced then to conceal: against all which evils, my desire was to have my countrymen well fortified; that they, who have the best parts, might employ them in confuting errors, and that the other would take heed of being seduced by them.



SECT. II. That there is a God.

AND, that we may shew that religion is not a vain and empty thing, it shall be the business of this first book to lay the foundation thereof in the existence of the Deity; which I prove in the following manner: That there are some things which had a beginning, is confessed on all sides, and obvious to sense: but these things could not be the cause of their own existence; because that which has no being, cannot act; for then it would have been before it was, which is impossible: whence it follows, that it derived its being from something else: this is true, not only of those things which are now before our eyes, or which we have formerly seen, but also of those things out of which these have arisen, and so on, till we arrive at some cause, which never had any beginning, but exists, as we say, necessarily, and not by accident:² Now this Being, whatsoever it be, (of whom we shall speak more fully by and by), is what we mean by the Deity, or God. Another argument for the proof of a Deity may be drawn from the plain consent of all nations, who have any remains of reason, any sense of good manners, and are not wholly degenerated into brutishness. For human inventions, which depend upon the arbitrary will of men, are not always the same every where, but are often changed; whereas there is no place where this notion is not to be found; nor has the course of time been able to alter it, (which is observed by Aristotle himself,³ a man not very credulous in these matters); wherefore we must assign it a cause as extensive as all mankind; and that can be no other than a declaration from God himself, or a tradition derived down from the first parents of mankind: if the former be granted, there needs no further proof; if the latter, it is hard to give a good reason why our first parents should deliver to posterity a falsity in a matter of so great moment. Moreover, if we look into those parts of the world which have been a long time known, or into those lately discovered; if they have not lost the common principles of human nature, as was said before, this truth immediately appears; as well amongst the more dull nations, as amongst those who are quicker, and have better understandings; and, surely, these latter cannot all be deceived, nor the former be supposed to have found out something to impose upon each other with: nor would it be of any force against this, if it should be urged, that there have been a few persons in many ages who did not believe a God, or at least made such a profession; for, considering how few they were,



2 Because, as their manner of speaking is, there can be no such thing as going on for ever; for of those things which had a beginning, either there is some first cause, or there is none. If it be denied that there is any first cause; then, those things which had a beginning were without a cause; and consequently existed, or name out of nothing, of themselves; which is absurd. *Le Clerc.*

3 *Metaphys.* book xi. ch. 5. where, after relating the fables of the gods, he has these words: "Which, if any one rightly distinguishes, he will keep wholly to this as the principal thing; that to believe the gods to be the first beings, is a divine truth; and that though arts and sciences have probably been often lost, and revived, yet this opinion hath been preserved as a relic to this very time." *Le Clerc.*

and that, as soon as their arguments were known, their opinion was immediately exploded, it is evident, it did not proceed from the right use of that reason which is common to all men, but either from an affectation of novelty, like the heathen philosopher who contended that snow was black; or from a corrupted mind, which, like a vitiated palate, does not relish things as they are; especially since history and other writings inform us, that the more virtuous any one is, the more carefully is this notion of the Deity preserved by him: and it is further evident, that they, who dissent from this anciently-established opinion, do it out of an ill principle, and are such persons, whose interest it is that there should be no God, that is, no Judge of human actions; because whatever hypothesis they have advanced of their own, whether an infinite succession of causes, without any beginning, or a fortuitous concurrence of atoms, or any other, it is attended with as great, if not greater difficulties, and not at all more credible than what is already received; as is evident to any one that considers it ever so little.⁴ For that which some object, that they do not believe a God, because they do not see him, if they can see any thing, they may see how much it is beneath a man, who has a soul which he cannot see, to argue in this manner. Nor, if we cannot fully comprehend the nature of God, ought we therefore to deny that there is any such Being; for the beasts do not know what sort of creatures men are, and much less do they understand how men, by their reason, institute and govern kingdoms, measure the course of the stars, and sail across the seas: these things exceed their reach: and hence man, because he is placed by the dignity of his nature above the beasts, and that not by himself, ought to infer, that He, who gave him this superiority above the beasts, is as far advanced beyond him as he is beyond the beasts; and that therefore there is a nature which, as it is more excellent, so it exceeds his comprehension.

4 Grotius might have said, and that not rashly, that there are much greater difficulties in the opinions of those who would have the world to be eternal, or always to have been; such as, that it must have come out of nothing of itself, or that it arose from the fortuitous concurrence of atoms; opinions full of manifest contradictions, as many since Grotius's time have exactly demonstrated; amongst whom is the eminent and learned dr. Ralph Cudworth, who wrote the English treatise of the *intellectual system of the universe*. There are also other very excellent English divines and natural philosophers. *Le Clerc*.

SECT. III. That there is but one God.

HAVING proved the existence of the Deity, we come next to his attributes: the first whereof is, that there can be no more Gods than one; which may be gathered from hence; because, as was before said, God exists necessarily, or is self-existent. Now that which is necessary, or self-existent, cannot be considered as of any kind or species of beings, but as actually existing, and is therefore a single being;⁵ for, if you imagine many Gods, you will see that necessary existence belongs to none of them; nor can there be any reason why two should rather be believed than three, or ten than five: beside, the abundance of particular things of the same kind proceeds from the fruitfulness of the cause, in proportion to which more or less is produced; but God has no cause, or original. Further, particular different things are endued with peculiar properties, by which they are distinguished from each other; which do not belong to God, who is a necessary being. Neither do we find any signs of many Gods; for this whole universe makes but one world, in which there is but one thing that far exceeds the rest in beauty, viz. the sun:⁶ and in every man there is but one thing that governs, that is, the mind: moreover, if there could be two or more Gods, free agents, acting according to their own wills, they might will contrary to each other; and so one be hindered by the other from effecting his design; now, a possibility of being hindered is inconsistent with the notion of God.



5 But a great many single beings are a great many individual beings; this argument therefore might have been omitted, without any detriment to so good a cause: *Le Clerc*.—Whoever would see the argument for the unity of God, drawn from his necessary or self-existence, urged in its full force, may find it at the beginning of dr. Samuel Clark's *Boyle's Lectures*.

6 At least to the inhabitants of this our solar system, (as we now term it), as those fiery centres the stars are to other eterns. *Le Clerc*.

SECT. IV. All perfection is in God.

THAT we may come to the knowledge of the other attributes of God, we conceive all that is meant by perfection to be in him, (I use the Latin word *perfectio*, as being the best that tongue affords, and the same as the Greek *τελειότης*); because whatever perfection is in any thing, either had a beginning, or not; if it had no beginning, it is the perfection of God; if it had a beginning, it must of necessity be from something else: and, since none of those things that exist are produced from nothing, it follows, that whatever perfections are in the effects, were first in the cause, so that it could produce any thing endued with them; and consequently they are all in the first cause. Neither can the first cause ever be deprived of any of its perfections: not from any thing else; because that which is eternal does not depend upon any other thing; nor can it at all suffer from any thing that they can do; nor from itself, because every nature desires its own perfection.



SECT. V. And in an infinite degree.

To this must be added, that these perfections are in God, in an infinite degree: because those attributes that are finite are therefore limited; because the cause whence they proceed has communicated so much of them, and no more; or else, because the subject was capable of no more. But no other nature communicated any of its perfections to God; nor does he derive any thing from any one else, he being, as was said, necessary or self-existent.

SECT. VI. That God is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and completely good.

Now, seeing it is very evident that those things which have life are more perfect than those which have not; and those which have a power of acting, than those which have none; those which have understanding, than those which want it; those which are good, than those which are not so; it follows, from what has been already said, that these attributes belong to God, and that infinitely: wherefore he is a living infinite God; that is, eternal, of immense power, and every way good, without the least defect.

SECT. VII. That God is the cause of all things.

EVERY thing that is, derives its existence from God; this follows from what has been already said. For we conclude, that there is but one necessary self-existent Being; whence we collect, that all other things sprung from a being different from themselves: for those things, which are derived from something else, were all of them, either immediately in themselves, or mediately in their causes, derived from him who had no beginning, that is, from God, as was before evinced. And this is not only evident to reason, but in a manner to sense too: for if we take a survey of the admirable structure of a human body, both within and without, and see how every, even the most minute, part hath its proper use, without any design or intention of the parents, and with so great exactness, as the most excellent philosophers and physicians could never enough admire; it is a sufficient demonstration that the Author of nature is the most complete understanding. Of this a great deal may be seen in Galen,⁷ especially where he examines the use of the hands and eyes: and the same may be observed in the bodies of dumb creatures; for the figure and situation of their parts to a certain end cannot be the effect of any power in matter. As also in plants and herbs, which is accurately observed by the philosophers. Strabo⁸ excellently well takes notice hereof in the position of water, which, as to its quality, is of a middle nature betwixt air and earth, and ought to have been placed betwixt them, but is therefore interspersed and mixed with the earth, lest its fruitfulness, by which the life of man is preserved, should be hindered. Now it is the property of intelligent beings only to act with some view. Neither are particular things appointed for their own peculiar ends only, but for the good of the whole; as is plain in water, which, contrary to its own nature, is raised upwards, lest by a vacuum there should be a gap in the structure of the universe, which is upheld by the continued union of its parts.⁹



7 Book iii. ch.10. which place is highly worth reading, but too long to be inserted. But many later divines and natural philosophers in England have explained these things more accurately. *Le Clerc.*

8 Book xvii. where after he had distinguished betwixt the works of nature, that is, the material world, and those of Providence, he adds: "After, the earth was surrounded with water, because man was not made to dwell in the water, but belongs partly to the earth and partly to the air, and stands in great need of light. Providence has caused many eminences and cavities in the earth, that in these the water, or the greatest part of it, might be received; whereby that part of the earth under it might be covered; and that by the other the earth might be advanced to cover the water, except what is of use for men, animals, and plants." The same hath been observed by rabbi Jehuda Levita, and Abeneadra, amongst the Jews, and St. Chrysostom, in his 9th homily of statutes, among Christians.

9 This was borrowed from the peripatetic philosophy, by this great man; which supposed the water in a pump to ascend for fear of a vacuum; whereas it is now granted by all to be done by the pressure of the air. But by the laws of gravitation, as the moderns explain them, the order of the universe, and the wisdom of its Creator, are no less conspicuous. *Le Clerc.*

Now, the good of the whole could not possibly be designed, nor a power put into things to tend towards it, but by an Intelligent Being, to whom the universe is subject. There are moreover some actions, even of the beasts, so ordered and directed, as plainly discover them to be the effects of some small degree of reason: as is most manifest in ants and bees, and also in some others, which, before they have experienced them, will avoid things hurtful, and seek those that are profitable to them. That this power, of searching out and distinguishing, is not properly in themselves, is apparent from hence, because they act always alike, and are unable to do other things which do not require more pains; wherefore they are acted upon by some foreign reason; and what they do, must of necessity proceed from the efficiency of that reason impressed upon them: which reason is no other than what we call God.¹⁰ Next, the heavenly constellations, but more especially those eminent ones, the sun and moon, have their courses so exactly accommodated to the fruitfulness of the earth, and to the health of animals, that nothing can be imagined more convenient: for though, otherwise, the most simple motion had been along the equator, yet are they directed in an oblique circle, that the benefit of them might extend to more places of the earth. And as other animals are allowed the use of the earth, so mankind are permitted to use those animals, and can by the power of his reason tame the fiercest of them. Whence it was that the stoics concluded that the world was made for the sake of man.¹¹ But, since the power of man does not extend so far as to compel the heavenly luminaries to serve him, nor is it likely they should of their own accord submit themselves to him, hence it follows, that there is a superior understanding, at whose command those beautiful bodies afford their perpetual assistance to man, wile, is placed so far beneath them; which understanding is none other than the Maker of the stars and of the universe. The eccentric motions of the stars, and the epicycles, as they term them, manifestly show, that they are not the effects of matter, but the appointment of a free agent;¹²



10 No, they are done by the soul of those beasts, which is so far reasonable, as to be able to do such things, and not others. Other. wise God himself would act in them instead of a soul, which a good philosopher will hardly be persuaded of. Nothing hinders but that there may be a great many ranks of sensible and intelligent natures, the lowest of which may be in the bodies of brute creatures; for nobody, I think, really believes with Ren. Cartes, that brutes are mere corporeal machines. But you will say, when brute creatures die, what becomes of the souls? That indeed I know not; but it is nevertheless true that souls reside in them. There is no necessity that we should know all things, nor are we therefore presently to deny any thing because we cannot give account of it. We are to receive those things that are evident, and be content to be ignorant of those things which we cannot know. *Le Clerc.*

11 See Tully in his first book of offices, and his second of the nature of the gods.

12 This argument is learnedly handled by Maimonides, in his *Ductor Dubitantium*, part ii. c. 4. And if you suppose the earth to be moved, it amounts to the same thing in other words.—These, and some of the following things, are according to the vulgar opinion, which is now exploded; but the efficacy of the Divine Power is equally seen in the constant motion of the planets, in ellipses, about the sun, through the most fluid vortex; in such a

and the same assurance we have from the position of the stars, some in one part of the heavens, and some in another: and from the unequal form of the earth and seas: nor can we attribute the motion of the stars in such a direction, rather than another, to any thing else. The very figure of the world, which is the most perfect, viz. round, and all the parts of it inclosed, as it were, in the bosom of the heavens, and placed in wonderful order, sufficiently declare, that these things were not the result of chance, but the appointment of the most excellent understanding: for, can any one be so foolish, as to expect any- thing so accurate from chance? He may as soon believe, that pieces of timber, and stones, should frame themselves into a house:¹³ or that, from letters thrown at a venture, there should arise a poem; when the philosopher, who saw only some geometrical figures on the sea-shore, thought them plain indications of a man's having been there, such things not looking as if they proceeded from chance. Besides, that mankind were not from eternity, but date their original from a certain period of time, is clear, as from other arguments, so from the improvement of arts, and those desert places, which came afterwards to be inhabited,¹⁴ and



manner as not to recede from, or approach to, their centre, more than their wonted limits, but always cut the sun's equator at like obliquity. *Le Clerc*.—Sir Isaac Newton has demonstrated that there are no such vortexes, but that their motions are better explained without them.

13 Or ship, or engine.

14 t Tertullian treats of this matter, from history, in his book concerning the soul, sect. 30. "We find" (says he) "in all commentaries, especially of the antiquities of men, that mankind increase by degrees," &c. And a little after, "The world manifestly improves every day, and grows wiser than it was." These two arguments caused Aristotle's opinion (who would not allow mankind any beginning) to be rejected by the learned historians, especially the Epicureans. Lucretius, book v.— "If heaven and earth had no original,

How is it, that, before the Trojan war,

No poets sung of memorable things;

But deeds of heroes died so oft with them;

And no where monuments raised to their praise?

This shews the world is young, and lately made.

Whence 'tis that arts are every day increas'd,

Or fresh renew'd; and ships so much improv'd,

And music, to delight the ear." With a great deal more to the same purpose. *Virgil, Eclogue vi.* ——"From these first principles

All things arose; hence sprung the tender world." *And in his Georgics.* "Use first produc'd those various arts we see, By small degrees; this taught the husbandman

To plough and sow his fields; from the hard flint

To fetch the hidden sparks; then men began

With hollow boats to cross the stream; pilots

Call'd Hyades and Pleiades their signs,

And Charles's wain: then sportsmen spread their nets
To catch wild beasts, and dogs pursued their game.
Some drain the rivers, and some seek the main,
Stretching their nets to inclose the finny prey:
Others with iron forge whet instruments
To cleave the yielding wood: then arts arose." *Horace, book i. sat. iii.* "When first mankind began to spread the earth.
Like animals devoid of speech, they strove
With utmost strength of hands, for dens and acorns;
From thence to clubs, and then to arms, they came,
Taught by experience; till words express'd
Their meaning, and gave proper names to things:
Then ended wars, cities were built, and laws
Were made for thieves, adulterers, and rogues." Pliny, in his third book of natural history, about the beginning,
"Wherefore I would be so understood as the words themselves signify, without the flourish of men; and as they were understood at the beginning, before any great exploits were performed." The same author affirms, that the Hercynian wood (in Germany) was coeval with the world, book xvi. Seneca, in *Lanctantius*, "It is not a thousand years since wisdom had a beginning." Tacitus's *Annals*, iii. "The first men, before appetite and passion swayed them, lived without bribes, and without iniquity; and needed not to be restrained from evil by punishment: neither did they stand in need of reward, every one naturally pursuing virtue; for so long as nothing was desired contrary to morality, they wanted not to be restrained by fear; but after they laid aside equity, and violence and ambition succeeded in the room of honesty and humility, then began that power which has always continued amongst some people. But others immediately, or at least after they grew weary of kings, preferred a legal government." And Aristotle could not fully persuade himself, any more than others, of the truth of his own hypothesis, that mankind never had any beginning. For he speaks very doubtfully of the matter in many places, as Moses Maimonides observes in his *Ductor Dubitantium*, part ii. In the prologue to his second book, concerning the heavens, he calls his position only a persuasion, and not a demonstration; and there is a saying of the same philosopher, in the third book of the soul, chap. iii. "that persuasion is a consequence of opinion." But his principal argument is drawn from the absurdity of the contrary opinion, which supposes the heavens and the universe not to be created, but generated; which is inconsistent. Book xi. of his *Metaphysics*, chap. 8, he says, "It is very likely that arts have often been lost, and invented again." And, in the last chapter of the third book of the generation of animals, he has these words, "It would not be a foolish conjecture, concerning the first rise of men and beasts, if any one should imagine, that of old they sprung out of the earth one of these two ways; either after the manner of maggots, or to have come from eggs." After his explication of each of these, he adds, "If therefore animals had any beginning, it is manifest it must be one of these two ways." The same Aristotle, in the first of his *Topics*, chap. xi. "There are some questions against which very good arguments may be brought; it being very doubtful which side is in the right, there being great probability on either hand, we have no certainty of them: and though they be of great weight, we find it very difficult to determine the cause and manner of their existence; as for instance, whether the world were from eternity, or no: for such things as these are disputable."

is further evidenced by the language of islands, plainly derived from the neighbouring continents. There are, moreover, certain ordinances so universal amongst men, that they do not seem so much to owe their institution to the instinct of nature, or the deductions of plain reason, as to a constant tradition, scarcely interrupted in any place, either by wickedness or misfortune: of which sort were formerly sacrifices, amongst holy rites; and now shame in venereal things, the solemnity of marriage, and the abhorrence of incest.



And again, disputing about the same thing, in his first book of the heavens, chap. x. "What shall be said will be the more credible, if we allow the disputants arguments their due weight." Tatian, therefore, did well not to pass by this, where he brings his reasons for the belief of the scriptures, "That what they deliver, concerning the creation of the universe, is level to every one's capacity." If you take Plato for the world's having a beginning, and Aristotle for its having had none, you will have seen both the Jewish and Christian opinions."

SECT. VIII. The objection concerning the cause of evil, answered.

NOR ought we to be in the least shaken in what has been said, because we see many evils happen, the original of which cannot be ascribed to God, who, as was affirmed of him, is perfectly good. For when we say, that God is the cause of all things, we mean of all such things as have a real existence; which is no reason why those things themselves should not be the cause of some accidents, such as actions are. God created man, and some other intelligences superior to man, with a liberty of acting; which liberty of acting is not in itself evil, but may be the cause of something that is evil.¹⁵ And to make God the author of evils of this kind, which are called moral evils, is the highest wickedness. But there are other sorts of evils, such as loss or pain inflicted upon a person, which may be allowed to come from God, suppose for the reformation of the man, or as a punishment which his sins deserve: for here is no inconsistency with goodness; but, on the contrary, these proceed from goodness itself, in the same manner as physic, unpleasant to the taste, does from a good physician.

13

14

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15 "God, indeed, foresaw that free agents would abuse their liberty, and that many natural and moral evils would arise from hence; yet did not this hinder him from permitting such abuse, and the consequences thereof; any more than it hindered his creating beings endued with such liberty. The reason is plain. Because a free agent being the most excellent creature, which discovers the highest power of tile Creator, God was unwilling to prevent those inconveniencies which proceed from the mutability of their nature; because he can amend them as he pleases, to all eternity; in such a manner as is agreeable to his own goodness, though he has not yet revealed it to us. Concerning which we have largely treated in French, in a book wrote against Pet. Bayle, the seeming advocate of the Manichees. *Le Clerc.*

SECT. IX. Against two principles.

AND here, by the way, we ought to reject their opinion, who imagine there are two active principles, the one good, and the other evil.¹⁶ For from two principles, that nye contradictory to each other, can arise no regular order, but only ruin and destruction: neither can there be a self-existent being perfectly evil, as there is one self-existent perfectly good; because evil is a defect, which cannot reside but in something which has a being; and the very having a being is to be reckoned amongst the things which are good.¹⁷

¹⁶ This has respect to the ancient disciples of Zoroastres, and to the Manichees. *Le Clerc.*

¹⁷ But here the author was speaking of moral and not of natural good. It had therefore been better to have forborne such kind of reasoning. *Le Clerc.*

SECT. X. That God governs the universe.

THAT the world is governed by the providence of God, is evident from hence; that not only men, who are endued with understanding, but birds, and both wild and tame beasts, (who are led by instinct, which serves them instead of understanding), take care of, and provide for, their young. Which perfection, as it is a branch of goodness, ought not to be excluded from God: and so much the rather, because he is all-wise, and all-powerful, and cannot but know every thing that is done, or is to be done, and with the greatest facility direct and govern them: to which we may add, what was before hinted concerning the motion of particular things, contrary to their own nature, to promote the good of the whole.



SECT. XI. And the affairs of this lower world.

AND they are under a very great mistake, who confine this providence to the heavenly bodies;¹⁸ as appears from the foregoing reason, which holds as strong for all created beings; and moreover from this consideration, that there is an especial regard had to the good of man, in the regulation of the course of the stars, as is confessed by the best philosophers, and evident from experience.¹⁹ And it is reasonable to conceive, that greater care should be taken of that for whose sake the other was made, than of that which is only subservient to it.

And the particulars in it.

NEITHER is their error less, who allow the universe to be governed by him, but not the particular things in it.²⁰ For if he were ignorant of any particular thing, (as some of them say), he would not be thoroughly acquainted with himself. Neither will his knowledge be infinite, (as we have before proved it to be). if it does not extend to individuals. Now, if God knows all things, what should binder his taking care of them; especially since individuals, as such, are appointed for some certain end, either particular or general? and things in general (which they themselves acknowledge to be preserved by God) cannot subsist but in their individuals: so that if the particulars be destroyed, by providence's forsaking them, the whole must be destroyed too.



18 This was the opinion of Aristotle. See Plutarch concerning the opinions of the philosophers, book. ii. chap. 3. and Atticus in Eusebius's Gospel Preparation, book v. ch. 3. *Le Clerc.*

19 Though not for man only; for it doth not appear that there are no other intelligent beings in other planets; yet partly for him, and, so far as he makes use of them, without any detriment to other creatures. Because we cannot live without the sun, we may well conclude it was made upon our account; unless we can imagine that chance provided every thing that is necessary for us; which is very absurd; just like a man who, happening upon a house well furnished, should deny that it was built for the convenience of men, who are alone capable of enjoying it. *Le Clerc.*

20 This was the opinion of the stoics: see Arrius's Dissertations upon Epictetus, book i. ch. 12. and Justin Lipsius, in his stoical physiology, *Le Clerc.*

SECT. XII. This is further proved by the preservation of empires.

THE preservation of commonwealths hath been acknowledged, both by philosophers and historians, to be no mean argument for the Divine Providence over human affairs. First, in general; because wherever good order in government and obedience hath been once admitted, it has been always retained;²¹ and in particular, certain forms of government have continued for many ages; as that of kings among the Assyrians, Egyptians, and Franks; and that of aristocracy among the Venetians. Now, though human wisdom may go a good way towards this, yet, if it be duly considered what a multitude of wicked men there are, how many external evils, how liable things are in their own nature to change; we can hardly imagine any government should subsist so long without the peculiar care of the Deity. And this is more visible where it has pleased God to change a government:²² for all things (even those which do not depend upon human prudence) succeed beyond their wish (which they do not ordinarily in the variety of human events) to those whom God has appointed instruments for this purpose, as it were, destined by him; (suppose Cyrus, Alexander, Cæsar the dictator, the Cingi²³ amongst the Tartars, Namcaa²⁴ amongst the Chinese): which wonderful agreeableness of events, and all conspiring to a certain end, is a manifest indication of a provident direction. For though a man may now and then throw a particular cast on a die by chance; yet, if he should do it a hundred times together, every body would conclude there was some art in it.



21 Because without it there is no such thing as human society, and without society mankind cannot be preserved; whence we may collect, that men were created by Divine Providence, that they might live in society, and make use of laws, without which there neither is nor can be any society. *Le Clerc.*

22 Thus Lucretius: "Some secret cause confounds the exploits of men."

23 He seems to mean Genghiz Can, who came out of eastern Tartary, and out of the city Caracarom, and subdued not only Tartary, but also the northern Sina and India. From him sprung the Mogul kings, and the princes of the lesser Tartary. His life is written in French, and published at Paris in 1710. *Le Clerc.*

24 Here, in justice, Manca Capacus ought to be named, who was the founder of the empire of Peru. (See *Garsilazzi de la Vega, in Incarum historia*).

SECT. XIII. And by miracles.

BUT the most certain proof of Divine Providence is from miracles, and the predictions we find in histories: it is true, indeed, that a great many of those relations are fabulous; but there is no reason to disbelieve those which are attested by credible witnesses to have been in their time, men whose judgment and integrity have never been called in question. For, since God is all-knowing and all-powerful, why should we think him not able to signify his knowledge or his resolution to act out of the ordinary course of nature, which is his appointment, and subject to his direction and government? If any one should object against this, that inferior intelligent agents may be the cause of them, it is readily granted; and this tends to make us believe it the more easily of God: beside, whatever of this nature is done by such beings, we conceive God does by them, or wisely permits them to do them; in the same manner as, in well regulated kingdoms, nothing is done otherwise than the law directs, but by the will of the supreme governor.

SECT. XIV. But more especially amongst the Jews, who ought to be credited upon the account of the long continuance of their religion.

Now, that some miracles have really been seen, (though it should seem doubtful from the credit of all other histories), the Jewish religion alone may easily convince us: with though it has been a long time destitute of human assistance, nay exposed to contempt and mockery, yet it remains to this very day, in almost all parts of the world;²⁵ when all other religions²⁶ (except the Christian, which is, as it were, the perfection of the Jewish) have either disappeared as soon as they were forsaken by the civil power and authority, (as all the pagan religions did), or else they are yet maintained by the same power as Mahometanism is: for, if any one should ask, whence it is that the Jewish religion hath taken so deep root in the minds of all the Hebrews, as never to be forced out; there can be no other possible cause assigned or imagined than this, that the present Jews received it from their parents, and they from theirs, and so on, till you come to the age in which Moses and Joshua lived: they received, I say, by a certain and uninterrupted tradition, the miracles which were worked, as in other places, so more especially at their coming out of Egypt, in their journey, and at their entrance into Canaan; of all which their ancestors themselves were witnesses.²⁷ Nor is it in the least credible, that a people of so obstinate a disposition could ever be persuaded, any otherwise, to submit to a law loaded with so many rites and ceremonies; or that wise men, amongst



25 Hecataeus, concerning the Jew; which lived before the time of Alexander, has these words: "Though they be severely reproached by their neighbours and by strangers, and many times harshly treated by the Persian kings and nobility; yet cannot they be brought off from their opinion. but will undergo the most cruel torments and sharpest death, rather than forsake the religion of their country." Josephus preserved this place, in his first book against Appion: and he adds another example out of the same Hecataeus, relating to Alexander's time, wherein the Jewish soldiers peremptorily refused to assist at the repairing the temple of the god Belus. And the same Josephus has very well shewn, in his other book against Appion, that the firm persuasion of the Jews of old, concerning God's being the author of their law, is from hence evident; because they have not dared, like other people, to alter any thing in their laws; not even when, in long banishments, under foreign princes, they have been tried by all sorts of threatenings and flatteries. To this we may add something of Tacitus about the proselytes: "All that are converted to them do the like; for the first principle they are instructed in is to have a contempt of the gods; to lay aside their love to their country, and to have no regard for their parents or brethren." That is, when the law of God comes in competition with them; which this profane author unjustly blames. See further what Porphyry has delivered about the constancy of the Jews, in his second and fourth books against eating of living creatures; where he mentions Antiochus, and particularly the constancy of the Essenes amongst the Jews.

26 Even those so highly commended laws of Lycurgus, as is observed by Josephus and Theodoret.

27 To which we give credit, because it was worthy of God to institute a religion in which it was taught that there was one God, the Creator of all things, who is a spiritual Being, and is alone to be worshipped. *Le Clerc.*

the many distinctions of religion which human reason might invent, should choose circumcision; which could not be performed without great pain,²⁸ and was laughed at by all strangers,²⁹ and had nothing to recommend it but the authority of God.

28 Philo says, it was done "with very great pain."

29 The same Philo says, "It was a thing laughed at by every body:" whence the Jews by the poets are called *cropt, circumcised, fore-skinned.*

SECT. XV. From the truth and antiquity of Moses.

THIS also gives the greatest credit imaginable to the writings of Moses, in which these miracles are recorded to posterity; that there was not only a settled opinion and constant tradition amongst the Jews that this Moses was appointed by the express command of God himself to be the leader and captain of this people; but also because, as is very evident, he did not make his own glory and advantage his principal aim, but he himself relates those errors of his own, which he could have concealed; and delivered the regal and sacerdotal dignity to others, (permitting his own posterity to be reduced only to common Levites). All which plainly shew, that he had no occasion to falsify in his history; as the style of it further evinces, it being free from that varnish and colour, which uses to give credit to romances; and is very natural and easy, and agreeable to the matter of which it treats. Moreover, another argument for the undoubted antiquity of Moses's writings, which no other writings can pretend to, is this, that the Greeks (from whom all other nations derived their learning) own, that they had their letters from foreigners;³⁰ which letters of theirs have the same order,



30 Herodotus in his Terpsichore says, "That the Ionians had their letters from the Phœnicians, and used them, with very little variation; which afterwards appearing, those letters were called Phœnician, (as they ought to be), from the Phœnicians bringing them into Greece." He calls them, "The Phœnician characters of Cadmus," And Callimachus;

—Cadmus, from whom the Greeks

Their written books derive." And Plutarch calls them Phœnician or Punic letters, in his ninth book, and third prob. of his Symposiacs, where he says, that *alpha* in the Phœnician language signifies an *ox*, which is very true. Eupolemus, in his book of the kings of Judæa, says, "That Moses was the first wise man, and that letters were first given by him to the Jews, and from them the Phœnicians received them;" that is, the ancient language of the Jews and Phœnicians was the same, or very little different. Thus Lucian: "He spake some indistinct words, like the Hebrew or Phœnician." And Chærilus, In his verses concerning the Solimi, who, he says, dwelt near the lake, I suppose he means Asphaltites, "These with their tongue pronounced Phœnician words." See also the Punic scene of Plautus, where you have the words that are put in the Punic language twice, by reason of the double writing; and also the Latin translation; whence you may easily correct what is corrupted. And as the Phœnician and Hebrew languages were the same, so are the ancient Hebrew letters the same with those of the Phœnicians. See the great men about this matter. Joseph Scaliger's Diatriba of the Eusebian year I | CCXVII. and the first book, ch. x. of Gerard Vossius's Grammar, (and particularly Sam. Bochart, in his Chanaan). You may amid also, if you please, Clement of Alexandria, Strom. book 1. and Esebius's Gospel Preparation, book x. ch. 5.

name, and shape, as the Syriac or Hebrew:³¹ and further still, the most ancient Attic laws, from whence the Roman were afterwards taken, owe their original to the law of Moses.³²



31 He means the Samaritan letters, which are the same as the Phoenician, as Lud. Capel, Sam. Bochart, and others, have shewn. I also have treated of the same in French, in the *Biblioth. Select.* vol. xi. *Le Clerc.*

32 You have a famous instance of this, in thieves that rob by night, which we have treated of in the second book of war and peace, chap. i. sect. 12. and another in that law which Sopator recites, “Let him that is next a-kin possess the heiress;” which is thus explained by Terence: “There is a law, by which widows ought to be married to the next kinsmen, and the same law obliges these kinsmen to marry them.” Donatus remarks upon this place thus: “That the widow should be married to the next kinsman, and he marry her, is the Attic law,” viz. taken from the law of Moses, in the last chap. of Numbers, which we shall have opportunity of speaking more of afterwards. A great many other things may be found to this purpose, if any one search diligently for them: as the feast in which they carried clusters of grapes, taken from the feast of tabernacles; the law that the high priest should marry none but a virgin, and his countrywoman; that next after sisters, kinsmen by the father’s side should inherit: wherefore the Attic laws agree with many of the Hebrew, because the Attics owe many of their customs to Cecrops, king of Egypt; and because God established many laws amongst the Hebrews, very much like those of the Egyptians, to which they had been accustomed, only reforming such things as were bad in them; as we have often observed in our notes upon the Pentateuch, and, before us, John Spencer in his book about the ritual laws of the Jews. *Le Clerc.*

SECT. XVI. From foreign testimonies.

TO these we may add the testimony of a great number, who were strangers to the Jewish religion, which shews that the most ancient tradition among all nations is exactly agreeable to the relation of Moses. For his description of the original of the world is almost the very same as in the ancient Phœnician histories, which are translated by Philo Biblius from



Sanchuniathon's collection;³³ and a good part of it is to be found among the Indians³⁴ and Egyptians;³⁵ whence it is that in Linus,³⁶ Hesiod,³⁷ and many other animals, and also of



33 Eusebius has preserved them for us in his first book, chap. 10. of his Preparation. “The theology of the Phœnicians supposes the foundation of the universe to have been a dark and windy air, or the breath of a dark air, and a dismal chaos, covered with thick darkness; that these were infinite, and had no bounds for many ages. But, when this spirit or breath placed its desire or love on these first principles, and a mixture was produced thereby, this conjunction was called *love*: this was the beginning of the creation of all things; but the breath, or spirit, was not created; and from its embraces proceeded Μῶτ, *Mot*, which some call *Mud*, others the corruption of a watery mixture. This was the seminary, and from hence were all things produced.” In Moses’s history we find the spirit or breath, and the darkness; and the Hebrew word מרחפת *Merachepheth*, signifies *Love*. Plutarch, Symposiac. viii. prob. 1. explaining of Plato, says, that God is the father of the world, not by the emission of seed, but by a certain generative power infused into matter; which he illustrates by this similitude: ”

The female bird is oft impregnated

By the quick motion of the wind.” And Μῶτ, *Mot*, ומוט, whence the Greeks derive their Μόθος, *Mothos*, signifies in Hebrew תהום *Tehom*, in Greek, ἄβυσσος, an *Abyss* already in motion. For ἄβυσσος, *Abyssos*, is in Ennius nothing else but *Mud*, if I understand him right:— “From muddy Tartarus

a birth gigantic sprung.” This mud separated into earth and sea. Apollonius in the ivth of his *Argonautics*, “The earth’s produced from mud.” Upon which place the Scholiast says; “Zeno affirms, that the chaos in Hesiod is water, of which all things were made; the water subsiding made mud, and the mud congealing made solid earth.” Now this Zeno was a Phœnician, a colony of whom were planted in Cittium, whence the Hebrews call all beyond the seas כתיים *Chittim*. Not much different from which is that of Virgil, *Eclogue vi*. “Then earth began to harden, and include

The seas within its bounds, and things to take

Their proper forms.” Numenius, cited by Porphyry, about the nymph’s den, affirms, “That it was said by the prophet, (meaning Moses), that the Spirit of God was moved upon the waters;” the same expression which Tertullian uses concerning baptism. Now, because the Hebrew word מרחפת *Merachepheth* signifies properly the brooding of a dove upon her eggs, therefore it follows in Sanchuniathon, that the living creatures, that is, the constellations, were in that mud, as in an egg; and hence that spirit is called by the name of the *dove*: under the similitude of which dove, rabbi Solomon explains the word מרחפת *Merachepheth*. Nigidius, in the Scholiast of Germaucius, says, “That there was found an egg of a huge bigness, which, being rolled about, was cast upon the earth, and, after a few days, Venus, the goddess of Syria, was hatched thereby.” Lucius Ampelius, in his book to Matrinus, says, “It is reported that, in the river Euphrates, a dove sat many days upon a fish’s egg, and hatched a goddess, very kind and merciful to the life of man.” Macrobius resembles the world to an egg, in the viith book and 16th chap. of his *Saturnalia*. It is said to be “the beginning of generation” in the Orphic verses mentioned by Plutarch, *Symposiac*. xi. chap. 3. and Athenagoras. And hence the Syrian gods are called by Arnobius, “the offspring of eggs;” by which gods he means the stars. For it follows in the Phœnician theology, that “the mud was illuminated with light, whence came the sun and moon, and great and little stars.” You see here, as in Moses, that light was before the sun. The word that Moses uses immediately after, I mean ארץ *Eretz*;

where evidently that which was dried from the water is called יַבֶּשֶׁת *Jabashah*; the same Pherecydes, from the authority of the Syrians, expresses thus, (as we are informed by others, but particularly by Josephus in his first book against Appion:) “Chthonia was the name given to the earth after that Jupiter had honoured it.” This place we find in Diogenes Laërtius, and others; and Anaximander calls the sea “that which remained of the first moisture of things.” That things were confused before their separation, (concerning which you have the very words of Moses in Chalcidius’s explication of Timæus), Linus informs us, as he was himself taught, that “In the beginning all things were confused.” So Anaxagoras, “All things were blended together, till the Divine Mind separated them, and adorned and regulated that which was confused.” And for this reason was the name *mind* given by Anaxagoras, as Phliasius assures us in his Timon;

“For Anaxagoras, that hero fam’d,
was term’d a *mind*, ’cause that was thought by him

A mind, which from confusion order brought.” All this came from the Phœnicians, who held a very ancient correspondence with the Greeks. The ancients say that Linus was descended from Phœnix: so Orpheus had his opinions from the Phœnicians, one of which was this in Athenagoras, “That mud proceeded from water.” After which he mentions a great egg split into two parts, heaven and earth. From the same Orpheus, Timotheus the chronographer cites this passage; “The chaos was dark as night, in which darkness all things under this sky were involved; the earth could not be seen by reason of the darkness, till light, breaking from the sky, illuminated every creature.” See the place in Scaliger, in the beginning of the first book of the Greek Chronicle of Eusebius. In that which follows of Sanchuniathon, it is called βᾶαυ, which is certainly the בְּהוּ *bohu* of Moses. And the winds, which are there called κολπία, *Kolpia*, are the same with קֹל־פִּי־יְהוָה *Kolphijah*, the voice of the mouth of God.

34 Megasthenes, in the fifteenth book of Strabo, expresses their opinion thus: “That in many things they agree with the Greeks; as that the world had a beginning, and will have an end; that it is of a spherical figure; that God, the Creator and Governor of it, penetrates all things; that things had different beginnings; and that the world was made of water.” Clement has preserved the words of Megasthenes himself out of his third book of the Indian history, strom. i. “All that was of old said concerning the nature of things, we find also said by the philosophers who lived out of Greece, the Brachmans among the Indians, and they that are called Jews in Syria.”

35 Concerning whom, see Laërtius in his Proœmium, “The foundation was a confused chaos, from whence the four elements welt separated, and living creatures made.” And a little after, “That as the world had a beginning, so it will have an end.” Diodorus Siculus explains their opinion thus: “In the beginning of the creation of all things, the heavens and the earth had the same form and appearance, their natures being mixed together; but afterwards the parts separating from one another, the world received that form in which we now behold it, and the air a continual motion, The fiery part ascended highest, because the lightness of its nature caused it to tend upwards; for which reason the son and multitude of stars go in a continual round; the muddy and grosser part, together with the fluid, sunk down, by reason of its heaviness. And this, rolling and turning itself continually round, from in moisture produced the see, and from the more solid parts proceeded the earth, as yet very soft and miry; but when the sun began to shine upon it, it grew firm and hard; and the warmth causing the superficies of it to ferment, the moisture in many places swelling, put forth certain putrid substances, covered with skins;

such as we now see in fenny moorish grounds, when, the earth being cool, the air happens to grow warm, not by a gradual change, but on a sudden. Afterwards the fore-mentioned substances, in the moist places, having received life from the heat in that manner, were nourished in the night by what fell from the cloud surrounding them, and in the day they were strengthened by the heat. Lastly, when these foetuses were come to their full growth, and the membranes by which they were inclosed broke by the heat, all sorts of creatures immediately appeared; those that were of a hotter nature became birds, and mounted up high; those that were of a grosser and earthy nature became creeping things, and such like creatures, which are confined to the earth; and those which were of a watery nature immediately betook themselves to a place of the like quality, and were called fish. Now the earth being very much dried and hardened, by the heat of the sun, and by the wind, was no longer able to bring forth living creatures, but they were afterwards begotten by mixing with each other. Euripides seems not to contradict this account, who was the scholar of Anaxagoras the philosopher; for he says thus in his Menalippe,

“Heaven and earth at first were of one form,

But when their different parts were separate,

Thence sprung beasts, fowls, and all the shoals of fish,

Nay, even men themselves.” “This therefore is the account we have received of the original of things. And if it should seem strange to any one, that the earth should in the beginning have a power to bring forth living creatures, it may be further confirmed by what we see comes to pass even now. For at Thebais in Egypt, upon the river Nile’s very much overflowing its banks, and thereby moistening the ground, immediately by the heat of the sun is caused a putrefaction, out of which arises an incredible number of mice. Now, if after the earth has been thus hardened, and the air does not preserve its original temperature, yet some animals are notwithstanding produced; from hence, they say, it is manifest, that in the beginning all sorts of living creatures were produced out of the earth in this manner.” If we add to this, that God is the Creator, who is called by Anaxagoras a *Mind*, you will find many things agreeing with Moses, and the tradition of the Phœnicians: as the heavens and earth mixed together, the motion of the air, the mud or abyss, the light, the stars, the separation of heaven and earth, and sea, the birds, the creeping things, fishes, and other animals; and, last of all, mankind. Macrobius, in his seventh of his Saturnalia, chap. 18, transcribed the following words from the Egyptians: “If we allow, what our adversaries affirm, that the things which now are had a beginning; nature first formed all sorts of animals perfect; and then ordained, by a perpetual law, that their succession should be continued by procreation. Now, that they might be made perfect in the beginning, we have the evidence of very many creatures produced perfect from the earth and the water; as in Egypt, mice; and, in other places, frogs, serpents, and the like.” And it is with just reason that Aristotle prefers Anaxagoras before any of the ancient Greek philosophers, *Metaphys.* book i. chap. 3, as a sober man, when the rest were drunken; because they referred every thing to matter, whereas this man added also a cause, which acts with design; which cause Aristotle calls *Nature*, and Anaxagoras *Mind*, which is better; and Moses, *God*; and so does Plato. See Laërtius, where he treats concerning the first principles of things, according to the opinion of Plato; and Appuleius concerning the opinions of Plato. Thales, who was before Anaxagoras, taught the same; as Velleius in Cicero tells us, in his first book of the Nature of the Gods. “For Thales Milesius, who was the first that inquired into such things as these, says, that water was the beginning of all things; and that God was that Mind which formed all things out of water.” Where, by *water*

man's formation after the Divine image, and the dominion given him over all living creatures,

he means the *chaos*, which Xenophon and others call *earth*; all of them well enough, if we rightly apprehend them.

36 In the verse quoted above.

37 In his Theogonia:— “The rise of all things was a chaos rude,

Whence sprung the spacious earth, n seat for gods,

Who dwell oil high Olympus' snowy top,

Nor are excluded from the dark abyss

Beneath the earth; from hence the god of love,

Most amiable of all, who frees the breasts

Of men and gods from anxious cares and thoughts,

And comforts each of them with soft delight; Greek writers, mention is made of a chaos, (signified by some under the name of an egg), and of the framing of From hence rose Erebus, and gloomy night.

These produced æther, and the gladsome day,

As pledges of their love.” If we compare this with those of the Phœnicians now quoted, it will seem to be taken from them. For Hesiod lived hard by the Theban Bœotia, which was built by Cadmus the Phœnician. Ἐριβος, *Erebus*, is the same as Moses's ערב *Ereb*, which *night* and *day* follow in the hymns that are ascribed to Orpheus, “All things that are, sprung from a chaos vast.” In the Argonautics,

which go under the same name; “In verse he sang the original of things,

Nature's great change; how heaven on high was fram'd,

The earth established, and begirt with sea;

How love created all things by his power.

And gave to each of them his proper place.” So also Epicharmus, the most ancient comic poet, relating an old tradition, “’Tis said that chaos was before the gods.” And Aristophanes, in his play called the *Birds*, in a passage pre. Served by Lucian, in his *Philopatris*, and by Suidas, “First of all was chaos and night, dark Erebus and gloomy Tartarus; There was no earth, nor air, nor heaven, till dusky night, By the wind's power on the wide bosom of Erebus, brought forth an egg, Of which was hatch'd the god of love, (when time began), who, with his golden wings Fixed to his shoulders, flew like a mighty whirlwind; and mixing with black chaos, In Tartarus' dark shades, produced mankind, and brought them into light. For, before love joined all things, the gods themselves had no existence; But upon this conjunction, all things being mixed and blended, æther arose; And sea and earth, and the blessed abodes of the immortal gods.” These appear, upon a very slight view, to be taken from the tradition of the Phœnicians, who held an ancient correspondence with the inhabitants of Attica, the most ancient of the Ionians. We have already spoken of Erebus. Tartarus is תהום *Tehom*, ἄβυσσος, *Abyssos*; and מרחפת *Merachpeth*, signifies *Love*, as was shewn before: to which agrees that of Parmenides, “Love was the first of all the gods.”

which are to be seen in many writers, particularly in Ovid, who transcribed them from the Greek:³⁸ That all things were made by the word of God, is asserted by Epicharmus,³⁹ and



38 The place is no further than the first book of his *Metamorphoses*, and is very well worth reading; the principal things in it being so very like those of Moses, and almost the same words, so that they afford much light to what has been already said, and are likewise much illustrated by it:—

“Before the sea, and

earth, and heaven’s high roof,
Were framed, nature had but one form, one face;
The world was then a chaos, one huge mass,
Gross, undigested; where the seeds of things
Lay in confusion, and disorder hurl’d,
Without a sun to cherish with his warmth
The rising world, or paler horned moon.
No earth, suspended in the liquid air,
Borne up by his own weight; no ocean vast,
Through unknown tracts of land to cut his way;
But sea, and earth, and air, are mix’d In one;
The earth unsettled, sea innavigable,
The air devoid of light; no form remain’d:
For each resisted each, being all confin’d;
Hot jarr’d with cold, and moist resisted dry;
Hard, soft, light, heavy, strove with mighty force;
Till God and nature did the strife compose,
By parting heaven from earth, and sea from land,
And from gross air the liquid sky dividing;
All which, from lumpish matter once discharg’d,
Had each his proper place, by law decreed:
The light and fiery parts upwards ascend,
And fill the region of the arched sky;
The air succeeds, as next in weight, and place;
The earth, compos’d of grosser elements,
Was like a solid orb begirt with sea.
Thus the well-order’d mass into due parts
Was separated by Divine command.
And first, the earth not stretch’d into a plain,
But like an artificial globe condens’d;
Upon whose surface winding rivers glide,
And stormy seas, whose waves each shore rebound.
Here fountains send forth streams, there one broad lake
Fills a large plain; thus, mix’d with pools and springs,
The gentle streams which roll along the ground,
Are some by thirsty hollow earth absorb’d;

Some in huge channels to the ocean bend,
And leave their banks to beat the sandy shore.
By the same power were plains and vales produc'd,
And shady woods and rocky mountains rais'd.
The heaven begirt with zones; two on the right,
Two on the left, the torrid one between.
The same distinction does the earth maintain,
By care divine into five climates mark'd;
Of which the middlemost, through heat immense,
Has no inhabitants; two with deep snow
Are cover'd; what remain are temperate.
Next, between heaven and earth the air was fix'd,
Lighter than earth, but heavier than fire;
In this low region storms and clouds were hung,
And hence loud thunder timorous mortals fright;
And forked lightning, mix'd with blasts of wind.
But the wise Framer of the world did not
Permit them every where; because their force
Is scarce to be resisted, (when each wind
Prevaileth in its turn); but nature shakes,
Their discord is so great. And first the east
Obtains the morn, Arabia's desert land;
And Persia's, bounded by the rising sun:
Next, Zephyr's gentle breeze, where Phoebus dips
Himself into the sea: then the cold north,
At whose sharp blasts the hardy Scythians shake:
And last the south, big with much rain and clouds.
Above this stormy region of the air
Was the pure æther plac'd, refin'd and clear.
When each had thus his proper bounds decreed,
The stars, which in their grosser mass lay hid,
Appear'd, and shone throughout the heaven's orb.
Then, lest a barren desert should succeed,
Creatures of various kinds each place possess'd.
The gods and stars celestial regions fill,
The waters with large shoals of fishes throng'd,
The earth with beasts, the air with birds was stock'd.
Nothing seem'd wanting, but a mind endu'd
With sense and reason to rule o'er the rest;

the Platonists;⁴⁰ and before them, by the most ancient writer, I do not mean of those hymns which go under his name, but of those verses which were of old called Orpheus's;⁴¹ not be-



Which was supplied by man, the seed divine
 Of him who did the frame of all things make;
 Or else when earth and sky——
 Some of the heavenly seed remain'd, which sown
 By Japhet, and with wat'ry substance mix'd,
 Was form'd into the image of the gods.
 And when all creatures to the earth were prone,
 Man had an upright form to view the heavens,

And was commanded to behold the stars." Here you see man has the dominion over all inferior creatures given him; and also that he was made after the image of God, or of divine beings. To the same purpose are the words of Eurysus the Pythagorean, in his book of fortune: "His (that is, man's) tabernacle, or body, is like that of other creatures, because it is composed of the same materials; but worked by the best Workman, who framed it according to the pattern of himself." Where the word σκῆνος is put for *body*, as in [Wisdom, chap. ix. ver. 15.](#) and [2 Cor. v. 1. and 4.](#) To which way be added that of Horace, who calls the soul —— "A

particle of breath divine." And Virgil, "An æthereal sense." And that of Juvenal, sat. xv. —— "Who alone

Have ingenuity to be esteem'd,
 As capable of things divine, and fit
 For arts; which sense we men from heav'n derive,
 And which no other creature is allowed;
 For He that framed us both did only give

To them the breath of life, but us a soul." And those remarkable things relating hereto, in Plato's Phædon and Alcibiades. Cicero, in the second book of the nature of the gods, says thus: "For when he (that is, God) left all other creatures to feed on the ground, he made man upright, to excite him to view the heavens, to which he is related, as being his former habitation." And Sallust, in the beginning of the Catiline war: "All men, that desire to exceed other animals, ought earnestly to endeavour not to pass away their days in silence, like the beasts, which nature has made prone, and slaves to their bellies." And Pliny, b. ii. c. 20. "The never enough to be admired Hipparchus; than whom none more acknowledged the relation betwixt man and the stars, and who considered our souls as a part of the heavens."

39 "Man's reason is derived from that of God."

cause Orpheus composed them, but because they contained his doctrines. And Empedocles⁴² acknowledged, that the sun was not the original light, but the receptacle of light, the store-

40 Amelius the Platonic: “And this is that reason, or word, by which all things that ever were, were made; according to the opinion of Heraclitus. That very Word, or Reason, the barbarian means, which set all things in order in the beginning, and which was with God before that order, and by which every thing was made, and in which was every creature; the fountain of life and being.” The barbarian he here speaks of is St. John the evangelist, a little later than whose time Amelius lived. Eusebius has preserved his words in the eleventh book and nineteenth chapter of his Preparation; and Cyril in his eighth book against Julian. St. Austin mentions the same place of Amelius, in his tenth book, and 29th chapter, of the city of God, and in the eighth book of his confessions. And Tertullian against the Gentiles: “It is evident (says he) that with your wise men, the Λόγος, *Logos*, Word or Reason, was the Maker of the universe; for Zeno would have this Word to be the Creator, by whom all things were disposed in their formation.” This place of Zeno was in his book περὶ οὐσίας, *concerning being*, where he calls the τὸ ποιοῦν, the *efficient cause*, Λόγος, the *Word*, or *Reason*; and in this he was followed by Cleanthes, Chrysippus, Archedemus, and Posidonius, as we are told by Laërtius in his life of Zeno. Seneca, in his lxxvth epistle, calls it the “Reason which formeth every thing.” And Chalcidius to Timæus says, “That the reason of God is God himself, who has a regard to human affairs, and who is the cause of men’s living well and happily, if they do not neglect the gift bestowed on them by the most high God.” And in another place, speaking of Moses, he has these words: Who is clearly of opinion, “that the heaven and earth were made by the Divine Wisdom preceding: and that then the Divine Wisdom was the foundation of the universe.”

41 The verses are these:— “I swear by that first word the Father spake,
When the foundation of the earth was laid.” They are extant in the admonition to the Greeks, among the works of Julian: as also these:— ” I speak to those I ought; begone, profane,
Away: but, O Musæus, hearken thou,
Thou offspring of the moon; I speak the truth:
Let not vain thoughts the comfort of thy life
Destroy; the Divine Reason strictly view,
And fix it in thy mind to imitate;
Behold the Great Creator of the world,
Who’s only perfect, and did all things make,
And is in all; though we with mortal eyes

Cannot discern him; but he looks on us.” These we find in the admonition to the Greeks; as also in a book concerning the monarchy of the world, in the works of Justin Martyr; in Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. 5. and in the xiiiith book of Eusebius’s Gospel Preparation, from Aristobulus.

42 Of whom Laërtitis says, “That he affirmed the sun to be a great heap of fire.” And he that wrote the opinions of the philosophers has these words: “Empedocles said, that the æther was first separated, then the fire, and after that the earth; the superficies of which being compressed by its violent motion, the water burst out; from which the air was exhaled; that the heavens were composed of æther, and the sun of fire.” And, chap. 20. Empedocles affirms, “There are two suns, one the original, and the other the apparent.” And Philolaus, as we there also read,

house and vehicle of fire, as the ancient Christians express it. Aratus⁴³ and Catullus⁴⁴ thought the divine residence was above the starry orb; in which, Homer says, there is a continual light. Thales⁴⁵ taught, from the ancient schools, that God was the oldest of beings, because not begotten; that the world was most beautiful, because the workmanship of God; that darkness was before light, which latter we find in Orpheus's verses,⁴⁶ and Hesiod;⁴⁷ whence it was, that the nations, who were most tenacious of ancient customs, reckoned the time by nights.⁴⁸ Anaxagoras affirmed, that all things were regulated by the Supreme Mind.⁴⁹

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says, "That the sun is of the same nature as glass, receiving its splendour from the fire that is in the world, and transmitting its light to us." Anaxagoras, Democritus, Metrodorus, affirmed the sun to be a certain mass of fire; as you find it in the same place. And Democritus shews, that these were the roost ancient opinions, as Laërtius relates.

43 Aratus:— "As far as the dire gulf Eridanus,
Under the footstool of the gods extends."

44 Catullus, the interpreter of Callimachus, introduces Berenice's hair, speaking after this manner: "Tho' in the night the gods upon me tread."

45 As we see in Diogenes Laërtius; and Herodotus and Leander assert him to have been originally a Phœnician.

46 In his hymn to night: "I sing the night, parent of men and gods."

47 Whose verses upon this subject are cited above.

48 The Numidians in Libya "reckon their time not by days, but by nights," says Nicolaus Damascenes: and Tacitus affirms of the Germans, "that they do not, like us, compute the number of the days, but of the nights; so they date their decrees and citations; night seems to begin the day with them." See the *Speculum Saxonicum*, book i. art. 3, 67. and in other places. So likewise the learned Lindenbrogius, upon the word *Night*, in his *Vocabulary of the German laws*. The neighbouring people of Bohemia and Poland preserve this custom to this very day, and the Gauls used it of old. Cæsar, in his sixth book of the Gallic war, says, "That all their distances of time were reckoned, not by the number of days, but of nights." And Pliny, concerning the druids, in the sixteenth book of his natural history, says, "The moon with them began their months and years." It is a known custom amongst the Hebrews. Gellius, in his third book, chap. ii. adds the Athenians, who in this matter were the scholars of the Phœnicians.

49 His words are quoted above, which are to be found in Laërtius, the writer of the opinions of the philosophers, and others: as are also the verses of Timon concerning his opinion.

Aratus,⁵⁰ that the stars were made by God; Virgil,⁵¹ from the Greeks, that life was infused into things by the Spirit of God; Hesiod,⁵² Homer,⁵³ and Callimachus,⁵⁴ that man was



- 50 In the beginning of his *Phænomena*:— “Begin with Jupiter, whose essence is
 Ineffable by mortal man, whose presence
 Does all things fill; assemblies, courts, and marts,
 The deep abyss, and ports, are fill’d with him.
 We all enjoy him, all his offspring are,
 Whose nature is benign to man; who stirs
 Them up to work, spewing the good of life.
 ’Tis he appoints the time to plough and sow,
 And reap the fruitful harvest.—
 ’Twas he that in the heavens fix’d the stars,
 Allotting each his place, to teach the year,
 And to declare the fate us men attends;
 That all things are by certain laws decreed.
 Him therefore let us first and last appease,
 O Father, the great help we mortals have.” That by Jupiter we are here to understand God, the
 true Maker of the world, and all things in it, St. Paul chews us in the [seventeenth chapter of the Acts, ver. 28](#).
 And we learn from Lactantius, that Ovid ended his *Phænomena* with these verses:— “Such, both
 in number and in form, did God
 Upon the heavens place, and give in charge
 To enlighten the thick darkness of the night.” And Chalcidius to Timæus “To which thing the
 Hebrews agree, who affirm that God was the adorer of the world, and appointed the sun to rule the day, and
 the moon to govern the night; and so disposed the rest of the stars, as to limit the times and seasons of the year,
 and to be signs of the productions of things.”
- 51 In the sixth book of his *Æneid*, which Servius says was composed from many of the ancient Greek writings:—
 “At first the heav’n and earth, and wat’ry seas,
 The moon’s bright orb, and all the glittering stars,
 Were fed and nourish’d by a Power Divine:
 For the whole world is acted by a sun,
 Which throughly penetrates it: whence mankind,
 And beasts, and birds, have their original;
 And monsters in the deep produc’d: the seed
 Of each is a divine and heavenly flame.” Which may be explained by those in his *Georgics*, iv.
 “By such examples taught, and by such marks,
 Some have affirm’d that bees themselves partake
 Of the celestial mind, and breath ethereal;
 For God pervades the sea, and earth, and heavens;
 Whence cattle, herds, men, and all kinds of beasts,
 Derive the slender breath of fleeting life.”
- 52 In his poem upon *Labour and Days*:— “Then ordered Mulciber, without delay,

formed of clay; lastly, Maximus Tyrius asserts, that it was a constant tradition received by all nations, that there was one supreme God, the cause of all things.⁵⁵ And we learn from



To mix the earth and water, and infuse
A human voice.”

53 Iliad, viii. “You all to earth and water must return.” For all things return from whence they came. Euripides in his *Hipsipyle* (as Stobæus tells us in the title) uses this argument, for bearing patiently the events of things; which is transcribed by Tully in his third book of *Tusculan questions*:— —“All which in vain

us mortals vex:

Earth must return to earth; for fate ordains
That life, like corn, must be cut off in all.” To the same purpose, Euripides in his *Supplicants*:—
“Permit the dead to be entomb’d in earth,
From whence we all into this body came;
And when we die, the spirit goes to air,
To earth the body; for we can possess
Life only for a time; the earth demands
It back again.” All which, you see, exactly agree with Moses, [Gen. iii. 19.](#) and Solomon, [Eccl. xii.](#)

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54 Who, in his *Scazon*, calls man *Prometheus’s clay*. Of this clay we find mention made in Juvenal and Martial. To which we may add this place of Censorinus: “Democritus, the Abderite, was of opinion, that men were first formed of clay and water; and Epicurus was much of the same mind.”

55 In his first dissertation: “Notwithstanding the great discord, confusion, and debates that are amongst men; the whole world agree in this one constant law and opinion, that God is the sole King and Father of all; but that there are many other gods, who are *Ida sons*, and share in his government. This is affirmed by the Greek and the barbarian; by him who dwells in the continent, and by him who lives on the sea-shore; by the wise and by the foolish.” To which may be added those places cited in the second book *attar and peace*, chap. xx. § 45. And that of Antisthenes, related by Tully in his first book of the nature of the gods: “that there are many vulgar gods, but there is but one natural God.” And Lactantius, book i. chap. 5. adds, from the same Antisthenes, that he is

“The Maker of the whole world.” So likewise Sophocles:— “There is really but one God,

The Maker of heaven and earth,

And sea, and winds.” To which may be added that place of Varro, cited by St. Austin, in the fourth book, and chap. 31. of his *City of God*.

Josephus,⁵⁶ Philo,⁵⁷ Tibullus,⁵⁸ Clemens Alexandrinus,⁵⁹ and Lucian,⁶⁰ (for I need not mention the Hebrews), that the memory of the seven days' work was preserved, not only among the Greeks and Italians, by honouring the seventh day; but also amongst the Celtæ and Indians, who all measured the time by weeks;⁶¹ as we learn from Philostratus,⁶² Dion Cassius,⁶³ and Justin Martyr; and also the most ancient names of the days.⁶⁴ The Egyptians tell us, that at first men led their lives in great simplicity,⁶⁵ their bodies being naked;⁶⁶ whence



56 Against Appion, about the end of the second book, where he says, "There is no city, Greek or barbarian, in which the custom of resting on the seventh day is not preserved, as it is amongst the Jews."

57 Concerning the seventh day: "It is a festival celebrated not only in one city or country, but throughout the whole world."

58 "The seventh day is sacred to the Jews."

59 Who, in his Strom. v. quotes out of Hesiod, "that the seventh day was sacred." And the like out of Homer and Callimachus. To which may be subjoined what Eusebius has taken out of Aristobulus, book xiii. chap. 12. "Theophilus Antiochenus, b. ii. to Autolychus, concerning the seventh day, which is distinguished by all men." And Suetonius, in his Tiberius, xxxii. "Diogenes the grammarian uses to dispute at Rhodes upon the sabbath day."—(The seventh day of the month ought not to be confounded with the last day of the week. See what John Selden has remarked upon this subject, in his book of the laws of nature and nations, book chap. 17. *Le Clerc*.)

60 Who tells us in his Paralogist, "That boys were used to play on the seventh day."

61 As is evident by the names of the days among the different nations of the Celtæ, viz. Germans, Gauls, and Britons. Helmoldus tells us the same of the Slavonians, book i. chap. 84.

62 Book iii. chap. 13. speaking of the Indians.

63 Book xxxvii. "The day called Saturn's." Where he adds, that the custom of computing the time by weeks was derived from the Egyptians to all mankind. And that this was not a new, but a very ancient custom, Herodotus tells us in his second book: to which may be added Isidore concerning the Romans, book v. ch. 30. and 33.

64 See the Oracle, and Orpheus's verses in Scaliger's Prolegomena to his emendation of times.—(I suspect that the foundation of weeks was rather from the seven planets, than from the creation of the world in seven days. *Le Clerc*.)

65 See what we have said of this matter, book ii. sect. 12. concerning the right of war, and the notes belonging to it.

66 Whose opinion Diodorus Siculus thus relates: "The first men lived very hardy, before the conveniences of life were found out; being accustomed to go naked, and wanting dwellings and fires; and being wholly ignorant of the food of civilized nations." And Plato, in his politics: "God their governor fed them, being their keeper; as man, who is a more divine creature, feeds the inferior creatures." And a little after: "They fed naked and without garments in the open air." And Dicaearchus the peripatetic, cited both by Porphyry, in his fourth book against eating living creatures, and to the same sense by Varro, concerning country affairs: "The ancients, who were nearest to the gods, were of an excellent disposition, and led so good lives, that they were called a golden race."

arose the poet's fiction of the golden age, famous among the Indians, as Strabo remarks.⁶⁷ Maimonides⁶⁸ takes notice, that the history of Adam, of Eve, of the tree, and of the serpent, was extant amongst the idolatrous Indians in his time:⁶⁹ and there are many witnesses in our age,⁷⁰ who testify that the same is still to be found amongst the heathen dwelling in Peru, and the Philippine islands, people belonging to the same India; the name of Adam amongst the Brachmans; and that it was reckoned six thousand years since the creation of the world, by those of Siam.⁷¹ Berosus, in his history of Chaldea; Manethos, in his of Egypt; Hierom, in his of Phoenicia; Hestæus, Hecatæus, Hillanicus, in theirs of Greece; and Hesiod among the poets,⁷² all assert, that the lives of those who descended from the first men were almost a thousand years in length; which is the less incredible, because the historians of

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67 Book xv. where he brings in Calanus the Indian speaking thus: "Of old we met every where with barley, wheat, and meal, as we do now-a-days with dust. The fountains flowed, some with water, some with milk; and likewise some with honey, some with wine, and some with oil. But men, through fullness and plenty, fell into wickedness; which condition Jupiter abhorring, altered the state of things, and ordered them a life of labour."

68 In his guide to the doubting, part iii. chap. 29.

69 In those places which Philo Biblius has translated out of Sanchuniathon. The Greek word *πρωτόγονος*, *first-born*, is the same with the Hebrew אָדָם *Adam*; and the Greek word *αἰών*, *Age*, is the same with the Hebrew חַוָּה *Chavah*, *Eve*. The first men found out the fruit of trees. And in the most ancient Greek mysteries, they cried out *Εὐα*, *Eva*, and at the same time shewed a serpent. Which is mentioned by Hesychius, Clemens in his exhortations, and Plutarch in the life of Alexander. Chalcidius, to Timæus, has these words: "That, as Moses says, God forbade the first man to eat the fruit of those trees by which the knowledge of good and evil should steal into their minds." And in another place; "To this the Hebrews agree, when they say, that God gave to man a soul by a divine breath, which they call reason, or a rational soul; but to dumb creatures, and wild beasts of the forest, one void of reason: the living creatures and beasts being, by the command of God, scattered over the face of the earth; amongst which was that serpent who, by his evil persuasions, deceived the first of mankind."

70 See, amongst others, Ferdinand Mendesium de Pinto.

71 What Simplicius relates out of Porphyry, comment, xvi. upon book ii. concerning the heavens, agrees exactly with this number; that the observations collected at Babylon, which Callisthenes sent to Aristotle, were to that time cm to Cl | CCCCIII. [1903], which is not far from the flute of the deluge.

72 Josephus, in the first book, chap. 4, of his ancient history, quotes the testimony of all these writers, whose books were extant in his time; and besides these, Acusilaus, Ephorus, and Nicolaus Damascenus. Servius, in his notes upon the eighth book of Virgil's *Æneid*, remarks, that the people of Arcadia lived to three hundred years.

many nations (particularly Pausanius⁷³ and Philostratus⁷⁴ amongst the Greeks, and Pliny⁷⁵ amongst the Romans) relate, that men's bodies, upon opening their sepulchres, were found



73 In his *Laconics*, he mentions the bones of men, of a more than ordinary bigness, which were shewn in the temple of Æsculapius at the city of Asepus: and, in the first of his *Eliacs*, of a bone taken out of the sea, which aforetime was kept at Piso, and thought to have been one of Pelops's.

74 In the beginning of his *Heroics*, he says, that many bodies of giants were discovered in Pallene, by showers of rain and earthquakes.

75 Book vii. chap. 16. "Upon the bursting of a mountain in Crete by an earthquake, there was found a body standing upright, which was reported by some to have been the body of Orion, by others the body of Eetion. Orestes's body, when it was commanded by the oracle to be digged up, is reported to have been seven cubits long. And, almost a thousand years ago, the poet Homer continually complained that men's bodies were less than of old." And Solinus, chap. i. "Were not all who were born in that age less than their parents? And the story of Orestes's funeral testifies the bigness of the ancients, whose bones, when they were digged up in the fifty-eighth Olympiad, at Tegea, by the advice of the oracle, are related to have been seven cubits in length. And other writings, which give a credible relation of ancient matters, affirm this, that in the war of Crete, when the rivers had been so high as to overflow and break down their banks, after the flood was abated, upon the cleaving of the earth there was found a human body of three and thirty feet long; which L. Flaccus the legate, and Metellus himself, being very desirous of seeing, were much surprised to have the satisfaction of seeing what they did not believe when they heard." See Austin's fifteenth book, chap. 11. of the city of Cod, concerning the cheek tooth of a man, which he himself saw.

to be much larger in old time.⁷⁶ And Catullus,⁷⁷ after many of the Greeks, relates, that divine visions were made to men before their great and manifold crimes did, as it were, hinder God, and those spirits that attend him, from holding any correspondence with men.⁷⁸ We



76 Josephus, book v. chap. 2. of his ancient history; “There remains to this day some of the race of the giants, who, by reason of the bulk and figure of their bodies, so different from other men, are wonderful to see or hear of: their bones are now shewn, far exceeding the belief of the vulgar.” Gabinius, in his history of Mauritania, said, that Antæus’s bones were found by Sertorius, which, joined together, were sixty cubits long. Phlegon Trallianus, in his ninth chapter of wonders, mentions the digging up of the head of Ida, which was three times as big as that of an ordinary woman. And he adds also, that there were many bodies found in Dalmatia, whose arms exceeded sixteen cubits. And the same man relates out of Theopompus, that there were found in the Cimmerian Bosphorus a heap of human bones twenty-four cubits in length. And there is extant a book of the same Phlegon, concerning long life, which is worth reading.—(That in many places of old time, as the present, there were men of a very large stature, or such as exceeded others some few feet, is not very hard to believe; but that they should all of them have been bigger, I can no more believe, than that the trees were taller, or the channels of the rivers deeper. There is the same proportion between all these, and things of the like kind, now, as there was formerly, they answering to one another, so that there is no reason to think they have undergone any change. See Theodore Riekus’s oration about giants. *Le Clerc.*)

77 In his epithalamium on Peleus and Thetis:— “But when the earth was stain’d with wickedness
And lust, and justice fled from every breast,
Then brethren vilely shed each others blood,
And parents ceas’d to mourn their children’s death;
The father wish’d the funeral of his soul;
The son to enjoy the father’s relic wish’d:
The impious mother, yielding to the child,
Fear’d not to stain the temple of the gods.
Thus right and wrong, by furious passion mix’d,
Drove from us the divine propitious mind.”

78 Of this, see those excellent things said by Plutarch in his Isis; Maximus Tyrius in his first and sixteenth dissertations, and Julian’s hymn to the sun. The name of *angels* is used, when they treat of this matter, not only by the Greek interpreters of the Old Testament, but also by Labeus, Aristides, Porphyry, Jamblicus, Chalcidius, and by Hostanes, who was older than any of them, quoted by Minutius: the fore-mentioned Chalcidius relates an assertion of Heraclitus, that such as deserved it were forewarned by the instruction of the divine powers.

almost every where, in the Greek⁷⁹ and Latin⁸⁰ historians, meet with the savage life of the giants, Mentioned by Moses. And it is very remarkable concerning the deluge, that the memory of almost all nations ends in the history of it, even those nations which were unknown till our forefathers discovered them: so that Varro calls all that the unknown time.⁸¹ And all those things which we read in the poets, wrapped up in fables, (a liberty they allow themselves), are delivered by the ancient writers according to truth and reality, that is, agreeable to Moses; as you may see in Berosus's⁸² history of Chaldea, Abydenus's⁸³ of As-



79 Homer, Iliad ix. and Hesiod, in his Labours. To this may be referred the wars of the gods, mentioned by Plato in his second republic; and those distinct and separate governments taken notice of by the same Plato, in his third book of laws.

80 See the first book of Ovid's metamorphoses, and the fourth book of Lucan, and Seneca's third book of natural questions, quest. 30. where he says concerning the deluge, "That the beasts also perished, into whose nature men were degenerated."

81 Thus Censorinus: "Now I come to treat of that space of time which Varro calls historical. For he makes three distinctions of time; the first from the creation of man to the first flood, which, because we are ignorant of it, is called the *unknown*. The second, from the first flood to the first Olympiad; which is called the *fabulous*, because of the many fabulous stories related in it. The third, from the first Olympiad to our time, which is called the *historical*, because the things done in it are related in a true history." The time which Varro calls *unknown*, the Hebrew rabbins, call *void*. Philo, in his book of the eternity of the world, remarks, that the shells found on the mountains are a sign of the universal deluge.

82 Concerning whom Josephus says thus, in his first book against Appion "This Berosus, following the most ancient writings, relates, in the same manner as Moses, the history of the flood, the destruction of mankind, the ark or chest in which Noah, the father of mankind, was preserved, by its resting on the top of the mountains of Armenia." After having related the history of the deluge, Berosus adds these words, which we find in the same Josephus, book i. and chap. 4. of his ancient history: "It is reported that part of the ship now remains in Armenia, on the Gordyæan mountains, and that some bring pitch from thence, which they use for a charm."

83 Eusebius has preserved the place in the ninth book of his preparation, chap. 12. and Cyril in his first book against Julian. "After whom reigned many others, and then Sisithrus, to whom Saturn signified there should be an abundance of rain on the fifteenth day of the month Desius, and commanded him to lay up all his writings in Heliopolis. a city of the Sipparians; which when Sisithrus had done, he sailed immediately into Armenia, and found it true as the god had declared to him. On the third day after the waters abated, he sent out birds to try if the water was gone off any part of the earth; but they finding a vast sea, and having no where to rest, returned back to Sisithrus: in the same manner did others: and again the third time, (when their wings were daubed with mud). Then the gods took him from among men; and the ship came into Armenia, the wood of which the people there use for a charm." Sisithrus, and Ogyges, and Deucalion, are all names signifying the same thing in other languages, as Noah does in the Hebrew, in which Moses wrote; who so expressed proper names, that the Hebrews might understand the meaning of them: for instance, Alexander the historian, writing Isaac in Greek, calls him

syria, who mentions the dove that was sent out of the ark;⁸⁴ and in Plutarch from the Greeks; and in Lucian,⁸⁵ who says, that in Hierapolis of Syria there was remaining a most ancient

50

45

Γέλωτα, *Laughter*, as we learn from Eusebius: and many such like we meet with among the historians as in Philo concerning rewards and punishments; “The Greeks call him Deucalion, the Chaldeans Noach, in whose time the great flood happened.” It is the tradition of the Egyptians, an Diodorus testifies in his first book, that the universal deluge was that of Deucalion. Pliny says it reached as far as Italy, book iii. chap. 14. But, to return to the translation of names into other languages, there is a remarkable place in Plato’s Critias concerning it: “Upon the entrance of this discourse, it may be necessary (says he) to premise the reason, lest you be surprised when you hear the names of barbarians in Greek. When Solon put this relation into verse, he inquired Into the signification of the names, and found, that the first Egyptians, who wrote of these matters, translated them into their own language; and he likewise, searching out their true meaning, turned them into our language.” The words of Abydenus agree with those of Alexander the historian, which Cyril has preserved in his fore-mentioned first book against Julian: “After the death of Otiartes, his son Xisuthrus reigned eighteen years, in whose time, they say, the great deluge was. It is reported that Xisuthrus was preserved by Saturn’s foretelling him what was to come; and that it was convenient for him to build an ark, that birds and creeping things, and beasts, might sail with him in it.” The most high God is named by the Assyrians and other nations from that particular star of the seven (to use Tacitus’s words) by which mankind are governed, which is moved in the highest orb, and with the greatest force: or certainly the Syriac word, אֵל *Il*, which signifies *God*, was therefore translated Κρόνος *Kronos*, by the Greek interpreters, because he was called אֵל *Il* by the Syrians. Philo Biblius, the interpreter of Sanchuniathon, hath these words: “Ilus, who is called Saturn.” He is quoted by Eusebius: in whom it immediately follows from the same Philo, “that Kronos was the same the Phœnicians call Israel;” but the mistake was in the transcriber, who put Ἰσραήλ *Israel*, for ἵλ *Il*, which many times amongst the Greek Christians is the contraction of Ἰσραήλ; whereas ἵλ is, as we have observed, what the Syrians call אֵל *Il*, and the Hebrews אֵל *El*.— (It ought not to be overlooked, that in this history, Deucalion, who was the same person as Noah, is called ἀνήρ πύργος, that is, אִישׁ אֲדָמָה *a man of the earth*, that is, a *husbandman*. Sac my notes upon [Gen. ix. 20](#). *Le Clerc.*)

84 In his book where he inquires which have most cunning, water or land animals: “They say Deucalion’s dove, which he sent out of the ark, discovered at its return that the storms were abated, and the heavens clear.” It is to be observed, both in this place of Plutarch’s, and in that of Alexander the historian, as well as in the book of Nicolaus Damascenes, and the writers made use of by Theophilus Antiochenes in his third book, that the Greek word λάρναξ *larnax*, answers to the Hebrew word תְּבַח *tebah*, and so Josephus translates it.

85 In his book concerning the goddess of Syria, where having begun to treat of the very ancient temple of Hierapolis, he adds: “They say this temple was founded by Deucalion, the Scythian, that Deucalion in whose days the flood of water happened. I have heard in Greece the story of this Deucalion from the Greeks themselves,

history of the ark, and of the preserving a few not only of mankind, but also of other living creatures. The same history was extant also in Molo,⁸⁶ and in Nicolaus Damascenus;⁸⁷ which latter names the ark, which we also find in the history of Deucalion in Apollodorus: and many Spaniards⁸⁸ affirm, that in several parts of America, as Cuba, Mechoacana, Nicaragua, is preserved the memory of the deluge, the saving alive of animals, especially the



which is thus: the present generation of men is not the original one, for all that generation perished; and the men which now are came from a second stock, the whole multitude of them descended from Deucalion. Now, concerning the first race of men, they relate thus: they were very obstinate, and did very wicked things; and had no regard to oaths, had no hospitality or charity in them; upon which account many calamities befel them. For on a sudden the earth sent forth abundance of water, great showers of rain fell, the rivers overflowed exceedingly, and the sea overspread the earth, so that all was turned into water, and every man perished; Deucalion was only saved alive, to raise up another generation, because of prudence and piety. And he was preserved in this manner: he, and his wives, and his children, entered into a large ark, which he had prepared; and after them went in bears, and horses, and lions, and serpents, and all other kinds of living creatures that fed upon the earth, two and two; he received them all in, neither did they hurt him, but were very familiar with him, by a divine influence. Thus they sailed in the same ark, as long as the water remained on the earth. This is the account the Greeks give of Deucalion. Now concerning what happened afterwards: There was a strange story related by the inhabitants of Hierapolis, of a great hole in the earth in that country, which received all the water; after which, Deucalion built an altar, and reared a temple to Juno over the hole. I saw the hole myself; it is but a small one, under the temple; whether it was larger formerly, I know not; I am sure this which I saw was but small. To preserve this story, they perform this ceremony: twice every year water is brought from the sea into the temple; and not only the priests, but all the people of Syria and Arabia, fetch it; many go even from the river Euphrates as far as tile sea to fetch water, which they pour out in the temple, and it goes into the hole, which, though it be but small, holds a vast quantity of water: when they do this, they say it was a rite instituted by Deucalion, in memory of that calamity, and his preservation. This is the ancient story of this temple.”

86 Eusebius relates his words in his ninth book of the Gospel Preparation, chap. 19. “At the deluge, the man and his children that escaped came out of Armenia, being driven from his own country by the inhabitants; and, having passed through the country between, went into the mountainous part of Syria, which was then uninhabited.”

87 Josephus gives us his words, out of the ninety-sixth book of his universal history, in the fore-cited place: “There is above the city Minyas, (which Strabo and Pliny call Milyas), a huge mountain in Armenia called Batis, on which they say a great many were saved from the flood, particularly one, who was carried to the top of it by an ark; the relics of the wood of which were preserved a great while: I believe it was the same man that Moses, the lawgiver of the Jews, mentions in his history.” To these writers we may add Jerom the Egyptian, who wrote the affairs of Phoenicia and Mnaseas, mentioned by Josephus. And perhaps Eupolemus, which Eusebius quotes out of Alexander the historian, in his Gospel Preparation, book ix. chap. 17.

88 See Josephus Acosta, and Antonius Herrera.

raven and dove; and the deluge itself in that part called Golden Castile. That remark of Pliny's,⁸⁹ that Joppa was built before the flood, discovers what part of the earth men inhabited before the flood. The place where the ark rested after the deluge, on the Gordyæan mountains,⁹⁰ is evident from the constant tradition of the Armenians, from all past ages, down to this very day.⁹¹ Japhet,⁹² the father of the Europeans, and, from him, Ion, or, as they formerly pronounced it, Javon⁹³ of the Greeks, and Hammon⁹⁴ of the Africans, are names

47

89 Book v. chap. xiii. Mela and Solinus agree with Pliny. Compare it with that which we have quoted out of Abydenus.

90 Which Moses calls *Ararath*; the Chaldean interpreters translate it *Kardu*; Josephus, *Cordiæan*; Curtius, *Cordæan*; Strabo writes it *Gordiæan*, book xvi. and Pliny, book vi. and Ptolemæus.—(These, and what follows in relation to the sacred geography and the founders of nations, since these of Grotius were published, are with great pains, and much more accuracy, searched into by Sam. Bochart, in his sacred geography, which add weight to Grotius's arguments. *Le Clerc*.)

91 Theophilus Antiochenus says, in his third book, that the relics of the ark were shewn in his time. And Epiphanius, against the Nazarites: "The relics of Noah's ark are shewn at this time, in the region of the Cordiæans." and Chrysostom, in his oration of perfect love. And Isidore, book xiv. chap. 8. of his antiquities: "Ararath, a mountain in Armenia, on which, histories testify the ark rested after the deluge; where at this day are to be seen some marks of the wood." We may add the words out of Haiton the Armenian, ch. 9. "There is a mountain in Armenia, higher than any other in the whole world, which is commonly called Ararath, on the top of which mountain the ark first rested after the deluge." See the Nubian geographer, and Benjamin's Itinerary.

92 It is the very same word **יַפֶּת** *Japheth*; for the same letter **פ** is by some pronounced like π *p*, by others φ *ph*; and the like difference is now preserved among the Germans and Dutch. Jerom upon Daniel has observed this of the Hebrew letter.

93 For $\iota\alpha\omicron\nu\epsilon\varsigma$ *iaones* is often found amongst the ancient writers. The Persian in Aristophanes's play, called Acharnenses, pronounces it $\iota\alpha\omicron\nu\alpha\tilde{\upsilon}$ *iaonau*. Now it was a very ancient custom to put a digamma between two vowels, which afterwards began to be wrote by a *V*, formerly thus, *F*. In like manner, that which was $\alpha\tilde{\upsilon}\omega\varsigma$ *auos*, is now $\acute{\alpha}\omega\varsigma$ *aos*, and $\eta\tilde{\omega}\varsigma$ *eos*, $\tau\alpha\tilde{\upsilon}\omega\varsigma$ *tauos*, a peacock; $\tau\omicron\tilde{\upsilon}\varsigma$ "Ἑλληνας κάλουσιν $\iota\alpha\tilde{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\varsigma$, the Greeks are called *iaunas*. Suidas.

94 the Greeks sometimes render the Hebrew letter **ח** *Cheth* by an aspirate, and sometimes omit it; as **חצ־ר־מוֹת** *Chatzarmuth*, Ἀδράμυττος *Adramyttos*, or Ἀδράμυττος *Hadramyttos*; **חכ־מֹת** *Chachmoth*, ἀχμῶθ *Achmuth*, in Irenæus and others: **ח־ב־ר־ה** *Chabrah*, a companion, by the ancient Greeks ἄβρα *abra*; **ח־י־ה** *Chajah*, αἰὼν *aion*, an age. **ח־נ־י־ב־ע־ל** *Hanno* or *Anno*; **ח־נ־י־ב־ע־ל** *Hannibal* or *Annibal*, **ח־צ־ר־ב־ע־ל** *Hasdrubal* or *Asdrubal*; **ח־ש־י־מ** *Chashim*; ἀξουμίται *axoumitai*, for $\omega\nu$ *on* is a Greek ending. This person is transformed, not only by the Lybians, but also by many other nations, into the star Jupiter, as a god. Lucan, book ix. "Jupiter Ammon is the only god

to be seen in Moses; and Josephus⁹⁵ and others observe the like footsteps in the names of other places and nations. And which of the poets is it, in which we do not find mention

Amongst the happy Arabs, and amongst

The Indians and Ethiopians.” And the sacred scripture puts Egypt amongst them. [Psalm lxxviii. 51. cv. 23, 27. cvi. 22.](#) Jerom, in his Hebrew traditions on Genesis, has these words, “From whom Egypt, at this very day, is called the country of Ham, in the Egyptian language.”

95 He says, Γομαρεῖς *Gomareis*, the Galatians, is derived from גִּמָּר *Gomar*, where Pliny’s town Comara is.

The people of Comara we find in the first book of Mela. The Scythians are derived from מַגּוּג *Magog*, by whom the city Scythopolis in Syria was built, and the other city Magog; Pliny, book v. chap. 23. which is called by others Hierapolis and Bambyce. It is evident that the Medes are derived from מְדִי *Medi*; and, as we have already observed, Javones, Iaones, Iones, from יָוֵן *Javen*. Josephus says, the Iberians in Asia come from תְּבַל *Thebal*, in the neighbourhood of whom Ptolemy places the city of Thabal, as preserving the marks of its ancient original.

The city Mazaca, mentioned by him, comes from מַשַּׁח *Masach*, which we find in Strabo, book xii. and in Pliny, book vi. 3. and in Ammianus Marcellinus, book xx. Add to this the Moschi mentioned by Strabo, book xi. and in the first and third book of Mela, whom Pliny calls Moscheni, book vi. chap. 9. and we find in them and Pliny the Moschican mountains. Josephus and others agree, that the Thracians were derived from תִּירָס *Tiras*, and

the word itself shews it; especially if we observe, that the Greek letter ξ *x* at first answered to the Syriac letter ס *s*, as the place of it shews. Concerning those that are derived from אֲשַׁכְּנַז *Aschanaz*, the place is corrupt in Josephus; but without doubt Ascania, a part of Phrygia and Mytia, mentioned in Homer, comes from thence; concerning which see Strabo, book xii. and Pliny, book v. chap. 32. The Ascanian lake, and the river flowing from it, we find in Strabo, book xiv. and in Pliny’s fore-cited fifth book, chap. 32. The Ascanian harbour is in Pliny, book v. chap. 30. and the Ascanian islands also, book iv. chap. 12. and book v. chap. 31. Josephus says,

the Paphlagonians are derived from רִיפָּתָה *Riphath*, by some called Riphataeans, where Mela, in his first book, puts the Riphacians. The same Josephus tells us, that the αἰολεῖς *aioleis*, come from אֲלִישָׁה *Alishah*; and the Jerusalem paraphrast agrees with him, in naming the Greeks Æolians, putting the part for the whole; nor is it much unlike Hella, the name of the country. The same Josephus also says, that the Cilicians are derived from

תַּרְשִׁישׁ *Tarshish*, and proves it from the city Tarsus; for it happens in many places, that the names of the people are derived from the names of cities. We have before hinted that Κίτιον *Kittion*, is derived from

כִּתִּים *Chitim*. The Ethiopians are called Chusæans by themselves and their neighbours, from כּוּשׁ *Chush*, now; as Josephus observed they were in his time; from whence there is a river so called by Ptolemy; and, in the Arabian

48

49

51

geographer, there are two cities which retain the same name. So likewise Μισώρ in Philo Biblius is derived from **מצרים** *Mitzraim*; those which the Greeks call Egyptians, being called by themselves and their neighbours Mesori; and the name of one of their months is Μεσιρὶ, *Mesiri*. Cedrenus calls the country itself Μέστσα, and Josephus rightly conjectures, that the river in Mauritania is derived from **פית** *Phut*. Pliny mentions the same river, book v. c. 1. “Phut, and the neighbouring Phutensian country, is so called to this day.” Jerom, in his Hebrew traditions on Genesis, says, it is not far from Fesa, the name remaining even now. The **חנעו** *Chenaan*, in Moses, is contracted by Sanchuniathon, and from him by Philo Biblius, into *Xvã Chua*; you will find it in Eusebius’s Preparation, book i. chap. 10. and the country is called so. Stephanus, of cities, says, “Chna was so called by the Phœnicians.” And St. Austin, in his book of expositions on the epistle to the Romans, says, in his time, if the country people that lived at Hipponne were asked who they were, they answered, Canaanites. And in that place of Eupolemus, cited by Eusebius, Prepar. ix. 17. the Canaanites are called Mestramites. Ptolemy’s Regema, in Arabia Felix, is derived from **רעמה** *Raamah*, by changing **ע** into **γ** *g*, as in Gomorrhæ and other words. Josephus deduces the Sabines from **סבא** *Saba*, a known nation, whose chief city Strabo says, book xvi. was Saba, where Josephus places the Sabatani, from **סבתה** *Sabatah*; there Pliny places the city Sobotale, book vi. chap. 28. The word **להבים** *Lehabim*, is not much different from the name of the Lybians; nor the word **נפתחים** *Nephathim* from Nepata, a city of Ethiopia, mentioned by Pliny, book vi. chap. 29. Nor Ptolemy’s Nepata, or the Pharusi in Pliny, book v. chap. 8. from **פצריסים** *Phatstrasim*, the same as Ptolemy’s Phaurusians in Ethiopia. The city Sidon, famous in all poets and historians, comes from **צידו** *Tridon*. And Ptolemy’s town Gerasa, from **גרגשי** *Gergashi*; and Arca, a city of the Phœnicians, mentioned by Ptolemy and Pliny, book v. ch. 18. from **ארקי** *Arki*. And Aradus, an island mentioned in Strabo, book xvi. and Pliny, book v. chap. 20. and Ptolemy in Syria, from **ארודי** *Arodi*; and Amathus of Arabia, mentioned by Herodotus in his Euterpe and Thalia, from **המתי** *Hamathi*; and the Elymites, neighbours to the Medes, from **עילם** *Eelim*, mentioned by Strabo, book xvi. Pliny, book vi. ch. 25. and Livy, book xxxvii. Their descendants in Phrygia are called Elymites by Athenæus, book iv. Every one knows, that the Assyrians are derived from **אשור** *Ashur*, as the Lydians are from **לוד** *Lud*, from whence comes. the Latin word *Ludi*. Those which by the Greeks are called Syrians, from the city **צור** *Tzur*, are called Aramites to this day, from **אראם** *Aram*: for **צ** *tz* is sometimes translated **τ** *t*, and sometimes **σ** *s*; whence the city **צור** *Tzur*, which the Greeks call Tyre, is by Ennius called Sarra, and by others Sina and Tina. Strabo, book xvi. towards the end: “The poet mentions the Arimites, whom Possidonius would have us to understand, not to be any part of Syria, or Cilicia, or any other country, but Syria itself.” And again, book xiii. “Some mean Syrians by Arimites, whom they now call Aramites.” And in the first book: “For those we call Syrians, are by themselves called Aramites.” “The country Ausanitis, mentioned by the Seventy in Job,

is derived from **חול** *Hutz*. Aristæus calls it Austias. And the city Cholla, placed by Ptolemy in Syria, from **חול** *Chol*; and the city Gindarus in Ptolemy, from **גהר** *Geher*; and the Gindaren people in Pliny, book v. chap. 23. in Cælo-Syria. And the mountain Masius, not far from Nisibus, mentioned by Strabo, book xi. and Ptolemy, in Mesopotamia, is derived from **מש** *Mash*. The names **יִקְטָן** *Joktan*, and **חַצְרֵמוּת** *Hatzoramuth*, and **חולן** *Holan*, are represented by the Arabian geographers under the names of Balsatjaktan, Hadramuth, and Chaulan; as the learned Capell observes. The river Ophar, and the people called Opharites, near Mæotis, Pliny, book vi. 7. If I mistake not, retain the name **אופר** *Ophar*; and those cities, which Moses mentions in this place, appear to be the most ancient by comparing of authors. Every one knows from whence Babylon is derived. **אֲרַךְ** *Arach* is Aracca, placed by Ptolemy in Susiana; from whence conic the Aracæan fields in Tibullus, as the famous Salamasius, a man of vast reading, observes. **אכד** *Achad*, a corruption of *Acadene*, is derived from **אכד** *Achad*, as is probably conjectured by Franciscus Junius, a diligent interpreter of scripture, who has observed many of those things we have been speaking of. **חלנה** *Chalnah* is the town Caunus on the river Euphrates, whose name Ammianus tells us, in his twenty-third book, continued to his time. The land **שנער** *Senaar* is the Babylonian Senaas, in Histiaeus Milesus, which place Josephus has preserved in his ancient history, book i. chap. 7. and in his Chronicon; as has Eusebius in his Preparation. He wrote the affairs of Phœnicia; whom also Stephens had read. Again, **ז** being changed into γ g, Ptolemy from hence calls the mountain Singarus in Mesopotamia. And Pliny mentions the town Singara, book v. chap. 24. and hence the Singaranæan country in Sextus Rufus. **נינוה** *Nineveh* is undoubtedly the Ninus of the Greeks, contract N1; thus, in Sardanapalus's epitaph;—"I, who great Ninus rul'd, am now but dust." The same name we find in Theognis, and Strabo, b. xvi. and Pliny, book vi. chap. 13. whose words are these: "Ninus was built upon the river Tigris, towards the west, a beautiful city to behold." Lucan, book iii. "Happy Ninus, as fame goes." The country Calachena has its name from the principal city **כלה** *Chala*: Strabo, book xi. and afterwards in the beginning of book xvi. **רסן** *Resin* is *Resaina* in Ammianus, book xxiii. Sidon every one knows. **עודה** *Azzah*, is without doubt rendered Gaza in Palestine, by changing, as before, the letter **ע** into γ g; it is mentioned by Strabo, book xvi. and Mela, book i. who calls it a large and well fortified town; and Pliny, book v. ch. 13. and book vi. chap. 28. and elsewhere. **ספירה** *Sephirah*, is Heliopolis, a city of the Sipparians, in that place of Abydenus now quoted. Sippara is by Ptolemy placed in Mesopotamia. **אור** *Ur* is the castle Ur, mentioned by Ammianus, book xxv. **חרן** *Curran* is Carra, famous for the slaughter of the Crassi.

made of the attempt to climb the heavens?⁹⁶ Diodorus Siculus,⁹⁷ Strabo,⁹⁸ Tacitus,⁹⁹ Pliny,¹⁰⁰ Solinus,¹⁰¹ speak of the burning of Sodom. Herodotus,¹⁰² Diodorus,¹⁰³ Strabo,¹⁰⁴ Philo

52

53

54

96 See Homer, *Odyss.* 30. and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, book i. "The giants, by report, would heaven have storm'd." See also Virgil's first *Georgic*, and Lucan, book vii. It is a frequent way of speaking amongst all nations, to call those things which are raised above the common height, *things reaching to heaven*, as we often find in Homer, and [Deut. i. 28. and ix. 1.](#) Josephus quotes one of the Sibyls, I know not which, concerning the unaccountable building of that tower; the words are these: "When all men spoke the same language, some of them built a vast high tower, as if they would ascend up into heaven; but the gods sent a wind, and overthrew the tower, and assigned to each a particular language; and from hence the city Babylon was so called." And Eusebius, in his *Preparation*, b. ix. c. 14. Cyril, book i. against Julian, quotes these words out of Abydenus: "Some say, that the first men, who sprang out of the earth, grew proud upon their great strength and bulk, and boasted that they could do more than the gods, and attempted to build a tower, where Babylon now stands; but when it came nigh the heavens, it was overthrown upon them by the gods, with the help of the winds, and the ruins are called Babylon. Men till then had but one language, but the gods divided it, and then began the war betwixt Saturn and Titan." It is a false tradition of the Greeks, that Babylon was built by Semiramis, as Berosus tells us in his *Chaldaics*, and Josephus in his first book against Appion; and the same error is refuted by Julius Firmicus out of Philo Biblius, and Dorotheus Sidonius. See also what Eusebius produces out of Eupolemus, concerning the giants and the tower, in his *Gospel Preparation*, book ix. chap. 17.

97 Book xix. where he describes the lake Asphaltites: "The neighbouring country burns with fire, the ill smell of which makes the bodies of the inhabitants sickly, and not very long lived."—(See more of this in our dissertation added to the Pentateuch concerning the burning of Sodom. *Le Clerc.*)

98 Book xvi. after the description of the lake Asphaltites: "There are many signs of this country's being on fire: for about Masada they shew many cragged and burnt rocks, and in many places caverns eaten in, and ground turned into ashes, drops of pitch falling from the rocks, and running waters stinking to a great distance, and their habitations overthrown; which makes credible a report amongst the inhabitants, that formerly there were thirteen cities inhabited there, the chief of which was Sodom, so large as to be sixty furlongs round; but by earthquakes and fire breaking out, and by hot waters mixed with bitumen and brimstone, it became a lake, as we now see it; the rocks took fire, some of the cities were swallowed up, and others forsaken by those inhabitants that could flee away."

99 In the fifth book of his history: "Not far from thence are those fields which are reported to have been formerly very fruitful, and had large cities built in them, but they were burnt by lightning; the marks of which remain; in that the land is of a burning nature, and has lost its fruitfulness. For every thing that is planted, or grows of itself, as soon as it is come to an herb or flower, or grown to its proper bigness, vanishes like dust, into nothing."

100 He describes the lake Asphaltites, book v. chap. 16. and book xxxv. chap. 15.

101 In the 36th chap. of Salmasius's edition: "At a good distance from Jerusalem, a dismal lake extends itself, which was struck by lightning, as appears from the black earth burnt to ashes. There were two towns there, one called Sodom, the other Gomorrha; the apples that grow there cannot be eaten, though they look as if they were ripe; for the outward skin incloses a kind of sooty ashes, which, pressed by the least touch, flies out in smoke, and vanishes into fine dust."

102 With some little mistake. The words are in his Euterpe, "Originally only the Colchians, and Egyptians, and Ethiopians, were circumcised. For the Phoenicians, and Syrians in Palestine, confess they learned it from the Egyptians. And the Syrians who dwell at Thermodoon, and on the Parthenian river, and the Macrons, their neighbours, say, they learnt it of the Colchians. For these are the only men that are circumcised, and in this particular agree with the Egyptians. But concerning the Ethiopians and Egyptians, I cannot affirm positively which learned it of the other." Josephus rightly observes, that none were circumcised in Palestine Syria but the Jews; in the eighth book, chap. 4. of his ancient history, and first book against Appion. Concerning which Jews, Juvenal says, "They take off their foreskin;" and Tacitus, "that they instituted circumcising themselves, that they might be known by such distinction." See Strabo, book xvii. But the Jews are so far from confessing that they derived this custom from the Egyptians, that, on the contrary, they openly declare, that the Egyptians learnt to be circumcised of Joseph. Neither were all the Egyptians circumcised, as all the Jews were, as we may see from the example of Appion, who was an Egyptian, in Josephus. Herodotus undoubtedly put the Phœnicians for the Idumæans; as Aristophanes does in his play called the *Birds*, where he calls the Egyptians and Phœnicians, "the circumcised." Ammonius, of the difference of words, says, "the Idumæans were not originally Jews, but Phœnicians and Syrians." Those Ethiopians which were circumcised, were of the posterity of Keturah, as shall be observed afterwards. The Colchians and their neighbours were of the ten tribes that Salmanasar carried away, and from thence some came into Thrace. Thus the Scholiast on Aristophanes's *Acharnenses* says, "That the nation

Biblius,¹⁰⁵ testify the ancient custom of circumcision, which is confirmed by those nations descended from Abraham,¹⁰⁶ not only Hebrews, but also Idumæans,¹⁰⁷ Ismaelites,¹⁰⁸ and



of the Odomants is the same as the Thracians; they are said to be Jews.” Where, by Jews, are to be understood, improperly, Hebrews, as is usual. From the Ethiopians, circumcision went across the sea into the new world, if it be true what is said of that rite’s being found in many places of that world.—(The learned dispute whether circumcision was instituted first amongst the Egyptians or amongst the Jews; concerning which, see my notes upon [Genesis xvii. 10.](#) *Le Clerc.*)

103 Book i. of the Colchians; “That this nation sprang from the Egyptians appears from hence, that they are circumcised after the manner of the Egyptians; which custom remains amongst this colony, as it does amongst the Jews.” Now, since the Hebrews were of old circumcised; it no more follows, from the Cholchians being circumcised, that they sprang from the Egyptians, than that they sprang from the Hebrews, as we affirm they did. He tells us, book iii. that the Troglodites were circumcised, who were a part of the Ethiopians.

104 Book xvi. concerning the Troglodites: “Some of these are circumcised, like the Egyptians.” In the same book he ascribes circumcision to the Jews.

105 In the fable of Saturn, in Eusebius, book i. chap. 10.

106 To which Abraham, that the precept of circumcision was first of all given, Theodorus tells us in his poem upon the Jews; out of which Eusebius has preserved these verses in his Gospel Preparation, book ix. chap. 22.—
“He who from home the righteous Abraham brought,
Commanded him, and all his house, with knife
To circumcise their foreskin. He obeyed.”

107 So called from Esau, who is called Οὔσωός *Ousoos*, by Philo Biblius. His other name was Edom, which the Greeks translated Ἐρυθρᾶν *Eruthran*, from whence comes the Erythræan sea, because the ancient dominions of Esau and his posterity extended so far. They who are ignorant of their original confound them, as we observed, with the Phœnicians. Ammonius says, the Idumæans were circumcised; and so does Justin, in his dialogue with Trypho; and Epiphanius against the Ebionites. Part of these were Homerites, who, Epiphanius against the Ebionites tells us, were circumcised in his time.

108 These were circumcised of old, but on the same year of their age as Ismael. Josephus, book i. chap. 12. and 13. “A child was born to them (*viz.* Abraham and Sarah) when they were both very old, which they circumcised on the eighth day; and hence the custom of the Jews is, to circumcise after so many days. But the Arabians defer it thirteen years: for Ismael, the father of that nation, who was the child of Abraham by his concubine, was circumcised at that age.” Thus Origen, in his excellent discourse against fate, which is extant in Eusebius, book vi. chap. 11. and in the Greek collection, whose title is Φιλοκαλία; “I don’t know how this can be defended, that there should be just such a position of the stars upon every one’s birth in Judæa, that upon the eighth day they must be circumcised, made sore, wounded, lamed, and so inflamed, that they want the help of a physician, as soon as they come into the world. And that there should be such a position of the stars to the Ismaelites in Arabia,

others.¹⁰⁹ The history of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, agreeable with Moses, was extant of old¹¹⁰ in Philo Biblius out of Sanchuniathon,¹¹¹ in Berosus,¹¹² Hecatæus,¹¹³ Damas-



that they must be all circumcised when they are thirteen years old; for so it is reported of them.” Epiphanius, in his dispute against the Ebionites, rightly explains these Ismaelites to be the Saracens; for the Saracens always observed this custom, and the Turks had it from them.

109 Namely those that descended from *Keturah*, concerning where there is a famous place of Alexander the historian in Josephus book i. chap. 16. which Eusebius quotes in his Gospel Preparation, book ix. chap. 20. “Cleodemus the prophet, who is called Malchus, in his relation of the Jews, gives us the same history as Moses their lawgiver, viz. that Abraham had many children by *Keturah*, to three of which he gave the names *Afer*, *Asser*, and *Afra*. Assyria is so called from *Asser*; and from the other two, *Afer*, and *Afra*, the city *Afra*, and the country *Africa*, are denominated. These fought with Hercules against *Lybia* and *Antæus*. Then Hercules married his daughter to *Afra*: he had a son of her, whose name was *Deodorus*, of whom was born *Sophon*, whence the barbarians are called *Sophaces*.” Here the other names, through the fault of the transcribers, neither agree with Moses, nor with the books of Josephus and Eusebius, as we have them now. But Ἀφῆρ *Apher*, is undoubtedly the same עֶפֶר *Apher* in Moses. We are to understand by Hercules, not the Theban Hercules, but the Phœnician Hercules, much older, whom Philo Biblius mentions, quoted by Eusebius often, in the fore-mentioned 10th chapter of the first book of his Gospel Preparation. This is that Hercules who, Sallust says in his Jugurthine war, brought his army into Africa. So that we see whence the Ethiopians, who were a great part of the Africans, had their circumcision, which they had in Herodotus’s time; and even now, those that are Christians retain it, not out of a religious necessity, but out of respect to so ancient a custom.

110 Scaliger thinks that several things, which Eusebius has preserved out of Philo Biblius, certainly relate to Abraham: see himself in his appendix to the Emendation of Time. There is some reason to doubt of it.

111 How far we are to give credit to Philo’s Sanchuniathon does not yet appear; for the very learned Henry Dodwell has rendered his integrity very suspicious, in his English dissertation on Sanchuniathon’s Phœnician history, published at London, in the year 1681, to whose arguments we may add this, that in his fragments there is an absurd mixture of the gods unknown to the eastern Grecians in the first times, with the deities of the Phœnicians, which the straitness of paper will not allow me to enlarge upon. *Le Clerc*.

112 Josephus has preserved his words in his ancient history, book i. chap. 8. “In the tenth generation after the flood, there was a man amongst the Chaldæans, who was very just and great, and sought after heavenly things.” Now it is evident from reason, that this ought to be referred to the time of Abraham.

113 He wrote a book concerning Abraham, which is now lost, but was extant in Josephus’s time.

cenus,¹¹⁴ Artapanus, Eupolemus, Demetrius,¹¹⁵ and partly in the ancient writers of the Orphic verses;¹¹⁶ and something of it is still extant in Justin,¹¹⁷ out of Trogius Pompeius. By almost all which is related also the history of Moses, and his principal acts.¹¹⁸ The Orphic verses expressly mention his being taken out of the water, and the two tables that



114 Nicolaus, that famous man, who was the friend of Augustus and Herod, some of whose relics were lately procured by that excellent person Nicholas Peiresius; by whose death, learning and learned men had a very great loss. The words of this Nicolaus Damascenes, Josephus relates in the fore-cited place: “Abraham reigned in Damascus, being a stranger who came out of the land of the Chaldæans, beyond Babylon; and, not long after, he, and those that belonged to him, went from hence into the land then called Canaan, but now Judæa, where he and those that descended from him dwelt, of whose affairs I shall treat in another place. The name of Abraham is at this day famous in the country about Damascus, and they shew us the town which from him is called Abraham’s dwelling.”

115 Eusebius, in his Preparation, book ix. ch. 16, 17, 18, 21, 23. has quoted several things, under these men’s names, out of Alexander the historian, but the places are too long to be transcribed; nobody has quoted them before Eusebius. But the fable of the Bethulians, which Eusebius took out of Philo Biblius, Prepar. book i. chap. 10. came from the altar of Bethel, built by Jacob, mentioned [Gen. xxxvi.](#)

116 2 For certainly those that we find in Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. v. and Eusebius, book xiii. chap. 12. can be understood of no other:— “The Maker of all things is known to none,
But one of the Chaldæan race, his son
Only begotten, who well understood
The starry orb, and by what laws each star
Moves round the earth, embracing all things in it.” Where Abraham is called *only begotten*, as in [Isaiah li. 2.](#)

𐤀𐤇𐤁 *Achad.* We have before seen, in Berosus, that Abraham was famous for the knowledge of astronomy; and Eupolemus, in Eusebius, says of him, “that he was the inventor of astronomy amongst the Chaldæans.”

117 Book xxxvi. chap. 2. “The original of the Jews was from Damascus, an eminent city in Syria, of which afterwards Abraham and Israel were kings,” Trogius Pompeius calls them kings, as Nicolaus did; because they exercised a kingly power in their families; and therefore they are called *Anointed*, [Psalm cv. 15.](#)

118 See Eusebius, in the fore-mentioned book ix. chap. 26, 27, 28. Those things are true which are there quoted out of Tragicus Judtæus Ezechiel, part of which we find in Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. i. who reports, out of the books of the priests, that an Egyptian was slain at Moses’s word; and, Strom. v. he relates some things belonging to Moses, out of Artapanus, though not very exactly. Justin, out of Trogius Pompeius, says of Moses, “He was leader of those that were banished, and took away the sacred things of the Egyptians; which they endeavouring to recover by arms, were forced by a tempest to return home; and that Moses having entered into his own country of Damascus, took possession of mount Sinah;” and what follows, which is a mixture of truth and falsehood, where we find *Arvas* written by him, it should be read *Arnas*, who is Aaron, not the son, as he imagines, but the brother of Moses, and a priest.

were given him by God.¹¹⁹ To these we may add Polemon:¹²⁰ and several things about his coming out of Egypt, from the Egyptian writers, Manetho, Lysimachus, Chæremon.¹²¹ Neither can any prudent man think it at all credible that Moses, who had so many enemies,¹²² not only of the Egyptians, but also of many other nations, as the Idumæans,¹²³ Arabians,¹²⁴ and Phœnicians,¹²⁵ would venture to relate any thing concerning the creation of the world, or the original of things, which could be confuted by more ancient writings, or was contradictory to the ancient and received opinions; or that he would relate any thing of matters in his own time, that could be confuted by the testimony of many persons then alive. Diod-



119 As the great Scaliger has mended the place; who with a very little variation of the shape of a letter, instead of ὕλογενής, *hulogenes*, as it is quoted out of Aristobulus, by Eusebius, in his Gospel Preparat. book xiii. chap. 12. bids us read ὕδογενής *hudogenes*, *born of the water*. So that the verses are thus:— “So was it said of old, so he commands

Who’s born of water, who receiv’d from God

The two great tables of the moral law,” The ancient writer of the Orphic verses, whoever he was, added these words, after he had said, that there was but one God to be worshipped, who was the Creator and Governor of the world.

120 He seems to have lived in the time of Ptolemy Epiphanes: concerning which, see that very useful book of the famous Gerard Vossius, of the Greek historians. Africanus says, the Greek histories were wrote by him; which is the same book Athenæus calls Ἑλλαδικόν. His words are these: “In the reign of Apis the son of Phoroneus, part of the Egyptian army went out of Egypt, and dwelt in Syria, called Palestine, not far from Arabia.” As Africanus preserved the place of Polemon, so Eusebius, in his chronology, preserved that of Africanus.

121 The places are in Josephus against Appion, with abundance of falsities, as coining from people whit) hated the Jews; and from hence Tacitus took his account of them. But it appears, from all these compared together, that the Hebrews descended from the Assyrians; and, possessing a great part of Egypt, led the life of shepherds; but afterwards, being burthened with hard labour, they came out of Egypt under the command of Moses, some of the Egyptians accompanying them, and went through the country of the Arabians, unto Palestine Syria, and there set up rites contrary to those of the Egyptians; but Josephus, in that learned book, has surprisingly shewn, how the Egyptian writers, in the falsities which they have here and there mixed with this history, differ with one another, and some with themselves, and how many ages the books of Moses exceed theirs in antiquity.

122 From whom they went away, by force, whose laws the Jews abolished. Concerning the implacable hatred of the Egyptians against the Jews, see Philo against Flaccus, and in his Embassy, and Josephus in each book against Appion.

123 Who inherited the ancient hatred between Jacob and Esau; which was increased from a new cause, when the Idumæans denied the Hebrews a passage, [Numb. xx. 14.](#)

124 Those, I mean, that descended from Ismael.

125 Namely, the Canaanites, and the neighbouring nations, who had continual wars with the Hebrews.

orus Siculus,¹²⁶ and Strabo,¹²⁷ and Pliny,¹²⁸ Tacitus,¹²⁹ and, after them, Dionysius Longinus,¹³⁰ (concerning loftiness of speech), make mention of Moses. Besides the Talmudists,¹³¹



126 In his first book, where he treats of those who made the gods to be the authors of their laws, he adds; “Amongst the Jews was Moses, who called God by the name of Ἰάω, *Iao*,” where by Ἰάω, he means יהוה *Jehovah*, which was so pronounced by the oracles, and in the Orphic verses mentioned by the ancients, and by the Basilidian heretics, and other gnostics. The same name the Tyrians, as we learn from Philo Biblius, pronounced Ἰεῦω, *Ieuo*, others Ἰαοῦ, *Iaou*, as we see in Clemens Alexandrinus. The Samaritans pronounced it Ἰαβαῖ, *Iabai*, as we read in Theodoret; for the eastern people added to the same words, some one vowel, and some another; from whence it is that there is such difference in the proper names in the Old Testament. Philo rightly observes, that this word signifies *existence*. Besides Diodorus, of those who make mention of Moses, the exhortation to the Greeks, which is ascribed to Justin, names Appion, Ptolemy on Mandesius, Hellanicus, Philochorus, Castor, Thallus, Alexander the historian: and Cyril mentions some of them in his first book against Julian.

127 The place is in the sixteenth book, where he thinks that Moses was an Egyptian priest; which he had from the Egyptian writers, as appears in Josephus: afterwards he adds his own opinion, which him some mistakes in it: “Many who worshipped the Deity agreed with him (Moses); for he both said and taught, that the Egyptians did not rightly conceive of God, when they likened him to wild beasts and cattle; nor the Libyans, nor the Greeks, in resembling him by a human shape; for God is no other than that universe which surrounds us; the earth, and the sea, and the heaven, and the world, and the nature of all things, as they are called by us. Who (says he) that has any understanding, would presume to form any image like to these things that are about us? Wherefore we ought to lay aside all carved images, and worship him in the innermost part of a temple worthy of him, without any figure.” He adds, that this was the opinion of good men: he adds also, that sacred rites were instituted by him, which were not burdensome for the costliness, nor hateful, as proceeding from madness. He mentions circumcision, the meats that were forbidden, and the like: and, after he had shew that man was naturally desirous of civil society, he tells us, that it is promoted by divine and human precepts, but more effectually by divine.

128 2 Book xxx. chap. 1. “There is another sect of magicians, which sprang from Moses.” And Juvenal; “They learn, and keep, and fear, the Jewish law, Which Moses in his secret volume gave.”

129 History v. where, according to the Egyptian fables, Moses is called “one of those that were banished.”

130 He lived in the time of Aurelian the emperor, a favourite of Zenobia, queen of the Palmyrians. In his book of the Sublime, after he had said, that they who speak of God ought to take care to represent him as great, and pure, and without mixture; he adds, “Thus does he who gave laws to the Jews, who was an extraordinary man, who conceived and spoke worthily of the power of God, when he writes in the beginning of his laws, God spake: What? Let there be light, and there was light: Let there be earth, and it was so.” Chalcidius took many things out of Moses, of whom he speaks thus: “Moses was the wisest of men, who, as they say, was enlivened not by human eloquence, but by divine inspiration.”

131 In the Gemara, in the title, *Concerning Oblations*, and the chapter, *All the Oblations of the Synagogue*. To which add the Tanchuma, or Ilmedenu. Mention is there made of the chief of Pharaoh’s magicians, and their discourse with Moses is related. Add also Numenius, book iii. concerning the Jews: Eusebius quotes his words, book viii. chap. 8. “Afterwards Jamnes and Mambres, Egyptian scribes, were thought to be famous for magical arts, about the time that the Jews were driven out of Egypt; for these were they who were chosen out of the

Pliny¹³² and Apulcius¹³³ speak of Jamnes and Mambres, who resisted Moses in Egypt. Some things there are in other writers,¹³⁴ and many things amongst the Pythagoreans,¹³⁵ about the law and rites given by Moses. Strabo and Justin,¹³⁶ out of Trogus, remarkably testify concerning the religion and righteousness of the ancient Jews: so that there seems to be no need of mentioning what is found, or has formerly been found, of Joshua and others,

multitude of the Egyptians, to contend with Musæus the leader of the Jews, a man very powerful with God by prayers; and they seemed to be able to repel those sore calamities which were brought upon Egypt by Musæus.” Where Moses is called Musæus, a word very near it, as is customary with the Greeks; as others call Jesus, Jason; and Saul, Paul. Origen against Celsus refers us to the same place of Numenius. Artaparnus, in the same Eusebius, book ix. ch. 27. calls them the priests of Memphis, who were commanded by the king to be put to death, if they did not do things equal to Moses.

132 In the fore-cited place.

133 In his second Apologetic.

134 As in Strabo, Tacitus, and Theophrastus, quoted by Porphyry, in his second book, against eating living creatures, where he treats of priests and burnt-offerings; and in the fourth book of the same work, where he speaks of fishes, and other living creatures, that were forbidden to be eaten. See the place of Hecatæus, in Josephus’s first book against Appion, and in Eusebius’s Preparat. book in, chap. 4, You have the law of avoiding the customs of strange nations, in Justin’s and Tacitus’s histories; of not eating swine’s flesh, in Tacitus, Juvenal, Plutarch’s Sympos. iv. and Macrobius from the ancients. In the same place of Plutarch, you will find mention of the Levites, and the pitching of the tabernacle.

135 Hermippus, in the life of Pythagoras, quoted by Josephus against Appion, b. ii. “These things he said and did, imitating the opinions of the Jews and Thracians, and transferring them to himself; for truly this man took many things into his own philosophy from the Jewish laws.” To abstain from creatures that die of themselves, is put among the precepts of Pythagoras, by Hierocles, and Prophyry in his epistle to Anebo, and Ælian, book iv.; that is out of [Levit. iv. 15.](#) [Deut. xiv. 21.](#) “Thou shalt not engrave the figure of God on a ring,” is taken out of Pythagoras, in Malchus’s or Porphyry’s exhortation to philosophy, and in Diogenes LaCrtius: and this from the second commandment. “Take not away that which thou didst not place,” Josephus, in his second book against Appion, puts amongst the Jewish precepts, and Philostratus amongst the Pythagorean. Jamblicus says, “A tender and fruit-fill tree ought not to be corrupted or hurt,” which he had out of [Deuteronomy xx. 19.](#) The fore-mentioned Hermippus ascribes this to Pythagoras, not to pass by a place where an ass has set upon his knees; the foundation of which is the story in [Numb. xxii. 27.](#) Porphyry acknowledges that Plato took many things from the Hebrews, as Theodoret observes in his first discourse against the Greeks. You will see part of them in Eusebius’s Preparation.—(I suspect that Hermippus, or Josephus, instead of Jews, should have said Idæans, that is, the priests of Jupiter Idæus in Crete, whom Pythagoras envied. See sir John Marsham’s collection of these, in his tenth age of the Egyptian affairs. *Le Clerc.*)

136 Strabo, in his fourteenth book, after the history of Moses, says, “That his followers for a considerable time kept his precepts, and were truly righteous and godly.” And a little after he says, that those, who believed in

62

63

agreeable to the Hebrew books; seeing that whoever gives credit to Moses, (which it is a shame for any one to refuse), cannot but believe those famous miracles done by the hand of God; which is the principal thing here aimed at. Now, that the miracles of later date, such as those of Elijah,¹³⁷ Elisha, and others, should not be counterfeit, there is this further argument; that in those times Judæa was become more known, and, because of the difference of religion, was bated by the neighbours, who could very easily confute the first rise of a lie. The history of Jonah's being three days in the whale's belly is in Lycophron and Æneas Gazeus,¹³⁸ only under the name of Hercules; to advance whose fame, every thing that was great and noble used to be related of him, as Tacitus observes.¹³⁹ Certainly nothing but the manifest evidence of the history could compel Julian (who was as great an enemy to the Jews as to the Christians) to confess that there were some men inspired by the Divine Spirit amongst the Jews,¹⁴⁰ and that fire descended from heaven, and consumed the sacrifices of Moses and Elias.¹⁴¹ And here it is worthy of observation, that there were not only very severe punishments threatened amongst the Hebrews, to any who should falsely assume



Moses, "worshipped God, and were lovers of equity." And Justin says thus, book xxxvi, c. 2. "Whose righteousness (viz. the kings and priests) mixed with religion, increased beyond belief." Aristotle also (witness Clearchus in his second book of sleep, which Josephus transcribed) gives a great character of a Jew, whom he had seen, for his wisdom and learning. Tacitus, amongst his many falsities, says this one truth, that the Jews worshipped "that Supreme and Eternal Being, who was immutable and could not perish," that is, God, as Dion Cassius speaks, treating of the same Jews), "who is ineffable and invisible."

137 Concerning whose prophecy, Eusebius says, Prep. book ix. chap. 30. that Eupolemns wrote a book. In the 39th chapter of the same book, Eusebius quotes a place of his concerning the prophecies of Jeremiah.

138 The verses are these:—"Of that three-nighted lion, whom of old Triton's fierce dog with furious jaws devour'd, Within whose bowels, tearing his liver, He rolled, burning with heat, though without fire, His head with drops of sweat bedew'd all o'er." Upon which place Tzetses says, "because he was three days within the whale." And Æneas Gazeus in Theophrastus: "According to the story of Hercules, who was saved by a whale swallowing him up, when the ship in which he sailed was wrecked."

139 And Servius, as Varro and Verrius Flaccus affirm.

140 Book iii. in Cyril.

141 Julian, in the tenth book of Cyril: "Ye refuse to bring sacrifices to the altar, and offer them, because the fire does not descend from heaven and consume the sacrifices, as it did in Moses's time; this happened once to Moses, and again long after to Elijah the Tishbite." See what follows concerning the fire from heaven. Cyprian, in iii. of his testimonies, says, "That, in the sacrifices, all those that God accepted of, fire came down from heaven, and consumed the things sacrificed." Menander also, in his Phœnician history, mentions that great drought which happened in the time of Elias, that is, when Ithobalus reigned amongst the Tyrians. See Josephus in his ancient history, book viii. chap. 7.

the gift of prophecy,¹⁴² but very many kings,¹⁴³ who by that means might have procured great authority to themselves; and many learned men, such as Esdras and others,¹⁴⁴ dared not to assume this honour to themselves; nay, some ages before Christ's time, nobody dared to do it.¹⁴⁵ Much less could so many thousand people be imposed upon, in avouching a constant and public miracle, I mean that of the oracle,¹⁴⁶ which shined on the high priest's breast, which is so firmly believed by all the Jews to have remained till the destruction of the first temple, that their ancestors must of necessity be well assured of the truth of it.¹⁴⁷

65

66

142 See [Deut. xiii. 5. xviii. 20.](#) and the following.

143 Nobody dared to do it after David.

144 The Hebrews used to remark upon those times, "Hitherto the prophets, now begin the wise men."

145 Therefore, in the first book of Maccabees, [iv. 46.](#) we read, that the stones of the altar which was defiled were laid aside, "until there should come a prophet to shew what should be done with them." And, in the [ixth chap. ver. 27.](#) of the same book: "So was there a great affliction in Israel, the like whereof had never been, since the time that there were no prophets amongst them." The same we find in the Talmud, in the title concerning the council.

146 See [Exodus xxviii. 30. Levit. viii. 8. Numb. xxvii. 21. Deut. xxxiii. 9. 1 Sam. xxi. 2. xxii. 10, 13, 15. xxiii. 2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12. xxviii. 6.](#) Add [Nehem. vii. 65.](#); and Josephus, book iii. 9. This is what is meant by the words ἐρώτημα δῆλων, "the consulting, (an oracle), where you will have an answer as clear as light itself;" in the Son of Sirach, [xxviii. 3.](#); for the word δῆλα, *clear*, answers to the Hebrew אֲוִרִים *Urim*; and so the Seventy translate it in the fore-cited places, [Numb. xxvii. 21. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6.](#) and elsewhere δῆλωσιν, *making clear*, as [Exod. xxviii.](#)

[26. Lev. viii. 8.](#) They also translate תְּמִינִים *Thumin*, ἀλήθειαν, *truth*. The Egyptians imitated this, just as children do men. Diodorus, book i. relating the affairs of the Egyptians, says of the chief judge, "that he hath truth banging about his neck." And again afterwards, "The king commands that all things necessary and fitting should be provided for the subsistence of the judges, and that the chief judge should have great plenty. This man carries about his neck an image of precious stones, hanging on a golden chain, which they call *Truth*, and they then begin to hear cases, when the chief judge has fixed this image of truth." And Ælian, book xiv. chap. 24, of his various history: "The judges in old time amongst the Egyptians were priests, the oldest of which was chief priest, who judged every one; and he ought to be a very just man, and one that spared nobody. He wore an ornament about his neck, made of sapphire stone, which was called *Truth*." The Babylonish Gemara, chap. i. of the book called Joma, says, that some things in the first temple were wanting in the second, as the ark with the mercy-seat, and the cherubims, the fire coming from heaven, the Schecinah, the Holy Ghost, and the Urim and Thumin.

147 This is a conjecture of the rabbins, without any foundation from scripture. It is much more credible, that the priest pronounced the oracle with his mouth. See our observations on [Exod. xxviii. 30. Numb. xxvii. 21.](#) *Le Clerc.*

SECT. XVII. *The same proved also from predictions.*

THERE is another argument to prove the providence of God, very like to this of miracles, and no less powerful, drawn from the foretelling of future events, and was very often and very expressly done amongst the Hebrews; such as the man's being childless who should rebuild Jericho;¹⁴⁸ the destroying the altar of Bethel, by king Josiah by name, above three hundred years before it came to pass:¹⁴⁹ so also Isaiah foretold the very name and principal acts of Cyrus;¹⁵⁰ and Jeremiah the event of the siege of Jerusalem, after it was surrounded by the Chaldeans; and Daniel the translation of the empire from the Assyrians to the Medes and Persians,¹⁵¹ and from them to Alexander of Macedon,¹⁵² whose successors to part of his kingdom were to be the posterity of Lagus and Seleucus:¹⁵³ and what evils the Hebrews should undergo from all these, particularly the famous Antiochus;¹⁵⁴ so very plainly, that Porphyry,¹⁵⁵ who compared the Grecian histories, extant in his time, with the prophecies, could not make it out any other way, but by saying, that the things ascribed to Daniel were wrote after they came to pass; which is the same as if any one should deny, that what is now extant under the name of Virgil, and was always thought to be his, was writ by him in Augustus's time. For there was never any more doubt amongst the Hebrews concerning the one, than there was amongst the Romans concerning the other. To all which may be added, the many and express oracles amongst those of Mexico and Peru, which foretold the coming of the Spaniards into those parts, and the calamities that would follow.¹⁵⁶

*And by other arguments.*¹⁵⁷

148 Compare Joshua vi. 26. with 1 Kings xvi. 34.

149 CCCLXI. as Josephus thinks, in his ancient history, book x. chap. 3.

150 Chap. xxxvii. xxxviii. For the fulfilling, see chap. xxxix. and Eusebius, book ix. chap. 39. of his Preparat. brings a testimony out of Eupolemus, both of the prophecy, and the fulfilling of it.

151 Daniel, chap. ii. 32, 39. v. 28. vii. 5. viii. 3, 20. x. 20. xi. 2.

152 In the fore-cited chap. ii. 32. and 39. vii. 6. viii. 5, 6, 7, 8, 21. x. 20. xi. 3, 4.

153 Chap. ii. 33, 40. vii. 7, 19, 23, 24. viii. 22. xi. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

154 Chap. vii. 8, 11, 20, 24, 25. viii. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, 26. xi. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44. 45. xii. 1, 2, 3, 11. Josephus explains these places as we do, book x. chap. 12.; and book xii. chap. 11.; and book i. chap. 1. of his Jewish war. Chrysostom, ii. against the Jews, making use of the testimony of Josephus, and Polychronius, and other Greek writers.

155 See Jerom upon Daniel, throughout.

156 (*Garcilazzo de la Vega*) Inca, Acosta, Herrera, and others, relate strange things of these oracles. See Peter Cieza, tome ii. of the Indian affairs.

157 What is here said, does not so much prove the existence of God, who takes care of the affairs of men; as that there are present with them some invisible beings, more powerful than men, which whoever believes, will easily believe that there is a God. For there is no necessity that all things, which come to pass different from the

To this may be referred very many dreams, exactly agreeing with the events; which, both as to themselves and their causes, were so utterly unknown to those that dreamed them, that they cannot without great shamelessness be attributed to natural causes: of which kind the best writers afford us eminent examples. Tertullian¹⁵⁸ has made a collection of them in his book of the soul; and ghosts have not only been seen, but also heard to speak,¹⁵⁹ as we are told by those historians who have been far from superstitious credulity; and by witnesses in our own age, who lived in Sina, Mexico, and other parts of America; neither ought we to pass by that common method of examining persons' innocence, by walking over red-hot ploughshares, viz. *fire ordeal*, mentioned in so many histories of the German nation, and in their very laws.¹⁶⁰

68

common course of nature, should be ascribed to God himself; as if whatever cannot be effected by men, or the power of corporeal things, must be done by Him himself. *Le Clerc.*

158 Chap. xlv. where he relates the remarkable dreams of Astyages, of Philip of Macedon, of the Himerræan woman, of Laodice, of Mithridates, of Illyrian Balaris, of M. Tully, of Artorius, of the daughter of Polycrates Samius, whom Cicero calls his nurse, of Cleonomus Pieta, of Sophocles, of Neoptolemus the tragedian. Some of these we find in Valetius Maximus, book i. ch. 7. besides that of Calpurnia concerning Cæsar, of P. Decius, and T. Manlius, the consuls, T. Atinius, M. Tully in his banishment, Hannibal, Alexander the great, Simonides, Croesus, the mother of Dionysius the tyrant, C. Sempronius Gracchus, Cassius of Parmenia, Aterius Rufus the Roman knight, Hamilcar the Carthaginian, Alcibiades the Athenian, and a certain Arcadian. There are many remarkable things in Tully's books of divination; neither ought we to forget that of Pliny, book xxv. chap. 2. concerning the mother of one that was fighting in Lusitania. And also those of Antigonus and Artucules, who was the first of the race of the Osmanidæ, in the Lipsian Monita, book i. chap. 5. and others collected by the industrious Theodore Zuinger, vol. v. book iv. the title of which is, concerning dreams.

159 See Plutarch, in the life of Dion and Brutus, and Appion of the same Brutus, in the fourth of his Civilia, and Florus, book iv. chap. 7. Add to these, Tacitus concerning Curtius Rufus, Annal. xi. which same history is in Pliny, epist. xxvii. book vii. together with another; concerning that which that wise and courageous philosopher Athenodorus saw at Athens. And those in Valeriva Maximus, book i. ch. 8. especially that of Cassius the Epicurean, who was frighted with the sight of Cæsar, whom he had killed; which is in Lipsius, book. i. chap. 5. of his warnings. Many such histories are collected by Chrysippus, Plutarch in his book of the soul, and Numenius in his second book of the soul's immortality, mentioned by Origen, in his fifth book against Celsus.

160 See the testimonies of this matter, collected by Francis Juret, upon the 74th epistle of Ivon, bishop of Chartres. Sophocles's Antigone tells us how old this is, where the Theban relations of Œdipus speak thus:—
“We are prepared to handle red-hot iron,

To pass through fire, or to invoke the gods,

That we are innocent, and did not do it.” Which we learn also from the report of Strobe, book v. and Pliny's natural hist. book vii. chap. 2. and Servius upon Virgil's eleventh Æneid. Also those things which were seen of old, in Feronia's grove upon the mountain Soracte. To these things which happened contrary to the common course of nature, we may add, I think, those we find made use of to preserve men's bodies from being wounded

by arrows. See also the certain testimonies concerning those who have spoke after their tongues were cut out upon the account of religion, such as Justinian, book i. chapter of the prætorian office, concerning a prefect in Africa; Procopius in the first of his Vandalics; Victor Uticensis, in his book of persecutions and Æneas Gaza in Theophrastus.

SECT. XVIII. The objection, of miracles not being seen now, answered.

NEITHER is there any reason why any one should object against what has been said, because no such miracles are now seen, nor any such predictions heard. For it is sufficient to prove a Divine Providence, that there ever have been such. Which being once established, it will follow, that we ought to think God Almighty forbears them now, for as wise and prudent reasons as he before did them. Nor is it fit that the laws given to the universe for the natural course of things, and that what is future might be uncertain, should always, or without good reason, be suspended, but then only, when there was a sufficient cause: as there was at that time when the worship of the true God was banished almost out of the world, being confined only to a small corner of it, *viz.* Judæa; and was to be defended from the wickedness which surrounded it, by frequent assistance: or when the Christian religion, concerning which we shall afterwards particularly treat, was, by the determination of God, to be spread all over the world.

SECT. XIX. And of there being so much wickedness.

SOME men are apt to doubt of a Divine Providence, because they see so much wickedness practised, that the world is in a manner overwhelmed with it, like a deluge: which, they contend, should be the business of Divine Providence, if there were any, to hinder or suppress. But the answer to such is very easy. When God made man a free agent, and at liberty to do well or ill, (reserving to himself alone a necessary and immutable goodness), it was not fit that he should put such a restraint upon evil actions as was inconsistent with this liberty.¹⁶¹ But whatever means of hindering them were not repugnant to such liberty; as, establishing and promulging a law, external and internal warnings, together with threatenings and promises; none of these were neglected by God: neither would he suffer the effects of wickedness to spread to the furthest; so that government was never utterly subverted, nor the knowledge of the divine laws entirely extinguished. And even those crimes that were permitted, as we hinted before, were not without their advantages, when made use of either to punish those who were equally wicked, or to chastise those who were slipped out of the way of virtue, or else to procure some eminent example of patience and constancy, in those who had made a great progress in virtue. Lastly, even they themselves, whose crimes seemed to be overlooked for a time, were for the most part punished with a proportionable punishment, that the will of God might be executed against them who acted contrary to his will.¹⁶²

70

71

161 Thus Tertullian against Marcian, ii. “An entire liberty of the will is granted him either way, that he may always appear to be the master of himself, by doing of his own accord that which is good, and avoiding of his own accord that which is evil. Because man, who is in other respects subject to the determination of God, ought to do that which is just, out of the good pleasure of his own free will. But, neither the wages of that which is good or evil can justly be paid to him who is found to be good or evil out of necessity, and not out of choice. And for this reason was the law appointed, not to exclude, but to prove liberty, by voluntarily performing obedience to it, or by voluntarily transgressing it; so that, in either event, the liberty of the will is manifest.” And again afterwards; “Then the consequence would have been, that God would have withdrawn that liberty which was once granted to man; that is, would have retained within himself his fore-knowledge and exceeding power, whereby he might have interposed, to hinder man from falling into danger, by trying to make an ill use of his liberty. For, if he had interposed, he would then have taken away that liberty which his reason and goodness had given them.” Origen, in his fourth book against Celsus, handles this matter, as he uses to do others, very learnedly; where, amongst other things, he says, “That you destroy the nature of virtue, if you take away liberty.”

162 Concerning this whole matter, see the note at sect. viii.

SECT. XX. And that so great, as to oppress good men.

AND if at any time vice should go unpunished, or, which is wont to offend many weak persons, some good men, oppressed by the fury of the wicked, should not only lead a troublesome life, but also undergo an infamous death; we must not presently from hence conclude against a Divine Providence; which, as we have before observed, is established by such strong arguments; but rather, with the wisest men, draw this following inference:—

SECT. XXI. This may be turned upon them, so as to prove, that souls survive bodies.

THAT, since God has a regard to human actions, who is himself just, and yet those things come to pass in the mean time, we ought to expect a judgment after this life, lest either remarkable wickedness should continue unpunished, or eminent virtue go unrewarded, and fail of happiness.

SECT. XXII. Which is confirmed by tradition.

In order to establish this, we must first shew, that souls remain after they are separated from their bodies:¹⁶³ which is a most ancient tradition, derived from our first parents (whence else could it come?) to almost all civilized people; as appears from Homer's verses,¹⁶⁴ and from the philosophers,¹⁶⁵ not only the Greeks, but also the ancient Gauls, which were called Druids,¹⁶⁶ and from the Indians called Brachmans,¹⁶⁷ and from those things, which many writers have related, concerning the Egyptians,¹⁶⁸ and Thracians, and also of the Germans.¹⁶⁹ And, moreover, concerning a divine judgment after this life, we find many



163 Whoever has a mind to read this argument more largely handled, I refer him to Chrysostom on 2 Cor. ch. iv. and to his Ethics, tome vi. against those who affirm that human affairs are regulated by daemons; and to his fourth discourse upon Providence.

164 Especially in that part called νεκῶν, "concerning those that are departed:" to which may be added, the like in Virgil, in Seneca's Œdipus, Lucan, Statius, and that in Samuel, 1 Sam. xxviii.

165 Pherecydes, Pythagoras, and Plato, and all the disciples of them. To these Justin adds Empedocles, and many oracles in his second Apologetic; and Xenocrates.

166 These taught that souls did not die. See Cæsar, book vi. of the war with the Gauls; and Strabo, book iv. of the same. "These and others say, that souls are incorruptible." (See also Lucan, book i. 455.)

167 Whose opinion Strabo explains to us thus, book xv. "We are to think of this life, as of the state of a child before it be born; and of death, as a birth to that which is truly life and happiness to wise men." See also a remarkable place concerning this matter, in Porphyry's fourth book, against eating living creatures.

168 Herodotus, in his Euterpe, says, that it was the opinion of the Egyptians, "That the soul of man was immortal." The same is reported of them by Diogenes Laërtius, in his preface, and by Tacitus, book v. of his history of the Jews. "They buried rather than burnt their bodies, after the manner of the Egyptians; they having the same regard and persuasion concerning the dead." See Diodorus Siculus, concerning the soul of Osiris; and Servius on the sixth Æneid, most of which is taken from the Egyptians.

169 See again here, the places of Hermippus, concerning Pythagoras, which we before quoted out of Josephus. Mela, book ii. concerning the Thracians, says, "Some think, that the souls of those who die return again; others, that though they do not return, yet they do not die, but go to a more happy place." And Solinus, concerning the same, chap. x. "Some of them think, that the souls of those who die return again; others, that they do not die, but are made more happy." Hence arose that custom of attending the funerals with great joy, mentioned by these writers, and, by Valerius Max. book i. ch. v. 12. That which we before quoted out of the Scholiast upon Aristophanes, makes this the more credible, viz. that some of the Hebrews of old came into Thrace.

things extant, not only among the Greeks, but also among the Egyptians,¹⁷⁰ and Indians,¹⁷¹ as Strabo, Diogenes Laërtius, and Plutarch,¹⁷² tell us: to which we may add a tradition, that the world should be burnt; which was found of old, in Hystaspes and the Sibyls,¹⁷³ and now also in Ovid¹⁷⁴ and Lucan,¹⁷⁵ and amongst the Indians in Siam;¹⁷⁶ a token of which is the sun's approaching nearer to the earth, observed by astronomers.¹⁷⁷ So likewise, upon the first going into the Canary Islands and America, and other distant places, the same opinion concerning souls and judgment was found there.



170 Diodorus Siculus, book i. says, that what Orpheus delivered concerning souls departed, was taken from the Egyptians. Repeat what we now quoted out of Tacitus.

171 Amongst whose opinions, Strabo, book xv. reckons that “concerning the judgments that are exercised amongst the souls departed.”

172 Concerning those whose punishment is deferred by the gods, and concerning the face of the moon's orb, see a famous place of his, quoted by Eusebius, book xi. ch. 38. of his Gospel Preparat. out of the dialogue concerning the soul.

173 (See Justin's second Apologetic, and Clemens, Strom. vi. whence is quoted that from the Tragcedian:—“For certainly the day will come, 'twill come, When the bright sky shall from his treasure send A liquid fire, whose all-devouring flames, By laws unbounded, shall destroy the earth, And what's above it; all shall vanish then. The water of the deep shall turn to smoke, The earth shall cease to nourish trees; the air, Instead of bearing up the birds, shall burn.”

174 Metamorphoses, book i. “For he remember'd, 'twas by fate decreed To future times, that sea, and earth, and heav'n Should burn, and this vast frame of nature fail.”

175 Book i. “So, when this frame of nature is dissolv'd, And the last hour, in future times, approach, All to its ancient chaos shall return: The stars, confounded, tumble into sea; The earth refuse its banks, and try to throw The ocean off; the moon attack the sun, Driving her chariot through the burning sky, Enrag'd, and challenging the rule of day: The order of the world's disturb'd throughout.” Lucan was preceded by his uncle Seneca, in the end of his book to Marcia: “The stars shall run upon each other; and, every thing being on a flame, that which now shines regularly, shall then burn in one fire.”

176 See Ferdinand Mendesium.

177 See Copernicus's Revolutions, book iii. chap. 16. Joachim Rhæticus on Copernicus, and Goma Frisius. See also Ptolemy, book iii. chap. 4. of his mathematical syntax. That the world is not now upheld by that power it was formerly, as itself declares; “and that its ruin is evidenced, by the proof, how the things in it fail,” says Cyprian to Demetrius.—(The earth is nearer to the sun in its perihelions, that is, when it is in the extreme parts of the lesser axis of its parabola, though the earth always approaches at the same distances; yet it is manifest from hence, that, at the will of God, it may approach still nearer, and, if it so pleases him, be set on fire by the sun, as it happens to comets. *Le Clerc.*)—“It were to be wished that the learned remarker had left out this and some other notes of this kind, unless he had studied such sort of things more.”

SECT. XXIII. And no way repugnant to reason.

NEITHER can we find any argument drawn from nature, which overthrows this ancient and extensive tradition:¹⁷⁸ for all those things, which seem to us to be destroyed, are either destroyed by the opposition of something more powerful than themselves, as cold is destroyed by the greater force of heat; or by taking away the subject upon which they depend, as the magnitude of a glass, by breaking it; or by the defect of the efficient cause, as light by the absence of the sun. But none of these can be applied to the mind. Not the first, because nothing can be conceived contrary to the mind; nay, such is the peculiar nature of it, that it is capable equally, and at the same time, of contrary things in its own, that is, in an intellectual, manner. Not the second, because there is no subject upon which the nature of the

75

76

178 This matter might be handled more exactly, and upon better principles of philosophy, if our room would allow it. **I.** We ought to define what we mean by the *death of the soul*, which would happen, if either the substance of the soul were reduced to nothing, or if there were so great a change made in it, that it were deprived of the use of all its faculties; thus, material things are said to be destroyed, if either their substance ceases to be, or if their form be so altered, that they are no longer of the same species; as when plants are burnt or putrefied; the like to which befalls brute creatures. **II.** It cannot be proved that the substance of the soul perishes: for bodies are not entirely destroyed, but only divided, and their parts separated from each other. Neither can any man prove, that the soul ceases to think, which is the life of the soul after the death of the man; for it does not follow, that, when the body is destroyed, the mind is destroyed too, it having never yet been proved that it is a material substance. **III.** Nor has the contrary yet been made appear, by certain philosophic arguments, drawn from the nature of the soul; because we are ignorant of it. It is true, indeed, that the soul is not, by its own nature, reduced to nothing; neither is the body; this must be done by the particular act of their Creator. But it may possibly be without any thought or memory; which state, as I before said, may be called the death of it. But, **IV.** If the soul, after the dissolution of the body, should remain for ever in that state, and never return to its thought or memory again, then there can be no account given of Divine Providence, which has been proved to be by the foregoing arguments. God's goodness and justice, the love of virtue, and hatred to vice, which every one acknowledges in him, would be only empty names; if he should confine his benefits to the short and fading good things of this life, and make no distinction betwixt virtue and vice; both good and bad men equally perishing for ever, without seeing in this life any rewards or punishments dispensed to those who have done well or ill: and hereby God would cease to be God, that is, the most perfect being; which, if we take away, we cannot give any account of almost any other thing, as Grotius has sufficiently shewn, by those arguments whereby he has demonstrated, that all things were created by God. Since, therefore, there is a God, who loves virtue and abhors vice, the souls of men must be immortal, and reserved for rewards or punishments in another life. But this requires further enlargement. *Le Clerc.*—The proof of the soul's immortality, drawn from the consideration of the nature of it, may be seen in its full force in dr. Clarke's letter to mr. Dodwell, and the defences of it.

soul depends; for if there were any, it would be a human body;¹⁷⁹ and that it is not so, appears from hence, that when the strength of the body fails by action, the mind only does not contract any weariness by acting. Also, the powers of the body suffer, by the too great power of the things which are the objects of them, as sight by the light of the sun.¹⁸⁰ But the mind is rendered the more perfect, by bow much the more excellent the things are about which it is conversant; as about figures abstracted from matter, and about universal propositions.¹⁸¹ The powers of the body are exercised about those things which are limited by time and place, but the mind, about that which is infinite and eternal. Therefore, since the mind, in its operations, does not depend upon the body, so neither does its existence depend upon it; for we cannot judge of the nature of those things which we do not see, but from their operations. Neither has the third method of being destroyed any place here: for there is no efficient cause from which the mind continually flows: not the parents, because the children live after they are dead. If we allow any cause at all, from whence the mind flows, it can be no other than the first and universal cause, which, as to its power, can never fail; and as to its will, that that should fail, that is, that God should will the soul to be destroyed, this can never be proved by any arguments.



179 That there is none, Aristotle proves very well from old men, book i. ch. 4. concerning the soul. Also, book iii. ch. 4. he commends Anaxagoras for saying, that mind was simple and unmixed, that it might distinguish other things.

180 Aristotle, book iii. of the soul; “that there is not the like weakness in the intellectual part that there is in the sensitive, is evident from the organs of sense, and from sensation itself; for there can be no sensation, where the object of such sensation is too strong; that is, where the sound is too loud, there is no sound; and where the smell is too strong, or the colours too bright, they cannot be smelt, nor seen. But the mind, when it considers things most excellent to the understanding, it is not hindered by them from thinking, any more than it is by meaner things, but rather excited by them: because the sensitive part cannot be separated from the body, but the mind may.” Add to this, the famous place of Plotinus, quoted by Eusebius, in his *Preparat.* book xv. chap. 22. Add also, that the mind can overcome those passions which arise from the body, by its own power; and can choose the greatest pains, and even the death of it.

181 And those are the most excellent actions of the mind which call it off most from the body.

SECT. XXIV. But many things favour it.

NAY, there are many not inconsiderable arguments for the contrary; such as, the absolute power every man has over his own actions;¹⁸² a natural desire of immortality; the power of conscience, which comforts him when he has performed any good actions, though never so difficult; and, on the contrary, torments him when he has done any bad thing;¹⁸³ especially at the approach of death, as it were, with a sense of impending judgment; the force of which many times could not be extinguished by the worst of tyrants,¹⁸⁴ though they have endeavoured it never so much; as appears by many examples.



182 And over all other living creatures, to which may be added, the knowledge of God, and of immortal beings. “An immortal creature is not understood by any mortal one,” says Sallust the philosopher. One remarkable token of this knowledge is, that there is nothing so grievous, which the mind will not despise, for the sake of God. Beside, the power of understanding and acting is not limited, as it is in other creatures, but unwearied, and extends itself infinitely, and is by this means like unto God; which difference of man from other creatures was taken notice of by Galen.

183 See Plato’s first book of his commonwealth: “When death seems to approach any me, fear and solicitude come upon him about those things which before he did not think of.”

184 Witness that epistle of Tiberius to the senate: “What should write to you, O senators, or how I should write, or what I should not write, at this time, let the gods and goddesses destroy me, worse than I now feel myself to perish, if I know.” Which words, after Tacitus had recited in the sixth of his annals, he adds, “So far did his crimes and wickedness turn to big punishment. So true is that assertion of the wisest of men, that, if the breasts of tyrants were laid open, we might behold the gnawings and stings of them; for as the body is bruised with stripes, so the mind is torn with rage, and lust, and evil designs.” The person which Tacitus here means is Plato, who says of a tyrant, in book ix. of his commonwealth; “He would appear to be in reality a beggar, if any one could but see into his whole soul; full of fears all his life long, full of uneasiness and torment.” The same philosopher has something like this in his Gorgias. Suetonius, ch. 67. being about to recite the fore-mentioned epistle of Tiberias, introduces it thus “At last, when he was quite wearied out, in the beginning of such an epistle as this, he confesses almost all his evils.” Claudian had an eye to this place of Plato, when he describes Rufinus in his second poem:— ———Stains within Deform his breast, which bears the stamp of vice.

SECT. XXV. From whence it follows, that the end of man is happiness after this life.

IF then the soul be of such a nature as contains in it no principles of corruption; and God has given us many tokens, by which we ought to understand, that his will is it should remain after the body; there can be no end of man proposed more worthy of him, than the happiness of that state; and this is what Plato and the Pythagoreans said, that the end of man was to be made most like to God.¹⁸⁵ Thus, what happiness is, and how to be secured, men may make some conjectures; but if there be any thing concerning it revealed from God, that ought to be esteemed roost trite and most certain.

185 Which the stoics had from Plato, as Clemens remarks, Strom. v.

SECT. XXVI. Which we must secure, by finding out the true religion.

Now, since the Christian religion recommends itself above all others; whether we ought to give credit to it or no, shall be the business of the second part of this work to examine.



**THE TRUTH
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION**

BOOK II.

SECT. I. That the Christian religion is true.

THE design, then, of this second book (after having put up our petitions to Christ the King of heaven, that he would afford us such assistances of his holy Spirit, as may render us sufficient for so great a business) is not to treat particularly of all the opinions in Christianity, but only to shew that the Christian religion itself is most true and certain; which we attempt thus:—

SECT. II. *The proof that there was such a person as Jesus.*

THAT Jesus of Nazareth formerly lived in Judæa, in the reign of Tiberius the Roman emperor, is constantly acknowledged, not only by Christians dispersed all over the world, but also by all the Jews which now are, or have ever wrote since that time: the same is also testified by heathens, that is, such as did not write either of the Jewish or of the Christian religion, Suetonius,¹⁸⁶ Tacitus,¹⁸⁷ Pliny the younger,¹⁸⁸ and many after these.

That he died an ignominious death.

THAT the same Jesus was crucified by Pontius Pilate, the president of Judæa, is acknowledged by all the same Christians, notwithstanding it might seem dishonourable to them who worship such a Lord. It is also acknowledged by the Jews,¹⁸⁹ though they are not ignorant how much they lie under the displeasure of the Christians, under whose government they every where live, upon this account, because their ancestors were the cause of Pilate's doing

80

81

186 In his Claudius, chap. 25. where *Chresto* is put for *Christo*, because that name was more known to the Greeks and Latins.

187 Book xv. where he is speaking of the punishment of the Christians. "The author of that name was Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, suffered punishment under his procurator Pontius Pilate." Where the great crimes, and hatred to human-kind, they are charged with, is nothing else but their contempt of false gods; which same reason Tacitus had to curse the Jews; and Pliny the elder, when he calls the Jews "a people remarkable for contempt of the gods." That is, very many of the Romans were come to this, that their consciences were not affected by that part of their theology which was civil, (which Seneca commends), but they feigned it in their outward actions, and kept it as a command of the law; looking upon worship as a thing of custom, more than in reality. See the opinion of Varro and Seneca about this matter, which is the same with that of Tacitus, in Augustine, book v. chap. 33. and book vi. chap. 10. of his city of God. In the mean time, it is worth observing, that Jesus, who was punished by Pontius Pilate, was acknowledged by many at Rome, in Nero's time, to be the Christ. Compare that of Justin in his second Apologetic concerning this history; where he addresses himself to the emperors and Roman senate, who might know those things from the Acts.

188 The epistle is obvious to every one, viz. book x. chap. 97. which Tertullian mentions in his Apologetic, and Eusebius in his Chronicon; where we find, that the Christians were used to say a hymn to Christ as God, and to bind themselves not to perform any wicked thing, but to forbear committing theft, robbery, or adultery; to be true to their word, and strictly perform their trust. Pliny blames their stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy in this one thing; that they would not invoke the gods, nor do homage with frankincense and wine before the shrines of deities, nor curse Christ; nor could they be compelled to do it by any torments whatsoever. The epistle in answer to that of Trajan says, that he openly declares himself to be no Christian who supplicates the Roman gods. Origen, in his fourth book against Celsus, tells us, there was a certain history of Jesus extant in Numenius the Pythagorean.

189 Who call him תלוי, that is, *hanged*. Benjaminis Tudelensis, In his Itinerary, acknowledges that Jesus was slain at Jerusalem.

it. Likewise, the heathen writers we mentioned have recorded the same to posterity; and, a long time after, the acts of Pilate were extant, to which the Christians sometimes appealed.¹⁹⁰ Neither did Julian, or other opposers of Christianity, ever call it in question. So that no history can be imagined more certain than this; which is confirmed by the testimonies, I don't say, of so many men, but of so many people, which differed from each other. Notwithstanding which, we find him worshipped as Lord throughout the most distant countries of the world.¹⁹¹

190 See Epiphanius in his *Tessarescædecatitæ*.—(It were better to have omitted this argument, because some imprudent Christians might appeal to some spurious acts; for it does not appear there were any genuine ones. *Le Clerc.*)

191 Chrysostom handles this matter at large, upon [2 Cor. v. 7](#).

SECT III. And yet, after his death, was worshipped by wise men.

AND that not only in our age, or those immediately foregoing, but also even in the first, the age next to that in which it was done, in the reign of the emperor Nero; at which time the fore-mentioned Tacitus and others attest, that very many were punished because they professed the worship of Christ.

SECT. IV. The cause of which could be no other but those miracles which were done by him.

AND there were always very many amongst the worshippers of Christ who were men of good judgment, and of no small learning; such as (not to mention Jews) Sergius the president of Cyprus,¹⁹² Dionysius the Areopagite,¹⁹³ Polycarp,¹⁹⁴ Justin,¹⁹⁵ Irenæus,¹⁹⁶ Athenagoras,¹⁹⁷ Origen,¹⁹⁸ Tertullian,¹⁹⁹ Clemens Alexandrinus, and others:²⁰⁰ who being such men, why they should themselves be worshippers of a man that was put to an ignominious death, especially when almost all of them were brought up in other religions, and there was neither honour nor profit to be had by the Christian religion; why, I say, they should do thus, there can be no reason given but this one; that upon a diligent inquiry, such as becomes prudent men to make, in a matter of the highest concern to them, they found, that the report which was spread abroad, concerning the miracles that were done by him, was true, and founded upon sufficient testimony; such as healing sore diseases, and those of a long continuance, only by a word, and this publicly; restoring sight to him that was born blind; increasing bread for the feeding of many thousands, who were all witnesses of it; restoring the dead to life again, and many other such like.



192 [Acts xiii. 12.](#)

193 [Acts xvii. 34.](#)

194 Who suffered martyrdom in Asia, in the clxviiith year of Christ, according to Eusebius.

195 Who published writings in defence of the Christians in the cxliith year of Christ. See the same Eusebius.

196 He flourished at Lyons, in the clxxxiiith year of Christ.

197 This man was an Athenian. He flourished about the clxxxth year of Christ, as appears from the inscription of his book.

198 He flourished about the ccxxxth year of Christ.

199 Who was famous in the ccviiith year of Christ.

200 About the same time. See Eusebius.

SECT. V. Which miracles cannot be ascribed to any natural or diabolical power, but must be from God.

WHICH report had so certain and undoubted a foundation, that neither Celsus,²⁰¹ nor Julian,²⁰² when they wrote against the Christians, dared to deny that some miracles were done by Christ; the Hebrews also confess it openly in the books of the Talmud.²⁰³ That they were not performed by any natural power, sufficiently appears from hence, that they are called wonders or miracles; nor can it ever be that grievous distempers should be healed immediately, only by a word speaking, or a touch, by the power of nature. If those works could have been accounted for by any natural efficacy, it would have been said so at first, by those who either professed themselves enemies of Christ when he was upon earth, or of his gospel. By the like argument, we gather, that they were not juggling tricks, because very many of the works were done openly, in the sight of all the people;²⁰⁴ and amongst whom were many learned men, who bore no good-will to Christ, who observed all his works. To which we may add, that the like works were often repeated, and the effects were not of a short continuance, but lasting. All which, rightly considered, as it ought to be, it will plainly follow, according to the Jews' own confession, that these works were done by some power more than human, that is, by some good or bad spirit; that these works were not the effects of any bad spirit, is from hence evident, that this doctrine of Christ, for the proof of which these works were performed, was opposite to those evil spirits: for it forbids the worship of evil spirits; it draws men off from all immorality, in which such spirits delight. It appears also, from the things themselves, that wherever this doctrine has been received, the worship of demons and magical arts have ceased;²⁰⁵ and the one God has been worshipped, with an abhorrence of demons; whose strength and power, Porphyry acknowledges, were broken upon the coming of Christ.²⁰⁶ And it is not at all credible, that any evil spirits should be so imprudent, as to do those things, and that very often, from which no honour or advantage could arise to them, but, on the contrary, great loss and disgrace. Neither is it any way consistent with the goodness or wisdom of God, that he should be thought to suffer men, who

83

84

201 Whose words, in book ii. of Origen, are, "You think he is the Son of God, because he healed the lame and the blind."

202 Nay, he plainly confesses the thing, when he says, in the words recited by Cyril, book vi. "Unless any one will reckon amongst the most difficult things, healing the lame and the blind, and casting out devils in Bethsaida and Bethany."

203 In the title Aboda Zara.

204 [Acts xxvi. 26.](#) [Luke xii.](#)

205 The books about which were burnt by the advice of the disciples of Christ, [Acts xix. 19.](#)

206 The place is in Eusebius's Prep. book v. chap. L. "After Christ was worshipped, nobody experienced any public benefit from the gods."

were free from all wicked designs, and who feared him, to be deceived by the cunning of devils; and such were the first disciples of Christ, as is manifest from their unblameable life, and their suffering very many calamities for conscience-sake. If any one should say, that these works were done by good beings, who yet are inferior to God; this is to confess, that they were well-pleasing to God, and redounded to his honour; because good beings do nothing but what is acceptable to God, and for his glory. Not to mention that some of the works of Christ were such as seem to declare God himself to be the author of them, such as the raising more than one of those that were dead to life. Moreover, God neither does nor suffers miracles to be done without a reason; for it does not become a wise lawgiver to depart from his laws without a reason, and that a weighty one. Now, no other reason can be given why these things were done, but that which is alleged by Christ, viz. to give credit to his doctrine;²⁰⁷ nor could they who beheld them conceive any other reason in their minds: amongst whom, since there were many of a pious disposition, as was said before, it would be profane to think God should do them, to impose upon such. And this was the sole reason why many of the Jews, who lived near the time of Jesus, who yet could not be brought to depart from any thing of the law given by Moses,²⁰⁸ (such as they who were called Nazarenes and Ebionites), nevertheless owned Jesus to be a teacher sent front heaven.



207 We may add, that the event itself, in that so great a part of mankind embraced the Christian religion, shows that it was a thing so worthy of God, as for him to confirm it with miracles at the beginning. If he did so many for the sake of one nation, and that no very great one, I mean the Jewish; how much more agreeable to his goodness was it to bestow this heavenly light to so great a part of mankind, who lay in the thickest darkness!
Le Clerc.

208 See [Acts xv.](#) [Rom. xiv.](#) Jerom in the Eusebian Chronicon, for the year of Christ cxxv. after he had named fifteen Christian bishops of Jerusalem, adds, "These were all bishops of the circumcision, who governed till the destruction of Jerusalem under the emperor Adrian." Severus Sulpitius, concerning the Christians of those times and places, says, "They believed Christ to be God, whilst they observed also the law; and the church had a priest out of those of the circumcision." See Epiphanius, where he treats of the Nazarenes and Ebionites. Nazarenes was a name not for any particular part, but all the Christians in Palestine were so called, because their master was a Nazarene.

SECT. VI. The resurrection of Christ proved from credible testimony.

CHRIST'S coming to life again in a wonderful manner, after his crucifixion, death, and burial, affords us no less strong an argument for those miracles that were done by Him. For the Christians of all times and places assert this not only for a truth, but as the principal foundation of their faith: which could not be, unless they, who first taught the Christian faith, had fully persuaded their hearers that the thing did conic to pass. Now, they could not fully persuade men of any judgment of it, unless they affirmed themselves to be eye-witnesses of it; for, without such an affirmation, no man in his senses would have believed them, especially at that time, when such a belief was attended with so many evils and dangers. That this was affirmed by them with great constancy, their own books, and the books of others,²⁰⁹ tell us; nay, it appears from those books, that they appealed to five hundred witnesses, who saw Jesus after he was risen from the dead.²¹⁰ Now, it is not usual for those that speak untruths to appeal to so many witnesses. Nor is it possible so many men should agree to bear a false testimony. And if there had been no other witnesses but those twelve known first propagators of the Christian doctrine, it had been sufficient. Nobody has any ill design for nothing. They could not hope for any honour, from saying what was not true, because all the honours were in the power of the heathens and Jews, by whom they were reproached and contemptuously treated: nor for riches, because, on the contrary, this profession was often attended with the loss of their goods, if they had any; and if it had been otherwise, yet the gospel could not have been taught by them, but with the neglect of their temporal goods. Nor could any other advantages of this life provoke them to speak a falsity, when the very preaching of the gospel exposed them to hardship, to hunger and thirst, to stripes and imprisonment. Fame, amongst themselves only, was not so great, that for the sake thereof, men of upright intentions, whose lives and tenets were free from pride and ambition, should undergo so many evils. Nor had they any ground to hope that their opinion, which was so repugnant to nature, (which is wholly bent upon its own advantages), and to the authority which every where governed, could make so great a progress, but from a divine promise. Further, they could not promise to themselves that this fame, whatever it was, would be lasting; because (God on purpose concealing his intention in this matter from them) they expected that the end of the whole world was just at hand, as is plain from their own writings, and those of the Christians that came after them.²¹¹ It remains, therefore, that they must



209 Even of Celsus, who wrote against the Christians. See Origen, book ii.

210 Paul, [1 Cor. xv. 6](#). He says, some of them were dead at that time, but their children and friends were alive, who might be hearkened to, and testify what they had heard. But the greater part of them were alive when Paul wrote this, This appearance was in a mountain in Galilee.

211 See [1 Thess. iv. 15,16](#). [1 Cor. xv. 52](#). Tertullian, of having but one wife: "Now the time is very short." Jerom to Gerontias; "What is that to us, upon whom the ends of the world are come?"

be said to have uttered a falsity, for the sake of defending their religion; which, if we consider the thing aright, can never be said of them; for either they believed from their heart that their religion was true, or they did not believe it. If they had not believed it to have been the best, they would never have chosen it from all other religions, which were more safe and honourable. Nay, though they believed it to be true, they would not have made profession of it, unless they had believed such a profession necessary; especially when they could easily foresee, and they quickly learnt by experience, that such a profession would be attended with the death of a vast number; and they would have been guilty of the highest wickedness, to have given such occasion, without a just reason. If they believed their religion to be true, nay, that it was the best, and ought to be professed by all means, and this after the death of their Master; it was impossible this should be, if their Master's promise concerning his resurrection had failed them; for this had been sufficient to any man, in his senses, to have overthrown that belief which he had before entertained.²¹² Again, all religion, but particularly the Christian religion, forbids lying and false witness, especially in divine matters:²¹³ they could not therefore be moved to tell a lie out of love to religion, especially such a religion. To all which may be added, that they were men who led such a life as was not blamed even by their adversaries;²¹⁴ and who had no objection made against them, but only their simplicity, the nature of which is the most distant that can be from forging a lie. And there was none of them who did not undergo even the most grievous things for their profession of the resurrection of Jesus. Many of them endured the most exquisite death for this testimony. Now, suppose it possible, that any man in his wits could undergo such things for an opinion he had entertained in his mind; yet for a falsity, and which is known to be a falsity, that not only one man, but very many, should be willing to endure such hardships, is a thing plainly incredible. And that they were not mad, both their lives and their writings sufficiently testify. What has been said of these first, the same may also be said of Paul, who openly declared that he saw Christ reigning in heaven,²¹⁵ and he did not want the learning of the Jews, but had great prospect of honour, if he had trod in the paths of his fathers.²¹⁶ But, on the contrary, he thought it his duty, for this profession, to expose himself to the hatred of

87

88

212 Chrysostom handles this argument at large, upon [1 Cor. i.](#) towards this end.

213 [Matt. xii. 36.](#) [John viii. 44, 45.](#) [Eph. iv. 25.](#) [Rom. ix. 1.](#) [2 Cor. vii. 14, xi. 31.](#) [Gal. i. 20.](#) [Col. iii. 9.](#) [1 Tim. i. 10.](#) and [ii. 7.](#) [Jam. iii. 14.](#) [Matt. xxii. 16.](#) [Mark xii. 14.](#) [Luke xx. 21.](#) [John xiv. 16.](#) [Eph. v. 9.](#) and elsewhere.

214 Even Celsus. See Origen, book i.

215 [1 Cor. xv. 8.](#) [2 Cor. xii. 4.](#) Add to this what Luke the disciple of Paul writes, [Acts ix. 4, 5, 6.](#) and [xxii. 6, 7, 8.](#)

216 [Acts xxii. 3.](#) There were two Gamaliels famous amongst the Hebrews on account of their learning. Paul was the disciple of one of them, who was very skilful, not only in the law, but also in those things that were delivered by the doctors. See Epiphanius.

his relations; and to undertake difficult, dangerous, and troublesome, voyages all over the world, and at last to suffer an ignominious death.

SECT. VII. *The objection drawn from the seeming impossibility of a resurrection, answered.*

INDEED, nobody can withstand the credibility of so many and so great testimonies, without saying, that a thing of this nature is impossible to be, such as we say all things that imply a contradiction are. But this cannot be said of it.²¹⁷ It might indeed, if any one should affirm, that the same person was alive and dead at the same time: but that a dead man should be restored to life, by the power of him who first gave life to man, there is no reason why this should be thought impossible.²¹⁸ Neither did wise men believe it to be impossible: for Plato relates it of Er the Armenian;²¹⁹ Heraclides Ponticus, of a certain woman;²²⁰ Herodotus, of Aristæus;²²¹ and Plutarch, of another:²²² which, whether they were true or false, shews the opinion of learned men, concerning the possibility of the thing.



217 See the seventh answer to the objections concerning the resurrection, in the works of Justin. “An impossibility in itself is one thing; and an impossibility in any particular is another; an impossibility in itself is, that the diagonal of a square should be commensurate with the side; a particular impossibility is, that nature should produce an animal without seed. To which of these two kinds of impossibles do unbelievers compare the resurrection? If to the first, their reasoning is false; for a new creation is not like making the diagonal commensurate with the aide; but they that rise again, rise by a new creation. If they mean a particular impossibility; surely all things are possible with God, though they may be impossible to any one else.” Concerning this difference of impossibilities, see the learned notes of Maimonides, in his guide to the doubting, part iii. ch. 15.

218 All those, who are skilful in the true philosophy, acknowledge that it is as hard to understand how the foetus is formed in the mother’s womb, as how the dead should be raised to life. But ignorant men are not at all surprised at the things which they commonly see; nor do they account them difficult, though they know not the reason of them: but they think those things which they never saw are impossible to be done, though they are not at all more difficult than those things they see every day. *Le Clerc.*

219 The place of Plato concerning this matter is extant in his tenth book of Republics, transcribed by Eusebius, in his Gospel Preparat. book xi. chap. 35. The report of which history is in Valerius Maximus, book i. chap. 8. the first foreign example; in the hortatory discourse among the works of Justin; in Clemens, Strom v.; in Origen, book ii. against Celsus; in Plutarch, Symposiac ix. 5.; and in Macrobius, in the beginning, upon Scipio’s dream.

220 There was a book of his “concerning the dead,” mentioned by Diogenes Laërtius in his preface, and in his Empedocles; and by Galen, in the sixth, concerning the parts that are affected. Pliny speaks thus of him, book vii. chap. 52. “That noble volume of Heraclides amongst the Greeks, of a woman’s being restored to life, after she had been dead seven days.” And Diogenes Laërtius, in the latter place, assigns her thirty days.

221 In his Melpomene. See Pliny’s Nat. Hist. book vii. ch. 52. Plutarch’s Romulus, and Hesychius concerning the philosophers.

222 Of Thespesius. Plutarch has this in his discourse of God’s deferring punishment. And Antyllus, concerning whom Eusebius has preserved that place of Plutarch, from his first book of the soul, in his Prepar. book xi. ch. 36. and Theodoret, serm. xi.

The truth of Jesus's doctrine proved from his resurrection.

IF it be not impossible that Christ should return to life again, and if it be proved from sufficient testimonies, such as convinced Bechai, a teacher of the Jews, so far as to acknowledge the truth of it;²²³ and Christ himself (as both his own disciples and strangers confess) declared a new doctrine, as by a divine command, it will certainly follow, that this doctrine is true; because it is repugnant to the justice and wisdom of God to bestow such endowments upon him who had been guilty of a falsity, in a matter of so great moment. Especially when he had, before his death, declared to his disciples that he should die, and what manner of death; and also that he should return to life again; and that these things should therefore come to pass, that they might confirm the truth of his doctrine.²²⁴



223 It were to be wished that Grotius had quoted the place; for though his reasoning, drawn from the resurrection of Christ, does not want the approbation of R. Bechai, yet perhaps the Jews might be affected with his authority. *Le Clerc.*

224 See [John xiv.](#) [Luke xxv. 46, 47.](#)

SECT. VIII. That the Christian religion exceeds all others.

THESE arguments are drawn from matters of fact; we come now to those which are drawn from the nature of the doctrine. Certainly all manner of worship of God must be rejected; (which can never enter into any man's mind, who has any sense of the existence of God, and of his government of the creation; and who considers the excellency of man's understanding, and the power of choosing moral good or evil, with which he is endued; and consequently that the cause, as of reward, so of punishment, is in himself); or else we must receive this religion, not only upon the testimony of the facts which we have now treated of, but likewise for the sake of those things that are intrinsical in religion; since there cannot be any produced, in any age or nation, whose rewards are more excellent, or whose precepts are more perfect, or the method in which it was commanded to be propagated more wonderful.



SECT. IX. The excellency of the reward proposed.

To begin with the reward, that is, with the end proposed to man; because, as we are used to say, that which is the last in execution is the first in intention.—Moses,²²⁵ in his institution of the Jewish religion, if we regard the express condition of the law, made no promises beyond the good things of this life; such as a fruitful land, abundance of riches, victory over their enemies, long life and health, and hope of their posterities surviving them. And if there be any thing more, it is only obscurely hinted, and must be collected from wise and strong arguing: which is the reason why many, who professed to follow the law of Moses, (as the Sadducees,²²⁶) cast off all hope of enjoying any good after this life. The Greeks, who derived their learning from the Chaldeans and Egyptians, and who had some hope of another life after this, spoke very doubtfully concerning it,²²⁷ as is evident from the disputes of So-

225 Deut. xi. and xxviii. Heb. viii. 6.

226 Matt. xxii. 23. Luke, in Acts xxiii. 8. Josephus: “The Sadduces argue, that the soul perishes with the body.” And, in another place, “They deny the soul’s immortality, and rewards and punishments in another life.” Jerom says of them, “That they believe the soul perishes with the body.”

227 This is observed by Chrysostom, on 1 Cor. i. 25.

crates,²²⁸ and from the writings of Tully,²²⁹ Seneca,²³⁰ and others.²³¹ And, though they searched diligently for arguments to prove it, they could offer nothing of certainty. For those which they allege hold generally as strong for beasts as they do for men.²³² Which when some of them considered, it is no wonder that they imagined that souls passed out of men into beasts, and out of beasts into men.²³³ Again; because this could not be proved by any testimonies, nor by any certain arguments, and yet it could not be denied but that there must be some end proposed for man; therefore others were led to say, that virtue was its own reward, and that a wise man was very happy, though in Phalaris's bull.²³⁴ But others disliked this, and not without reason; for they saw very well, that happiness, especially in the highest degree, (unless we regard only the sound of words, without any meaning), could not consist in that which is attended with danger, loss, torment, and death:²³⁵ and therefore

92

93

228 In Plato's *Phædon*: "Now I would have you to understand, that I hope to go amongst good men; but I will not be too positive in affirming it." And afterwards, "If those things I am speaking of should prove true, it is very well to be thus persuaded concerning them; but if there be nothing after death, yet I shall always be the less concerned for the present things of this life; and this my ignorance will not continue long, (for that would be bad), but will shortly vanish." And Tertullian, concerning the soul: "From such a firm steadiness and goodness of mind did that wisdom of Socrates proceed, and not from any certain discovery of the truth." The same is observed of Socrates, in the exhortation among the works of Justin.

229 In his first *Tusculan* question; "Shew me first, if you can, and it be not too troublesome, that souls remain after death; or, if you cannot prove this, (for it is difficult), declare how there is no evil in death." And a little after: "I know not what mighty thing they have got by it, who teach, that, when the time of death comes, they shall entirely perish; which, if it should be, (for I do not say any thing to the contrary), what ground of joy or glorying does it afford?" And again, "Now suppose the soul should perish with the body, can there be any pain, or can there be any sense at all in the body after death? Nobody will say so." Lactantius, book vii. chap. 8. cites the following passage out of the same Cicero, spoken after a dispute about the soul: "Which of these opinions is true, God only knows."

230 Epistle lxiii. "And perhaps (if the report of wise men be true, and any place receives us) that which we think perishes, is only sent before."

231 Justin Martyr says in general, in his dialogue with Trypho: "The philosophers knew nothing of these things, nor can they tell what the soul is."

232 As that argument of Socrates to Plato, that "that which moves of itself is eternal." See Lactantius, in the fore-mentioned place.

233 As the Brachmans of old, and now also; from whom Pythagoras and his scholars had it.

234 See Tully's second *Tusc.* question; and Lactantius's institutions, book iii. chap. 27. where he strenuously disputes against this opinion; and Augustin, epist. lii.

235 Lactantius, book iii. chap. 12. "Virtue is not its own happiness, because the whole power of it consists, as I said, in bearing evils." And a little after, when he had quoted a place of Seneca's, he adds: "But the stoics, whom he follows, deny that any one can be happy without virtue. Therefore the reward of virtue is a happy life; if virtue,

they placed the chief good and end of man in sensual pleasure. And this opinion likewise was solidly confuted by very many, as a thing which overthrew all virtue, the seeds of which are planted in the mind; and degraded man, who was made for nobler purposes, to the rank of brute creatures, who look no further than the earth. In so many doubts and uncertainties did mankind at that time wander, till Christ discovered the true knowledge of their end; promising to his disciples and followers another life after this, in which there should be no more death, pain, or sorrow, but accompanied with the highest joy; and this not only to one part of man, that is, his soul, of whose happiness after this life there was some hope, partly from conjecture, and partly from tradition; but also to the body, and that very justly, that the body, which oftentimes ought to endure great losses, torments, and death, for the sake of the divine law, might not go without a recompence. And the joys which are promised are not such mean things as those feasts which the duller Jews hoped for after this life,²³⁶ and the embraces which the Mahometans promise to themselves;²³⁷ for these are only proper remedies for the mortality of this frail life; the former, for the preservation of particular animals, and the latter, for the continuance of their species: but the body will be in a perpetual vigour, and its brightness will exceed the stars. The mind will have a knowledge of God and of Divine Providence, and of whatever is now hidden from it, without any mistake; the will will be calm, employed in wonder and praises, in beholding God; in a word, all things will be much greater and better than can be convinced by comparing them with the greatest and best here.



as is rightly said, makes life happy. Virtue, therefore, is not to be desired for its own sake, as they affirm, but for the sake of a happy life, which necessarily attends virtue: which argument might instruct them what is the chief good. But this present bodily life cannot be happy, because it is subject to evils, by means of the body.” Pliny, in his nat. hist. book vii. chap. 40. says well, “That no mortal man is happy.”

236 The places are quoted beneath, in the fifth book.

237 See the Alcoran, Azoara ii. v. xlvii. liv. lxx. lxxvi.

SECT. X. A solution of the objection taken from hence, that the bodies after their dissolution cannot be restored.

BESIDES the objection which we have now answered, it is commonly alleged, that the bodies of men, after their dissolution, cannot be restored to the same frame again; but this is said without the least foundation. For most philosophers agree, that, though the things be ever so much changed, the matter of them still remains, capable of being formed into different shapes;²³⁸ and who will affirm, that God does not know at what places, though ever so far distant, the parts of that matter are, which go to the making up of a human body? or, that he has not power to bring them back and reunite them? and do the same in the universe, that we see chemists do in their furnaces and vessels, collect those particles which are of the same kind, though separated from one another? And there are examples in nature, which shew, that though the shape of things be ever so much changed, yet the things themselves return to their original form; as in seeds of trees and plants. Neither is that knot, which is objected by so many, such as cannot be loosed, viz. concerning human bodies passing into nourishment of wild beasts and cattle; who, after they are thus fed, are eaten again by men. For the greatest part of what is eaten by us is not converted into any part of our body, but goes into excrements or superfluities, such as spittle and choler: and much of that which has nourishment in it is consumed by diseases, internal heat, and the ambient air. Which being thus, God, who takes such care of all kinds, even of dumb creatures, may have such a particular regard to human bodies, that if any part of them should come to be food for other men, it should no more be converted into their substance, than poison or physic is; and so much the rather, because human flesh was not given to be food for men. And if it were otherwise, and that something which does not belong to the latter body must be taken from it, this will not make it a different body; for there happens a greater change



238 If any one be not satisfied with this account of Grotius, he may be answered, that it is not at all necessary that the matter which is raised should be numerically the same with that which the dying man carried to the grave with him; for he will be as much the same man, though his soul were joined to matter which it was never before joined to, provided it be the same soul, as a decrepit old man is the same as he was when a child crying in the cradle, though perhaps there is not in the old man one particle of that matter there was in the infant, by reason of the continual effluvia which fly from the body. It may very well be called a *resurrection of the body*, when a like one is formed by God out of the earth, and joined to the mind; therefore there is no need of reducing ourselves to so great straits, in order to defend too stitily the sameness of the matter. *Le Clerc.*

of its particles in this life:²³⁹ nay, a butterfly is contained in a worm;²⁴⁰ and the substance of herbs, or of wine, in some very little thing, from whence they are again restored to their true bigness,²⁴¹ Certainly, since these, and many other such like suppositions, may be made without any absurdity, there is no reason why the restoring of a body, after it is dissolved, should be reckoned amongst the things that are impossible; especially since learned men,

96

97

239 See Alfenus, in lib. Proponerebar. D. de Judiciis: "If any one should think, that, by altering the parts, any thing is made different from what it was before; according to such reasoning, we ourselves should be different from what we were a year since: because, as philosophers say, those small parts, of which we consist, continually fly off from our bodies, and other foreign ones come in their room." And Seneca, ep. lviii. "Our bodies are in a continual flux, like a river; all that we see runs away as time does: none of those things we see are durable. I myself am changed, while I am speaking of their change." See Methodius's excellent dissertation upon this subject, whose words Epiphanius has preserved in his confutation of the Origenists, number xii. xiii. xiv. xv.

240 See Ovid in the last book of his Metamorphoses:—"Wild moths (a thing by countrymen observ'd) Betwixt the leaves in tender threads involv'd, Transform their shape into a butterfly." We may add something out of Pliny's natural history, book ix. chap. 51. concerning frogs: he says, "For half a year of their life they are turned into mud, and cannot be seen; and, by the waters in the spring, those which were formerly bred, are bred again afresh." And in book x. chapter 9. "The cuckow seems to be made of a hawk, changing his shape in the time of year." And book xi. chap. 20. "There are who think, that some creatures which are dead, if they be kept in the house in water, will come to life again, after the sun shines hot upon them in the spring, and they be kept warm all day in wood ashes." And again, chap. 22. speaking of silk-worms, "Another original of them may be from a larger sort of worm, which shoots forth a double kind of horns; these are called canker-worms, and afterwards become what they call the humble-bee; from whence comes another sort of insect. termed *Necydalus*, which, in six months time, turns into a silkworm." And again, chap. 23. speaking of the silk-worm of Coos, he says, "They were first small and naked butterflies." And chap. 26. concerning the grasshopper; "It is first a small worm, but afterwards comes out of what they call *Tettygometra*, whose shell being broke, they fly away about midsummer." Chap. 30. "Flies drowned in liquor, if they be buried in ashes, return to life again." And chap. 32. "Many insects are bred in another manner. And first the horse-fly, out of the dew: in the beginning of the spring, it sticks to a radish-leaf, and being stiffened by the sun, it gathers into the bigness of a millet. Out of this springs a small worm, and, in three days after, a canker-worm, which increases in a few days, having a hard shell about it, and moves at the touch of a spider; this canker-worm, which they call a *chrysalis*, when the shell is broken, flies away a butterfly."

241 If Grotius had lived till our days, he would have spoken more fully; since it is evident that all animals, of whatever kind, spring from an egg, in which they are formed, as all plants do from seeds, though never so small. But this is nothing to the resurrection, for bodies will not rise again out of such principles. *Le Clerc.*

such as Zoroaster amongst the Chaldeans,²⁴² almost all the stoics,²⁴³ and Theopompus,²⁴⁴ among the peripatetics, believed that it could be, and that it would be.

242 See Clemens, Strom. v.

243 Clemens, Strom. v. "He (Heraclitus) knew, having learnt it from the barbarian philosophy, that men who lived wickedly should be purified by fire, which the stoics call ἐκπύρωσιν, whereby they imagine every one shall rise again such a one as he really is: thus they treat of the resurrection." And Origen, book v. against Celsus: "The stoics say, that, after a certain period of time, the universe shall be burnt, and after that shall be a renovation, in which all things shall continue unchangeable." And afterwards: "They have not the name of the resurrection, but they have the thing." Origen here adds the Egyptians. Chrysippus, concerning Providence, quoted by Lactantius, book vi. of his Institutions, has these words; "Which being thus there is evidently no impossibility, but that we also, when we are dead, after a certain period of time is past, may be restored again to the same state in which we now are." He that is at leisure may look into Nathaniel Carpenter's sixteenth exercise of free philosophy.

244 Concerning whom, see Diogenes Laërtius in the beginning of his book. "And Theopompus in his eighth Philippic relates, as the opinion of the wise men, that men shall live again, and become immortal, and every thing shall continue what it is."

SECT. XI. The exceeding purity of its precepts, with respect to the worship of God.

ANOTHER thing, in which the Christian religion exceeds all other religions that ever were, are, or can be imagined, is the exceeding purity and holiness of its precepts, both in those things which concern the worship of God, and also in all other particulars. The rites of the heathens, almost all over the world, were full of cruelty; as Porphyry has largely shewn;²⁴⁵ and as we are convinced, by those in our age, who have sailed to those places. For it is an established principle, almost every where, that the gods are to be pacified with human blood; which custom neither the Greek learning, nor the Roman laws, abolished: as appears from what we read concerning sacrifices offered up to Bacchus Omesta, amongst the Greeks;²⁴⁶ concerning a Grecian man and a Grecian woman, and concerning a man and woman amongst the Gauls, that were sacrificed to Jupiter Latialis.²⁴⁷ And the most holy mysteries, both of Ceres and of Bacchus, were full of lewdness; as was plain, when once the secrets of their religion began to be publicly discovered; as is at large declared by Clemens Alexandrinus,²⁴⁸ and others.²⁴⁹ And there were such sights shewn upon those days, that were consecrated to the honour of their gods, that Cato was ashamed to be present at them.²⁵⁰ In the Jewish religion, indeed, there was nothing unlawful or immoral; but to prevent that people, who were prone to idolatry,²⁵¹ from revolting from the true religion, it was burthened

98

99

245 In his book prohibiting eating living creatures; whence Cyril took many things, in his fourth against Julian.

246 Plutarch mentions them in his Themistocles, and also Pausanias. The like rites of the Messenians, Pellæans, Lictyans in Crete, Lesbians, Phocænsians, you have in the hortatory discourse in Clemens.

247 Dionysius Halicarnassensis tells us in his first book, that it was a very ancient custom in Italy to sacrifice men. How long it remained, Pliny says, book xxviii. ch. 2. "Our age hath seen in the beast-market a Grecian man and woman slain, or these of some other nation with whom they dealt." This custom remained till Justin's and Tatian's time: for Justin, in his first Apologetic, addresses the Romans thus: "That idol which you worship, to whom not only the blood of irrational creatures is poured out, but also human blood; which blood of slain men is poured out by the most noble and eminent person among you." And Tatian: "I find among the Romans, that Jupiter Latialis was delighted with human blood; and with that which flows from men that are slain." Porphyry tells us, that these rites remained till Adrian's time. That there was a very ancient custom amongst the Gauls of offering human sacrifices, we learn from Tully's oration in defence of M. Fonteius; and out of Plutarch, concerning superstition. Tiberius abolished it, as we find in Pliny, book xxx. chap. 1. See the same Pliny there, concerning the Britons, and Dion in Nero, and Solinus; also Hermoldus concerning the Slavonians, book i. chap. 3. Porphyry, in his second book against eating living creatures, says, that it remained till his time in Arcadia, in Carthage, and "in the great city," that is, Rome, where he instances in the rite of Jupiter Latialis.

248 In his hortatory discourse.

249 Especially Arnobius.

250 See Martial, in the beginning of his epigrams; Gellius, x. 13. and Valerius Maximus, book ii. chap. 10.

251 This is the reason given for such precepts by Maimonides, whom Josephus Albo follows.

with many precepts, concerning things that were in themselves neither good nor bad: such as the sacrifices of beasts, circumcision, strict rest on the sabbath day, and the forbidding many sorts of meats; some of which the Mahometans have borrowed, and added to them a prohibition of wine. But the Christian religion teaches us to worship God, who is a most holy Being, with a pure mind,²⁵² and with such actions as are in their own nature virtuous, if they had not been commanded.²⁵³ Thus, it does not bid us to circumcise our flesh, but our desires and affections:²⁵⁴ not to abstain from all sorts of works, but only from all such as are unlawful:²⁵⁵ not to offer the blood and fat of beasts in sacrifice to God; but, if there be a just occasion, to offer our own blood for a testimony of the truth:²⁵⁶ and whatever share of our goods we give to the poor, we are to look upon as given to God:²⁵⁷ not to forbear certain kinds of meat or drink, but to use both of them with such temperance as may most secure our health;²⁵⁸ and sometimes, by fasting, to render our bodies more subservient to the mind, that it may with more freedom advance itself towards higher objects.²⁵⁹ But the chief part of religion is every where declared to consist in such a godly faith,²⁶⁰ by which we may be framed to such a sincere obedience,²⁶¹ as to trust wholly upon God,²⁶² and have a firm belief of his promises;²⁶³ whence arises hope,²⁶⁴ and a true love both of God and of our neighbour, which causes obedience to his commands;²⁶⁵ not a servile obedience,²⁶⁶ proceeding from the fear of punishment, but because it is well-pleasing to him,²⁶⁷ and because he is our Father,²⁶⁸ and rewarder,²⁶⁹ out of his exceeding goodness towards us. And we are



252 [John iv. 24.](#)

253 Whence it is called *a reasonable service*, [Rom. xii. 1.](#) [Phil. iv. 8.](#)

254 [Rom. ii. 28, 29.](#) [Phil. iii. 3.](#)

255 [1 Cor. v. 8.](#)

256 [1 Cor. x. 16.](#) [Heb. xii. 4.](#) [1 Pet. ii. 21.](#)

257 [Math vi. 4.](#) [Luxe xii. 33.](#) [2 Cor. ix. 7.](#) [Heb. iii. 6.](#)

258 [Luke xxi. 34.](#) [Rom. xiii. 13.](#) [Ephes. v. 18.](#) [Gal. v. 21.](#) [1 Tim. v. 3.](#) [1 Pet. iv. 3.](#)

259 [Matt. vi. 18.](#) [xvii. 21.](#) [1 Cor. vii. 5.](#)

260 [John xii. 44.](#)

261 [Luke xi. 28.](#) [John xiii. 17.](#) and the following verses; [1 Cor. vii. 19.](#) [1 Pet. i. 2.](#)

262 [Matt. xxi. 21.](#) [2 Tim. i. 12.](#)

263 [Rom. iv. 20.](#) [2 Cor. vii. 1.](#) [Gal. iii. 29.](#)

264 [Heb. vi. 11.](#) [Rom. viii. 24.](#) [xv. 4.](#)

265 [Gal. v. 6.](#) [1 Thess. iii. 6.](#)

266 [Rom. viii. 15.](#)

267 [Heb. xii. 28.](#)

268 [Rom. viii.](#)

269 [Coloss. 24.](#) [2 Thess. i. 6.](#)—(To which we may add, that we can easily apprehend, that his precepts are most worthy of him, and so exactly suited to our nature, that better or more agreeable cannot be conceived by any

commanded to pray,²⁷⁰ not to obtain riches or honours, and such other things, which many have desired to their own hurt; but, in the first. place, for such things as are for the glory of God; and so much only for ourselves of those perishable things as nature requires, permitting the rest to Divine Providence; being contented, which way soever they happen: but for those things that lead to eternity we are to pray with all earnestness, viz. for pardon of our past sins, and for the assistance of the Spirit for the future; that, being established firmly against all threats and temptations, we may continue on in a godly course. This is the worship of God required by the Christian religion, than which certainly nothing can be conceived more worthy of him.



one; therefore we ought to render ourselves obedient to him, out of a grateful sense of his commands, because they are the best and most excellent that can be; and this, though there were no punishment to be inflicted on the disobedient, beside the baseness of the fact itself: this is to obey God like sons, and not like servants. *Le Clerc*)

270 [Matt. vi. 10.](#)

SECT. XII. Concerning those duties of humanity which owe to our neighbour, though he has injured us.

THE duties towards our neighbour, required of us, are also of the like sort. The Mahometan religion, which was bred in arms, breathes nothing else; and is propagated by such means only. Thus, Aristotle takes notice of, and blames, the laws of the Laconians,²⁷¹ (which were so highly commended above any other in Greece, even by the oracle of Apollo), because they tended directly to force of arms. But the same philosopher affirms, that war against barbarians was lawful: whereas the contrary is true amongst men, who were designed by nature for friendship and society. For, what greater iniquity can there be, than to punish single murders, but expose to public view, in their triumphs, whole nations whom they had slain, as a glorious exploit?²⁷² And yet that most celebrated city of Rome, how did it procure that title, but by wars, and those many times very unjust;²⁷³ as they themselves confess concerning the wars against Sardinia²⁷⁴ and Cyprus?²⁷⁵ And in general, as the most famous compilers of annals have related, very many nations did not account it infamous to commit robberies out of their own bounds.²⁷⁶ Executing of revenge is, by Aristotle and Cicero, made

102

103

271 Polit. vii. chap. 14. "Like unto these are some, who afterwards declared their opinions in their writings. For in praising the government of the Lacedæmonians, they commend the design of the lawgiver, because the whole establishment tended to power and war: which may easily be confuted by reason, and is now confuted by fact." Euripides, in *Andromache*, said it before Aristotle, ——"If war, and glory,

And the sword, were from the Spartans taken,
There's nothing excellent that would remain."

272 To this purpose is the 96th epistle of Seneca, and book ii. chap. 8. concerning anger; and the second epistle of Cyprian.

273 Petronius:— ——"If any secret holes,
If any land, did shining gold contain,
They war proclaim."

274 See Polybius, hist. iii.

275 Florus, book iii. chap. 9. "So great was the report, and that very justly, of its riches, that, though they were a people that conquered nations, and were accustomed to bestow kingdoms, yet, at the instance of Publius Clodius the tribune, it was given in charge, to confiscate the king, though alive, and their ally." Plutarch mentions the same thing in his life of Cato, and Appion, book ii. of his politics; and Dion, book xxxviii. See the same Florus, in his war of Numantia and Crete.

276 Thucydides, book "Formerly the Greeks, as well as the barbarians, whether they lived on the continent near the sea-shore, or whether they inhabited the islands, after they began to hold correspondence with one another by sailing, fell to robbing, led on by great men, either for the sake of gain to themselves, or to procure

a part of virtue.²⁷⁷ The gladiators tearing one another to pieces was one of the public entertainments amongst the heathens:²⁷⁸ and to expose their children was a daily practice.²⁷⁹ The Hebrews, indeed, had a better law, a more holy discipline; but yet there were some things overlooked or allowed in that people, whose passion was ungovernable; such as the giving up to their power seven nations,²⁸⁰ though indeed they deserved it: with which they not being contented, persecuted with cruel hatred all that differed from them;²⁸¹ the marks of which remain even to this day, in their prayers uttered against Christians:²⁸² and the law

victuals for them that wanted. And happening upon cities which were not walled, but inhabited like villages, they plundered them, and the greatest part made their advantage of them, being not ashamed as yet of doing thus, but rather accounting it glorious. This is evidently the practice of some that dwell upon the continent now, who account it honourable to do thus; and, amongst the ancient poets, it is very frequent for them who met sailors, to ask them if they were pirates; knowing that they who were so asked would not disown it; nor they who asked them think it any reproach. Nay, they robbed one another, upon the very continent; and a great many of the Greeks live now in this ancient manner, as the Ozolan Locrians, the Ætolians, the Acarnanians, and those of the adjoining continent.” The question Thucydides here mentions is in Homer’s *Odys. T’*. Upon which the Scholiast says, “To plunder was not accounted infamous, but glorious, by the ancients.” Justin, book xliii. chap. 3. concerning the Phocensians: they were more diligent in occupying the sea than the land, in fishing, and trading; and very often they spent their lives in plundering,” (which at that time was looked upon as honourable). Concerning the Spaniards, see Plutarch in Marius; and Diodorus, book v. concerning the Tyrrhenians. Servius on the eighth and tenth Æneids, Cæsar, Tacitus, and Saxo-Grammaticus, concerning the Germans.

277 Aristotle’s ethics to Nicomachus, iv. 11. “Such a one seems to be no ways affected or concerned, nor to revenge himself, unless provoked; but it shews a mean spirit to bear contemptuous treatment.” And Tully, in his second book of *Invention*, places revenge amongst the duties that belong to the law of nature: “Whereby, either in our own defence, or by the way of revenge, we keep off force or reproach.” And to Atticus: “I hate the man, and will hate him: I wish I could revenge myself upon him.” And against Antony: “I would revenge every single crime, according to the degree of provocation in each.”

278 See Lactantius, book vi. and Tertullian, concerning shews, chap. 19.

279 See Justin’s second *Apologetic*, chap. 27. and Lactantius’s *Institution*, chap. 20. and Terence’s *Hecyra*.

280 *Exod. xxxiv. 11, 12. Deut. vii. 1, 2.*

281 R. Levi ben Gerson tells us they were to endeavour to injure them any manner of way. Bechai says, that what was taken from them by theft was not to be restored.

282 See a little book of prayers, put out at Venice, in a small volume, page 8. and a German book of Antonius Margarita, and Maimonides on the thirteen articles, where he says, they are to be destroyed who do not believe them. And it is a frequent saying in the mouths of the Jews, “Let all sectaries suddenly perish.” The like saying we find in R. Isaac’s *Bereschith Rabba*, and the Talmud in *Baba Kamma*, and *Baba Bathra*.

itself allowed a man to revenge an injury by the punishment of retaliation,²⁸³ and that a man-slayer might be killed by the private hand of the next relation. But the law of Christ forbids requiring any injury that hath been done us, either by word or deed,²⁸⁴ lest, by imitating that malice we condemn in others, we should on the contrary approve it. It would have us do good, in the first place, to those that are good; and then to the bad also, after the example of God, from whom we receive, in common with all other men, such gifts as the sun, the stars, the air, the winds, and the rain.²⁸⁵



283 [Lev. xxiv. 20. Deut. xix. 21.](#)

284 [Matt. v. 38-44.](#)

285 [Matt. v. 45.](#)

SECT. XIII. About the conjunction of male and female.

THE conjunction of man and woman, whereby mankind is propagated, is a thing that highly deserves to be taken care of by law; which that the heathen neglected is no wonder, when they relate stories of the whoredom and adulteries of those gods which they worshipped.²⁸⁶ And, which is worse, the conjunction of males with one another is defended by the examples of their gods;²⁸⁷ in the number of which, Ganymedes of old, and Antinous afterwards, were reckoned upon this account:²⁸⁸ which horrid crime is also often esteemed lawful amongst the Mahometans, Chinese, and other nations. The Greek philosophers seem to take great pains to put a virtuous name upon a vicious thing.²⁸⁹ The most eminent of which same Greek philosophers, recommending intercourse with women,²⁹⁰ what did they do else but turn a whole city into one common stew, when even brute creatures observe some sort of conjugal league?²⁹¹ How much more reasonable is it then, that man, who is the most divine creature, should not be born from an uncertain original, whereby the mutual affection betwixt parents and children is destroyed? The Hebrew law indeed forbade

105

106

286 See Euripides's Ione:— "I can't forbear The lewdness of Apollo to reprove, Who forces virgins to his nuptial bed, And murders his own children privately: Is this to practise virtue you enjoy? If mortals sin, you gods revenge the wrong; And is it just that you, who laws prescribe To all mankind, should live by none yourselves? Though it will never be, yet I must speak; If Phoebus, Neptune, and the King of gods, Should punish all unlawful marriages, None would remain to worship at their shrines." See this matter fully handled by Clemens, in his hortatory discourse; by Athenagoras, Tatian, Arnobius, book iv. Nazianzen, in his first against Julian, and Theodoret, discourse iii.

287 See this also, in the fore-mentioned places of Clemens and Theodoret.

288 Mentioned by Justin in his second Apologetic; by Clemens In his hortatory discourse; by Origen in his second and eighth books against Celsus; by Eusebius in his ecclesiastical history, iv. 8. by Theodoret, 8. and the historians of those times.

289 So indeed it was thought, not only by Lucian, in his little book concerning love but by Gregory Nazianzen, orat. iii. against Julian; and by Elias Cretensis, and Nonnus, upon him. And also by Cyril in his sixth book against Julian; and by Theodoret, very largely, in his thirteenth book to the Greeks. I cannot omit a place of Philo's, who had a great opinion of Plato, out of his book concerning a contemplative life: "Plato's feast is spent almost wholly upon love, not only of men eager after women, and women eager after men; for such desires may be satisfied by the law of nature; but of men after men, differing from themselves only in age; and if any thing be speciously said concerning love and heavenly Venus, those names are used only for a cover." Tertullian, concerning the soul, preferring the Christian wisdom to that of Socrates, adds, "Not bringing in new demons, but driving out the old; not corrupting youth, but instructing them in all the goodness of modesty."

290 See Plato, as in other places, so more particularly in his fifth Republic.

291 See Pliny, book x. chap. 34. "The actions of doves are mightily taken notice of by these, upon the same account; their customs are the same, but the highest degree of modesty belongs specially to them; adulteries are

all uncleanness, but a man was allowed to have more wives than one at a time,²⁹² and the husband had a power to put away his wife for any cause whatsoever;²⁹³ which is the custom at this day among the Mahometans: and formerly the Greeks and Latins took so great a liberty, that the Laconians and Cato permitted others to have their *wives* for a time.²⁹⁴ But the law of Christ, which is most perfect, strikes at the very root of vice, and accounts him guilty before God (who can see into and judge the hearts or men) that lusts after, though he has not committed, the crime;²⁹⁵ or that attempts the chastity of any woman, or looks upon her with such desires. And, because all true friendship is lasting, and not to be broke, it would, with very good reason, have that to be so which contains the union of their bodies, as well as the agreement of their minds;²⁹⁶ and which, without doubt, is more convenient for a right education of their children. Among the heathen, some few nations were content with one wife, as the Germans and Romans; and in this they are followed by the Christians:²⁹⁷ namely, that the wife, having resigned herself entirely to her husband, may be recompensed with a like return;²⁹⁸ that the government of the family may be better managed by one governor, and that different mothers might not bring a disturbance in amongst the children.²⁹⁹



not known to either of them; they do not violate the fidelity of wedlock.” Concerning the conjugal chastity of ring-doves, see Porphyry in his third book against eating living creatures.

292 This appears from [Deut. xvii. 16](#), [17. xxi. 15](#), [2 Sam. xii. 8](#). So the Hebrews understood the law; and Chrysostom, [1 Cor. xi](#). and Augustine, book iii. chap. 12. concerning the Christian doctrine; and others of the ancients. Josephus, who best understood the law, says in the seventeenth of his Antiquities, “It was due custom of our fathers to have many wives.”

293 [Deut. xxiv. 1, 2, 3, 4](#). [Levit. xxi. 14](#).

294 See Herodotus, book vi. and Plutarch, in his Cato Uticensis, and Lycurgus.

295 [Matt. v. 28](#).

296 [Matt. v. 32](#). [xix. 9](#).

297 Paul the apostle, [1 Cor. vii. 4](#). Lactantius’s Institutions, vi. 22. Hieronymus against Oceanus.

298 Sallust well expresses it in his Jugurthine war. “Amongst those that have many wives there is but little affection, because the mind is distracted with a multitude, so as to have none of them for an intimate companion; but they are all equally esteemed of no value.” Ammianus, concerning the Persians, book xxiii. “By means of various lusts, divided love grows faint.” And Claudian, in his Gildonic war:— —” They have a thousand marriages,

For they regard no ties, no sacred pledge,

But their affection is in number lost.”

299 Euripides, in his Andromache, rightly apprehends and expresses them both.

SECT. XIV. About the use of temporal goods.

TO come now to the use of those things which are commonly called goods; we find theft allowed by some heathen nations, as the Egyptians³⁰⁰ and Spartans;³⁰¹ and they who did not allow it in private persons, did scarce any thing in the public; as the Romans, of whom the Roman orator said, if every one should have his due restored to him, they must go back again to their cottages.³⁰² Indeed, there was no such thing amongst the Hebrews; but they were permitted to take usury of strangers, that the law might in some measure be fitted to their disposition;³⁰³ (and therefore, amongst other things, it promised riches to them that obeyed it.³⁰⁴ But the Christian law not only forbids all kind of injustice towards any persons;³⁰⁵ but also forbids us setting our affections upon perishing things;³⁰⁶ because our mind is of such a nature, that it cannot diligently attend to the care of two things, each of which requires the whole man, and which oftentimes draw him contrary ways: and besides, solicitousness in procuring and preserving riches,³⁰⁷ is attended with a certain slavery and uneasiness, which spoils that very pleasure which is expected from riches: but nature is satisfied with a very few things,³⁰⁸ and those such as can easily be procured, without any great labour or charge. And, if God has granted us something beyond this, we are not commanded to cast it into the sea, as some philosophers imprudently did;³⁰⁹ nor to let it lie useless by us, nor yet to lavish it away: but, out of it, to supply the wants of other men, either by giving³¹⁰ or lending to those that ask it;³¹¹ as becomes those who believe themselves not to be proprietors of these things,³¹² but only stewards and deputies of the most high God their parent; for a kindness well bestowed is a treasure full of good hope,³¹³ against which neither the wickedness of thieves, nor variety of accidents, can prevail any thing. An admirable example of which sincere and undissembled charity the first Christians afford us; when things were



300 See Diodorus Siculus's history, book i.

301 See Plutarch, in his *Lycurgus*.

302 Lactantius, in his epitome, chap. 1. cites the words of Tully to this purpose, out of his third Republic.

303 [Deut. xxiii. 19.](#)

304 [Levit. xxvi. 5.](#) [Deut. xxviii. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12.](#)

305 [Matt. vii. 12.](#) [Ephes. v. 3.](#)

306 [Matt. vi. 24.](#) and the following verses; [xiii. 22.](#) [Luke. viii. 14.](#) [1 Tim. vi. 9.](#)

307 [Matt. vi. 34.](#) [Phil. iv. 9.](#)

308 [1 Tim. vi. 7, 8.](#)

309 Laërtius and Suidas affirm this of Aristippus and Philostratus of Crates.

310 [Matt. v. 42.](#)

311 In the same [Matt. Luke vi. 35.](#)

312 [1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.](#)

313 [Matt. vi. 20.](#)

sent from so great a distance as Macedonia and Achaia,³¹⁴ in order to supply the want of those in Palestine; as if the whole world had been but one family. And here this caution is added also, in the law of Christ, that no hope of recompence or honour ought to diminish from our liberality;³¹⁵ because, if we have regard to any thing else but God, it takes away his acceptance.³¹⁶ And, lest any one should pretend, as is commonly done, to cloke his sparingness, as if he were afraid he should want what he has, when he comes to be an old man, or if any misfortune should befall him, the law promises, that a particular care shall be taken of those who keep these precepts:³¹⁷ and, that they may the more rely upon it, reminds them of the remarkable providence of God,³¹⁸ in providing for wild beasts and cattle, in adorning herbs and flowers; and that it would be an unworthy thing in us, not to believe so good, so powerful a God, nor to trust him any further than we would do a bad debtor, of whom we never think ourselves secure without a pledge.



314 [Rom. xv. 25, 28.](#) and the following verses. [2 Cor. ix. 1, 2, 2, 4.](#) [Philip. iv. 18.](#)

315 [Matt. vi. 1, 2.](#) [Luke xiv. 12.](#)

316 See the fore-cited place in [Matt.](#)

317 [Matt. vi. 32.](#) [Luke xii. 7. xxi. 18.](#)

318 [Matt. vi. 26, 28.](#)

SECT. XV. Concerning oaths.

OTHER laws forbid perjury; but this would have us entirely to abstain from oaths,³¹⁹ except upon necessity; and to have so great regard to truth in our common conversation, that there should be no need of requiring an oath of us.³²⁰

319 [Matt. v. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37.](#) [James v. 12.](#)

320 See the fore-mentioned place of [Matthew.](#)

SECT. XVI. Concerning other actions.

AND, indeed, there is nothing excellent to be found in the philosophic writings of the Greeks, or in the opinions of the Hebrews, or of any other nation, which is not contained here, and moreover ratified by divine authority. For instance; concerning modesty,³²¹ temperance,³²² goodness,³²³ moral virtue,³²⁴ prudence,³²⁵ the duty of governors and subjects,³²⁶ parents and children,³²⁷ masters and servants,³²⁸ husbands and wives:³²⁹ and particularly, abstaining from those vices which, under a spew of virtue, deceived many of the Greeks and Romans, viz. the desire of honour and glory.³³⁰ The sum of it is wonderful for its substantial brevity—that we should love God above all things, and our neighbour as ourselves;³³¹ that is, we should do to others as we would have them do to us.³³² Perhaps some may object against what we have now said of the excellency of Christ's commands, the great difference of opinions amongst Christians, from whence have arisen so many various sects: —



321 1 Pet. iii. 3.

322 Tit. ii. 12. 1 Tim. ii. 9.

323 2 Cor. vi. 6. Gal. v. 22. Coloss. iii. 12. 1 Cor. xiii. 4.

324 Phil. iv. 8. 1 Tim. ii. 2. iii. 4. Tit. ii. 7.

325 Matt. x. 16. Ephes. i. 8.

326 1 Tim. ii. 2. Rom. xiii. 1 Pet. ii. 13, 17.

327 Coloss. iii. 20, 21. Ephes. vi. 1, 2, 3, 4.

328 Ephes. vi. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Coloss. iii. 22, 23, 24, 25.

329 Ephes. v. 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 33. Coloss. iii. 18, 19. 1 Tim. ii. 12.

330 Matt. xviii. 4. xxiii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14. John v. 44. Ephes. iv. 2. Coloss. ii. 18, 23. 1 John ii. 16. Phil. ii. 3. 1 Thess. ii. 6. 1 Pet. i. 24. v. 5.

331 Matt. ix. 18. xxii. 37, 39. Luke x. 27. Rom. xiii. 9, 10, 11. Gal. v. 14. James ii. 8.

332 Matt. vii. 12. Luke vi. 31. This was commanded by the emperor Alexander; see Dion, and he that wrote the life of this emperor in Latin.

SECT. XVII. An answer to time objection drawn from the many controversies amongst Christians.

BUT the answer to this is evident: there are scarce any arts but the same thing happens to them, partly through the weakness of human nature, and partly because men's judgment is hindered by prejudices: but, for the most part, this variety of opinion is limited within certain bounds, in which men are agreed, and whereby they determine doubts: as in the mathematics, it is a dispute whether the circle can be squared or no; but whether, if you take equals from equals, the remainder will be equal, this admits of no dispute: and thus it is in natural philosophy, physic, and other arts. So the difference of opinions that is amongst Christians cannot hinder their agreement in the principal things; that is, those commands by which we have now recommended the Christian religion:³³³ and the certainty of these appears from hence, that those who, being highly enraged against one another, have sought for matter of disagreement, never ventured to go so far as to deny that these were the precepts of Christ; no, not even they who would not direct their lives according to this rule. And if any should attempt to contradict these, he ought to be looked upon to be like those philosophers who denied that snow was white. For as these were confuted by their senses, so are they by the consent of all Christian nations, and by those books which were wrote by the first Christians; and those after them, who were followed by learned men; and such who bore testimony to the faith of Christ by their death. For that which all these acknowledge to be the doctrine of Christ, ought to be accounted so, by all fair and equal judges; for the same reason that we believe Plato, Xenophon, and other disciples of Socrates, concerning the opinions of Socrates; and the schools of the stoics, for what Zeno delivered.



333 We may add also in those opinions that are necessary, and upon which the observation of commands depends; such as are mentioned in the most ancient creeds which are extant, in Irenæus and Tertullian, and what we now call the apostles' creed, as I have somewhat more fully shewn in that little piece annexed hereto, concerning the choice of our opinion, &c. sect. iv. *Le Clerc.*

SECT. XVIII. The excellency of the Christian religion farther proved from the excellency of its Teacher.

THE third thing wherein we said the Christian religion exceeds all other religions that are, or can be imagined, is the manner in which it was delivered and propagated: in the consideration of which particular, the first thing that offers itself is the Author of this doctrine. The authors of the Grecian wisdom and knowledge themselves confessed, that they alleged scarce any thing for certainty, because truth was sunk, as it were, to the bottom of a well;³³⁴ and the mind as dim-sighted, in regard to divine things, as the eyes of an owl in the sunshine.³³⁵ Beside, there was hardly any of them, but was addicted to some particular vice:³³⁶ some were flatterers of princes,³³⁷ others devoted to the embraces of harlots,³³⁸ others to snarling impudence,³³⁹ and one great argument of the envy and hatred they all had against one another is, their quarrelling about words or things of no moment;³⁴⁰ and as good an argument of their coldness and indifferency in the worship of God is, that they who believed that there was really but one God, did yet lay him aside, and paid divine worship to others, whom they believed to be no gods; making that only the rule of their religion which was

112

113

334 It was a saying of Democritus, "That truth lay at the bottom of a well," as we find in Tully's Academical Questions, and in other writers.

335 See Aristotle's Metaphysics, book ii. chap. 1. "As the eyes of a bat are dazzled at the light in the day-time, so is the understanding in our soul confounded at the plainest things in the world."

336 Socrates is most commended, by the consent of all; yet Cyril, in his sixth book against Julian, sets before us, in the words of Porphyry, the high degree of anger he discovered in his words and sayings.

337 Plato and Aristippus.

338 Zeno, the chief of the stoics, was addicted to the love of men; and Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Aristippus, and almost all of them, to the love of women; witness Athenæus's books, xii. and xiii. Laërtius and Lactantius. Theognis mentions it of himself in many places.

339 Whence they were called Cynics.

340 This is well observed by Timon Phliasius: "O wretched mortals, nought but sin and flesh, Always deceiv'd with words and fierce contests;

Vain men, like empty bladders, puff'd with wind." And again, "Sharp contest walks about with mighty noise; Sister of mortal hatred and confusion;

Till, wandering to and fro, at last she fix

Herself in human breasts, and raise their hopes." And again, "Who has enflam'd them with such deadly strife?

The noisy multitude, who silence hate,

From whom the plague of tattle has its rise." You will find these verses in Clemens, Strom. v. in Eusebius, at the end of his Preparation, and in Theodoret's second discourse.

publicly received.³⁴¹ And as for the reward of piety, they could affirm nothing for certain; as appears from the last dispute of Socrates, a little before his death.³⁴² Mahomet, the author of that religion which has spread itself so far, abandoned himself to lust all his life long,³⁴³ which his friends themselves do not deny. Neither did he give any assurance whereby it might appear that those rewards he promised, which consisted in feasts and women, would ever really be; since they do not pretend to say that he is restored to life again in his body; so far from that, that it now lies buried in Medina. But Moses, the Hebrew lawgiver, was an excellent person: however, entirely free from faults; for with great reluctance he would scarce undertake an embassy to the king of Egypt, though at the command of God;³⁴⁴ and he discovered some distrust of God's promise, concerning striking water out of the rock,³⁴⁵ as the Hebrews acknowledge. And he himself partook of scarce any of those rewards which he promised to his people by the law, being driven to and fro in desert places, by continual tumults,³⁴⁶ and never entering the happy land.³⁴⁷ But Christ is described by his disciples to be without any manner of sin:³⁴⁸ nor could he ever be proved to have committed any, by the testimonies of others:³⁴⁹ and whatever he commanded others, he performed himself;³⁵⁰ for he faithfully fulfilled all things that God commanded him; he was most sincere in the whole course of his life;³⁵¹ he was the most patient of injuries and torments, as is



341 Xenophon, in his sixth Memorab. recites the oracle by which the gods are commanded to be worshipped according to the laws of every city. Here we may repeat the words of Seneca, before quoted out of Augustine; after which Augustine adds these: "He worshipped that which he blamed; he did that which he condemned; and that which he found fault with, he paid adoration to." According to what Plato says, in his Timæus, and other places; and Porphyry in that place of Eusebius's Preparat. book iv. ch. 8. that it is dangerous to speak the truth, in divine matters, before the vulgar. The fear a which danger, both in the Greek and Latin, and barbarian philosophers, prevailed over the sincere profession of the truth; which thing alone is sufficient to hinder any one from thinking that such men were to be followed in every thing. Justin Martyr, in his exhortation to the Greeks, observes this of Plato.

342 See what we have before quoted concerning him.

343 See what is said in the sixth book.

344 [Exodus iv. 2, 10, 13, 14.](#)

345 [Numbers xx. 12.](#)

346 [Exodus xxxii.](#) [Numbers xi. xii. xiv. xvi. xx. xxv.](#)

347 [Numbers xx. 12.](#) [Deut. xxxiv. 4.](#)

348 [John viii. 40. x. 32.](#) [2 Cor. v. 21.](#) [1 Pet. ii. 22.](#) [Heb. iv.](#) That his piety was commended by the oracle among the Gentiles, we shall shew in the fourth book.

349 Origen observes this in his third book against Celsus.

350 Lactantius, in the end of his Institutions, well observes, "That he not only shewed the way, but walked before in it, lest any one should dread the path of virtue on the account of its difficulty."

351 [1 Peter ii. 22.](#)

evident from his punishment on the cross;³⁵² he was so great a lover of mankind, of his enemies, even of those by whom he was led to death, that he prayed to God for them.³⁵³ And the reward that he promised to his followers, he was possessed of himself, in a most eminent manner; as is declared and proved by certain testimony. Many saw, heard, and handled him, after he was returned to life again:³⁵⁴ he was taken up into heaven in the sight of twelve;³⁵⁵ and that he there obtained the highest power, is manifest from hence, that he endued his disciples with a power to speak those languages which they had never learned;³⁵⁶ and with other miraculous gifts,³⁵⁷ as he promised them, when he departed from them:³⁵⁸ all which put together shew, that there is no reason to doubt of his faithfulness, or of his power to recompense us with that reward he has promised. And hence it is we collect, that this religion exceeds all others in this particular also, that the Author of it performed himself what he commanded, and was possessed of what he promised.

From the wonderful propagation of this religion.

WE come now to the effects of the doctrine by him delivered; which, indeed, if rightly considered, are such, that if God has any regard or care of human affairs, this doctrine cannot possibly but be thought divine. It was agreeable to Divine Providence to cause that to spread the furthest, which is in itself best. And this has happened to the Christian religion, which we ourselves see is taught all over Europe; even the further corners of the north not exempted;³⁵⁹ and no less throughout all Asia,³⁶⁰ even in the islands in the sea belonging to



352 [Matthew xxvi. 50, 52.](#) [John viii. 23.](#) [Acts viii. 32.](#)

353 [Luke xxiii. 34.](#)

354 [John xx. 27, 28, 29.](#) [John i. Epist. i. Matt. xxviii.](#) [Mark. xvi.](#) [Luke xxiv.](#) [1 Cor. xv. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.](#)

355 [Mark xvi. 19.](#) [Luke xxiv. 51, 52.](#) [Acts i. 9, 10, 11.](#) also [Acts vii. 55.](#) [ix. 3, 4, 5.](#) [xxii. 6.](#) [1 Cor. xv. 8.](#)

356 [Acts ii. 3, 4. x. 46. xix. 6.](#) [1 Cor. xii. 10, 28, 30.](#) [xiii. 1, 8.](#) [xiv. 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 13, 14, 18, 19, 22, 23, 27, 39.](#)

357 [Acts v viii. ix. x. xi. xiii. xiv, xvi, xix. xx. xxi. xxviii.](#) [Rom. xv. 19.](#) [2 Cor. xii. 12.](#) [Heb. ii. 4.](#) The truth hereof his shewn by Justin in his dispute with Trypho; by Irenæus, book ii. by Tertullian, in his apology; by Origen, in his seventh book against Celsus; by Lactantius, and others.

358 [John xiv. 12. xvii. 18.](#) [Mark xvi. 17.](#)

359 See Adam Bremensis and Helmoldus, and the writers concerning Iceland.

360 See the acts of the general councils.

it;³⁶¹ through Egypt also,³⁶² and Ethiopia,³⁶³ and some other parts of Africa,³⁶⁴ and at last through America.³⁶⁵ Nor is this done now only, but was so of old; as the history of all ages testify, the books of the Christians, and the acts of synods; and at this day there is a tradition preserved amongst the barbarians, of the journeys and miracles of Thomas³⁶⁶ and Andrew,³⁶⁷ and the other apostles. And Clemens,³⁶⁸ Tertullian,³⁶⁹ and others, have observed, how far the name of Christ was famous in their times, amongst the Britons, Germans, and other distant nations.³⁷⁰ What religion is there that can compare with it for the extent of its

117

118

361 See Osorius in his Lusitanics.

362 This appears from the acts of the general councils; from the ancient ecclesiastical histories, and particularly Eusebius, vi. 31. out of the Coptic liturgy.

363 See Franciscus Alvaresius.

364 See Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustin, and the acts of the African councils: especially that council which is subjoined to the works of Cyprian.

365 See Acosta and others, who have wrote about the affairs of America.

366 See Abdias, book ix. Eusebius's ecclesiastical history, book i. towards the end; and book ii. chap. 1. and the beginning of book iii. Ruffinus, book x. chap. 9. Add to these, Osorius and Linschotius, concerning the affairs of East India; and Freita concerning the empire of the Lusitanians in Asia, The sepulchre of this apostle is now to be seen in the country of Coromandel.

367 See Eusebius, in the beginning of his fore-mentioned third book, and Origen upon Genesis.

368 He says, Strom. v. that Christ was known in all nations.

369 In his first book against the Jews. "In whom else have all nations believed, but in Christ, who lately came? In whom have all these nations believed—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers of Mesopotamia, Armenia, Phrygia, Cappadocia; the inhabitants of Pontus, and Asia, and Pamphylia; they that dwell in Egypt, and they who live in the country of Africa, beyond Cyrene; Romans and strangers; Jews and other nations in Jerusalem; the different sorts of people in Getulia; the many countries of the Moors; all the borders of Spain; the different nations of Gaul? And those places of Britain, which the Romans could not come at, are yet subject to Christ; the Sarmatæ, and Dæci, and Germans, and Scythians; and many other obscure nations, and many provinces and islands unknown to us, so many that they cannot be reckoned. In all which places the name of Christ, who lately came, reigns." Presently after, he shews how much larger the kingdom of Christ was in his time, that is, the end of the second century, than those of old, Nebuchadnezzar's, Alexander's, or the Romans: "The kingdom of Christ overspreads all places, is received every where, in all the above-named nations (he had mentioned the Babylonians, Parthians, Indians, Ethiopia, Asia, Germany, Britain, the Moors, Getulians, and Romans) it is in great esteem; he reigns every where, is adored in all places, is divided equally amongst them all."

370 Irenæus, who was ancients than Tertullian, book. i. chap. 3. "For though there be different languages, the power of tradition is the same; neither the churches founded in Germany have any other belief, or any other

tradition; nor yet those in Iberia, nor those among the Celtæ, nor those which are in the east, nor those in Egypt, nor those in Libya, nor those that are established in the middle of the world; but, like the sun, which God created, and is one and the same throughout the whole world, so the light, the preaching of the truth, shines every where, and enlightens all men, who are willing to come to the knowledge of the truth." And Origen's homily upon the ivth of Ezekiel: "The miserable Jews confess, that these things were foretold of the presence of Christ; but they are foolishly ignorant of his person, though they see what is said of him fulfilled; for when did the British land, before the coming of Christ, agree in the worship of one God? when did the country of the Moors, when did the whole world together, do so?" And Arnobius, book ii. "The powers which they saw with their eyes, and those unheard-of effects, which were openly produced, either by him, or which were proclaimed by his disciples, throughout the whole world, subdued those violent appetites, and caused nations and people, and those whose manners were very different, to consent, with one mind, to the same belief: for we might enumerate, and take into our account, those things which were done in India among the Seræ, Persians, and Medes, in Arabia, Egypt, in Asia, Syria, among the Galatians, Parthians, Phrygians, in Achaia, Macedonia, Epirus; in those islands and provinces surveyed by the east and western sun; and lastly in Rome, the mistress of the world." And Athanasius, In his synodical epistle, which we find in Theodoret, book iv. ch. 3. mentions the Christian churches in Spain, Britain, Gaul, Italy, Dalmatia, Mysia, Macedonia, Greece, Africa, Sardinia, Cyprus, Crete, Pamphylia, Lysia, Isauria, Egypt, Libya, Pontus, and Cappadocia. And Theodoret, in his eighth discourse against the Greeks, speaks thus concerning the apostles: "When they were conversant in the body, they went about, sometimes to one sort, and sometimes to another; sometimes they discoursed to the Romans, sometimes to the Spaniards, and sometimes to the Celtans; but after, they returned to him that sent them: all enjoyed their labours without exception; not only the Romans and they that love the Roman yoke, and were subject to their government, but also the Persians, and Scythians, and Massagetæ, and Sauromatæ, and Indians, and Ethiopians; and, to speak in one word, the borders of the whole world." And again, in his ninth book, amongst the converted nations he reckons the Persians, the Massagetæ, the Tibareni, the Hyrcani, the Caspians, and Scythians. Jerom, in the epitaph of Nepotian, reckons among the Christians, the Indians, Persians, Goths, Egyptians, Bessians, and the people clothed with skins: in his epistle to Læta, he reckons up the Indians, Persians, Ephioptions, Armenians, Huns, Scythians, and Getans: and, in his dialogue between an Orthodox man and a Luciferian, he mentions the Britons, Gauls, the east, the people of India, the Iberians, the Celtiberians, and the Ethiopians. And Chrysostom, in his sixth homily upon 1 Cor. says, "If they were not worthy to be believed in what they said, how should their writings have spread all over barbarous countries, even to the Indians, and those countries beyond the sea?" And again, in his last homily upon Pentecost: "The Holy Spirit descended in the shape of tongues, divided its doctrine among the several climates of the world; and by this gift of tongues, as it were by a particular commission, made known to every one the limits of that command and doctrine that was committed to him." And again, in his famous oration concerning Christ's being God: "We must say then, that a mere man could not, in so short a time, have overspread the world, both sea and land; nor have so called men to such things, who were withheld by evil customs, nay, possessed with wickedness; yet he was sufficient to deliver mankind from all these, not only Romans, but also Persians, and all barbarous nations." See also what follows, which is highly worth reading.

possession? If you answer, heathenism; that, indeed, has but one name, but is not one religion: for they do not all worship the same thing; for some worship the stars, others the elements, others beasts, others things that have no existence; neither are they governed by the same law, nor under one common master. The Jews, indeed, though very much scattered, are but one nation; however, their religion has received no remarkable increase since Christ: nay, their own law is made more known by the Christians than by themselves. Mahometanism is settled in very many countries, but not alone; for the Christian religion is cultivated in those same countries, and in some places by a greater number: whereas, on the contrary, there are no Mahometans to be found in many parts where the Christian religion is.

Considering the weakness and simplicity of those who taught it in the first ages.

We come next to examine in what manner the Christian religion made such a progress, that in this particular also it may be compared with others. We see most men are disposed to comply with the examples of kings and rulers, especially if they be obliged to it by law, or compelled by force. To these the religions of the pagans, and that of the Mahometans, owe their increase. But they who first taught the Christian religion were not only men without authority, but of low fortune, fishers, tent-makers, and the like: and yet, by the industry of these men, that doctrine, within thirty years, or thereabouts, spread not only through all parts of the Roman empire, but as far as the Parthians and Indians.³⁷¹ And not only in the very beginning, but, for almost three hundred years, by the industry of private persons, without any threats, without any enticements, nay, opposed as much as possible by the power of those who were in authority, this religion was propagated so far, that it possessed the greatest part of the Roman empire, before Constantine professed Christianity.³⁷² They among the Greeks, who delivered precepts of morality, at the same time rendered themselves acceptable by other arts; as the Platonics, by the study of geometry; the peripatetics, by the history of plants and animals; the stoics, by logical subtilty: the Pythagoreans, by the knowledge of numbers and harmony. Many of them were endued with admirable eloquence, as Plato, Xenophon, and Theophrastus. But the first teachers of Christianity had no such art: their speech was very plain, without any enticements:³⁷³ they declared only the precepts, promises, and threats in bare words; wherefore, since they had not in themselves any power, answerable to such a progress, we must of necessity allow that they were attended with miracles; or that the secret influence of God favoured their undertaking; or both.

371 [Rom. xv. 19.](#)

372 Tertullian said in his time, apology ii. "We are but of yesterday, and have filled all places belonging to you, your cities, islands, castles, towns, councils, your very camps, tribes, companies, the palace, senate and forum; we have left you only your temples."

373 This was wisely observed by Chrysostom, on [1 Cor. i. 17.](#) and by Theodorot, after the words now quoted.

SECT. XIX. And the great impediments that hindered men from embracing it, or deterred them from professing it.

To which consideration we may add this; that the minds of those who embraced the Christian religion, taught by these men, were not entirely free and unprejudiced from any established rule of religion, and consequently very pliable; as they were who first embraced the heathen rites and the law of Mahomet; and much less were they prepared by any foregoing institution; as the Hebrews were rendered fit for the reception of the law of Moses, by circumcision, and the knowledge of one God: but, on the contrary, their minds were filled with opinions, and had acquired habits, which are a second nature, repugnant to these new instructions; having been educated and confirmed by the authority of laws, and of their parents, in the heathen mysteries and Jewish rites. And besides this, there was another obstacle as great, namely, the most grievous sufferings, which it was certain they who professed Christianity must endure, or be in fear of, upon that account: for, since such sufferings are highly disagreeable to human nature, it follows, that those things which are the cause of such sufferings cannot be received without great difficulty. The Christians, for a long time, were kept out of all places of honour, and were moreover fined, had their goods confiscated, and were banished: but these were small things; they were condemned to the mines; had the most cruel torments, that it was possible to invent, inflicted upon them; and the punishments of death were so common, that the writers of those times relate, that no famine, no pestilence, no war, ever consumed more men at a time. Neither were they the ordinary kinds of death: but burning of them alive, crucifying them, and such like punishments;³⁷⁴ which one cannot read or think of without the greatest horror; and this cruelty, which, without any long interruption, and that not every where, continued in the Roman empire almost till the time of Constantine, and in other places longer, was so far from diminishing them, that, on the contrary, their blood was called the seed of the church, they so much more increased as they were cut off. Here, therefore, let us compare other religions with Christianity. The Greeks and other heathens, who are wont to magnify their own matters, reckon a very few that suffered death for their opinions; some Indian philosophers, Socrates, and not many more; and it can hardly be denied, but that, in these famous men, there was some desire of transmitting their fame to posterity. But there were very many of the common people, scarce known to their neighbours, among the Christians, who suffered death for their opinion; women, virgins, young men, who had no desire, nor probable hopes, that their name would continue long after them; and, indeed, there are but a few whose names remain in the martyrologies, in comparison of the number of them that suffered for this cause, and are reckoned



374 Domitius Ulpianus, a famous lawyer, wrote seven books about the punishments that Christians ought to have inflicted on them. Lactantius mentions them, book. v. chap. 11.

only by the heap.³⁷⁵ Further, very many of them might have escaped this punishment by some small dissimulation, such as throwing a little frankincense upon the altar; which cannot be affirmed of them who, whatever private opinions they had in their minds, yet in their outward actions conformed themselves to the customs of the vulgar. So that to suffer death for the honour of God could scarce be allowed to any but the Jews and Christians; and not to the Jews after Christ's time; and before, only to a very few, compared with the Christians; more of which suffered punishment for the law of Christ in one province, than ever there did Jews; all whose sufferings of this kind may almost be reduced to the times of Manasses and Antiochus. Wherefore, seeing the Christian religion, in this particular also, infinitely exceeds others, it ought justly to be preferred before them. It must be inferred from such a multitude, of every age and sex, in so many different places and times, who refused not to die for this religion, that there was some great reason for such a constant resolution; which cannot be imagined to be any other but the light of truth, and the Spirit of God.

An answer to those who require more and stronger arguments.

IF there be any one who is not satisfied with the arguments hitherto alleged for the truth of the Christian religion, but desires more powerful ones, he ought to know that different things must have different kinds of proof:³⁷⁶ one sort in mathematics, another in the properties of bodies, another in doubtful matters, and another in matters of fact. And we are to abide by that whose testimonies are void of all suspicion: which, if it be not admitted, not only all history is of no further use, and a great part of physic; but all that natural affection which is betwixt parents and children is lost, who can be known no other way.³⁷⁷ And it is the will of God, that those things which he would have us believe, so as that faith should be accepted from us as Obedience, should not be so very plain as those things we perceive by our senses, and by demonstration; but only so far as is sufficient to procure the belief, and

375 As the innocent company of three hundred at Carthage, mentioned in the xxivth Roman martyrology of Augustus; very many in Africa under Severus; under Valerian at Antioch; and in Arabia, Cappadocia, and Mesopotamia, in Phrygia, in Pontes, under Maximin; at Nicomedia, in Numidia, at Rome, in Thebais, Tyre, Trevers under Dioclesian, in Persia under Cabada and Sapoires. All which are mentioned in the martyrology, without any names.

376 See Aristotle's ethics to Nicomachus, book i. "It is sufficient, if a thing be made appear according to the subject matter of it; for the same evidence is not to be expected in all things." And in the latter part of his first *Metaphys.* the last chapter: "Mathematical certainty is not to be met with in all things." And Chalcidius on the *Timæus*, according to the opinion of Plato: "A disposition to believe precedes all doctrines; especially if they be asserted, not by common, but by great and almost divine men."

377 Thus Homer:—"No man for certain knows whose son he is." That is, with the most exact kind of knowledge.

persuade a man of the thing, who is not obstinately bent against it;³⁷⁸ so that the gospel is, as it were, a touchstone, to try men's honest dispositions by. For since those arguments, which we have brought, have gained the assent of so many good and wise men, it is very manifest that the cause of infidelity in others is not from the want of proof, but from hence, that they would not have that seem true which contradicts their passions and affections.³⁷⁹ It is a hard thing for them lightly to esteem of honours and other advantages; which they must do, if they would receive what is related concerning Christ, and, for that reason, think themselves bound to obey the precepts of Christ. And this is to be discovered by this one thing, that they receive many other historical relations as true, the truth of which is established only upon authorities of which there are no marks remaining at this time; as there is in the history of Christ, partly by the confession of the Jews which are now left, partly by the congregation of Christians every where to be found; for which there must of necessity have been some cause. And since the long continuance of the Christian religion, and the propagation of it so far, cannot be attributed to any human power, it follows, that it must be attributed to miracles; or, if any one should deny it to have been done by miracles, this very thing, that it should, without a miracle, gather so much strength and power, ought to be looked upon as greater than any miracle.³⁸⁰

124

125

378 There are two sorts of propositions in the Christian religion; one sort of which may be philosophically demonstrated, the other cannot. Of the former are such as these: the existence of God, the creation of the world, a Divine Providence; the goodness and advantage of the precepts of religion; all which are capable of a demonstration, and are actually demonstrated by Grotius and others; so that a man must renounce his reason, or else admit them. But those passions which are contrary to them hinder unbelievers from receiving them, because, if they should own them to be true, they must subdue those passions, which they are unwilling to do, because they have been so long accustomed to them. Of the latter sort are the historical facts upon which the truth of the gospel depends, and which are explained by Grotius, and proved by historical arguments. Which same arguments would be allowed to be good by unbelievers, in the same manner as they do the proofs of all those histories which they believe, though they did not see the facts, if they were not hindered by the prevalence of their passions; and which they must entirely subdue, if such arguments came once to take place. See a little book of mine, in French, concerning infidelity. *Le Clerc*.

379 Chrysostom treats very handsomely of this, in the beginning of *1 Cor. chap. 3*. And to Demetrius he says; "that they do not believe the commandments, proceeds from their unwillingness to keep them."

380 Chrysostom handles this argument on *1 Cor. ch. i.* towards the end; and Augustin, concerning the city of God, book xxii. chapter 6.

**THE TRUTH
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.**

BOOK III.

SECT. I. Of the authority of the books of the New Testament.

HE who is persuaded of the truth and excellency of that religion which Christians profess, having been convinced either by the arguments before offered, or by any other besides them, in order to understand all the several parts of it, he must go to the most ancient books which contain this religion; and they are what we call the books of the New Testament, or rather Covenant: for it is unreasonable for any one to deny that that religion is contained in those books, as all Christians affirm; since it is fit that every sect, good or bad, should be believed in this assertion, that their opinions are contained in this or that book; as we believe the Mahometans, that the religion of Mahomet is contained in the Alcoran: wherefore, since the truth of the Christian religion has been proved before, and at the same time it was evident that it was contained in these books, the authority of these books is sufficiently established by this single thing: however, if any one desire to have it more particularly made appear to him, he must first lay down that common rule amongst all fair judges, that he who would disprove any writing, which has been received for many ages, is obliged to bring arguments that may diminish the credibility of such a writing; which, if he cannot, the book is to be defended, as in possession of its own authority.³⁸¹



381 See Baldus in his rubric concerning the credibility of writings; and Gailus, book ii. Obs. cxlix. numb. 6 and 7, and those he there cites.

SECT. II. The books, that have any names affixed to them, were writ by those persons whose names they bear.

We say then, that the writings, about which there is no dispute amongst Christians, and which have any particular person's name affixed to them, are that author's whose title they are marked with; because the first writers, such as Justin, Irenæus, Clemens,³⁸² and others after them, quote these books under those names; and besides, Tertullian says,³⁸³ that in his time some of the original copies of those books were extant: and because all the churches received them as such, before there were any public councils held: neither did any heathens or Jews raise any controversy, as if they were not the works of those whose they were said to be. And Julian openly confesses,³⁸⁴ that those were Peter's, Paul's, Matthew's, Mark's, and Luke's, which were read by the Christians under those names. Nobody in his senses makes any doubt of Homer's or Virgil's works being theirs, by reason of the constant testimony of the Greeks concerning the one, and of the Latins concerning the other: how much more then ought we to stand by the testimony of almost all the nations in the world for the authors of these books?

127

382 There is only Clemens's epistle to the Corinthians extant, in which he quotes places of the New Testament, but does not name the writers: wherefore Clemens's name might have been omitted; and so might Justin's, who is not used to add the names. *Le Clerc.*

383 In his prescription against the heretics: "Let any one, who would exercise his curiosity principally in the affair of his salvation, let him run over the apostolical churches, over which the seats of the apostles have now the rule, in their respective places; in which the authentic letters themselves are recited." And why might not the hand of the apostles be then extant, when Quintilian says, that in his time Cicero's hand was extant; and Gellius says the same of Virgil's in his?

384 The place is to be seen in Cyril's tenth book.—(See also out annotations, in the dissertation on the four Evangelists, added to the Harmony of the Gospels. *Le Clerc.*)

SECT. III. The doubt of those books that were formerly doubtful, taken away.

THERE are, indeed, in the volume we now use, some books which were not equally received from the beginning; as the second of Peter,³⁸⁵ that of James and Jude, two under the name of John the presbyter, the Revelations, and the epistle to the Hebrews: however, they were acknowledged by ninny churches, as is evident from the ancient Christians, who use their testimony as sacred; which makes it credible, that those churches, which had not those books from the beginning, did not know of them at that time; or else were doubtful concerning them; but, having afterwards learned the truth of the thing, they began to use those books, after the example of the rest; as we now see done in almost all places: nor can there be a sufficient reason imagined why any one should counterfeit those books, when nothing can be gathered from them but what is abundantly contained in the other books that are undoubted.

385 However, Grotius himself doubted of this; the reason, of Which doubt he himself gives us, in the beginning of his annotations upon this epistle. But, though one or two epistles could be called in question, this would not render the rest doubtful; nor would any part of the Christian faith be defective, because it is abundantly delivered in other places. *Le Clerc.*

SECT. IV. The authority of those books which hare no name to them evident from the nature of the writings.

THERE is no reason why any one should detract from the credibility of the epistle to the Hebrews upon this account only, because we do not know who wrote it; and so likewise of the two epistles of John, and the Revelation, because some have doubted whether John the apostle wrote them, or another of the same name. For, in writers,³⁸⁶ the nature of the writings is more to be regarded than the name. Wherefore we receive many historical books, whose authors we are ignorant of, as that of Cæsar's Alexandrian war, viz. because we see, that, whoever the author was, he lived in those times, and was present at those matters; so likewise ought we to be satisfied, when those who wrote the books we are now speaking of, testify that they lived in the first age, and were endued with the apostolical gifts. And if any one should object against this, that these qualities may be feigned, as may the names in other writings, he would say a thing that is by no means credible, viz. that they, who every where press the study of truth and piety, should without any reason bring themselves under the guilt of a lie, which is not only abhorred by all good men, bat was punished with death by the Roman laws.³⁸⁷



386 It had been more proper to say *in writings*, or books, which is the meaning of Grotius, as appears from what follows. *Le Clerc*.

387 See L. Falsi Nominis. D. de Lege Cornelia; and Paul, book v. Sent. tit. xxv. sect. 10 and 11. See examples of this punishment, at the end of the books of Valerius Maximus, and in Capitolinus in Pertinax.

SECT. V. That these authors wrote what was true, because they knew the things they wrote about.

IT is certain, therefore, that the books of the New Testament were wrote by those whose names they bear, or by such persons as they profess themselves to be; and it is moreover evident that they had a knowledge of things they wrote about, and had no desire to say what was false; whence it follows, that what they wrote must be true, because every falsity either proceeds from ignorance, or from a ill intention. Matthew, John, Peter, and Jude, wore of the company of those twelve which Jesus chose to be witnesses of his life and doctrines; so that they could not want the knowledge of those things they relate:³⁸⁸ The same may be said of James, who either was an apostle, or, as others would have it, a near relation of Jesus,³⁸⁹ and made bishop of Jerusalem by the apostles. Neither could Paul be deceived, through ignorance, concerning those doctrines, which he professes were revealed to him by Jesus himself reigning in heaven; neither could he be deceived in the things which he performed himself; no more could Luke, who was his inseparable companion in his travels.³⁹⁰ This same Luke could easily know what he wrote concerning the life and death of Jesus, because he was born in a neighbouring place, and had travelled through Palestine, where, he says, he spake with them who were eye-witnesses of these things.³⁹¹ Without doubt there were many others (besides the apostles with whom he was acquainted) who were then alive, having been healed by Jesus, and who had seen him die, and come to life again. If we believe Tacitus and Suetonius, concerning those things which happened long before they were born, because we rely upon their diligent inquiry, how much more reasonable is it to believe this author, who says he had every thing from eye-witnesses? It is a constant tradition that Mark was a continual companion of Peter;³⁹² so that what he wrote is to be esteemed as if Peter himself, who could not be ignorant of those things, had dictated it: besides, almost every thing which he wrote is to be found in the writings of the apostles. Neither could the writer of the Revelations be deceived in those visions which he says were caused from heaven,³⁹³ nor he to the Hebrews, in those things which he professes he was taught either by the Spirit of God, or by the apostles themselves.³⁹⁴



388 [John xv. 27.](#) also [1 Epist. i. Acts i. 21, 22.](#)

389 So others, and they not a few, think; and St. Chrysostom every where. See Josephus also. (Add to these Eusebius, H. E. book ii. chap. 1 and 23.

390 See [Acts xx.](#) and the following; [Colossians iv. 14.](#) [2 Tim. iv. 11.](#) [Philem. 14.](#)

391 In the preface of him Gospel history.

392 Irenæus, book iii. ch. 1. and Clemens in his Hypotyposes, cited in Eusebius's eccles. hist.

393 [Rev. i. 1, 2. iv. 1.](#) and the following; [xxii. 18, 19, 20, 21.](#)

394 [Heb. ii. 4. v. 14. xiii. 7, 8, 23.](#)

SECT. VI. And because they would not say what was false.

THE other thing we affirmed, viz. that they would not speak an untruth, belongs to what was before treated of, when we shewed the credibility of the Christian religion in general, and of the history of Christ's resurrection. They, who would disprove witnesses in this particular relating to the disposition of their mind and will, must of necessity allege something to make it credible, that they set their mind against the truth. But this cannot be said here: for if any one should object that their own cause was concerned, he ought to examine upon what account it was their cause; certainly nor for the sake of getting any advantage, or shunning any danger; when, on the account of this profession, they lost all advantages, and there were no dangers which they did not expose themselves to. It was not therefore their own cause, unless out of reverence to God, which certainly does not induce any man to tell a lie, especially in a matter of such moment, upon which the eternal salvation of mankind depends. We are hindered from believing such a wicked thing of them, both by their doctrines, which are in every part full of piety,³⁹⁵ and by their life, which was never accused of any evil fact, no, not by their enemies, who only objected their unskilfulness against them, which is not at all apt to produce a falsity. If there had been in them tile least dishonesty, they would not have set down their own faults to be eternally remembered; as in the flight of them all, when Christ was in danger,³⁹⁶ and in Peter's thrice denying him.³⁹⁷



395 And abhor lying, [John xiv. 17. xv. 26. xvi. 13. xvii. 17, 19. viii. 37. Acts xxvi. 25. Rom. i. 25. 2 Thess. ii. 10. 1 John i. 6, 8. ii. 4, 21. 2 Cor. vi. 8. Ephes. iv. 15, 25. Colos. iii. 9. Rev. xxii. 15. 2 Cor. xi. 31. Gal. i. 20](#)). Observe how industriously St. Paul distinguishes those things which are his own, and those which are the Lord's, [1 Cor. vii. 10, 12.](#) how Cautious in speaking of what he saw, whether he saw them in the body, or out of the body, [2 Cor. xi. 2.](#)

396 [Matt. xxvi. 31, 56.](#)

397 [Matt. xxvi. 69,](#) and the following; [Mark xiv. 66,](#) and the following; [Luke xxii. 54,](#) and the following.

SECT. VII. The credibility of these writers further confirmed, from their being famous for miracles.

BUT, on the contrary, God himself gave remarkable testimonies to the sincerity of them, by working miracles, which they themselves and their disciples publicly avouched, with the highest assurance;³⁹⁸ adding the names of the persons and places, and other circumstances; the truth or falsity of which assertion might easily have been discovered by the magistrate's inquiry; amongst which miracles, this is worthy observation, which they constantly affirmed,³⁹⁹ viz. their speaking languages they had never learned, before many thousand people, and healing in a moment bodies that were diseased, in the sight of the multitude; nor were they at all afraid, though they knew at that time that the Jewish magistrates were violently set against them, and the Roman magistrates very partial, who would not overlook any thing that afforded matter of traducing them as criminals, and authors of a new religion: nor did any of the Jews or heathens, in those nearest times, dare to deny that miracles were done by these men: nay, Phlegon, who was a slave of the emperor Adrian, mentions the miracles of Peter in his annals:⁴⁰⁰ and the Christians themselves, in those books wherein they give an account of the grounds of their faith, before the emperors, senate, and rulers, speak of these facts as things known to every body, and about which there could be no doubt:⁴⁰¹ moreover, they openly declared, that the wonderful power of them remained in their graves for some ages;⁴⁰² when they could not but know, if it were false, that they could easily be disproved by the magistrates, to their shame and punishment. And these miracles



398 See the Acts of the Apostles throughout, and [2 Cor. xii. 12.](#)

399 The places are quoted before.

400 Book xiii. As Origen says in his second book against Celsus. This is that Phlegon whose remains we have yet concerning miracles, and long-lived men.

401 The places are very many, especially in Origen. See the whole eighth chapter of Augustine's twenty-second book of the city of God.

402 The miracles at the sepulchres of holy men then began to be boasted of, when the Christians, having the power in their hands, began to make an advantage of the dead bodies of martyrs and others that were buried in their churches. Wherefore I would not have this argument made use of, lest we diminish from the credibility of certain miracles, by these doubtful or fictitious ones. Every one knows how many stories are related after the fourth century about this matter. But Origen does not mention any such miracles; but, in his seventh book against Celsus, says, "Very many miracles of the Holy Spirit were manifested at the beginning of Jesus's doctrine, and after his ascension, but afterwards they were fewer; however, there are now some footsteps of them in some few, whose minds are purified by reason, and their actions agreeable thereto." Who can believe that so many miracles should be done in one or two centuries after Origen, when there was less need of them? Certainly it is as reasonable to derogate from the credibility of the miracles of the fourth and fifth centuries, as it would be impudent to deny the miracles of Christ and his apostles. These miracles could not be asserted without danger;

(now mentioned) at their sepulchres were so common, and had so many witnesses, that they forced Porphyry to confess the truth of them.⁴⁰³ These things which we have now alleged ought to satisfy us; but there are abundance more of arguments, which recommend to us the credibility of these books:—

those could not be rejected without danger, nor be believed without profit to those who perhaps forged them; which is a great difference. *Le Clerc.*

403 See Cyril's tenth book against Julian, and Jerom against a, book of Vigilantius.

***SECT. VIII. And of their writings; because in them are contained many things
which the event proved to be revealed by a Divine Power.***

FOR we find in them many predictions concerning things which men could not possibly know of themselves, and which were wonderfully confirmed by the event; such as the sudden and universal propagation of this religion;⁴⁰⁴ the perpetual continuance of it;⁴⁰⁵ that it should be rejected by very many of the Jews,⁴⁰⁶ and embraced by strangers;⁴⁰⁷ the hatred of the Jews against those who professed this religion;⁴⁰⁸ the severe punishments they should undergo, upon the account of it;⁴⁰⁹ the siege and destruction of Jerusalem and the temple,⁴¹⁰ and the sore calamities of the Jews.⁴¹¹



404 [Matt. xiii. 33.](#) and following verses. [Luke x. 18.](#) [John xii. 32.](#)

405 [Luke i. 33.](#) [Matt. xxviii. 20.](#) [John xiv. 16.](#)

406 [Matt. xxi. 33.](#) and following verses; [xxii. at the beginning;](#) [Luke xv. 11.](#) and following verses.

407 In the same places, and also [Matt. viii. 11.](#) [xii. 21.](#) [xxi. 43.](#)

408 [Matt. x. 17.](#)

409 [Matt. x. 21,](#) [39.](#) [xxiii. 34.](#)

410 [Matt. xxiii. 38.](#) [xxiv. 16.](#) [Luke xiii. 34.](#) [xxi. 24.](#)

411 [Matt. xxi. 33.](#) and following verses; [xxiii. 34.](#) [xxiv. 20.](#)

SECT. IX. And also from the care, that it was fit God should take, that false writings should not be forged.

TO what has been said may be added, that, if it be granted that God takes care of human affairs, and especially those that concern his own honour and worship, it is impossible he should suffer such a multitude of men, who had no other design than to worship him with sincerity, to be deceived by false books. And, after there did arise several sects in Christianity, there was scarce any found, who did not receive either all or most of these books, except a few which do not contain any thing particular in them; which is a very good argument why we should think that nothing in these books could be contradicted; because those sects were so inflamed with hatred against each other, that whatsoever pleased one, for that very reason displeased another.

SECT. X. A solution of that objection, that many books were rejected by some.

THERE were, indeed, amongst those who were willing to be called Christians, a very few who rejected all those books which seem to contradict their particular opinion; such as they who, out of hatred to the Jews, spoke ill of the God of the Jews, of the Maker of the world, and of the law;⁴¹² or, on the contrary, out of fear of the hardships that the Christians were to undergo, sheltered themselves under the name of Jews,⁴¹³ that they might profess their religion without punishment.⁴¹⁴ But these very men were disowned by all other Christians,⁴¹⁵ every where, in those times when all pious persons, that differed from one another, were very patiently born with, according to the command of the apostles.⁴¹⁶ The first sort of these corrupters of Christianity are, I think, sufficiently confuted above, where we have shown that there is but one true God, whose workmanship the world is: and indeed it is sufficiently evident from those very books which they, that they might in some measure appear to be Christians, receive; such as the gospel of St. Luke in particular:⁴¹⁷ it is, I say, evident that Christ preached the same God which Moses and the Hebrews worshipped. We



412 See Irenæus, book i. chap. 29. Tertullian against Marcion, and Epiphanius concerning the same.

413 See Gal. ii. 11. vi. 13. 14. Philip. iii. 18. Irenæus, book i. chap. 26. Epiphanius concerning the Ebionites.

414 Acts ix. 20. xiii. and many times in that book. Philo against Flaccus; and concerning the embassy. Josephus every where. To which may be added L. Generaliter, D. de Decurionibus, and lib. i. C. de Judæis. Tertullian, in his apology, says, "But the Jews read their law openly; they generally purchase leave by a tribute, which they gather upon all sabbath-days."

415 Tertullian, in his first against Marcion, says, "You cannot find any church of apostolical order, who are not Christians out of regard to the Creator."

416 See what will be said of this matter at the end of the sixth book. Add also Irenæus's epistle to Victor, and what Jerom writes concerning it in his catalogue; and Cyprian in his African council, "Judging no man, nor removing any one from the right of communion, for his differing in opinion."

417 Tertullian, in his sixth book against Marcion, makes it appear very plainly.

shall have a better opportunity to confute the other sort, when we come to oppose those who are hews, and willing to be called so. In the mean time I shall add only this; that the impudence of those men is very surprising who undervalue the authority of Paul, when there was not any one of the apostles who founded more churches, nor of whom there were so many miracles related, at that time when, as was before observed, the facts might be easily inquired into. And, if we believe his miracles, what reason is there why we should. not believe him in his heavenly visions, and in his receiving his instructions from Christ? If he was so beloved of Christ, it cannot possibly be that he should teach any thing disagreeable to Christ, that is, any thing false; and that one thing which they find fault with in him, namely, his opinion concerning the freedom procured to the Hebrews, from the rites formerly enjoined by Moses, there could be no reason for his teaching it but the truth; for he was circumcised himself,⁴¹⁸ and observed most of the law of his own accord:⁴¹⁹ and, for the sake of the Christian religion, he performed things much more difficult, and underwent things much harder than the law commanded, or than he had reason to expect. upon the account of it;⁴²⁰ and he was the cause of his disciples doing and bearing the same things:⁴²¹ whence it is evident, he did not deliver any thing to please the ears of his hearers. or for their profit; when he taught them, instead of the Jewish sabbath, to spend every day in divine worship;⁴²² instead of the small expence the law put them to, to bear the loss of all their goods;⁴²³ and instead of offering beasts to God, to offer their own blood to him.⁴²⁴ And Paul himself openly assures us, that Peter, John, and James, gave him their right hands, in token of their friendship with him; ⁴²⁵ which, if it had not been true, he would not have ventured to say so, when they were alive, and could have convicted him of an untruth. Except only these, therefore, which I have now mentioned, who scarce deserve the name of Christians, the manifest consent of all other assemblies, in receiving these books, beside what has been already said concerning the miracles which were done by the writers of them, and the particular care of God about things of this nature, is sufficient to induce all impartial men to give credit to these relations; because they are ready to believe many other historical books

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418 [Philip. iii. 5.](#)

419 [Acts xvi. 3. xx. 6. xxi.](#) and the following chapter.

420 [2 Cor. xi. 23.](#) and the following verses; and every where is the Acts. See also [1 Cor. ii. 3.](#) [2 Cor. xi. 30. xii. 10.](#)

421 [Acts xx. 29.](#) [Rom. v. 3. viii. 12.](#) [2 Cor. i. 4, 8. ii. 4. vi. 4.](#) [1 Thess. i. 6.](#) [2 Thess. i. 6.](#)

422 [Acts ii. 46. v. 42.](#) [1 Tim. v. 5.](#) [2 Tim. i. 3.](#)

423 [2 Cor. vi. 4. xii. 10.](#)

424 [Rom. viii. 36.](#) [2 Cor. iv. 11.](#) [Philip. i. 20.](#)

425 [Gal. ii. 9.](#) And [1 Cor. iv. 11.](#) [2 Cor. xi. 5. xii. 11.](#)

which have not any testimonies of this kind; unless very good reason can be given to the contrary; which cannot be done here:—

SECT. XI. An answer to the objection, of some things being contained in these books that are impossible.

FOR, if any one should say, that there are some things related in these books that are impossible to be done, we have before shewn, that there are some things which are impossible to be done by men, but are possible with God;⁴²⁶ that is, such as do not include any contradiction in themselves; amongst which things are to be reckoned those which we account most wonderful, the power of working miracles, and calling the dead to life again: so that this objection is of no force.

SECT. XII. Or disagreeable to reason.

NOR is there more heed to be given to them who say, that there are some doctrines to be found in these books which are inconsistent with right reason: for, first, this may be disproved by that great multitude of ingenious, learned, and wise men, who have relied on the authority of these books from the very beginning: also, every thing that has been shown in the first book to be agreeable to right reason, viz. that there is a God, and but one, a most perfect Being, all-powerful, loving, wise, and good; that all things which are, were made by him; that his care is over all his works, particularly over men; that he can reward those that obey him after this life; that we are to bridle sensual appetites; that there is a natural relation betwixt men, and therefore they ought to love one another: all these we may find plainly delivered in these books. To affirm any thing more than this for certain, either concerning the nature of God, or concerning his will, by the mere direction of human reason, is an unsafe and fallible thing;⁴²⁷ as we may learn from the many opinions of the schools different from one another, and of all the philosophers. Nor is this at all to be wondered at; for, if they who dispute about the nature of their own minds, fall into such widely different opinions,⁴²⁸ must it not necessarily be much more so with them who would determine any thing concerning the Supreme Mind, which is placed so much out of our reach? If they who understand human affairs affirm it dangerous to pry into the councils of princes,⁴²⁹ and that therefore we ought not to attempt it, who is sagacious enough to hope, by his own conjectures, to find out which it is that God will determine of the various kinds of those things that he can freely will! Therefore Plato said very well, that none of these things could be known without a revelation:⁴³⁰ and there can be no revelation produced, which can be proved truly to be such by greater testimonies than those contained in the books of the New Testament. There is so far from being any proof, that it has never yet been asserted that God ever declared any thing to man, concerning his nature, that was contradictory to these books; nor can there be any later declaration of his will produced that is credible. And if any thing was commanded or allowed, before Christ's time, of those sort of things which are plainly indifferent, or certainly not at all obligatory of themselves, nor plainly evil, this does not oppose these books; because, in such things, the former laws are nulled by the latter.⁴³¹

427 Matt. xi. 27. Rom. xi. 33, 34, 35. 1 Cor. ii. 11, 16.

428 See Plutarch's works, book iv. or the opinions of the philosophers. And Stobæus's physics, chap. xi.

429 Tacitus says so in the vith of his annals.

430 The place is in his Phædon, and also in Timæus. It was well said by Ambrose, "Who should I rather believe concerning God, than God himself?"

431 "The latter constitutions are more valid than the former." It is a saying of Modestinas, L. ultima, D. de Constitutionibus Principum. Tertullian, "I think (says he) that in human constitutions and decrees, the latter are more bidding than the former." And in his apology: "Ye lop and hew down the ancient and foul wood of

SECT. XIII. An answer to this objection, that some things are contained in these books which are inconsistent with one another.

IT is objected by some, that the sense of these books is sometimes very different: but whoever fairly examines this matter will find, that, on the contrary, this is an addition to the other arguments for the authority of these books; that in those places which contain any thing of moment, whether in doctrine or history, there is every where such a manifest agreement, as is not to be found in any other writers of any sect, whether they be Jews,⁴³² or Greek philosophers,⁴³³ or physicians,⁴³⁴ or Roman lawyers;⁴³⁵ in all which we very often find, that not only they of the same sect contradict one another, as Plato and Xenophon do,⁴³⁶ but very often the same writer sometimes asserts one thing, and sometimes another;⁴³⁷ as if he had forgot himself, or did not know which to affirm: but these writers, of whom we are speaking, all urge the same things to be believed, deliver the same precepts concerning the life of Christ, his death, and return to life again: the main and principal things are every where the same. And as to some very minute circumstances, which make nothing towards the main thing, we are not wholly at such a loss for a fair reconciliation of them, but that it may easily be made; though we are ignorant of some things, by reason of the similitude of things that were done at different times, the ambiguity of names, one man's or place's having many names, and such like. Nay, this very thing ought to acquit these writers of all suspicion of deceit; because they who bear testimony to that which is false are used to relate all things so by agreement, that there should not be any appearance of difference.⁴³⁸ And if, upon the



the laws, by the new axes of the decrees and edicts of the princes." And concerning baptism, "In all things we are determined by the latter; the latter things are more binding than those that went before." Plutarch, Sympos. ix. "In decrees and laws, in compacts and bargains, the latter are esteemed stronger and firmer than the former.

432 The different opinions amongst whom, as they are to be seen in other places, so likewise in Manasses, the son of Israel, a very learned man in this sort of learning, in his books of the creation and resurrection.

433 See the fore-cited book of the opinion of the philosophers.

434 See Galen of sects, and of the best sect; and Celsus of physic, is the beginning; to which the Spagirici may be added.

435 There was a remarkable difference of old between the Sabiniani and Proculiani; and now betwixt those who follow Bartolus and his followers, and those who follow Cujacius and others who were more learned. See Gabriel's common, more common, and most common sentences.

436 See Xenophon's epistle to Æschines, the disciple of Socrates. Athenæus xi. Laërtius's life of Plato; and Gellius, book xiv.

437 Many have shewn this of Aristotle; and others, of the Roman lawyers.

438 This is what the emperor Adrian affirms; in witnesses, we are to examine whether they offer one and the same premeditated speech; L. Testium, D. de Testibus. Speculator, lib. i. part. v. de Teste in pr. n. 81. A very exact knowledge of all circumstances is not necessary in a witness. See [Luke i. 56. iii. 23. John ii. 6. vi. 10, 19. xix. 14.](#)

account of some small difference, which cannot be reconciled, we must immediately disbelieve whole books, then there is no book, especially of history, to be believed; and yet Polybius, Halicarnassensis, Livy, and Plutarch, in whom such things are to be found, keep up their authority amongst us in the principal things; how much more reasonable then is it, that such things should not destroy the credibility of those whom we see, from their own writings, have always a very great regard to piety and truth! There remains another way of confuting testimonies—from contrary external testimonies:—



SECT. XIV. An answer to the objection from external testimonies: where it is shewn that they make more for these books.

BUT I confidently affirm that there are no such things to be found; unless any one will reckon amongst these what is said by those who were born a long while after, and they such who professed themselves enemies to the name of Christ, and who therefore ought not to be looked upon as witnesses. Nay, on the contrary, though there is no need of them, we have many testimonies which confirm some parts of the history delivered in these books. Thus, that Jesus was crucified, that miracles were done by him and his disciples, both Hebrews and heathens relate. Most clear testimonies of Josephus, published a little more than forty years after Christ's death, are now extant, concerning Herod, Pilate, Festus, Felix, John the baptist, Gamaliel, and the destruction of Jerusalem; which are exactly agreeable to what we find amongst the writers of the Talmud concerning those times: the cruelty of Nero towards the Christians is mentioned by Tacitus: and formerly there were extant books of private persons, such as Phlegon,⁴³⁹ and the public acts, to which the Christians appealed;⁴⁴⁰ wherein they agreed about the star that appeared after the birth of Christ;⁴⁴¹ about the earthquake, and the preternatural eclipse of the sun at full moon, about the time that Christ was crucified.



439 Book xiii. of his Chronicon or Olympiads, in these words, "In the fourth year of the CCIId Olympiad, there happened the greatest eclipse of the sun that ever was known; there was such a darkness of night at the sixth hour of the day, that the stars were seen in the heavens; and there was a great earthquake in Bithynia, which overturned a great part of Nicæa." These words are to be seen in Eusebius's and Jerom's Chronicon. And Origen mentions the same thing, Tract xxxv. upon Matt. and in his second against Celsus.

440 See Tertullian's apology, c. xxi. "This event which has befallen the world, you find related in your mystical books."

441 Chalcidius the Platonist, in his commentary on Timæus: "There is another more holy and more venerable history, which relates the appearance of a new star, not to foretel diseases and death, but the descent of a venerable God; who was to preserve mankind, and to shew favour to the affairs of mortals; which star the wise men of Chaldæa observing as they travelled in the night, and being very well skilled in viewing the heavenly bodies, they are said to have sought after the new birth of this God and having found that majesty in a child, they paid him worship, and made such vows as were agreeable to so great a God."

SECT. XV. An answer to the objection of the Scripture being altered.

I SEE no other objection can be made against these books, unless it be that they have not continued to be the same as they were at the beginning. It must be owned, that, as in other books, so in these it might happen, and has happened, that, through carelessness or perverseness in the transcribers, some letters, syllables, or words, may be changed, omitted, or added. But it is very unreasonable, that, because of such a difference of copies,⁴⁴² which could not but happen in so long time, there should arise any controversy about the Testament or book itself; because both custom and reason require that that should be preferred before the rest which is to be found in the most ancient copies. But it can never be proved that all the copies are corrupted by fraud, or any other way, especially in those places which contain any doctrine, or remarkable point of history; for there are no records that tell us that they were so, nor any witnesses in those times: and if, as we before observed, any thing be alleged by those who lived a long time after, and who shew the most cruel hatred against those who were defenders of these books; this is to be looked upon as reproach, and not testimony. And this which we have now said may suffice in answer to those who object that the scripture may have been altered: because he that affirms this, especially against a writing which has been received so long and in so many places, ought himself to prove that which he presumes.⁴⁴³ But, that the folly of this objection may more plainly appear, we will shew that that which they imagine to be, neither is, nor can be done. We have before proved these books to have been wrote by those whose names they bear; which being granted, it follows that one book is not forged for the sake of another. Neither is any remarkable passage altered; for such an alteration must have something designed by it, and then that part would plainly differ from those other parts and books which are not altered, which is no where to be seen; nay, as we observed, there is a wonderful harmony in the sense every where. Moreover, as soon as any of the apostles, or apostolical men, published any thing, doubtless the Christians took great care to have many copies of it, as became pious persons, and such as were desirous of preserving and propagating the truth to posterity; and these were therefore dispersed as far as the name of Christ extended itself, through Europe, Asia, and Egypt, in which places the Greek language flourished; and, as we before observed, some of the original copies were preserved for two hundred years. Now, no book, of which so many copies had been taken,



442 This is now very manifest, from the most accurate collection of the various readings of the New Testament, and especially from the edition of dr. Mills. Though there is a great variety, yet no new doctrine can be raised from thence, nor no received one confuted; no history of any moment, in regard to the truth of the Christian religion, which was before believed from the books of the New Testament, is on that account to be rejected; nor any that was before unknown, to be collected from the various readings. And what is said of the books of the New Testament, the same we are to conceive said of the Old Testament. *Le Clerc.*

443 L. ult. C. de Edicto Divi Adriani tollendo.

that were kept, not by some few private persons, but by the care of whole churches, can be corrupted.⁴⁴⁴ To which we may add, that in the very next ages these books were translated into the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Latin tongues: which versions are now extant, and do not any where differ from the Greek books in any thing of moment. And we have the writings of those who were taught by the apostles themselves, or their disciples, who quote a great many places of these books, in that sense which we now understand them. Nor was there at that time any one in the church of so great authority as to have been obeyed, if he had designed to alter any thing; as is sufficiently manifest from the liberty taken by Irenæus, Tertullian, and Cyprian, to differ from those who were of the highest rank in the church. And, after the times now mentioned, many others followed, who were men of great learning and as great judgment, who, after a diligent inquiry, received those books, as retaining their original purity. And further, what we now said concerning the different sects of Christians may be applied here also; that all of them, at least all that own God to be the Creator of the world, and Christ to be a new lawgiver, make use of these books as we now have them. If any attempted to put in any thing, they were accused of forgery by the rest. And that no sect was allowed the liberty to alter these books according to their own pleasure, is sufficiently evident from hence, that all sects fetched their arguments against the rest from hence. And what we hinted concerning the Divine Providence, relates as much to the principal parts as to the whole books; that it is not agreeable thereto that God should suffer so many thousand men, who were regardful of piety, and sought after eternal life with a sincere intention, to fall into an error that they could not possibly avoid. And thus much may suffice for the books of the New Testament, which, if they were alone extant, were sufficient to teach us the true religion.



444 That is, so as that it should run through all the copies, and corrupt all the versions: for otherwise wicked men, who are obstinately bent on their own opinions, may here and there corrupt their own copies; as not only Marcion did, but also some library-keepers, who had a better judgment; as we have shewn in our *Ars Critica*, part iii. sect. i. ch. 14. *Le Clerc*.

SECT. XVI. The authority of the books of the Old Testament.

BUT, since God has been pleased to leave us the records of the Jewish religion, which was of old the true religion, and affords no small testimony to the Christian religion, it is not foreign to our purpose to see upon what foundation the credibility of these is built. That these books are theirs to whom they are ascribed, appears in the same manner as we have proved of our books. And they, whose names they bear, were either prophets, or men worthy to be credited; such as Esdras, who is supposed to have collected them into one volume, at that time when the prophets Haggai, Malachi, and Zecharias, were yet alive. I will not here repeat what was said before in commendation of Moses. And not only that first part delivered by Moses, as we have shewn in the first book, but the later history, is confirmed by many pagans. Thus, the Phœnician annals mention the names of David and Solomon,⁴⁴⁵ and the



445 See what Josephus cites out of them, book viii. chap. 2. of his ancient history; where he adds, that if any one would see the copies of those epistles which Solomon and Hirom wrote to each other, they may be procured of the public keepers of the records at Tyrus. (We must be cautious how we believe this; however, see what I have said upon [1 Kings v. 3.](#)) There is a remarkable place concerning David, quoted by Josephus, book vii. chap. 6. of his ancient history, out of the fourth of Damascenus's history: "A long while after this, there was a certain man of that country, who was very powerful, his name was Adadus, who reigned in Damascus, and the other parts of Syria, except Phœnicie: he waged war with David, king of Judæa, and having fought many battles, the last was at Euphrates, where he was overcome: he was accounted one of the best kings, for strength and valour: after his death, his children reigned for ten generations, each of them continuing his father's government and name, in the same manner as the Egyptian kings are called Ptolemies. The third being the most potent of them all, being willing to recover the victory his grandfather had lost, made war upon the Jews, and laid waste that which is now called Samaria." The first part of this history we have in [2 Sam. viii. 5.](#) [1 Chron. xviii.](#) and the latter part in [1 Kings xx.](#) This Adadus is called by Josephus, *Adar*; and *Adores* by Justin, out of Trogus. Eusebius, in his Gospel Preparation, book iv. chapter 30. tells us more things concerning David, out of Eupolemus. And the fore-mentioned Josephus. in the same chapter, and in his first against Appion, brings this place out of Dius's Phœnician history: "After Abibalus's death, his son Hirom reigned; this man increased the eastern part of the city, and much enlarged the city; and he joined Jupiter Olympius's temple to the city, which before stood by itself in an island, by filling up the space between; and he adorned it with the gifts of gold offered to the gods; he also went up to Libanus, and cut down wood to adorn the temple with. And they say that Solomon, who reigned in Jerusalem, sent riddles to Hirom, and received some from him; and he that could not resolve the riddles was to pay a large sum of money. Afterwards Abdemonus, a man of Tyre, resolved the riddles that were proposed, and sent others, which Solomon not resolving, paid a large sum of money to Hirom." He afterwards adds a famous place of Menander, the Ephesian, who wrote the affairs of the Greeks and barbarians. "After Abibalus's death, his son Hirom succeeded in the government; he lived thirty-four years, and inclosed a large country, and erected the golden pillar in Jupiter's temple. He afterwards cut down wood from the mountain called Libanus, cedar trees for the roof of the temple, and pulled down the old temples, and built new. He consecrated the grove of Hercules and Astarte. He first laid the foundation of Hercules's in the month Peritius, and afterwards Astarte's,

about the time that he invaded the Tityans for not paying tribute, and returned after having reduced them. About this time there was one Abdemonus, a young man, who overcame, in explaining the riddles proposed by Solomon, the king of Jerusalem. The time from this king, to the building of Carthage, is reckoned thus: After Hirom's death, Beleazar his son succeeded in the kingdom; who lived forty-three years, and reigned seven. After him was his son Abdastratus, who lived twenty-nine years, and reigned nine. This man was slain by the four children of his nurse, who lay in ambush for him; the eldest of which reigned twelve years. After these was Astartus, the son of Delæstartus, who lived fifty-four years, and reigned twelve. After him came his brother Asergmus, who lived fifty-four years, and reigned nine; this man was killed by his brother Pheletes, who seized the kingdom, and reigned eight months; he lived fifty years; he was slain by Ithobalus, the priest of Astarte, who reigned thirty-two years, and lived sixty-eight. He was succeeded by his son Badezorus, who lived forty-five years, and reigned six. His successor was Matgemus his son, who lived thirty-two years, and reigned nine. He was succeeded by Pygmalion, who lived fifty-six years, and reigned forty-seven. In his seventh year, his sister, who fled from him, built the city of Carthage in Libya." Theophilus Antiochenus, in his third book to Autolychus, has set down this place of Menander, but has contracted it. Tertullian, in his apology, chap. 19. says, "We must look into the records of the most ancient nations, Egyptians, Chaldæans, Phœnicians, by whom we are supplied with knowledge; such as Manethon the Egyptian, or Berosus the Chaldæan, or Hirom the Phœnician, king of Tyre; and their followers, Mendesius Ptolemæus, and Menander the Ephesian, and Demetrius Phalereus, and king Juba, and Appion, and Thallus." This Hirom, and Solomon, who was cotemporary with him, are mentioned also by Alexander Polyhister, Menander, Pergamenus, and Lætus in the Phœnician accounts, as Clemens affirms, Strom. i. whence we may correct Tatian, who wrote Χαῖτος *Chætus*, for λαῖτος *Lætus*, who is reported to have translated into Greek what Theodotus, Hypsicrates, and Mochus wrote about Phœnicia. The memory of Hazael king of Syria, whose name is in [1 Kings xix. 15.](#) [2 Kings viii. 13.](#) [xii. 17.](#) [xiii. 3, 24.](#) is preserved at Damascus, with divine worship, as Josephus relates, book ix. chap. 2. of his ancient history. The same name is in Justin, out of Trogus. Concerning Salmanasar, who carried the ten tribes into captivity, as it is related in [2 Kings xvii. 3,](#) &c. and who took Samaria, [2 Kings xviii. 9.](#) there is a place of Menander the Ephesian, which I mentioned before, in Josephus, book ix. ch. 14. "Elulæus reigned thirty-six years: this man with a fleet reduced the Cittæans, who revolted from him. But the king of Assyria sent an army against them, and brought war upon all Phœnicia; and having made peace with them all, returned back again. But Sidon, Arce, Palætyrus, and many other cities, who had yielded themselves to the king of Assyria, revolted from the Tyrian government; yet the Tyrians not submitting, the king of Assyria returned upon them again, after he had received from the Phœnicians sixty ships and eight hundred rowers. Against which the Tyrians coming out with twelve ships, broke their enemies ships in pieces, and took five hundred men prisoners: hereupon the price of every thing was raised in Tyre. Then the king of Assyria departed, and placed guards upon the river, and upon the water-pipes, that they might hinder the Tyrians from drawing any; and this they did for fire years, and they were forced to drink out of wells which they digged." Josephus adds in the same place, that Salmanasar, the name of this king, remained till his time in the Tyrian records. Sennacherib, who subdued almost all Judæa, except Jerusalem, as it is related, [2 Kings xviii. 13.](#) [2 Chron. xxxii. 1.](#) [Isaiah xxxvi. 1.](#) his name and expeditions into Asia and Egypt are found in Berosus's Chaldaics, as the same Josephus testifies, book x. chap. 1. and Herodotus, in his second book, mentions the same Sennacherib, and calls him king of the Arabians and Assyrians. Baladan king of Babylon is mentioned in [2 Kings xx. 12.](#) and

league they made with the Tyrians. And Berosus, as well as the Hebrew books, mention Nabuchadonosor,⁴⁴⁶ and other Chaldeans.⁴⁴⁷ Vaphres,⁴⁴⁸ the king of Egypt in Jeremiah,



[Isaiah xxxix](#). And the same name is in Berosus's Babylonics, as Josephus testifies in his ancient history, book x. chap. 3. Herodotus mentions the battle In Mageddo, in which Nechao king of Egypt overcame the Jews, (which history is in [2 Chron. xxxv. 22](#). [Zech. xii. 1.](#)) in the fore-said second book, in these words: "And Necho encountered the Syrians" (for so Herodotus always calls the Jews, as do others also) "in a land battle, and overcame them in Magdolus.

446 Concerning him, Josephus has preserved us a place of Berosus, in the tenth of his ancient history, and in his first book against Appion; which may be compared with Eusebius, who, in his Chronicon about these times, and in his Prepar. book ix. chap. 40 and 41. produces this and the following place of Abydenus: “Nabopallasarus his father, hearing that he who was appointed governor over Egypt, and the places about Cœlo-Syria and Phœnice, had revolted, being himself unable to bear hardships, he invested his son Nabuchadonosor, who was a young man, with part of his power, and sent him against him. And Nabuchadonosor, coming to a battle with the rebel, smote him, and took him, and reduced the whole land to his subjection again. It happened about this time that his father Nabopallasarus fell sick, and died, in the city of Babylon, after he had reigned twenty-nine years. Nabuchadonosor in a little time hearing of the death of his father, after he had put in order his affairs in Egypt, and the rest of the country, and committed to some of his friends the power over the captives of the Jews, Phœnicians, Syrians, and the people about Egypt, and ordered every thing that was left of any use to be conveyed to Babylon, he himself with a few came through the wilderness to Babylon; where he found affairs settled by the Chaldæans, and the government maintained under one of the most eminent amongst them, so that he inherited his father’s kingdom entire; and having taken a view of the captives, he ordered them to be dispersed by colonies, throughout all the proper places in the country about Babylon. And he richly adorned the temple of Belus, and others, with the spoils of the war; and he renewed the ancient city of Babylon, by adding another to it; so as that afterwards, in a siege, the river might never be turned out of its course, to assault the city. He also encompassed the city with three walls within, and three without, some made of tile and pitch, others of tile alone. The city being thus well walled, and the gates beautifully adorned, he added to his father’s palace a new one, far exceeding it in height and costliness; to relate the particulars of which would be tedious. However, as exceeding great and beautiful as it was, it was finished in fifteen days; on this palace he built very high walks of stone, which to the sight appeared like mountains, and planted them with all sorts of trees, and made what they call a pensile garden, for his wife, who was brought up in Media, to delight herself with the prospect of the mountainous country. After he had begun the fore-mentioned wall, he fell sick and died, having reigned forty-three years.” This wife of Nabuchadonosor is Nitocris, according to Herodotus, in his first book, as we learn from the great Scaliger, in his famous appendix to the Emendation of Time. These things are explained by Curtius, in his fifth book, to which I refer you, and partly by Strabo, book xv. and Diodorus, book ii. Berosus, out of whom we have quoted these things, and those before, was the priest of Belus, after Alexander the great’s time; to whom the Athenians erected a statue with a golden tongue, in the public gaming place, for his divine predictions. This is mentioned by Pliny, book vii. chap. 37. of his natural history. Athenæus, in his fifteenth, calls his book *Babylonica*. Tatian (who himself also affirms that Berosus mentions Nabuchadonosor) and Clemens call it *Chaldaica*. King Juba confesses, that he took out hence what he wrote concerning the affairs of Syria, as Tatian observes. He is also mentioned by Vitruvius, and by Tertullian in his apology, and by the writer of the Alexandrian Chronicon. Eusebius, both in his Chronicon and in the end of the ninth of his Preparation, tells us, that Nabuchadonosor is mentioned also by Abydenus, who wrote of the Assyrians: the words are these: “Megasthenes says, that Nabuchodrosorus was stronger than Hercules, and waged war against Libya and Iberia, and having overcome them, he planted them in several colonies on the right shore of the sea. And the Chaldæans relate moreover concerning him, that as he was going into his palace on a certain time, he was inspired by a god, and spake the following words: I Nabuchodrosorus foretel a sad calamity that will befall you, O Babylonians; which neither

Belus, our forefather, nor queen Beltia, could persuade the fates to avert: there shall come a Persian mule, who, assisted by your gods, shall bring slavery upon you; Medus, the glory of the Assyrians, will also help to do this. I wish, that, before he betrays his countrymen, some Charybdis, or sea, would swallow him up, and destroy him; or that he were directed another way, through the wilderness, where there are no cities, or footsteps of men, where the wild beasts feed, and the birds fly about; that he might wander solitary amongst the rocks and dens; and that a happy end had overtaken me, before these things were put into my mind. Having prophesied this, he suddenly disappeared." Compare this last with that which is said of this Nabuchadonosor in the book of Daniel; the first, out of Megasthenes, we have also in Josephus, book x. chap. 11. of his ancient history; and he says it is in the fourth of his Indian history. Eusebius likewise has this concerning Nabuchadonosor, out of Abydenus: "It is reported (of the place where Babylon stands) that at first it was all water, called sea, but Belus drained it, and allotted to every one his portion of laud, and encompassed Babylon with a wall, which time has worn out. But Nabuchadonosor walled it again, which remained till the Macedonian empire; and it had brazen gates." And a little after: "When Nabuchadonosor came to the government, in fifteen days time he walled Babylon with a triple wall, and he turned out of their course the rivers Armacale and Acracanus, which is an arm of Euphrates. And, for the city of the Sipparenians, he digged a pool forty furlongs round, and twenty fathoms deep; and made sluices to open and water the fields; they call them guides to the aquæducts. He also built up a wall to exclude the Red sea; and he rebuilt Teredon, to hinder the incursions of the Arabians; and he planted his palace with trees, called the pensile gardens." Compare this with [Dan. iv. 30](#). And [ρho](#), book xv. quotes these words also out of the same Magasthenes: "Nabuchadonosor, whose fame amongst the Chaldæans is greater than Hercules, went as far as the pillars." There were others who touched upon the history of this king, but we have only the names of them remaining. Diocles in the second of his Persian history, and Philostratus in that of the Indians and Phœnicians, who says that Tyre was besieged by him thirteen years, as Josephus tells us, in the fore-cited place of his ancient history, and in his first book against Appion, where he quotes the following words out of the public acts of the Phœnicians: "When Ithobalus was king, Nabuchadonosor besieged Tyre thirteen years. After him, Baal reigned ten years; after him, judges were appointed to govern Tyre; Eccibalus, the son of Baslacus, two months; Chelbes, the son of Abdaius, ten months; Abbarus, the high priest, three months; Mutgonus and Gerastratus, the sons of Abdelinus, were judges six years; betwixt whom Belatorus reigned one. After his death they sent and fetched Cerbalus from Babylon; he reigned four years. After his death they sent for his brother Hirom, who reigned twenty years. In his time Cyrus the Persian flourished." For the exact agreement of this computation with the sacred books, see Josephus in the fore-cited book against Appion: where follows in Josephus these words concerning Hecatæus "The Persians," says he, "drew many millions of us to Babylon." And concerning the war of Sennacherib, and Nabuchadonosor's captivity, see the place of Demetrius in Clemens, Strom. i. Hecatæus's authority is very little to the purpose, because he is a spurious writer. See Ger. J. Vossius upon the Greek historians. *Le Clerc*.

447 After the fore-cited words of Berosus, follow these, according to Josephus, in both the places now mentioned: "His son Evilmaradoch was made head of the kingdom; he managed affairs unjustly and wantonly; after he had reigned two years, he was treacherously slain by Neriglissororus, who married his sister: after his death, Neriglissororus, who thus killed him, possessed the government, and reigned four years. His son Laborosoarchodus, a youth, reigned nine months: but, because there appeared in him many evil dispositions, he was slain by

is the same with Apries in Herodotus.⁴⁴⁹ And the Greek books are filled with Cyrus and his successors,⁴⁵⁰ down to Darius,⁴⁵¹ and Josephus, in his book against Appion, quotes many other things relating to the Jewish nation: to which may be added that we above took out



the treachery of his friends. After his death, they who killed him agreed to devolve the government upon Nabonnidus, a certain Babylonian, who was also one of the conspirators. In this reign, the walls of the city Babylon, along the river, were beautified with burnt brick and pitch. In the seventeenth year of his reign, Cyrus came out of Persia with a great army, and, having subdued all the rest of Asia, he came as far as Babylon; Nabonnidus, hearing of his coming, met him with a great army also, but he was overcome in the battle, and fled away with a few, and shut up himself in the city of the Borsippeni. Then Cyrus, having taken Babylon, ordered the outward walls of the city to be rated, because the people appeared to be very much given to change, and the town hard to be taken; and went from thence to Borsippus, to besiege Nabonnidus; but he not mining the siege, yielded himself immediately; whereupon Cyrus treated him kindly, and, giving him Carmania to dwell in, he sent him out of Babylonia; and Nabonnidus passed the remainder of his days in that country, and died there.” Eusebius, to the fore-mentioned place, has preserved the following words of Abydenus, immediately after those now quoted concerning Nabuchadonosor: “After him reigned his son Evilmaruruchus: his wife’s brother Neriglasarus, who slew him, left a son, whose name was Labossoarascus. He dying by a violent death, they made Nabannidachus king, who was nut related to him. Cyrus, when he took Babylon, made this man governor of Carmania.” This Evilmerodach is mentioned by name in [2 Kings xxv. 27](#). Concerning the rest, see Scaliger. That of Cyrus’s taking Babylon agrees with this of Herodotus: “So Cyrus made an irruption as far as Babylon; and the Babylonians having provided an army, expected him: as soon as he approached the city, the Babylonians fought with him; but, to save themselves from being beaten, they shut themselves up in the city.” Compare this with the fifty-first of Jeremiah, [29, 30, 31](#). Concerning the flight at Borsippe, see [Jeremiah li. 30](#). Concerning the drying up the river’s channel, Herodotus agrees with [Jeremiah li. 32](#). The words of Herodotus are: “He divided the river, bringing it to a standing lake, so that he made the ancient current passable, having diverted the river.” It is worth considering, whether what Diodorus relates in his second book, concerning Belesis the Chaldæan, may not have respect to Daniel, whose name in Chaldee was Beltashazzar, [Dan. i. 7](#). The truth of what we read in scripture, concerning the Chaldæan kings, is strongly confirmed by the chronology of the astronomical canon of Nabonassar, as you may see in sir John Marsham’s chronological canon. *Le Clerc*.

448 So the Seventy and Eusebius translate the Hebrew word **חֶפְרַע** *Cephre*. He was contemporary with Nabuchadonosor.

449 Book ii.

450 See the places already quoted; and Diodorus Siculus, b. ii. and Ctesias in his Persics; and Justin, book i. chap. 5. and the following. The foundation of the temple of Jerusalem was laid in Cyrus’s time, and was finished in Darius’s, according to Berosus, as Theophilus Antiochenus proves.

451 Cadomannus. See the fore-mentioned persons, and Æschylus’s account of Persia, and the writers of the affairs of Alexander. In the time of this Darius, Jaddus was the high priest of the Hebrews, [Nehem. xii. 22](#). the

of Strabo and Trogius.⁴⁵² But there is no reason for us Christians to doubt of the credibility of these books, because there are testimonies in our books, out of almost every one of them, the same as they are found in the Hebrew. Nor did Christ, when he blamed many things in the teachers of the law, and in the Pharisees of his time, ever accuse them of falsifying the books of Moses and the prophets, or of using supposititious or altered books. And it can never be proved or made credible, that, after Christ's time, the scripture should be corrupted in any thing of moment; if we do but consider how far and wide the Jewish nation, who every where kept those books, was dispersed over the whole world. For, first, the ten tribes were carried into Media by the Assyrians, and afterwards the other two. And many of these fixed themselves in foreign countries, after they had a permission from Cyrus to return; the Macedonians invited them into Alexandria with great advantages;⁴⁵³ the cruelty of Antiochus, the civil war of the Asmonæi, and the foreign wars of Pompey and Sossius, scattered a great many; the country of Cyrene was filled with Jews;⁴⁵⁴ the cities of Asia,⁴⁵⁵ Macedonia,⁴⁵⁶ Lycaonia,⁴⁵⁷ and the isles of Cyprus,⁴⁵⁸ and Crete,⁴⁵⁹ (and others, were full of them; and



same that went out to meet Alexander the great, according to the relation of Josephus, in his ancient history, book xi. 8. At this time lived Hecataeus Abderita, so famous in Plutarch, in his book concerning Isis; and Laërtius in Pyrrho; he wrote a single book concerning the Jews, whence Josephus, in book ii. against Appion, took a famous description of the city and temple of Jerusalem; which place we find in Eusebius, b. ix. c. 4. of his Gospel Preparation; and in each of them there is a place of Clearchus, who commends the Jewish wisdom, in the words of Aristotle. And Josephus, in the same book, names Theophilus, Theodoret, Mnaseas, Aristophanes, Hermogenes, Euemerus, Conoron, Zopyrion, and others, as persons who commended the Jews, and gave testimony concerning the Jewish affairs.

452 Book i.

453 Hecataeus, transcribed by Josephus, in his first book against Appion, speaking of the Jews: "Not a few," (viz. thousands, as appears from the foregoing words), "after the death of Alexander, went into Egypt and Phœnicia, by reason of the commotions in Syria." To which we may add that of Philo against Flaccus; "There are no less than ten hundred thousand Jews, inhabitants of Alexandria, and the country about it, from the lower parts of Libya, to the borders of Ethiopia." See moreover Josephus, book xii. chap. 2, 3, and the following; book xiii. chap. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. xviii. 10. And the Jews were free of Alexandria, Josephus xiv. 17.

454 See Josephus, book xvi. 10. of his ancient history. [Acts vi. 9. xi. 20.](#)

455 Josephus xii. 3. xiv. 17. xvi. 4. [Acts xix.](#)

456 [Acts xvii.](#)

457 [Acts xiv. 19.](#)

458 [Acts xiii. 5.](#)

459 [Acts ii. 11.](#)

that there was a vast number of them in Rome,⁴⁶⁰ we learn from Horace,⁴⁶¹ Juvena1,⁴⁶² and Martial.⁴⁶³ It is impossible that such distant bodies of men should be imposed upon by any art whatsoever, or that they should agree in a falsity. We may add further that, almost three hundred years before Christ, by the care of the Egyptian kings, the Hebrew books were translated into Greek, by those who are called the *seventy*;⁴⁶⁴ that the Greeks might have them in another language, but the sense the same in the main; upon which account they were the less liable to be altered: and the same books were translated into Chaldee, and into the Jerusalem language, that is, half Syriac, partly a little before,⁴⁶⁵ and partly a little after, Christ's time.⁴⁶⁶ After which followed other Greek versions, that of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion; which Origen, and others after him, compared with the seventy interpreters, and found no difference in the history, or in any weighty matters. Philo flourished in Caligula's time, and Josephus lived till Vespasian's. Each of them quote out of the Hebrew books the same things that we find at this day. By this time the Christian religion began to

154

155

460 Josephus xviii. 5. of his ancient history. *Acts xviii. 2. xxviii. 17.*

461 Book i. Sat. iv. —“For we are many, And, like the Jews, will force you to our side.” And Sat. v. —“Let circumcised Jews believe it.” And Sat. ix. —“This is the thirtieth Sabbath,” &c.

462 Sat. ix. Some are of parents born, who sabbaths keep.” And what follows, Sat. xiv.

463 IV. 4. “The sabbath-keepers' fasts.” And in other places: as vii. 29, and 34. xi. 95. 57. To which we may add that of Rutilius, book i. of his Itinerary:—“I wish Judæa ne'er had been subdu'd By Pompey's war, or Titus's command; The more suppress'd, the dire contagion spreads; The conquer'd nation crush the conqueror.” Which is taken out of Seneca, who said of the same Jews, “The customs of the most wicked nation have prevailed so far, that they are embraced all the world over; so that the conquered give Laws to the conquerors.” The place is in Augustine, book vi. ch. 11. of his city of God. He calls them the most wicked nation, only for this reason, because their laws condemned the neglect of the worship of one God, as we observed before; upon which account Cato Major blamed Socrates. To which may be added the testimony of Philo, in his embassy, on the vast extent of the Jewish nation. “That nation consists of so great a number of men, that it does not, like other nations, take up one country only, and confine itself to that; but possesses almost the whole world; for it overspreads every continent and island, that they seem not to be much fewer than the inhabitants themselves.” Dion Cassius, book xxxvi. concerning the Jewish nation, says, “That though it has been often suppressed it has increased so much the more, so as to procure the liberty of establishing its laws.”

464 See Aristæus and Josephus, book xii. 2.

465 By Onkelos, and perhaps by Jonathan.

466 By the writer of the Jerusalem Targum, and by Josephus Cæcus, or by him, whoever he was, one man or many, who translated Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and what they call the Hagiography.

be more and more spread, and many of its profession were Hebrews:⁴⁶⁷ many had studied the Hebrew learning,⁴⁶⁸ who could very easily have perceived and discovered it, if the Jews had received any thing that was false, in any remarkable subject; I mean, by comparing it with more ancient books. But they not only do this, but they bring very many testimonies out of the Old Testament, plainly in that sense in which they are received amongst the Hebrews, which Hebrews may be convicted of any crime sooner than (I will not say of falsity, but) of negligence, in relation to these books; because they used to transcribe and compare them so very scrupulously, that they could tell how often every letter came over.⁴⁶⁹ We may add, in the first place, an argument, and that no mean one, why the Jews did not alter the scripture designedly; because the Christians prove, and, as they think, very strongly, that their Master Jesus was that very Messiah who was of old promised to the forefathers of the Jews; and this from those very books which were read by the Jews. Which the Jews would have taken the greatest care should never have been, after there arose a controversy between them and the Christians, if it had ever been in their power to have altered what they would.



467 Or next to Hebrews, as Justin, who was a Samaritan.

468 As Origen, Epiphanius, and especially Jerom.

469 Josephus in his first book against Appion. "It is very manifest, by our deeds, how much credit we give to our own writings; for after so many ages past, no one has presumed to add, take away, or change any thing." See the law, [Deut. iv. 2.](#) and the Talmud, inscribed Shebuoth.—(We are to understand this of the time after the Massora; for it was otherwise before, in the time of their commonwealth: and after it was overturned by the Chaldæans, they were not so accurate as is commonly thought. This is evident from Lud. Cappellus's critics upon the Bible, and from the commentaries of learned men upon the Old Testament, and likewise from Grotius's own annotations. And we have also shewn it to be so on the historical books of the Old Testament. *Le Clerc.*)

**THE TRUTH
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.**

BOOK IV.

SECT. I. A particular confutation of the religions that differ from Christianity.

THE fourth book (beginning with that pleasure men, for the most part, take at the sight of the other men's danger, when they themselves are placed out of the reach of it) shews, that the principal aim of a Christian ought to be, not only a satisfaction upon his having found out the truth himself, but also an endeavour to assist others, who wander in various crooked paths of error, and to make them partakers of the same happiness. And this we have, in some measure, attempted to do in the foregoing books, because the demonstration of the truth contains in it the confutation of error. But, however, since the particular sorts of religion which are opposed to Christianity, as Paganism, Judaism, or Mahometanism, for instance, besides that which is common to all, have some particular errors, and some special arguments, which they use to oppose us with; I think it may not be foreign to our present purpose to attempt a particular examination of every one of them; in the mean time, beseeching our readers to free their judgment from all passion and prejudice, which clog the understanding; that they may the more impartially determine concerning what is to be said.



SECT. II. And, first, of Paganism. That there is but one God. That created beings are either good or bad. That the good are not to be worshipped without the command of the supreme God.

AND, first, against the heathens we say,—If they suppose many gods, eternal and equal, this is sufficiently confuted in the first book; where we have shewn that there is but one God, the cause of all things. If by gods they mean created beings superior to man, these are either good or bad; if they say they are good, they ought, in the first place to be very well assured of this, lest they fall into great danger, by entertaining enemies instead of friends; deserters instead of ambassadors.⁴⁷⁰ And reason also requires that there should be some manifest difference in the worship betwixt the Supreme God and these beings: and further, we ought to know of what rank these beings are, what benefit we may expect from any of them, and what honour the Supreme King would have us pay to them. All which things being wanting in their religion, it sufficiently appears from thence, that there is nothing of certainty in it; and it would be much safer for them to betake themselves to the worship of the one Supreme God: which even Plato⁴⁷¹ owned to be the duty of a wise man; because as good beings are the ministers of the Supreme God, they cannot but be assisting to such as are in favour with him.⁴⁷²



470 2 Cor. xi. 14. Porphyry, in his second book about abstaining from eating animals, says, that “by those who are opposite (to the gods) all witchcraft is performed; for both these and their chief are worshipped by all such as work evil upon men’s fancies, by enchantments; for they have a power to deceive, by working strange things: by them evil spirits prepare philtres and love-potions, all incontinence, and love of riches and honour, and especially deceit, proceed from them; for it is natural for them to lie: they are willing to be thought gods, and the highest of them in power to be esteemed God.” And afterwards concerning the Egyptian priests: “These put it past all dispute, that there are a kind of beings who give themselves up to deceive, of various shapes and sorts; dissemblers, sometimes assuming the form of gods or daemons, or of souls of dead men; and by this means they can effect any seeming good or evil: but as to things really good in themselves, such as those belonging to the soul; of producing these they have no power, neither have they any knowledge of them; but they abuse their leisure, mock others, and hinder those who walk in the way of virtue; they are filled with pride, and delight in perfumes and sacrifice.” And Arnobius, book iv. against the Gentiles; “Thus the magicians, brethren to the soothsayers is their actions, mention certain beings, opposite to God, who often impose upon men for true gods. And these are certain spirits of grosser matter, who feign themselves to be gods.” Not to transcribe too much, we find something to the same purpose in Jamblichus, concerning the Egyptian mysteries, book iii. ch. 31. and book iv. chap. 7, 13.

471 “Jupiter is worshipped by us, and other gods by others.” The words are quoted by Origen, in his eighth book against Celsus.

472 This is very well prosecuted by Arnobius, book iii.

**SECT. III. A proof that evil spirits were worshipped by the heathen, and the
unfitness of it shewn.**

BUT that the spirits to which the heathen pain their worship were evil, and not good, appears from many substantial arguments. First, because they did not direct their worshippers to the worship of the Supreme God;⁴⁷³ but did as much as they could to suppress such worship, or, at least, were willing in every thing to be equalled with the Supreme God in worship. Secondly, because they were the cause of the greatest mischiefs coming upon the worshippers of the one Supreme God, provoking the magistrates and the people to inflict punishments upon them: for though they allowed their poets the liberty to celebrate the murders and adultries of their gods; and the Epicureans to banish the Divine Providence out of the world; nor was there any other religion so disagreeable in its rites, but they admitted it into their society, as the Egyptian, Phrygian, Greek, and Tuscan rites at Rome; yet the Jews were every where ridiculed,⁴⁷⁴ as appears from their satires and epigrams, and were sometimes banished;⁴⁷⁵ and the Christians had moreover the most cruel punishments inflicted upon them;⁴⁷⁶ for which there can be no other reason assigned, but because these two sects worshipped one God, whose honour the gods they established opposed, being more jealous of him than of one another. Thirdly, from the manner of their worship, such as is unworthy of a good and virtuous mind; by human blood,⁴⁷⁷ by men's running naked about their temples,⁴⁷⁸ by games and dancings,⁴⁷⁹ filled with uncleanness; such as are now to be seen amongst the people of America and Africa, who are overwhelmed in the darkness of heathenism. Nay, more than this, there were of old, and still are, people who worship evil spirits, which they know and own to be such; as the Arimanes of the Persians,⁴⁸⁰ the Caco-dæmons of the Greeks, and the Vejoves of the Latins:⁴⁸¹ and some of the Ethiopians and Indians now have others; than which, nothing can be imagined more impious. For what else is religious worship, but a testimony of the exceeding goodness which you acknowledge

159

160

473 This is very well treated of by Augustin, book x. chap. 14, 16, 19. of his city of God.

474 "As being cropt, circumcised, sabbath-keepers, worshippers of the clouds and heavens, merciful to swine."

475 Josephus, xviii. 5. Tacitus, Annal. ii. Seneca, Epist. cix. [Acts xviii. 1.](#) Suetonius in Tiberius, chap. xxxvi.

476 Tacitus, Annal. xv. to which that of Juvenal relates:—"You, like a torch, shall burn,

As they who flaming stand, stifled with smoke,

And with their body's print have marked the ground.

477 See what was said of this, book ii.

478 As in their rites dedicated to Pan. See Livy, book i. Plutarch in Antonius, and others.

479 As in the rites of Flora. See Ovid's Fasti, book iv. and Titian, and Origen, in his eighth against Celsus.

480 See Plutarch's Isis and Osiris, and Diogenes Laërtius in his preface.—(See also Thomas Stanley, of the philosophy of the Persians; and our observations upon the word *Arimanes* in the Index. *Le Clerc.*)

481 Cicero, book iii. of the nature of the gods.

to be in him whom you worship; which, if it be paid to an evil spirit. is false and counterfeit, and comprehends in it the sin of rebellion; because the honour due to the king is not only taken from him, but transferred to a deserter and his enemy. And it is a foolish opinion, to imagine that a good God will not revenge this, because that is not agreeable to his goodness; for clemency, if it be reasonable, hath its proper bounds;⁴⁸² and where the crimes are very great, justice itself forces punishment, as it were. necessarily. Nor are they less blameable who say, that they are driven by fear to pay obedience to evil spirits; for he who is infinitely good. is also in the highest degree ready to communicate; and therefore all other beings were produced by him. And if it be so, it will follow that he hath an absolute right over all creatures, as his own. workmanship; so that nothing can be done by any of them, if he desires to binder it: which being granted, we may easily collect, that evil spirits cannot hurt him who is in favour with the most high God, who is infinitely good, any further than that God suffers it to be done for the sake of some good. Nor can any thing be obtained of evil spirits, but what ought to be refused; because a bad being, when he counterfeits one that is good, is then worst;⁴⁸³ and the gifts of enemies are only snares.⁴⁸⁴

482 “How can you love, unless you be afraid not to love?” Tertullian first against Marcion.

483 See the verses of Syrus the mimic.

484 Sophocles. “Enemies’ gifts are no gifts, no advantage.”

SECT. IV. Against the heathen worship paid to departed men.

THERE have been, and now are, heathens, who say that they pay worship to to the souls of men departed this life. But here, in the first place, this worship is also to be distinguished, by manifest tokens, from the worship of the Supreme God. Besides, our prayers to them are to no purpose, if those souls cannot assist us in any thing; and their worshippers are not assured of this; nor is there any more reason to affirm that they can, than that they cannot: and what is worst of all is, that those men who are thus had in honour, are found to have been men remarkable for very great vices. A drunken Bacchus, an effeminate Hercules, a Romulus, unnatural to his brother, and a Jupiter, as unnatural to his father. So that their honour is a reproach to the true God, and that goodness which is well-pleasing to him; because it adds a commendation, from religion, to those vices which are sufficiently flattering of themselves.⁴⁸⁵



485 See an example hereof in Terence's *Eunuch*, act iii. scene v. Cyprian, epist. ii. "They imitate those gods they worship; the religion of those wretched creatures is made up of sin." Augustine, epist. CCII. "Nothing renders men so unsociable, by perverseness of life, as the imitation of those whom they commend and describe in their writings." Chalcidius in *Timæus*: "So it comes to pass, that instead of that gratitude that is due to Divine Providence from men for their original and birth, they return sacrilege." See the whole place.

SECT. V. Against the worship given to the stars and elements.

MORE ancient than this was the worship of the stars, and what we call the elements, fire, water, air, and earth;⁴⁸⁶ which was, indeed, a very great error: For prayers are a principal part of religious worship, which to put up to any but beings that have understanding is very foolish; and that what we call the elements are not such, is evident in a good measure from experience. If any one affirms otherwise of the stars, he has no proof of it, because no such thing can be gathered from their operations, which are the only signs to judge of beings by. But the contrary may be sufficiently collected from the motion of them, which is not various, like that of creatures endued with freedom of will, but certain and determinate.⁴⁸⁷ We have elsewhere shewn that the course of the stars is adapted to the use of man; whence man ought to acknowledge, that he, in his better part, bears a nearer resemblance to God, and is dearer to him; and therefore ought not to derogate so much from his own high birth, as to place himself below those things which God has given him; and he ought to give God thanks for them, which is more than they can do for themselves, or at least more than we are assured of.



486 There are reasons to persuade us that idolatry began with the worship of angels and the souls of men, as you may see in the index to the *Oriental Philosophy*, at the word *Idololatria. Le Clerc.*

487 By which argument a certain king of Peru was persuaded to deny that the sun could be a god. See the history of the Incas.

SECT. VI. Against the worship given to brute creatures.

BUT that which is of all things most abominable, is, that some men, particularly the Egyptians, fell into the worship even of beasts.⁴⁸⁸ For though in some of them there do appear, as it were, some shadow of understanding, yet it is nothing compared with man; for they cannot express their inward conceptions either by distinct words or writings; nor do they perform actions of different kinds, nor those of the same kind, in a different manner; and much less can they attain to the knowledge of number, magnitude, and of the celestial motions. But, on the other hand, man, by his cunning and subtlety, can catch the strongest creatures, wild beasts, birds, or fishes; and can in some measure bring them under rules, as elephants, lions, horses, and oxen;⁴⁸⁹ he can draw advantage to himself out of those that are most hurtful, as physic from vipers: and this use may be made of them all, which themselves are ignorant of, that by viewing the structure and situation of the parts of their bodies, and comparing together their several species and kinds, he learns his own excellency, and how much more perfect and noble the frame of the human body is than others; which, if rightly considered, is so far from inclining him to worship other creatures, that he should rather think himself appointed their god in a manner, under the Supreme God.



488 Concerning whom, Philo, in his embassy, says, “They esteem dogs, wolves, lions, crocodiles, and many other wild creatures iv the water and on the land, and birds, as gods.” To which may be added, a long discourse of this matter, in the first book of Diodorus Siculus.

489 Euripides in *Æolus*:— Man has but little strength, Yet can, by various arts, Tame the wildest creatures In sea, or earth, or air.” And Antiphon:— “They us in strength, we them in art, exceed.” Which affords us no bad explication of [Genesis i. 26.](#) and [Psalm viii. 6.](#) He that desires a larger discourse of this matter, may look into Oppianus, in the beginning of his fifth book of fishing, and Basil’s tenth homily on the six days of creation. Origen, in his fourth book against Celsus, has these words: “And hence you may learn, for how great a help our understanding was given us, and how far it exceeds all the weapons of wild beasts: for our bodies are much weaker than those of other creatures, and vastly less than some of them; yet, by our understanding, we bring wild beasts under our power, and hunt huge elephants; and those whose nature is such that they may be tamed, we make subject to us; and those that are of a different stature, or the taming of which seems to be of no use to us, we manage these wild beasts with such safety, that, as we will, we keep them shut up, or, *if we want their flesh for meat,* we kill them as we do other creatures that are not wild. Whence it appears that the Creator made all living creatures subject to him who is endued with reason, and a nature capable of understanding him.” Claudius Neapolitanus, in Porphyry’s first book against eating living creatures, speaks thus concerning man: “He is lord over all creatures void of reason, as (sod is over man.”

SECT. VII. Against the worship given to those things which have no real existence.

We read that the Greeks and Latins, and others likewise, worshipped things which had no real existence, but were only the accidents of other things. For, not to mention those outrageous things, fever, impudence, and such like;⁴⁹⁰ health is nothing else but a just temperature of the parts of the body; and good fortune, a correspondence of events with the wishes of men; and the affections, such as love, fear, anger, hope, and the like, arising from the consideration of the goodness or badness, the easiness or difficulty of a thing, are certain motions in that part of the mind, which is most closely connected with the body, by means of the blood; and they have no power of their own, but are subject to the command of the will, which is mistress of them, at least as far as respects their continuance and direction. So likewise the virtues, which have different names. Prudence, which consists in the choice of what is advantageous; fortitude, in undergoing dangers; justice, in abstaining from what is not our own. Temperance, in moderating pleasure, and the like: there is also a certain disposition or inclination towards that which is right, which grows upon the mind by long exercise; which, as it may be increased, so it may be diminished by neglect, nay, it may entirely be destroyed in a man. And honour,⁴⁹¹ to which we read of temples being dedicated, is only the judgment of one concerning another, as endued with virtue; which often happens to the bad, and not to the good, through the natural aptness of mankind to mistake. Since, therefore, these things have no real existence, and cannot be compared in excellence with those that have a real existence;⁴⁹² nor have any knowledge of our prayers



490 See Tully's third book of the laws.

491 Tully in the fore-mentioned place; and Livy, book xxvii.

492 Perhaps some may explain this worship of the heathens in this manner; as to say, that it was not so much the things, which were commonly signified by those words, that they worshipped, as a certain divine power, from which they flowed, or certain ideas in the divine understanding. Thus they might be said to worship a fever; not the disease itself, which is seated in the human body, but that power which is in God, of sending or abating a fever: to worship *impudence*; not that vice which is seated in the minds of men, but the will of God, which sometimes allows men's impudence to go on, which he can restrain and punish; and the same may be said of the rest, as love, fear, anger, hope, which are passions, which God can either excite or restrain; or of virtues, which are perfect in the divine nature, and of which we see only some faint resemblances in men, arising from the ideas of those virtues which are most complete in God: and of honour, which does not consist so much in the esteem of men, as in the will of God, who would have virtue honourable amongst men. But the heathens themselves never interpreted this matter thus; and it is absurd to worship the attributes and ideas of God, as real persons, under obscure names, such as may deceive the common people. It is much more sincere and honest to worship the Deity himself without any perplexities. *Le Clerc.*

or veneration of them; it is most disagreeable to right reason to worship them as God; and he is rather to be worshipped upon their account, who can give us them, and preserve them for us.



SECT. VIII An answer to the objection of the heathens taken from the miracles done amongst them.

THE heathens used to recommend their religion by miracles; but they were such as were liable to many exceptions. For the wisest men amongst the heathens themselves rejected many of them, as not supported by the testimony of sufficient witnesses.⁴⁹³ but plainly counterfeit:⁴⁹⁴ and those that seem to have been done, came to pass in some secret place, in the night, before one or two persons, whose eyes might easily be deceived with a false appearance of things, by the cunning of the priests. There were some, which only caused the people, who did not understand the nature of things, especially their occult qualities, to wonder at them; much in the same manner as if any one should draw iron with a loadstone, before people who knew nothing of it; and it is related by many, that these were the arts⁴⁹⁵ in which Simon and Apollonius Tyanæus were so skilful. I do not deny but that some greater than these were seen, which could not be the effect of natural causes, by human power alone; but they were such as did not require a power truly divine, that is, omnipotent; for these spirits, who were inferior to God, and superior to man, were sufficient for these things; because, by their swiftness, strength, and cunning, they could easily remove distant things, and so compound different sorts of things, as to produce effects which should be very surprising to men. But the spirits by whom this was effected were not good, and consequently neither was their religion good; as is evident from what was said before, and from this consideration also, because they said that they were compelled, by certain enchantments, against their will:⁴⁹⁶ and yet the wisest heathens agree, that there could not possibly be any such force in words; but that they could only persuade, and this according to the manner of their interpretation. And a further sign of their wickedness is, that they would undertake

166

167

493 So Livy, in the beginning: "I do not design either to affirm or deny those things related before, or upon, the building of the city, as fitter for poetic fables, than the sincere memorials of affairs that were transacted: thus much must be allowed antiquity, that by mixing human things with divine, the original of cities was rendered the more venerable."

494 It were much better to acquiesce in this answer, than to allow of their miracles, or that such things were done, as men could not commonly distinguish from miracles, such as oracles, wonders, curing of diseases, which, if they were done, could scarce be distinguished from true miracles, at least by the common people. See what I have said upon this matter in the prolegomena to my ecclesiastical history, sect. ii. chap. 1. *Le Clerc*.

495 Tatian: "There are certain diseases and contrarieties of the matter of which we are compounded; when these happen, the dæmons ascribe the causes of them to themselves."

496 Thus the oracle of Hecate in Porphyry:— "I come, invoked by well-consulted prayers,
Such as the gods have to mankind reveal'd." And again, "Why have you call'd the goddess
Hecate

many times to entice some to the love of others, notwithstanding their own endeavours against it, either by false promises, or by doing them some hurt;⁴⁹⁷ which things were forbidden by human laws, as witchcraft.⁴⁹⁸ Neither ought any one to wonder that the Supreme God should suffer some miracles to be done by evil spirits; because they who were already fallen from the worship of the true God, deserved to be deluded by such deceits.⁴⁹⁹ But this is an argument of their weakness, that their works were not attended with any remarkable good; for if any seemed to be called to life again, they did not continue long in it, nor exercise the functions of living persons. If at any time any thing proceeding from a divine power appeared in the sight of the heathen; yet it was not foretold that it would come to pass, in order to prove the truth of their religion; so that nothing hinders but the Divine Power might propose to itself some other end widely different from this. For instance; suppose it true, that a blind man was restored to his sight by Vespasian; it might be done, to render him more venerable upon this account; and that he might thereby the more easily obtain the Roman empire; and was therefore chosen by God, to be the executioner of his judgments



From heaven, and forc'd her by a charm divine?" And that of Apollo in the same writer, "Hear me, for I am forc'd to speak against my will." These are the rites of their secret arts by which they address themselves to I know not what powers, as Arnobius expresses it, as if they compelled them by charms to be their servants; so Clemens (explains it. There is a form of their threats in Jamblichus, book vi. chap. 5, 6, 7. of his Egyptian mysteries. The same we meet with in Lucan, book ix. in the words of Pompey the less; and in Eusebius out of Porphyry, book v. chap. 10. of his gospel preparation. Other forms of threatenings you have in Lucan, where he speaks of Erichthon, and in Papinius about Tiresias.

497 See the Pharmaceutria of Theocritus and Virgil, and the confession of Porphyry in Eusebius, book v. chap. 7. of his Preparat. and Augustin, book x. chap. 11. of his city of God. And the same Porphyry against eating living creatures, book ii. and Origen against Celsus, book vii.

498 L. ejusdem. Sect. Adjectio. D. ad Legem Corneliam de Sicariis et Veneficis. L. si quis aliquid ex metallo. Sect. qui abortionis. D. de Poenis. Paulus Sententiarum, lib. v. tit. xxiii.

499 Deut. xiii. 3. 2 Thess. ii. 9. 10. Ephes. ii. 2, 3.

upon the Jews:⁵⁰⁰ and other like reasons there might be for other wonders, which had no relation at all to religion.⁵⁰¹

500 Tacitus, Hist. iv. "Many miracles were done, whereby the favour of heaven, and the good disposition of the gods towards Vespasian, appeared." He had said before, in hist. i. "We believe, that, after previous good luck, the empire was decreed to Vespasian and his children, by the secret law of fate, and by wonders and oracles." Suetonius ushers in his relation of the same miracles thus, chap. 7. "There was a certain authority and majesty wanting, viz. in a new and unthought-of prince; to which this was added." See the same Suetonius a little before, chap. 5. Josephus says of the same Vespasian, book iii. chap. 27. of the wars of the Jews, "That God raised him up to the government, and foretold him of the sceptre by other signs."

501 But see the examination of miracles feigned to be done in favour of Vespasian and Adrian, in my ecclesiastical history, century ii. 138th year. *Le Clerc*.

SECT. IX. And from oracles.

AND almost all the same things may be applied to solve that which they allege concerning oracles; especially what was before said, that such men deserved to be imposed upon, who despised that knowledge which reason and ancient tradition suggested to every man. Moreover the words of the oracles were for the most part ambiguous, and such as might be interpreted of the event, be it what it would.⁵⁰² And if any thing was more particularly foretold by them, there is no necessity of its proceeding from an omniscient Being; because either they were such as might be perceived beforehand, from natural causes then appearing, as some physicians foretel future diseases;⁵⁰³ or they might with probability be conjectured, from what we usually see come to pass; which we read was often done by those who were skilful in civil matters.⁵⁰⁴ And if at any time God made use of any of those works, done by the diviners among the heathen, to foretel such things as could have no other real foundation



502 See the places of Cœnomaus, concerning this subject, in Eusebius, book iv. chap. 20, 21, 22, 23, 21, 25, 26. Hence Apollo was by the Greeks called Λοξίας. *Ambiguous*. Cicero, in his second book of divination, says, the oracles of Apollo were ambiguous and obscure. “Whichsoever of them came to pass, (says he), the oracle was true.”—(Perhaps many of the oracles were counterfeited after the event; and there are many reasons to suspect that abundance of frauds were used by diviners; concerning which D. de Fontenelle has written an excellent book in French, which I refer you to, and what is said in defence of it, vol. xiii. of the Choice Library; and what Antony Van Dale has written of this matter above all others, in his book of oracles. (*Le Clerc*).

503 Chalcidius on Timæus. “Men are forewarned either by the flying of birds, or by entrails, or by oracles, some propitious Dæmons foretelling, who knew all things that will afterwards come to pass; just as a physician, according to the rules of physic, de. dares either death or health, and as Anaximander and Pherecydes did an earthquake.” Pliny, book ii. chap. 79.

504 See the writers of the life of Atticus. “A plain evidence of this thing, besides those books wherein he (Cicero) mentions it expressly, (which are published among the common people), are sixteen volumes of epistles sent to Atticus, from his consulship to the end of his days; which whoever reads, will not think that he wants a complete and regular history of those times; there is such a full description of the inclinations of princes, of the vices of great men, and of the alterations in the republic, that there is no. thing which is not laid open; so that one would easily be led to think prudence to be a kind of divination. For Cicero did not only foretel future things that would happen in his own lifetime, but, like a diviner, declared those also that came to pass lately.” Cicero affirms truly of himself, in his sixth epistle of his sixteenth book: “In that war, nothing happened ill which I did not foretel. Wherefore, since I who am a public augur, like other augurs and astrologers, by my former predictions, have confirmed you in the authority of augury and divination, you ought to believe what I foretel. I do not make my conjecture from the flying of birds nor from the manner of their chirping, as our art teaches us, not from the rebounding of the corn that falls from the chickens’ mouths, nor from dreams; but I have other signs, which I observe.” Thus Solon foretold that great calamities would come upon Athens, from Munichia. And Thales, that the forum of the Milesii would one time be in a place then despised. Plutarch in Solon.

but the will of God, it did not tend to confirm the heathen religion, but rather to overthrow it; such as those things we find in Virgil's fourth eclogue, taken out of the Sibylline verses;⁵⁰⁵ in which, though unknown to himself, he describes the coming of Christ, and the benefits we should receive from him:⁵⁰⁶ Thus, in the same Sibyls, that he was to be acknowledged as king, who was to be truly our king;⁵⁰⁷ who was to rise out of the east, and be lord of all things.⁵⁰⁸ The oracle of Apollo⁵⁰⁹ is to be seen in Porphyry;⁵¹⁰ in which he says, the other gods were aërial spirits, and that the one God of the Hebrews was to be worshipped: which words if the worshippers of Apollo obeyed, they ceased to be his worshippers; if they did not obey him, they accused their god of a lie. To which may be added, that if these spirits



505 See Augustine's city of God, book x. chap. 27.

506 It is now sufficiently evident, that all the prophecies of the Sibyls are either doubtful or forged; wherefore I would not have Virgil, an interpreter of the Sibyl, be thought to have declared a kind of prophecy, without any design like Caiaphas, who was ignorant of what he prophesied: I know not what Sibyl, or rather person under the disguise of such a one, predicted, that the golden age was a-coming; from the opinion of those who thought that there would be a renovation of all things, and that the same things would come to pass again. See what Grotius has said of this matter, book ii. sect. 10. and the notes upon that place. Wherefore in this, the Sibyl was not a prophetess, nor did Virgil write thence any prophecies of Christ. See Servius upon the place, and Isaac Vossius's interpretation of that eclogue. *Le Clerc*.

507 Cicero mentions him in his second book of divination.

508 Suetonius of Vespasian, chap. 4. Tacitus, Hist. v.

509 See Augustine of the city of God, book xix. chap. 23. and Eusebius's Preparat. book iv. chap. 4. And the same Porphyry, in his book of Oracles, says, "the god (Apollo) testifies that the Egyptians, Chaldæans, Phœnicians, Lydians, and Hebrews, are they who have found out the truth." He that wrote the exhortation to the Greeks, amongst the works of Justin, quotes this oracle:— "The Hebrews only and Chaldees are wise,

Who truly worship God the Eternal King." And this, "Who the first mortal form'd, and call'd him

Adam." There are two oracles of Cato's concerning Jesus, which Eusebius in his gospel demonstration, transcribed out of Porphyry:— "Souls, of their bodies stript, immortal are;

This wise men know; and that which is endued

With greatest piety, excels the rest."

"The souls of pious men to heaven ascend,

Though various torments do their bodies vex." The same are mentioned by Augustine, book xix. chap. 23. of his city of God, out of the same Porphyry: where he brings another oracle, in which Apollo said, that the Father whom the pious Hebrews worshipped, was a law to all the gods.

510 This is justly enough said upon Porphyry, and those who are of the same opinion with him, concerning those oracles; and may be brought as an argument *ad hominem*, as logicians call it; but since it does not appear that these oracles were not feigned, nay, there are very good reasons to think they were fictitious, they ought to be of no weight amongst Christians. *Le Clerc*.

would in their oracles have consulted the good of mankind, they would, above all things, have proposed to them a general rule of life, and assured them of a reward, which they who so lived might expect; but they did neither of them. On the contrary, they many times in their Verses applauded kings, though never so wicked:⁵¹¹ decreed divine honours to champions,⁵¹² enticed men to unlawful embraces,⁵¹³ to pursue unjust gain,⁵¹⁴ and to commit murder;⁵¹⁵ which may be evidenced by many instances.



511 See those alleged by CEnomaus, in Eusebius's gospel preparat. book v. chap. 23, and 35.

512 See his same author, chap. 34. of Cleomedes; which we find also in Origen's third book against Celsus.

513 This was shewn before.

514 See Eusebius's gospel preparat. book v. chap. 22.

515 CEnomaus recites oracles of this kind, which you may find in the fore-mentioned book of Eusebius, chap 19, and 27.

SECT. X. The heathen religion rejected, because it failed of its own accord, as soon as human assistance was wanting.

BESIDES those things already alleged, the heathen religion affords us a very strong argument against itself, in that wheresoever human force was wanting, it immediately fell, as if its only support were then taken away. For, if you turn your eyes towards all the Christian or Mahometan empires, you will find heathenism no where mentioned but in books: nay, history informs us, that in those times when the emperors made use of force and punishment, as the first emperors did, or of learning and cunning, as Julian did, to support the heathen religion; even then it continually decreased; no force being made use of against it, no greatness of family, (for it was commonly believed that Jesus was the son of a carpenter), no flourish of words, no bribes, (for they were poor), no flattery, for they on the contrary despised all advantages, and said there was no adversity but they ought to undergo, upon account of their law. And now, how weak must the heathen religion be, to be overthrown by such weak forces? Nor did the vain credulity of the heathens only vanish at this doctrine, but spirits themselves came out of men, at the name of Christ;⁵¹⁶ were silenced; and being asked the reason of their silence, were forced to own, that they could do nothing when Christ was invoked.⁵¹⁷

516 Acts v. 16. viii. 7. xvi. 18.

517 Tertullian, in his apology. See also Lucan against false diviners. Apollo in Daphne: "This place, Daphne, is filled with dead bodies, which hinder the oracles." Babylas and other Christian martyrs died there. See Chrysostom against the gentiles.

SECT. XI. An answer to this, that the rise and decay of religion is owing to the stars.

THERE were some philosophers who ascribed the rise and decay of all religion to the stars; but this starry science, which they profess to know and understand, is delivered in such different rules, that there is nothing certain to be found in it, but this one thing, that there is no certainly in it.⁵¹⁸ I do not speak of those effects which naturally follow from necessary causes; but of such as proceed from the will of man, which is in its own nature so far free, as that no external necessity can be laid upon it;⁵¹⁹ for if the act of willing Bowed from such a necessary impression, that power which we experience in the soul, of deliberating and choosing, would be given us to no purpose:⁵²⁰ and the justice of all laws, and of rewards and punishments, would be entirely taken away; because there is neither blame nor desert due to that which is plainly unavoidable.⁵²¹ Further, since some actions of the will are evil, if they are caused by a certain necessity of the heavens, and because God has given such a power to the heavens and the heavenly bodies, it will follow, that God, who is perfectly good, is the true cause of moral evil;⁵²² and at the same time that he professes his utter abhorrence of wickedness in his positive law, he has planted the efficient and inevitable cause of it in the nature of things; therefore he wills two things contrary to each other, viz. that the same thing should be, and not be; and that that should be a sin which is done by a divine impulse. It is said by others, with a greater shew of probability, that first the air, and afterwards our bodies, are affected by the influence of the stars, and so imbibe certain qualities, which for the most part excite in the soul desires answerable to them; that by these the will is enticed, and oftentimes yields to them.⁵²³ But if this be granted, it makes nothing to the question in

173

174

518 See the excellent dissertation of Bardesanes, the Syrian, concerning this matter; which you may find in the Philocalia collected from Origen, and in Eusebius's Preparat. book vi. chap. 10.

519 See Alexander Aphrodisæus's book concerning this matter.

520 See Eusebius's gospel preparat. book vi. chap. 6.

521 See Justin, apology ii. "If mankind be not endued with a power of choosing freely; to avoid that which is bad, and to comply with that which is good; the cause of either of them cannot be said to be from himself." See also what follows. And thus Tatian: "The freedom of the will consists in this; that a wicked man is justly punished, because his wickedness is from himself; and a good man is rewarded, because he has not voluntarily transgressed the will of God." To this may be added Chalcidius's disputation concerning this matter in Timæus.

522 Plato speaks against this, in his second republic; "The cause is from him that chooses; God is not the cause." Thus Chalcidius translates it in Timæus, which Justin, in the fore-mentioned place, says, agrees with Moses.

523 But they speak most truly who deny any such influences at all, and acknowledge nothing else in the stars but heat and light; to which we may add, their weight resulting from their bigness; but these have, properly speaking, no relation to the mind. *Le Clerc.*

hand: for the religion of Christ could not possibly have its rise from the affections of the body, nor consequently from the power of the stars; which, as was said, act upon the mind no otherwise than by such affections; because this religion, in the highest degree, draws men off from those things that delight the body. The wisest astrologers do except truly knowing and good men from the law of the stars;⁵²⁴ and such were they who first proposed the Christian religion, as their lives plainly shew: and if we allow a power in learning and knowledge to hinder their bodies from being thus infected, there always were amongst Christians some who might be commended upon this account. Further, the effects of the stars, as the most learned confess, respect only particular parts of the world, and are temporary: but this religion has continued already for above sixteen hundred years, not only in one, but in very distant parts of the world, and such as are under very different positions of the stars.

SECT. XII. The principal things of the Christian religion were approved of by the wisest heathens: and if there be any thing in it hard to be believed, the like is to be found amongst the heathen.

THERE is the less reason for the heathens to oppose the Christian religion; because all the parts of it are so agreeable to the rules of virtue, that, by their own light, they do in a manner convince the mind; insomuch that there have not been wanting some amongst the heathen who have said those things singly, which in our religion are all put together. For instance, that religion does not consist in ceremonies, but is in the mind;⁵²⁵ that he who



524 Thus Zoroaster: "Do not increase your fate." And Ptolemais: "A wise man may avoid many influences of the stars."

525 Menander:— "With a clean mind do sacrifice to God;

Not so much neat in clothes, as pure in heart." Cicero in his second book of the nature of the gods: "The best worship of the gods, which is also the most innocent, the most holy, and the most full of piety, is to reverence them always with a pure, sincere, uncorrupted mind and expression." And again, in his second book of laws: "The law commands us to approach the gods sincerely, that is, with our minds, which is all in all." Persius, Sat.

ii. "This let us offer to the gods: (which blear'd

Messala's offspring can't, with all their cost):

Justice and right in all our secret thoughts,

An undissembled virtue from the breast:

Bring these, and what you please then sacrifice." These verses seem to have respect to the Pythian oracle, which we find in Porphyry's second book against eating living creatures; where any thing offered by a pious man is preferred to hecatombs of another. In the same book Porphyry has these words to the like purpose: "Now, they esteem him not fit to offer sacrifice worthily, whose body is not clothed with a white and clean garment; but they do not think it any great matter, if some go to sacrifice, having their bodies clean, and also their garments, though their minds be not void of evil: as if God were not most delighted with the purity of that which in us is

has it in his heart to commit adultery, is an adulterer;⁵²⁶ that we ought not to return an injury;⁵²⁷ that a husband ought to have but one wife;⁵²⁸ that the bands of matrimony ought

176

177

most divine, and bears the nearest resemblance to him. For it is written in the temple of Epidaurus, "Let all who come to offer at this shrine

Be pure; so we command." "New, purity consists in holy thoughts." And a little after: "No material things ought to be offered or dedicated to God, who, as the wise man said, is above all; for every thing material is impure to him who is immaterial: wherefore words are not proper to express ourselves by to him, not even internal ones, if polluted by the passions of the mind." And again: "For it is not reasonable that in those temples which are dedicated to the gods by men, they should wear clean shoes without any spots; and in the temple of the Father, that is, in this world, not keep their inner clothes (which is the body) neat, and converse with purity in the temple of their Father." Neither can I omit what follows out of the same book: "Whoever is persuaded that the gods have no need of these, (sacrifices), but look only to the manners of those who approach them, esteeming right notions of them and of things, the best sacrifices; how can such a one be otherwise than sober, godly, and righteous?" Where we find these three known words of Paul, *Tit. ii. 2. soberly, righteously, and godly*. Charondas, in his preface to the laws: "Let your mind be void of all evil: for the gods delight not in the sacrifices and expences of wicked men, but in the just and virtuous actions of good men." Seneca, quoted by Lactantius in his institutions, book vi. chap. 25. "Would you conceive God to be great, propitious, and to be revered, as meek in majesty, as a friend, and always at hand; you must not worship him with sacrifices, and abundance of blood, but with a pure mind, and an upright intention." To the same sense is that of Dion Prusænsis, orat. 3. Thucydides, book i. "There is no other festival, but a man's doing his duty." Diogenes: "Does not a good man think every day a festival?"

526 Thus Ovid:— "He who forbears only because forbid,
Does sin; hilt body's free, his mind is staked;

Were be alone, he'd be an adulterer." Seneca the father: "There is such a thing as incest, without the act of whoredom; viz. the desire of it." And in another place: "She is reckoned amongst sinners, and not without reason, who is modest out of fear, and not for virtue's sake."

527 See Plato's Criton, and Maximus Tyrius's second dissertation. Menander:— "O Gorgias, he's the very best of men,

Who can forgive the greatest injuries." Ariston Spartianus: "To a certain person, who said that it was princely thing to do good to friends, and evil to enemies: Rather, answered he, to do good to friends, and to make enemies friends." And the same Dion, the deliverer of Sicily, in Plutarch says, that a true demonstration of a philosophical disposition consists not in any one's being kind to his friends; but, when he is injured, is being easily entreated, and merciful towards those who have offended him.

528 See what is before quoted out of Sallust and others, about this matter. Euripides in his Andromache:—
—"It is by no means fit

not to be dissolved;⁵²⁹ that it is every man's duty to do good to another,⁵³⁰ especially to him that is in want;⁵³¹ that, as much as possible, men ought to abstain from swearing;⁵³² that in meat and clothes, they ought to be content with what is necessary to supply nature.⁵³³ And if there be any thing in the Christian religion difficult to be believed, the like is to be found amongst the wisest of the heathens, as we have before made appear, with respect to the immortality of the soul, and bodies being restored to life again. Thus Plato, taught by the Chaldeans, distinguished the divine nature into the Father; the Father's Mind, which he also calls a branch of the Deity, the Maker of the world; and the soul, which comprehends and contains all things.⁵³⁴ That the Divine nature could be joined with the human, Julian,

178

179

One man should o'er two women have the rule:

One nuptial bed will a wise man suffice,

Who would have all things regulated well." And more to the same purpose, in the chorus of the same tragedy.

529 So it was amongst the Romans till the five hundred and twentieth year of the city, as Valerius Maximus informs us, book iii. chap. 1. Anaxandrides to the same purpose:—"Tis shameful thus for men to ebb and flow."

530 Terence's self-tormentor:—"I am a man, and think every thing humane belong to me." "We are by nature related to each other," says Florentinus the lawyer, L. ut vim. D. de Justitia. And this is the meaning of the proverb, "One man is a kind of god to another." Cicero, in his first book of offices, says, there is a mutual society betwixt men, all of them being related to one another.

531 Horace, book ii.— "Wretch, why should any want, when you are rich?" In Mimus:—"Mercy procures strong security."

532 Pythagoras: "We ought not to swear by the gods, but endeavour to make ourselves believed without an oath:" which is largely explained by Hierocles, on his golden verses. Marcus Antoninus, book iii. in his description of a good man, says, "Such a one needs no oath." Sophocles in his *Œdipus Coloneus*:—"I would not have you swear, because 'tis bad." Clinius the Pythagorean would sooner lose three talents in a cause, than affirm the truth with an oath. This story is related by Basilius concerning reading Greek authors.

533 Euripides:—"There are but two things which mankind do want,

A crust of bread, and draught of springing water;

Both which are near, and will suffice for life." And Lucan:—"There is enough of bread and drink for all." And Aristides:—"We want nothing but clothes, houses, and food."

534 See Plato's epistle to Dionysius. Plato calls the first principle the Father; the second principle the Cause or Governor of all things, in his epistle to Hermias, Erastus, and Coriscus. The same is called the Mind by Plotinus, in his book "of the Three Principal Substances." Numenius calls it the Workman, and also the Son: and Amelius the Word, as you may see in Eusebius, book xi. chap. 17, 19, 19. See also Cyril's third, fourth, and eighth books against Julian. Chalcidius on Timæus, calls the first the Supreme God; the second, the Mind, or Providence; the third, the Soul of the World, or the Second Mind. In another place he distinguishes these three

that great enemy to the Christians, believed, and gave an example in Æsculapius,⁵³⁵ who be thought came from heaven to deliver to men the art of physic. Many are offended at the cross of Christ; but what stories are there which the heathen authors do not tell of their gods! Some were servants to kings; others were struck with thunderbolts, ripped up, wounded. And the wisest of them affirmed, that the more virtue cost, the more delightful it was. Plato, in his second Republic, says, in a manner, prophetically,⁵³⁶ that for a man to appear truly good, it is necessary that his virtue be deprived of all its ornaments, so that he may be looked upon by others as a wicked man, may be derided, and at last hanged: and certainly to be an example of eminent patience, is no otherwise to be obtained.

180

181

thus: the Contriver, the Commander, and the Effector. He speaks thus of the second: "The reason of God is God consulting the affairs of men; which is the cause of men's living well and happily, if they do not neglect that gift which the Supreme God has bestowed on them."—"The Pythagoreans assign to the Supreme God the number three, as perfect," says Servius, on the seventh eclogue. Not much differing from which is that of Aristotle, concerning the same Pythagoreans, in the beginning of his first book of the heavens.—(This is more largely handled by the very learned R. Cudworth, in his English work of the intellectual system of the world, book. i. chap. 4. which you will not repent consulting. *Le Clerc.*)

535 Book vi. "Amongst those things which have understanding, Jupiter produced Æsculapius from himself, and caused him to appear upon earth, by means of the fruitful life of the sun; he, taking his journey from heaven to earth, appeared in one form in Epidaurus." Thus Porphyry, as Cyril relates his words in his fore-mentioned eighth book: "There is a certain kind of gods, which in a proper season are transformed into men." What the Egyptians' opinion of this matter was, see Plutarch, Sympos. viii. quæst. i. to which may be added that place of [Acts xiv. 11.](#)

536 2 The words are these, translated from the Greek: "He will be scourged, tormented, bound, his eyes burnt out, and die by crucifixion, after he has endured all those evils." Whence he had that, which he relates in his third book of Republic: "That a good man will be tormented, furiously treated, have his hands cut off, his eyes plucked out, will be bound, condemned, and burnt." Lactantius, in his institutions, book vi. chap. 17. has preserved this place of Seneca: "This is that virtuous man, who, though his body suffer torments in every part, though the flame enter into his mouth, though his hands be extended on a cross, does not regard what he suffers, but how well." Such a one Euripides represents to us in these verses;— Burn, scald this tender flesh; drink your full glut Of purple blood. Sooner may heaven and earth Approach each other, and be join'd in one, Than I to you express a flattering word." To which that of Æschylus, mentioned by Plato in the fore-cited place, exactly agrees:— "He strives to be, not to be thought, the best; Deep-rooted in his mind he bears a stock, Whence all his wiser counsels are derived."

**THE TRUTH
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.**

BOOK V.

SECT. I. A confutation of Judaism, beginning with an address to the Jews.

NOW we are coming out of the thick darkness of heathenism: the Jewish religion, which is a part and the beginning of truth, appears to us, much like twilight to a person gradually advancing out of a very dark cave: wherefore I desire the Jews, that they would not look upon us as adversaries. We know very well, that they are the offspring of holy men, whom God often visited by his prophets and his angels;⁵³⁷ that the Messiah was born of their nation, as were the first teachers of Christianity: they were the stock into which we were grafted: to them were committed the oracles of God, which we respect as much as they; and with Paul put up our hearty prayers to God for them, beseeching him that that day may very speedily come when the veil which now hangs over their faces,⁵³⁸ being taken off, they, together with us, may clearly perceive the fulfilling of the law;⁵³⁹ and when, according to the ancient prophecies, many of us, who are strangers, shall lay hold of the skirt of a Jew, praying him, that with equal piety we may worship that one God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.⁵⁴⁰



537 This, and what follows, is taken out of the ixth, xth, and xith, of the Romans; to which may be added [Matt. v. 21.](#)

538 [2 Cor. iii. 14, 10, 16.](#)

539 [Rom. iii. 21. viii. 14. x. 4. xiii. 8. Gal. iii. 24.](#)

540 [Zech. viii. 20, and following. Isaiah ii. 2. xix. 18. and 24. Micah iv. 2. Hosea iii. 4. Rom. xi. 52.](#)

SECT. II. That the Jews ought to look upon the miracles of Christ as sufficiently attested.

FIRST, therefore, they are requested not to esteem that unjust in another's cause, which they think just in their own: if any heathen should ask them, why they believe the miracles done by Moses, they can give no other answer, but that the tradition concerning this matter has been so continual and constant amongst them, that it could not proceed from any thing else but the testimony of those who saw them. Thus, that the widow's oil was increased by Elisha,⁵⁴¹ and the Syrian immediately healed of his leprosy,⁵⁴² and the son of her who entertained him raised to life again,⁵⁴³ with many others, are believed by the Jews, for no other reason but because they were delivered to posterity by credible witnesses; and, concerning Elijah's being taken up into heaven,⁵⁴⁴ they give credit to the single testimony of Elisha, as a man beyond all exception. But we bring twelve witnesses,⁵⁴⁵ whose lives were unblameable, of Christ's ascending into heaven;⁵⁴⁶ and many more, of Christ's being seen upon earth after his death; which, if they be true, the Christian doctrine must of necessity be true also; and it is plain that the Jews can say nothing for themselves, but what will hold as strong or stronger for us. But, to pass by testimonies, the writers of the Talmud, and the Jews themselves, own the miraculous things done by Christ, which ought to satisfy them:⁵⁴⁷ For God cannot more effectually recommend the authority of any doctrine delivered by man, than by working miracles.



541 [2 Kings iv.](#)

542 [2 Kings v.](#)

543 In the fore-mentioned [ivth chapter.](#)

544 Chap. ii. of the fore-cited book.

545 [Mark. xvi. 10.](#) [Luke xxiv. 52.](#) [Acts i.](#)

546 [Matt. xxviii.](#) [Mark xvi.](#) [Luke xxiv.](#) [John xi, xxi.](#) [1 Cor. xv.](#)

547 See what is quoted, book ii.

SECT. III. An answer to the objection, that those miracles were done by the help of devils.

BUT some say, that these wonders were done by the help of devils: but this calumny has been already confuted from hence; that as soon as the doctrine of Christ was made known, all the power of the devils was broken. What is added by some, that Jesus learned magical arts in Egypt, carries a much less appearance of truth, than the like objection of the heathen against Moses, which we find in Pliny,⁵⁴⁸ and Apuleius.⁵⁴⁹ For it does not appear, but from the books of his disciples, that Jesus ever was in Egypt; and they add, that he returned from thence a child. But it is certain that Moses spent a great part of his time, when he was grown up, in Egypt, both from his own account,⁵⁵⁰ and the relation of others.⁵⁵¹ But the law of each of them strongly clears both Moses and Jesus from this crime, because they expressly forbid such arts as odious in the sight of God.⁵⁵² And if, in the times of Christ and his disciples, there had been any such magical art any where, either in Egypt, or other places, whereby those things related of Christ could be done; such as dumb men's being suddenly healed, the lame walking, and sight given to the blind; the emperors Tiberius,⁵⁵³ Nero,⁵⁵⁴ and others, who would not have spared any cost in inquiring after such things, would undoubtedly have found it out. And if it be true, what the Jews report,⁵⁵⁵ that the counsellors of the great council were skilled in magical arts, in order to convict the guilty; certainly they who were so great enemies to Jesus, and so much envied his reputation, which continually increased by his miracles, would have done the like works by some art; or have made it plain by undeniable arguments, that his works could proceed from nothing else.



548 Book xxx. chap. i.

549 In his second Apology.

550 [Exodus ii. iv.](#) and following.

551 Manethon, Chæremon, Lysimachus in Josephus's first book against Appion, and Justin, and Tacitus.

552 [Exod. xxii. 18.](#) [Levit. xx. 6, 27.](#) [Numb xxiii. 23.](#) [Deut. xviii. 10.](#) [1 Sam. xxviii. 9.](#) [2 Kings xvii. 17.](#) [xxi. 6.](#) [Acts xiii. 8, 9, 10.](#) [xvi. 18.](#) [xix. 19.](#)

553 Tacitus, annal. vi. Suetonius in his life, chap. 63. and 69.

554 Concerning whom Pliny, book xxx. chap. 2. in his history of magic, says, "He had not a greater desire after music and tragical singing." And afterwards; "No man favoured any art with greater cost; for these things he wanted neither riches, abilities, nor disposition to learn," Presently after he relates how he was initiated into the magical suppers by king Tiridates.

555 See the Talmud, entitled, Concerning the council; and that concerning the Sabbath.

SECT. IV. Or by the power of word.

Some of the Jews ascribe the miracles of Jesus to a certain secret name, which was put into the temple by Solomon, and kept by two lions for above a thousand years, but was conveyed thence by Jesus; which is not only false, but an impudent fiction. For, as to the lions, which is so remarkable and wonderful a thing, neither the books of the Kings, nor the Chronicles, nor Josephus, mention any thing of them: nor did the Romans, who before the times of Jesus entered the temple with Pompey, find any such thing.

SECT. V. That the miracles of Jesus were divine, proved from hence, because he taught the worship of one God, the Maker of the world.

Now, if it be granted that miracles were done by Christ, which the Jews acknowledge; we affirm, that it follows from the law of Moses itself, that we ought to give credit to him: for God has said in the xviiiith chapter of Deuteronomy, that he would raise up other prophets besides Moses, which the people were to hearken to; and threatens heavy punishments if they did not. Now the most certain token of a prophet is miracles;⁵⁵⁶ nor can any thing be conceived more flagrant. Yet it is said, *Deut. xiii.* that if any one declares himself to be a prophet, by working wonders, he is not to be hearkened to, if he entices the people to the worship of new gods: for God permits such wonders to be done, only to try whether his people be firmly established in the worship of the true God. From which places, compared together, the Hebrew interpreters rightly collected⁵⁵⁷ that every one who worked miracles was to be believed,⁵⁵⁸ if he did not draw them off from the worship of the true God, for in that instance only it is declared, that no credit is to be given to miracles, though never so remarkable ones. Now Jesus did not only not teach the worship of false gods, but on the contrary did expressly forbid it as a grievous sin:⁵⁵⁹ and taught us to reverence the writings of Moses, and those prophets which followed him: so that nothing can be objected against his miracles; for what some object, that the law of Jesus in some things differs from that of Moses, is not sufficient.

SECT. VI. An answer to the objection, drawn from the difference betwixt the law of Moses and the law of Christ; where it is shewn, that there might be given a more perfect law than that of Moses.

FOR the Hebrew doctors Themselves lay down this rule for the extent of a prophet's power,⁵⁶⁰ that is, of one that works miracles: that he may securely violate any sort of precept, except that of the worship of one God, and, indeed, the power of making laws, which is in God, did not cease upon his giving precepts by Moses; nor is any one, who has any authority to give laws, thereby hindered from giving others contrary to them. The objection of God's immutability is nothing to the purpose, for we do not speak of the nature and essence of

556 And the foretelling future events, which may justly be reckoned amongst miracles. *Deut. xvii. 22.*

557 See Moses Maimonides, and others quoted in Manasses' Conciliator, quest. iv. on Deut.

558 And whose prophecies came to pass; this argument is strongly urged in Chrysostom's fifth discourse against the Jews; and in his discourse concerning Christ's divinity, vi. tom. Savil.

559 *Mark xii. 29, 32. John xvii. 3. Acts xv. 20. 1 Cor. v. 10, 11, 13. vi. 9. x. 7. xii. 2. 2 Cor. vi. 16. 1 Thes. i. 9. 1 John v. 21.*

560 This rule is laid down in the Talmud, entitled, concerning the council. Thus, at the command of Joshua, the law of the sabbath was broken, *Jos. vi.* And the prophets often sacrificed out of the place appointed by the law, as Samuel, *1 Sam. vii. 17. xiii. 8.* and Elijah, *1 Kings xviii. 38.*

God, but of his actions. Light is turned into darkness, youth into age, summer into winter I which are all the acts of God. Formerly God allowed to Adam all other fruit, except that of one tree, which he forbade him,⁵⁶¹ viz. because it was his pleasure. He forbade killing men in general, yet he commanded Abraham to slay his son.⁵⁶² He forbade some, and accepted other sacrifices, distant from the tabernacle.⁵⁶³ Neither will it follow, that because the law given by Moses was good, therefore a better could not be given. Parents are wont to lisp with their children, to wink at the faults of their age, to tempt them to learn with a cake; but as they grow up, their speech is corrected, the precepts of virtue instilled into them, and they are shewn the beauty of virtue, and what are its rewards. Now, that the precepts of the law were not absolutely perfect,⁵⁶⁴ appears from hence; that some holy men in those times led a life more perfect than those precepts required. Moses, who allowed revenging an injury, partly by force and partly by demanding judgment; when himself was afflicted with the worst of injuries, prayed for his enemies.⁵⁶⁵ Thus David was willing to have his rebellious son spared,⁵⁶⁶ and patiently bore the curses thrown upon him.⁵⁶⁷ Good men are no where found to have divorced their wives, though the law allowed them to do it. So that laws are only accommodated to the greater part of the people;⁵⁶⁸ and in that state it was reasonable some things should be overlooked, which were then to be reduced to a more perfect rule, when God, by a greater power of his spirit, was to gather to himself a new people out of all nations. And the rewards which were expressly promised by the law of Moses, do all regard this mortal life only; whence it must be confessed, that a law better than this might be given, which should propose everlasting rewards, not under types and shadows, but plainly and openly, as we see the law of Christ does.⁵⁶⁹



561 [Gen. ii. 17.](#)

562 [Gen. xxii. 2.](#)

563 As we said just before.

564 [Heb. viii. 7.](#)

565 [Exod. xxxii. 11, 12, 13, 31.](#) [Numb. xi. 2. xii. 13. xiv. 13.](#) and following verses, [xxi. 7, 8.](#) [Deut. ix. 18, 26. xxxiii.](#)

566 [2 Sam. xviii. 5.](#)

567 [2 Sam. xvi. 10.](#)

568 Origen against Celsus, book iii. "As a certain lawgiver said to one who asked him, if he gave to his citizens the most perfect laws: not says he, the most perfect in themselves, but the best they can bear." Porphyry, book i. against eating living creatures, concerning lawgivers, says thus: "If they have regard to the middle sort of life, called natural, and according to what is agreeable to most men, who measure good and evil by external things, which concern the body if, I say, with this view they make laws; what injury is done to life, if any one adds something more excellent than this?"

569 [Heb. vii. 19, 22. viii. 6.](#) [2 Tim. i. 10.](#)



SECT. VII. *The law of Moses was observed by Jesus when on earth; neither was any part of it abolished afterwards, but only those precepts which had no intrinsic goodness in them.*

We may here observe by the way, to shew the wickedness of those Jews who lived in our Saviour's time, that Jesus was very basely treated by them, and delivered up to punishment, when they could not prove that he had done any thing contrary to the law. He was circumcised,⁵⁷⁰ made use of the Jewish meats,⁵⁷¹ was clothed like them;⁵⁷² those who were cleansed from their leprosy he sent to the priests;⁵⁷³ he religiously observed the Passover, and other festival days.⁵⁷⁴ If he healed any on the Sabbath day, he made it appear, not only from the law,⁵⁷⁵ but from their received opinions, that such works were not forbidden on the Sabbath.⁵⁷⁶ He then first began to discover the abrogating some laws,⁵⁷⁷ when he had overcome death, was ascended into heaven, had endued his disciples with remarkable gifts of the Holy Spirit, and had shewn by those things, that he had obtained a kingly power,⁵⁷⁸ in which is included an authority to make laws,⁵⁷⁹ according to that prophecy of Daniel, chap. iii. and vii. the viii. and xith being compared together; who foretold that after the overthrow of the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, (the latter of which came to pass under Augustus), God would give to a man, who should appear to be an ordinary person,⁵⁸⁰ a kingdom, extending to the people of all nations and languages, and which should never have an end. Now that part of the law, the necessity of which was taken away by Christ, did not contain in it any thing in its own nature virtuous; but consisted of things indifferent in themselves, and therefore not unalterable: for if there had been any thing in the nature of those things to enforce their practice, God would have prescribed them to all the world, and not to one people only;⁵⁸¹ and that from the very beginning, and two thousand years, and

570 [Luke ii. 21.](#)

571 [Gal. iv. 5.](#)

572 [Matt. ix. 20.](#)

573 [Matt. viii. 4.](#) [Mark i. 44.](#) [Luke v. 14.](#)

574 [Luke ii. 41.](#) [John ii. 13, 23.](#) [xi. 50.](#) [xii. 1.](#) [John vii. 2.](#)

575 [Matt. xii. 5.](#)

576 [Matt. xii. 11.](#)

577 [Acts x. Colos. ii. 14.](#)

578 [Acts ii. 36.](#) [Rev. i. 5.](#)

579 [James i. 25.](#)

580 [Dan. ii. 45.](#) [vii. 13.](#) For "the son of man" expresses in Hebrew a certain meanness; and so the prophets are called, compared with angels, as is observed by Iacchiades, on [Dan. x. 16.](#)

581 So far from that, that some laws, such as those of first-fruits, tithes, assembling upon festivals, relate expressly to the place of Judæa only, whither it is certain all nations could not come. See [Exodus xxxiii. 19.](#) and [xxxiv. 26.](#) [Deut. xxvi. 2.](#) and what follows. Also [Deut. xii. 5.](#) and following; [xiv. 23.](#) and following. Also [Exodus xxiii. 17.](#)

more, after mankind had been created. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Melehisedech, Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the eminently pious men, who were so beloved of God, were ignorant of all, or almost all, this part of the law: and nevertheless they received testimony of their faith towards God, and of his divine love towards them. Neither did Moses advise his father-in-law Jethro to perform these rites, nor Jonas the Ninevites, nor did the other prophets reprove the Chaldæans, Egyptians, Sidonians, Tyrians, Idumæans, and Moabites, to whom they wrote, for not embracing them, though they particularly enumerate their crimes. These precepts, therefore, were particular, and introduced either to hinder some evil, to which the Jews were especially inclined, or for a trial of their obedience, or to signify some future things.⁵⁸² Wherefore, there is no more reason to wonder at their being abolished, than at a king's abrogating some municipal laws, in order to establish the same ordinances all over a nation: neither can there be any thing alleged to prove that God had obliged himself to make no alteration herein. For if it be said, that these precepts are styled perpetual; men very often make use of this word,⁵⁸³ when they would signify only, that what they command in this manner, is not limited for a year's continuance, or to a certain time:⁵⁸⁴ suppose of war or peace, accommodated to the scarceness of provision; now this does not hinder but that they may appoint new laws concerning these matters, whenever the public good requires it. Thus the precepts which God gave to the Hebrews, were some of them temporary, only during the continuance of that people in the wilderness;⁵⁸⁵ others confined to their dwelling in the land of Canaan.⁵⁸⁶ That these might be distinguished from the other, they are called perpetual; by which may be meant, that they ought not to be neglected any where, nor at any time, unless God should signify his will to the contrary. Which manner of speaking, as it is common to all people, the Hebrews ought the less to wonder at, because they know that, in their law, that is called a perpetual right, and a perpetual servitude, which continued



[xxxiv. 22, 23, 24.](#) [Deut. xvi. 16.](#) The most ancient custom interpreted the law of sacrifices in the same manner. The Talmud, entitled, concerning the councils, and that entitled Chagiga, tell us, that the law of Moses was given to the Hebrews only, and not to strangers. See Maimonides on [Deut. xxxiii.](#) and Bechai.

582 Being very much addicted to rites, and, on that account, prone to idolatry. This the prophets every where shew, especially [Ezekiel xvi.](#)

583 L. Hac edictali. Cod. de Secundis nuptiis. L. Hac in perpetuum. Cod. de Diversis Prædiis Libro xi. and in many other places.

584 L. Valerius in Livy, xxxiv. "The laws which particular times require are liable to be abolished, and I find are changed with the times; those that are made in the time of peace are abrogated in war; and those made in war, abrogated in peace."

585 As [Exodus xxvii.](#) [Deut. xxiii. 12.](#)

586 [Deut. xii. 1.](#) [Numb. xxxiii. 52.](#)

only from jubilee to jubilee.⁵⁸⁷ And the coming of the Messiah is by themselves called the fulfilling of the jubilee, or the great jubilee.⁵⁸⁸ And, moreover, the promise of entering into a new covenant is to be found amongst the old prophets, as [Jeremiah xxxi.](#)⁵⁸⁹ where God promises that he will make a new covenant, which shall be writ upon their hearts, and men will have no need to learn religion of each other, for it shall be evident to them all: and moreover, that he would pardon all their past transgressions: which is much the same, as if a prince, after his subjects had been at great enmity with each other, in order to establish a peace, should take away their different laws, and impose upon them all one common law, and that a perfect one; and for the future, promise them pardon for all their past transgressions, upon their amendment. Though what has been said might suffice, yet we will go through every part of the law that is abolished; and shew that the things are not such as are in their own nature well-pleasing to God, or such as ought to continue always.



587 [Exodus xxi. 6.](#) [1 Sam. i. 22.](#) And thus Josephus Albo, in his third book of Foundations, chap. 16. thinks the word לעולם *Le-olam*, in the ritual law, may be understood. And Phineas's priesthood is called, [Psalm cvi. 30, 31.](#) עד עולם *Ad-olam*, everlasting. And by the Son of Sirach, [xlv. 21.](#) an everlasting priesthood; and [1 Mac. ii. 54.](#)

588 In Pereck Cheleck, and elsewhere, and in [Isaiah lxi. 2.](#)—(Pereck Cheleck, is the xith chapter of the Talmud concerning Councils; but what Grotius mentions is not to be found there, at least in the Mischna text; these citations ought to have been more exact. *Le Clerc.*).

589 [Ver. 31.](#) and following.

SECT VIII. *As sacrifices, which were never acceptable to God upon their own account.*

THE principal, and which first offer themselves to us, are sacrifices; concerning which many Hebrews are of opinion that they first proceeded from the invention of men, before they were commanded by God.⁵⁹⁰ Thus much certainly is evident, that the Hebrews were desirous of very many Liles; which was a sufficient reason why God should enjoin them such a number, upon this account, lest the memory of their dwelling in Egypt should cause them to return to the worship of false gods.⁵⁹¹ But when their posterity set a greater value upon them than they ought, as if they were acceptable to God upon their own account, and a part of true piety, they are reprov'd by the prophets: *As to sacrifices,*⁵⁹² says God in David's [fiftieth Psalm](#), according to the Hebrew, *I will not speak to you at all concerning them, viz, that you shall slay burnt-offerings, upon burnt-offerings, or that I will accept young bullocks or goats out of thy fold; for all the living creatures which feed in the forests, and wander upon the mountains, are mine; I number both the birds, and the wild beasts; so that if I be hungry, I need not come to declare it to you; for the whole universe, and every thing in it, is mine. Do you think I will eat the fat of flesh, and drink the blood of goats? No; sacrifice thanksgiving, and offer thy vows unto God.* There are some amongst the Hebrews, who affirm, that this was said, because they who offered these sacrifices were unholy in their hearts and lives. But the words themselves, which we have quoted, tell us the contrary, viz, that the thing was not at all acceptable to God in itself. And if we consider the whole tenour of the Psalm, we shall find that God addresses himself to holy men; for he had before said, *Gather my saints together;*

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590 Chrysostom xii. concerning statues, speaking of Abel, says, "That he offered sacrifices which he did not learn from any other person, nor did he ever receive any law that established any thing about first fruits; but he had it from himself, and was moved to it by his own conscience only." In the answer to the orthodox, in the words of Justin, to the eighty-third query; "none of those who sacrificed beasts to God before the law, sacrificed them at the Divine command; though it is evident that God accepted them, and by such acceptance discovered that the sacrifices were well-pleasing to him."—(This matter is largely handled by dr. Spencer, concerning the Ritual Law of the Jews, book iii. discourse 2. to which I refer you. *Le Clerc*).

591 This very reason for the law of sacrifices is alleged by Maimonides, in his Guide to the Doubting, book iii. chap. 32. Tertullian against Marcion, book ii. "Would you have nobody find fault with the labour and burthen of sacrifices, and the busy scrupulousness of oblations, as if God truly desired such things, when Ile so plainly exclaims against them? To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices? And who hath required them at your hands But let such observe the care God has taken, to oblige a people, prone to idolatry and sin, to be religious, by such duties as that superstitious age was most conversant in, that he might call them off from superstition, by commanding those things to be done upon his account, as if he desired it, lest they should fall to making images."

592 This is Grotius's paraphrase upon [Psalm i.](#) not a literal translation; and so are the following. *Le Clerc*.

and afterwards, *Hear, O my people*. These are the words of a teacher. Then having finished the words before cited, he, turns his discourse as is usual to the wicked: *But to the wicked, said God:* and in other places, we find the *same sense*; as [Psalm li](#). *To offer sacrifices is not acceptable to thee, neither art thou delighted with burnt-offerings:* but the sacrifice which thou truly delightest in is a mind humbled *by the sense of its faults; for thou, O God, wilt not despise a broken and contrite heart*. The like of which is that of [Psalm xl](#). *Sacrifices and oblations thou dost not delight in, but thou securest one to thyself, as if I were bored through the ear;*⁵⁹³ *thou dost not require burnt-sacrifices, or trespass-offerings; therefore have I answered, Lo, I come; and I am as ready to do thy will, as any covenant can make me; for it is my delight. For thy law is fired in my whole heart; the praises of thy mercy I do not keep close in my thoughts, but I declare thy truth and loving kindness every where; but thy compassion and faithfulness do I particularly celebrate in the great congregation*. In [chap. i](#). of [Isaiah](#), God is introduced speaking in this manner: *What are so many sacrifices to me? I am filled with the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of feel beasts; I do not love the blood of young bullocks, of lambs, or of goats, that you should appear with it before me: for who hath required this of you, that you should thus pollute my courts?* And [Jeremiah vii](#). which is a like place, and may serve to explain this. *Thus saith the Lord of angels, the God of Israel; Ye heap up your burnt-offerings with your sacrifices, and yourselves eat the flesh of them. For at the time when I first brought your fathers up out of Egypt, I neither required nor commanded them any thing about sacrifices, or burnt-offerings, But that which I earnestly commanded them was, that they should be obedient to me; so would I be their God, and they should be my people; and that they should walk in the way that I should teach them, so should all things succeed prosperously to them*. And these are the words of God in [Hosea, ch. vi](#). *Loving-kindness towards men is snuck more acceptable to me than sacrifice;*⁵⁹⁴ *to think aright of God is above all burnt-offerings*. And in [Micah](#), when the question was put, how any man should render himself most acceptable to God; by a vast number of rams, by a huge quantity of oil, or by calves of a year old? God answers, *I will tell you what is truly, good and acceptable to me; viz. that you render to every man his due, that you do good to others, and that you become humble and lowly before God.*⁵⁹⁵ Since, therefore, it appears from these places, that sacrifices are not reckoned amongst those things which are primarily and of themselves acceptable to God; but the people, gradually, as is usual, falling into wicked superstition, placed the principal part of their piety in them, and believed that their sacrifices made a sufficient compensation for their sins: it

593 A mark of servitude amongst the Hebrews.

594 So the Chaldee interpreter explains this place.

595 Therefore the Jews say, that the six hundred and two precepts of the law are by [Isaiah](#) contracted into six, [chap. xxxiii. 15](#). by [Micah](#) into three in this place; by [Isaiah](#) into two, [chap. lvi. 1](#). by [Habakkuk](#) into one, [chap. ii. 4](#). as also by [Amos, v. 6](#).

is not to be wondered at, if God in time abolished a thing in its own nature indifferent, but by use converted into evil; especially when king Hezekiah broke the brazen serpent erected by Moses,⁵⁹⁶ because the people began to worship it with religious worship. Nor are there wanting prophecies, which foretold that those sacrifices about which the controversy now is, should cease: which any one will easily understand, who will but consider, that according to the law of Moses, the sacrificing was committed entirely to the posterity of Aaron, and that only in their own country. Now in [Psalm cx.](#) according to the Hebrew, a king is promised, whose kingdom should be exceeding large, who should begin his reign in Sion, and who should be a king and a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedeck. And Isaiah, [chap. xix.](#) saith, that an altar should be seen in Egypt, where not only the Egyptians, but the Assyrians, and also Israelites should worship God; and, [chap. lxvi.](#) he saith, that the most distant nations, and people of all languages, as well as the Israelites, should offer gifts unto God, and out of them should be appointed priests and Levites; all which could not be, whilst the law of Moses continued.⁵⁹⁷ To these we may add that place in [Malachi, chap. i.](#)⁵⁹⁸ where God, foretelling future events, says, that the offerings of the Hebrews would be an abomination to him; that from the east to the west his name should be celebrated among all nations; and that incense and the purest things should be offered him. And Daniel, in [chap. ix.](#) relating the prophecy of the angel Gabriel concerning Christ, says, *that he shall abolish sacrifices and offerings:* and God has sufficiently signified, not only by words, but by the things themselves, that the sacrifices prescribed by Moses are no longer approved by him; since he has suffered the Jews to be above sixteen hundred years without a temple, or altar, or any distinction of families, whence they might know who those are who ought to perform the sacred rites.

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596 [2 Kings xviii. 4.](#)

597 Add this place of Jeremiah, [chap. iii. 16.](#) "In those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, the ark of the covenant of the Lord, neither shall it come into their minds, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done any more."—(Even the Jews themselves could no longer observe their law, after they were so much scattered. For it is impossible that all the males should go up thrice in a year to Jerusalem, according to the law, [Exodus xxiii. 17.](#) from all those countries which were inhabited by them. This law could be given to no other than a people not very great, nor much distant from the tabernacle. *Le Clerc.*)

598 See Chrysostom's excellent paraphrase upon this place, in his second discourse against the gentiles.

SECT. IX. And the difference of meats.

WHAT has been said concerning the law of sacrifices, the same may be affirmed of that in which different kinds of meat are prohibited. It is manifest, that after the universal deluge, God gave to Noah and his posterity a right to use any sort of food;⁵⁹⁹ which right descended not only to Japhet and Ham, but also to Shem and his posterity, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But afterwards, when the people in Egypt were tinctured with the vile superstition of that nation; then it was that God first prohibited the eating some sort of living creatures; either because for the most part such were offered by the Egyptians to their gods,⁶⁰⁰ and they made divination by them; or because in that typical law, the particular voices of men were repres-



599 The mention of clean and unclean creatures seems to be an objection against this, in the history of the deluge; but either that was said by way of prolepsis to those who knew the law; or, by unclean, ought to be understood, those which men naturally avoid for food, such as Tacitus calls profane, Hist. iv. Unless any one had rather understand by clean, those which are nourished by herbs; and by unclean, those which feed on other living creatures.

600 Origen, in his fourth book against Celsus: "Some wicked dæmons, and (as I may call them) Titanic or gigantic ones, who were rebellious against the true God, and the heavenly angels, and fell from heaven, and are continually moving about gross and unclean bodies here on earth, having some fore-sight of things to come, by reason of their freedom from earthly bodies; and being conversant in such things, and being desirous to draw off mankind from the true God, they enter into living creatures, especially those that are ravenous, wild, and sagacious, and move them to what they will: or else, they stir up the fancies of such living creatures to fly or move in such a manner; that men, taken by the divination in these dumb creatures, might not seek the God that comprehends the universe, nor enquire after the pure worship of God; but suffer their reason to degenerate into earthly things; such as birds and dragons, foxes and wolves. For it is observed by those who are skilful in these things, that future predictions are made by such living creatures as these; the daemons having no power to effect that in tame creatures, which, by reason of their likeness in wickedness, not real, but seeming wickedness in such creatures, they are able to effect in other creatures. Whence, if any thing he wonderful in Moses, this particularly deserves our admiration, that, discerning the different natures of living creatures, and whether instructed by God concerning them, and the dæmons appropriated to every one of them; or whether he understood by his own wisdom, the several ranks and sorts of them; he pronounced them unclean, which were esteemed by the Egyptians and other nations to cause divination, and he declared the other to be clean." The like to which we find in Theodoret, book vii. against the Greeks: and not very different from this is that of Manetho, "having established in the law many other things, particularly such as were contrary to the customs of the Egyptians." And that which Tacitus says of the Jews: "All things are profane amongst them which are sacred amongst us." And afterwards: "They slay a ram in contempt of Jupiter Ammon; and sacrifice an ox, which the Egyptians worshipped the god Apis by."

ented by certain kinds of living creatures.⁶⁰¹ That these precepts were not universal, appears from the instance of what is appointed concerning the flesh of a beast that died of itself, [Deut. xiv.](#) that it was not lawful for the Israelites to eat it, but it was lawful for strangers,



601 Barnabas in his epistle: “Moses said, Ye shall not eat a swine, nor an eagle, nor a hawk, nor a raven, nor any fish which hath no fins. By which he meant three opinions figuratively expressed. What he aims at is evident from these words in Deuteronomy: And my judgments shall be established amongst my people. Now the commandment of God is not literally to prohibit eating them; but Moses spake of them in a spiritual sense. He mentions swine for this end, that they should not converse with men who resemble swine; for when they live in luxury, they forget their master; but when they want, they own their master: thus a swine, while he is eating, will not know his master; when he is hungry, he cries out, and when he is full, he is quiet. Again, Thou shalt not, says he, eat the eagle, or the hawk, or the kite, or the raven. As much as to say, you shall not converse with such men, who know not how to get their food by labour and pains, but unjustly steal it from others; and who walk about as if they were sincere, when they lie in wait for others; Thus these slothful creatures contrive how they may devour the flesh of others, being pestilent by their wickedness. Again, Thou shalt not eat, says he, the lamprey, nor the pourcontrol, nor the cuttle; that is to say, you shall not converse with those men who are finally wicked, and condemned to death; as these sort of fish alene are doomed to swim at the bottom of the sea, not like others to hover on the top of the water, but to dwell on the ground at the bottom. Also, he says, thou shalt not eat the coney: wherefore? that you may not be a corrupter of children, nor such like; for the hare has a new place to lay her excrements in every year; for so many years as she lives, so many holes has she under ground. Further, thou shalt not eat the hyæna; that is, thou shalt not be an adulterer, or unclean person, or such like: for what reason? because this creature changes its nature every year, and sometimes is a male, and sometimes a female. And he justly hated the weasel; as much as to say, you shall not be like such persons, who, we have heard, have committed iniquity in their mouths, by uncleanness; neither shall you have correspondence with such workers of iniquity; for this animal conceives in its mouth. Concerning meats, therefore, Moses meant three things spiritually; but they, through fleshly inclinations, understood him of meats. But David knew these three opinions, and therefore agreeably thereto he says, *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly*, as fishes wander in darkness at the bottom of the sea; *and hath not stood in the way of sinners*, viz. like them, who, though they would seem to fear God, sin like swine: *and hath not sat in the seat of the scornful*, like birds watching for their prey. Thus you have the end and the meaning of them. But Moses commanded to eat every creature that is cloven-footed, and that cheweth the cud. And what does he mean by this? He that receiveth meat, knoweth him that feeds him, and is satisfied with it, and seems to rejoice: which is very well said, if we consider the command. What, therefore, is the meaning of it? Why, converse with those who fear their master; with those who meditate in their hearts upon the word they have received; with those who speak of and keep the judgments of their master; with those who know that meditation is a pleasant work, and belongs to those who thoroughly consider their master’s word. But what means cloven-footed? That a man should walk uprightly in this world, in expectation of another life. See what excellent laws are established by Moses.” Clemens commends this of Barnabas, in his fifth Strome. You may find also many things partly alike, and partly the same with these, in

which strangers the Jews were commanded to perform all good offices to, as esteemed of God.⁶⁰² And the ancient Hebrew teachers openly declare, that in the times of the Messiah, the law of the prohibition of meats should cease, and that swine's flesh should be as clean as that of an ox.⁶⁰³ And certainly since God designed to gather a people to himself out of all nations, it was more reasonable that he should make liberty, and not bondage, in such things common to all. Now follows an examination of festival days.



Philo's book of agriculture; and in the book entitled, "The wicked lay snares for the righteous;" which are too long to be transcribed. The like is to be seen in Eusebius, out of Aristæus, book viii. chap. 9.

602 Holy men, but not circumcised, which you find mentioned, [Levit. xxii. 25. and xxv. 40, 47.](#) and in the Talmud, chap. of the king, and of the council; and in Maimonides's book of idolatry.

603 Thus R. Samuel in Mecor Chaim. The Talmud, entitled Nida, says, the law was to continue but till the times of the Messiah. We may moreover observe, that some Hebrew teachers, amongst whom is Bachai, were of opinion that the laws concerning forbidden meats, were peculiar to the land of Canaan, nor was any one obliged to observe them out of the bounds thereof. And beside, the Jews themselves are ignorant, or at least dispute about the signification of many of the names of those animals; which we cannot think God would have permitted, if the obligations to observe that law were to have continued till this time.

SECT. X. And of days.

THESE were all instituted in memory of the benefit they had received from God, when they were delivered from the Egyptian bondage, and brought into the promised land. Now the prophet Jeremiah says, [chap. xvi. and xxiii.](#) that the time would come when new and much greater benefits should so eclipse the memory of that benefit, that there would scarce be any mention made of it. And, moreover, what we now said of sacrifices, is as true of festivals; the people began to put their trust in them so far, that if they rightly observed them, it was no great matter how they offended in other respects. Wherefore, in [Isaiah, chap. i.](#) God says, that he hated their new moons and feast-days, they were such a burden to him, that he was not able to bear them. Concerning the Sabbath, it uses particularly to be objected, that it is an universal and perpetual precept, not given to one people only, but, in the beginning of the world, to Adam the father of them all. To which I answer, agreeably to the opinions of the most learned Hebrews, that this precept concerning the Sabbath is two-fold; a precept of remembrance, [Exodus xx. 8.](#)⁶⁰⁴ and a precept of observation, [Exodus xxxi. 31.](#)⁶⁰⁵ The precept of remembrance is fulfilled in a religious memory of the creation of the world; the precept of observation consists in an exact abstinence from all manner of labour. The first precept was given from the beginning, and without doubt the pious men before the law obeyed it,⁶⁰⁶ as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; the latter of whom, though we have a relation of many of their travels, yet there is no sign of their stopping their journey on account of the Sabbath;⁶⁰⁷ which thing we frequently meet with, after their coming out of Egypt. For after the people were brought out of Egypt, and had safely passed through the Red Sea, they kept the first day a Sabbath of rest, and sung a hymn to God upon that account; and from this time that exact rest of the Sabbath was commanded, the first mention of which is in the gathering of manna, [Exodus xxxv. 2.](#) [Levit. xxiii. 3.](#) And in this sense, the reason alleged, [Deut. v. 15.](#) for the law of the Sabbath is the deliverance out of Egypt. And further, this law had regard to servants against the severity of those masters, who allowed them no



604 זבִּיר.

605 שְׁמִיר. Thus Moses Gerundensis, and Isaac Aramas distinguish.—(*Observation and remembrance signify the same thing in Moses, as to this matter, as we have shewn on [Deut v. 1.](#) however the thing here treated of is true. *Le Clerc.*)*

606 From whom a certain veneration for the seventh day was derived to the Greeks, as Clemens observes. See what is said in relation to this, book. i.

607 That the pious men of those times did in this sense σαββατίσαι, that is, observe the Sabbath, is denied by Justin, in his dialogue with Tryphon, and by Tertullian in two places against the Jews.

respite from their labours, as you find it in the fore-cited places. It is true, indeed, that strangers were obliged by this law, and that for this reason, that there might be an universal rest of all the people.⁶⁰⁸ But that this law of perfect rest was not given to other people, appears from hence, that in many places it is called a sign, and a particular covenant between God and the Israelites, [Exod. xxxi. 13, 16](#). And, further, Mat those things which were instituted in memory of the coming out of Egypt are not such as ought never to cease, we have before shewn, from the promise of much greater benefits. To which may be added, that if the law concerning rest on the Sabbath had been given from the beginning, and in such a manner as never to be abolished; certainly that law would have prevailed over all other laws, the contrary to which we now find. For it is evident, that children were rightly circumcised on the Sabbath-day.⁶⁰⁹ and while the temple stood, the sacrifices were slain on the Sabbath-day, as well as on other days.⁶¹⁰ The Hebrew teachers themselves shew, that this law is changeable, when they say that work may justly be done on the Sabbath at the command of a prophet, which they prove by the example of the taking of Jericho on the Sabbath-day by the command of Joshua. And that, in the time of the Messiah, the difference of days should be taken away, some of them shew very well, from that place of [Isaiah lxvi. 23](#). where it is foretold, that there should be a continual worship of God from Sabbath to Sabbath, from new moon to new moon.



608 Not those others, who out of Judæa observed the precepts given to the posterity of Noah. This is the opinion of the Hebrews.

609 Thus the Hebrew proverb: "The Sabbath gives way to circumcision." See [John vii. 22](#).

610 [Numb. xxviii. 9](#).

SECT. XI. And circumcision of the flesh.

WE come now to circumcision, which is, indeed, ancients than Moses, as being commanded to Abraham and his posterity; but this very precept was the beginning of the covenant declared by Moses. Thus we find God said to Abraham, [Genesis xvii](#). *I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, even the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; therefore keep my covenant, thou and thy seed for ever. This is the covenant betwixt me and thee and thy seed; Every male shall be circumcised.* But we have before seen, that there was to succeed anew covenant in the room of this covenant, such as should be common to all people; for which reason the necessity of a mark of distinction must cease. And this is further evident, that there was some mystical and higher signification contained under this precept of circumcision; as appears from the prophets, when they command the heart to be circumcised, to which all the precepts of Christ tend.⁶¹¹ So likewise the promises added to circumcision, must of necessity relate to something further; namely, that of an earthly possession, to the revelation of an everlasting possession;⁶¹² which was never made more manifest than by Jesus; and that of making Abraham a father of many nations;⁶¹³ till that time when not only some few people, but innumerable of them, spread all over the world, should imitate that memorable faith of Abraham towards God; which never yet came to pass, but by the gospel. Now it is no wonder, that when the work is finished, the shadow of the work that was designed should be taken away. And that God's mercy was not confined to this sign, is from hence manifest;⁶¹⁴ that not only those who lived before Abraham, but even Abraham himself was acceptable to God before he was circumcised; and circumcision was omitted by the Hebrews all the while they journeyed through the deserts of Arabia, without being reprov'd of God for it.⁶¹⁵

202

203

611 [Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. Jer. iv. 4.](#)

612 [Heb. iv.](#)

613 [Gen. xvii. 5. Rom. iv. 11, 13, 16, 17. Luke xix. 9. Gal. iii. 7.](#)

614 Justin, in his dialogue with Trypho, says, "Circumcision was given for a sign, and not for a work of righteousness." And Irenæus, book iv. chap. 30. "We learn from scripture, that circumcision is not that which perfects righteousness: but God gave it, that Abraham's posterity might continue distinguishable. For God said to Abraham, Let every male of you be circumcised, and circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be for a sign and a covenant betwixt you and me."

615 [Josh. v. 5. 6.](#)

SECT. XII. And yet the apostles of Jesus easily allowed of those things.

THERE was certainly very good reason why the Hebrews should return their hearty thanks to Jesus and his ambassadors, in that he freed them from that heavy burden of rites, and secured their liberty to them, by miracles and gifts no way inferior to those of Moses.⁶¹⁶ But yet they who first delivered this doctrine, did not require this of them, that they should acknowledge such their happiness; but if they would perform the precepts of Jesus, which were full of all virtue, they easily allowed them, in indifferent things, to follow what course of life they would,⁶¹⁷ provided they did not impose the observation of it, as necessary, upon strangers, to whom the ritual law was never given;⁶¹⁸ which one thing sufficiently shews, that the Jews very unjustly reject the doctrine of Jesus, under pretence of the ritual law. Having answered this objection, which is almost the only one commonly opposed to the miracles of Jesus, we come now to other arguments suited to convince the Jews.

616 R. Levi Ben Gerson said, that the miracles of the Messiah ought to be greater than those of Moses, which is most evident is the dead restored to life.

617 Acts xvi. 3. xxi. 24. Rom. xiv. 1 Cor. ix. 20. Gal. v. 6. Coloss. iii. 11.

618 Acts xv. Gal. i. 6. ii. 3, 14, iv. 10. vi. 12.

SECT. XIII. A proof against the Jews, taken from their own confession of the extraordinary promise of the Messiah.

BOTH they and we are agreed, that in the predictions of the prophets there is a promise, that amongst the many persons who should make known to the Jews, from heaven, very great advantages, there should be one, far exceeding the rest, whom they called the Messiah; which, though a common name, did more eminently agree to this person only. We assert, that he came long since: they expect that he is yet to come. It remains, therefore, that we put an end to the controversy, from those books, the authority of which is equally acknowledged by both.



SECT. XIV. That he is already come, appears from the time foretold.

DANIEL, a testimony of whose great piety Ezekiel affords us,⁶¹⁹ could neither deceive us, nor be deceived himself by the angel Gabriel: and he, according to the direction of the angel, has left us upon record, chap. ix. that there should not pass above five hundred years between the publication of the edict for rebuilding the city of Jerusalem, and the coming of the Messiah.⁶²⁰ But there are above two thousand years passed, since that time to this day, and he, whom the Jews expect, is not yet come; neither can they name any other to whom that time will agree. But it agrees so well to Jesus, that a Hebrew teacher, Nehemiah,⁶²¹ who lived five hundred years before him, said openly then, that the time of the Messiah, signified by Daniel, could not be deferred above five hundred years. There is another mark before hinted at, which agrees with this of the time; and that is, that a government over all nations should be appointed from heaven,⁶²² after the posterity of Seleucus and Lagus should cease to reign;⁶²³ the latter of which ended in Cleopatra, not long before Jesus was born. A third token is in the fore-mentioned chap. ix. of Daniel; that after the coming of the Messiah, the city of Jerusalem should be razed; which prophecy of the destruction of that city, Josephus himself refers to his own age.⁶²⁴ From whence it follows, that the time limited for the coming of the Messiah was then past. To this may be referred that of Haggai, [chap. ii.](#) where God

205

619 [xiv. 14.](#) [xxviii. 3.](#) Josephus concerning Daniel, at the end of the tenth book, says, "That the spirit of God was with him." And afterwards, "That he was endued with every thing in an incredible manner, as being one of the greatest of the prophets. In his life-time he was had in great honour and esteem, both by the kings and the people; and after his death he was had in everlasting remembrance; the books wrote by him, and left to us, we read at this day, and their testimony convinces us that he had a communication with God."

620 The great Hebrew doctors, such as Salomon Jarchi, rabbi Josue, quoted by Abenesdras and Saadiah, agree, that the Son of Man in Daniel is the Messiah: thus rabbi Josue, who saw the raising of the temple, said that the time of the Messiah was then past, as R. Jacob in Caphthor testifies.

621 Grotius ought to have told us whence he had this. If I remember right, in some epistle of his to his brother William Grotius, he says, he received it from a Jew. *Le Clerc.*

622 R. Levi Ben Gerson tells us, that that stone, by the blow whereof that image which represented the empires should be broken to pieces, was the Messiah. Rabbi Solomon, r. Abenesdras, and r. Saadia, say, that that kingdom, which would consume the rest of the kingdoms, was the kingdom of the Messiah. R. Levi Ben Gerson and Saadia affirm the Son of Man in Daniel to be the Messiah.

623 See the annotations upon this in the first book.

624 Book x. chap. 12. "Daniel wrote concerning this time, and concerning the Roman empire, and that (our nation) should be destroyed by it. God having discovered all these things to him, he left them us in writing; so that whoever reads them, and considers what has come to pass, cannot but admire the honour God did to Daniel." Iacchiades also upon [Dan. ix. 24.](#) tells us, that the seventy weeks of years were finished in the destruction of Jerusalem.

comforts Zerubbabel, a heathen prince, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high-priest, upon their sorrow because the temple built by them did not answer the greatness of the former temple, with this promise, that there should be greater honour done to that temple, than to the former: which could be said neither of the bigness of the work, nor of the materials, nor of the workmanship, nor of the ornaments, as is very plain from the history of those times in the sacred writings, and in Josephus, compared with that of the temple of Solomon: to which we may add, which is observed by the Hebrew teachers, that there was wanting two very great endowments in the latter temple, which were in the former, viz. a visible light, as a token of the divine Majesty, and a divine inspiration.⁶²⁵ But wherein this latter temple was to exceed the former, God briefly declares, when he says, that he would establish his peace,⁶²⁶ that is, his favour and goodwill, in that temple, as it were, by a firm covenant. This is further prosecuted by Malachi, [chap. iii.](#) *Behold, I will send my messenger, who shall prepare my way; and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple,*⁶²⁷ (now Malachi lived after the latter temple was built), *even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in.* Therefore the Messiah ought to come while the second temple stood; in which account is reckoned by the Hebrews all the time from Zerubbabel to Vespasian;⁶²⁸ for the temple in the time of Herod the great was not rebuilt from the foundation, but only gradually renewed by parts;⁶²⁹ notwithstanding which alteration, it might be called the same temple. And, indeed, there was so firm an expectation of the Messiah at that time amongst the



625 In the title concerning instruction, and the Jerusalem Gemara, chap. 3.

626 We must observe what goes before. “The desire of all nations shall come and I will fill this house with glory.” Which wonderfully agrees with what we have taken out of Malachi: so that these two prophets may serve for interpreters of each other. Rabbi Akiba, and many others, as rabbi Solomon testifies, were of opinion, that the Messiah ought to come in the second temple.

627 This place of Malachi, the Jews commonly explain of the Messiah.

628 As in the Talmud, chap. the last, concerning the council; anti that entitled Juma, and that entitled Rosch Haschana.

629 Philo concerning the world: “That is not corruptible, all the parts of which are corrupting gradually but that, all the parts of which are destroyed together at the same time.” Add to this, L. Proponebatur. D. de Judiciis, et L. quid tamen. Sect. in navis. D. quibus modis ususfructus amittatur.

Hebrews, and their neighbours, that Herod was thought by some to be the Messiah,⁶³⁰ Judas Gaulonita by others,⁶³¹ and some more by others, who lived about the time of our Saviour.⁶³²



630 These were the Herodians, [Matt. xxii.16.](#) [Mark iii. 6. viii. 15. xii. 13.](#) Tertullian in his enumeration of heretics: “Amongst these were the Herodians, who said that Herod was the Christ.” And Epiphanius says the same of them: agreeable to which, is that of the ancient scholiast on Persius; “Herod reigned amongst the Jews, in the time of Augustus, in the parts of Syria; therefore, the Herodians keep the birth-day of Herod, as they do the Sabbath, upon which day they put lighted candles crowned with violets on their windows.”

631 See Josephus xviii. 1. [Acts v. 37.](#)

632 [Acts xxi. 38.](#) Josephus has many instances in the time of Felix, and some after the destruction of Jerusalem.

SECT. XV. (With an answer to what is alleged, that his coming was deferred upon the account of the sins of the people.)

THE Jews see themselves put to difficulties by these arguments: that they may elude the force of them, therefore, some say, that their sins were the cause why he did not come at the promised time. Now, not to mention, that, in the fore-cited prophecies,⁶³³ what is determined by them, has no signs of being suspended upon any conditions; how could his coming be deferred on the account of their sins, when this also was foretold, that for the many and great sins of the people, the city should be destroyed, a little after the time of the Messiah?⁶³⁴ Further, the Messiah was to come for this very reason, that he might bring a remedy for the most corrupt age;⁶³⁵ and, together with the rules of reforming their lives, assure them of pardon of their sins. Whence it is said in Zechariah, chap. xiii. concerning his time, that a fountain should then be opened to the house of David and to all in Jerusalem, to wash away their sins; and it is a common thing among the Jews, to call the Messiah, ISCH COPHER, that is, the Appeaser.⁶³⁶ It is therefore very repugnant to reason to say, that that was deferred upon the account of the disease, which was directly appointed for that disease.



633 This is expressly affirmed by r. Jochanan, in Schemoth Rabba, and r. David Kimchi, on [Psalm cviii. 5.](#) Josephus book x. towards the end, says well of Daniel: "That in his prophecies, he not only foretold what was to come, like the other prophets; but he determined the time in which those things should come to pass." That the decree of the Messiah's being sent at that time was not suspended upon any conditions, appears also from [Mal. iii. 1.](#) Besides, seeing that the Messiah was to be the author of the new covenant, as Malachi in that place and other prophets shew, his coming could not be suspended on the condition of observing that covenant he came to abolish.

634 [Dan. ix. 24.](#)

635 [Isaiah liii. 4.](#) and following verses. [Jeremiah xxxi. 31.](#) and what follows. [Ezekiel xi. 19, 21.](#)

636 **אִישׁ בּוֹטֵר**. See the Chaldee paraphrase on [Cant. i. 14.](#) R. Judas in Chasidim, and r. Simeon in Bereschith Rabba, say, that the Messiah should bear our sins.

SECT. XVI. Also from the present state of the Jews, compared with the promises of the law.

AS to what we said, that the Messiah is long since come upon earth, even experience might convince the Jews. God promised them, in the covenant made with Moses,⁶³⁷ a quiet possession of the land of Palestine, so long as they conformed their lives to the precepts of the law: and, on the contrary, if they sinned grievously against it, he threatened to drive them out;⁶³⁸ and such like evils: yet, notwithstanding this, if at any time, when under the pressure of these calamities, and led by repentance of their sins, they returned to obedience, he would be merciful towards his people, and cause them to return into their own country, though dispersed into the furthest parts of the world; as you may see in many places, particularly [Deut. xxx.](#) and [Nehemiah i.](#) But now it is above fifteen hundred years since the Jews have been out of their own country, and without a temple: and if at any time they attempted to build a new one, they were always hindered.⁶³⁹ Nay, Ammianus Marcellinus,⁶⁴⁰ who was not a Christian writer, reports that balls of fire broke out of the foundation, and destroyed their work. When of old, the people had defiled themselves with the greatest wickedness, every where sacrificed their children to Saturn, looked upon adultery as nothing, spoiled the widows and the orphans, shed innocent blood in great plenty: all which the prophets reproach them with;⁶⁴¹ they were driven out of their country; but not longer than seventy years:⁶⁴² and in the mean time God did not neglect speaking to them by prophets,⁶⁴³ and comforting them with hopes of their return, telling them the very time.⁶⁴⁴ But now, ever since they have been driven out of their country,⁶⁴⁵ they have continued vagabonds and despised, no prophet has come to them, no signs of their future return; their teachers, as if they were inspired with a spirit of giddiness, have sunk into low fables and ridiculous opinions, with which the books of the Talmud abound; which yet they presume to call the oral law, and to compare them, nay, to prefer them, above what is written by Moses. For



637 [Exodus xv.](#) [Levit. xviii.](#) [Deut. vi. vii. xi. xxviii.](#)

638 [Levit. xxvi.](#) [Deut. iv. xi. xxviii.](#)

639 In the times of Adrian, Constantine, and Julian. Chrysostom ii. against the Jews.

640 Book xxiii. Chrysostom ii. against the Jews. "Fire immediately broke out of the foundation, and burnt many men, and also the stones of that place." The whole place is worth reading, The same author has the like words in his fourth homily upon Matthew, and in his discourse of Christ's being God.

641 [Isaiah i. 17. iii. 14, 15. v. 23. xi. 2, 3. lix. lxxv.](#) [Amos ii. 6.](#) [Jeremiah ii. iii. v. vii. 31. viii. x. xi. xvi. xxii.](#) [Ezekiel ii. vi. vii. viii. xvi. xxii. xxiv.](#) [Daniel ix.](#) [Micah ii. 1, 2, 3.](#)

642 R. Samuel makes this objection in his R. Isaac.

643 [Jeremiah xxx. xxxi. xxxiii.](#) [Ezekiel xxxvi, xxxvii.](#)

644 [Jeremiah xxv. 12. xxix. 10.](#)

645 The Talmud in Baba Bathra.

what we there find of God's mourning, because he suffered the city to be destroyed,⁶⁴⁶ of his daily diligence in reading the law,⁶⁴⁷ of the behemoth and leviathan,⁶⁴⁸ and many other things, is so absurd that it is troublesome to relate them.⁶⁴⁹ And yet in this long space of time, the Jews have neither gone aside to the worship of false gods, nor defiled themselves with murder, nor are accused of adultery; but they endeavour to appease God by prayers and fasting, and yet they are not heard:⁶⁵⁰ which being thus, we must of necessity conclude one of these two things, that either that covenant made by Moses is entirely dissolved, or that the whole body of the Jews are guilty of some grievous sin, which has continued for so many ages: and what that is, let them tell us themselves; or, if they cannot say what, let them believe us, that that sin is, their despising the Messiah, who came before these evils began to befall them.

646 See the preface of Echad Rabbathi; the like to which we find in the Talmud, entitled Chagiga, in Debarim Rabba, and in Berachoth.

647 Thaanith and Aboda Zara.

648 See the Talmud Baba Bathra, and the Chaldee paraphrast on the Song of Solomon, [viii. 2.](#)

649 Many of which Gerson the Christian has transcribed in his book against the Jews; see those chapters in it concerning devils, concerning the Messiah, concerning the revelations by Elias, concerning hell, concerning the kingdom of the ten tribes beyond the river Sabbaticus, and concerning the deeds of the rabbies.

650 Whereas, if we may believe themselves, they highly merit of God for rejecting a false Messiah, who was received by so great a part of mankind.

SECT. XVII. *Jesus proved to be the Messiah, from those things that were predicted of the Messiah.*

AND these things do indeed prove, as was before said, that the Messiah did come so many ages since; to which I add, that he was no other than Jesus; for all others, who were willing to have themselves thought the Messiah, or were really thought so, left no sect in which that opinion continued. None now profess themselves to be followers of Herod, or Judas Gaulonita, or of Barchochebas,⁶⁵¹ who, in the times of Adrian, declared himself to be the Messiah, and deceived many learned men.⁶⁵² But there have been such as owned Jesus, ever since he was upon earth, to this very day, and they a great many, not in one country, but all the world over.⁶⁵³ I might here allege many other things, formerly predicted, or believed of the Messiah, which we believe to have been completed in Jesus, and which were not so much as affirmed of any other; such as these, that he was of the seed of David;⁶⁵⁴ that he was born of a virgin;⁶⁵⁵ that this thing was discovered from heaven,⁶⁵⁶ to him who had married that virgin, and would not keep her in marriage because she was big with child by another; that he was born in Bethlehem;⁶⁵⁷ that he began to spread his doctrine first in Galilee;⁶⁵⁸ that he healed all kinds of diseases;⁶⁵⁹ made the blind to see, and the lame to walk: but I shall content myself with one, the effects of which remains to this day; and is



651 Whom Justin styles, *the chief of the revolt of the Jews*. He is mentioned by Eusebius, Jerom, Orosius, in the Talmud, entitled concerning the Council, in Bereschith Raba, by the rabbies John and Abraham Salmanticensis, and others, in many places.

652 As rabbi Akiba; see the Talmud, entitled concerning the Council, and the book Zemach David.

653 See what is said of this in the second book.

654 Psalm lxxxix. 4. Isaiah ix. 7. xi. 10. Jeremiah xxiii. 5. Ezekiel xxxiv. 24. Mich. v. 2. Matt. i. 20. ix. 27. xii. 23. xv. 22. xx. 30, 31. xxi. 9, 15. xxii. 42. and following verses. Mark x. 47. xii. 35, 36, 37. Luke i. 27, 32, 69. ii. 4, 11. xviii. 38, 39. xx. 12, 44. John vii. 42. Acts xii. 34. xv. 16. Rom. i. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 8. Rev. v. 5. xxii. 16.

655 Isaiah vii. 14. Matt. i. 18, 22, 23. Luke i. 35.

656 Matt. i. 20.

657 Mic. v. 2. Matt. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Luke ii. 4.

658 Isaiah ix. 1. Matt. iv. 12, 13. Mark i. 14. Luke iv. 14, 15, 16. and in many other places.

659 Isaiah xxxv. 5. lxi. 1. Matt. xi. 5. Luke. iv. 18. and every where else. Further he also raised the dead, which r. Levi Ben Gerson reckons among the principal marks of the Messiah.

manifest from the prophecies of David,⁶⁶⁰ Isaiah,⁶⁶¹ Zechariah,⁶⁶² and Hosea,⁶⁶³ viz. that the Messiah was to be the instructor of all nations; that the worship of false gods should be overthrown by him;⁶⁶⁴ and that he should bring a vast multitude of strangers to the worship of one God. Before the coming of Jesus, almost the whole world was subject to false worship: which began to vanish afterwards by degrees, and not only particular persons, but whole nations and kings, were converted to the worship of one God. These things are not owing to the Jewish rabbles, but to the disciples of Jesus and their successors. Thus they were made the people of God who were not so before,⁶⁶⁵ and that prediction of Jacob, [Gen. xlix.](#) was fulfilled, that before the civil power was taken from the posterity of Judah, Shiloh should come, whom the Chaldee and other interpreters explain to be the Messiah,⁶⁶⁶ whom foreign nations also were to obey.⁶⁶⁷

212

213

660 [Psalm ii. 8. xxii. 28. lxxviii. 32. lxxii. 8, 17.](#)

661 [ii. 2. xi. 10. xiv. 1. xix. 18. xxvii. 13. xxxv. xlii. and xliii.](#) particularly [xlix. 6. li. 5. lii. 15. liv. lv. 4, 5. lx. 3.](#) and following ones, [lxv. 1, 2. lxvi. 19,](#) and following.

662 [ii. 11. viii. 20.](#) and following, [ix. 9, 10, 11. xiv. 16.](#)

663 [ii. 23.](#)

664 [Isaiah ii. 18, 20. xxxi. 7. xlvi. 1. Zephaniah i. 4, 5, 6. Zech. xiii. 2.](#)

665 [Hosea ii. 23.](#)

666 Both Jonathan the author of the Jerusalem paraphrase, and the writers of the Talmud, in the title concerning the Council; Bereschith Rabba, Jakumus on the Pentateuch, rabbi Solomon, and others, **שבני**, which the Jews now would have to be a rod of chastisement; the Targum in Chaldee explains by **שלטן**, and the Greeks ἀρχων, *a governor*; Aquila, σαγήτρον, *a sceptre*; Symmachus, ἐκούσία, *power*. And **שילה** is explained by **בגן** his son, by the Chaldee r. Siloh, r. Bachai, r. solomon, Abenesdras, and Kimchi. See what is excellently said concerning this place in Chrysostom, in his discourse, that Christ is God.

667 See the fore-cited place of [Isaiah xi. 10.](#) which affords light to this.

SECT. XVIII. An answer to what is alleged, that some things were not fulfilled.

HERE the Jews commonly object, that there were some things predicted of the times of the Messiah, which we do not see fulfilled. But those which they allege are obscure, and may have a different signification; for which we ought not to reject those that are plain; such as the holiness of the precepts of Jesus; the excellency of the reward; the plainness of speech in which it was delivered; to which we may add the miracles; and all together ought to engage us to embrace his doctrine. In order to understand aright the prophecies of the sealed book,⁶⁶⁸ as it is commonly called, there is many times need of some divine assistance, which is justly withheld from those who neglect those things that are plain. Now, that those places, which they object, may be variously explained, they themselves are not ignorant of: and if any one cares to compare the ancient interpreters, who were in the Babylonish captivity,⁶⁶⁹ or elsewhere, concerning the limes of Jesus, with those who wrote after the name of the Christians began to be hated amongst the Jews, he will find that partiality was the cause of new explications; and that those which were formerly received, agreed very well with the sense of the Christians. They are not ignorant themselves, that many things in the sacred writings are not to be understood according to the strict propriety of the words, but in a figurative sense;⁶⁷⁰ as when God is said to have descended;⁶⁷¹ when mouth,⁶⁷² ears,⁶⁷³ eyes,⁶⁷⁴ and nose are ascribed to him.⁶⁷⁵ And what hinders but that many things, spoken of the times of the Messiah, may be explained in this manner? As that the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the lion and the calf, should lie down together;⁶⁷⁶ that a young child should play with the snakes; that the mountain of God should rise higher than the rest of



668 [Isaiah xxix. 11.](#) [Dan. xii. 4, 9.](#) and [Iacchiades](#) upon them. See [Chrysostom's](#) dissertation about this matter, discourse ii. why the Old Testament is obscure.

669 [Grotius](#) seems to have respect to the [Chaldee](#) interpreters of the Old Testament, and to speak according to the opinion of the Jews, who thought them older than they were. See [Brian Walton's](#) [Prolegomena](#) to the [Polyglot Bible](#), ch. xii.

670 Thus [Maimonides](#), in his first book, would have that place of [Isaiah xi. 6.](#) of the times of the Messiah understood allegorically; and thus [David Kimchi](#) speaks of the same place of [Isaiah](#), who also says the same of [Jeremiah ii. 15. v. 6.](#)

671 As [Gen. xi. 5. xviii. 21.](#) See [Maimonides](#) of these and the like forms of speech, in his [Guide to the Doubting](#), part. i. chap. 10. and ii. 29. and following: and also upon [Deut.](#) where he speaks of the king. In the cabalistical book, [Nezrael Israel](#) says, that the things belonging to the Messiah would be heavenly.

672 As [Jer. ix. 12.](#)

673 As [Psalm xxxi. 2. xxxiv. 15.](#)

674 In the place of the fore-cited psalm.

675 [Psalm xviii. 8.](#) [Jer. xxxii. 37.](#)

676 In the fore-mentioned place of [Isaiah xi. 6.](#) and following verses.

the mountains:⁶⁷⁷ that strangers should come thither to perform holy rites. There are some promises, which appear, from the foregoing and following words, or from their own sense, to contain in them a tacit condition. Thus God promised many things to the Hebrews, if they would receive and obey the Messiah when he came: which if they do not come to pass, they must impute it to themselves. And if there be any which are expressly and unconditionally promised, and are not yet fulfilled, they may yet be expected. For it is agreed even amongst the Jews, that the time or kingdom of the Messiah was to continue to the end of the world.⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁷ [Isaiah ii.](#) [Micah iv. 1.](#) and following.

⁶⁷⁸ [Perek Cherek](#), p. 97.

SECT. XIX. And to that which is objected of the low condition and death of Jesus.

MANY are offended at the mean condition of Jesus, but without any reason; for God says every where in the sacred writings, that he exalteth the humble, and casteth down the proud.⁶⁷⁹ Jacob went over Jordan,⁶⁸⁰ carrying nothing with him but his staff, and returned thither again enriched with great plenty of cattle. Moses was banished, and poor, and a feeder of cattle, when God appeared to him in the bush, and made him leader of his people;⁶⁸¹ David also, when he was feeding his flock, was called to be king;⁶⁸² and the sacred history is full of other such like examples. And of the Messiah, we read that he was to be a joyful messenger to the poor;⁶⁸³ that he should not lift up his voice in the street, nor make use of contention, but should act mildly, so as to spare a shaking reed, and to cherish the heat which remained in the smoking flax.⁶⁸⁴ Neither ought his other hardships, and death itself, to render him more odious to any one. For God often permits pious men not only to be vexed by the wicked, as Lot was by the men of Sodom;⁶⁸⁵ but also to be killed, as is manifest in the example of Abel, slain by his brother;⁶⁸⁶ of Isaiah, who was cut in pieces;⁶⁸⁷ of the Maccabees brethren, tormented to death with their mother.⁶⁸⁸ The Jews themselves sing the [lxxixth Psalm](#): in which are these words: *They have given the dead bodies of thy servants to the fowls of the air, and the remains of them, whom thou lovest, to the beasts: they have poured out their blood within the walls of Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them;* and so on. And that the Messiah himself was to arrive at his kingdom, and to the power of bestowing on his disciples the greatest good things, through troubles and death, nobody can deny, who reads those words of Isaiah with an attentive mind, [chap. liii.](#)⁶⁸⁹ *Who hath believed our report, and who hath acknowledged the power of God? And that for this reason, because he hath arisen in the sight of God as a tender plant, as grass out of the sandy ground: there is no beauty or comeliness in his countenance, neither if you look upon him is there any thing*

679 [1 Sam. ii. 8.](#) [Psalm xxxiv. 18.](#) [Prov. xi. 2.](#) [Isaiah lvii. 15.](#) [lxvi. 2.](#)

680 [Gen. xxxii.](#) and following.

681 [Exod. iii.](#)

682 [1 Sam. xvi. 7, 11.](#)

683 [Isaiah lxi. 1.](#) [Matt. xi. 5.](#) and [Zech. ix. 9.](#)

684 [Isaiah xlii. 2, 3, 4.](#) [Matt. xii. 19, 20.](#)

685 [Gen. xix.](#)

686 [Gen. iv.](#)

687 So says the tradition of the Jews, of which the author of the Hebrews has respect [xii. 37.](#) and [Josephus x. 4.](#) [Chalchidius on Timæus](#), "As the prophets by wicked men, one cut in pieces, another overwhelmed with stones."

688 [2 Maccab. vii.](#) [Josephus](#) in his book, "Of the government of reason."

689 Which place is interpreted of the Messiah, by the Chaldee paraphrast, and the Babylonish Gemara, entitled concerning the council.

*delightful: he was exposed to contempt, and was as the most despised amongst men: he endured many sorrows, many griefs: all men turned away themselves from him: he was so much despised as to be thought of no value; but, indeed, he hath endured our diseases, he kink borne our calamities.*⁶⁹⁰ *We esteemed him as struck from heaven, as smitten and afflicted of God: but he was wounded for our sins, he was bruised for our crimes; the punishment which should procure safety for us, was laid on him;*⁶⁹¹ *his stripes were a remedy for us, for assuredly we have all wandered to and fro like sheep: God hath inflicted on him the punishment due to our crimes. And yet, when he was afflicted and grievously tormented, he did not lift up his voice, but was silent as a lamb going to be slain, and a sheep to be shorn. After bonds, after judgment, he was taken from amongst men; but now who can worthily declare the continuance of his life? He was taken out of this place wherein we live; but this evil befel him for the sins of my people. He was delivered into the hands of powerful and wicked men, even unto death and burial, when he had done no injury to any one nor was deceit ever found in his speech. But although God permitted him to be thus far bruised and afflicted with pains, yet because he has made himself a sacrifice for sin,*⁶⁹² *he shall see his posterity, he shall live a long life;*⁶⁹³ *and those things which are acceptable to God, shall happily succeed through him. Seeing himself freed from evil, says God, he shall be satisfied with pleasure,*⁶⁹⁴ *and that principally for this reason, because by his doctrine my righteous servant shall acquit many, bearing himself their sins. I will give him a large portion when the spoil shall be divided amongst the warriors;*⁶⁹⁵ *because he submitted himself to death, and was reckoned amongst the wicked; and when he bore the punishment of other men's crimes, he made himself a petitioner for the guilty. Which of the kings or prophets can be named, to whom these things will agree? Certainly none of them. And as to what the modern Jews conceit, that the Hebrew people themselves are here spoken of, who being dispersed into all nations, should by their example and discourse make proselytes; this sense, in the first place, is inconsistent with many testimonies*

690 Abarbanel upon this place tells us, that by diseases, are to be understood any evils.

691 Rabboth, and Solomom Jarchi, on the Gemara, entitled concerning the council, explain these words concerning the Messiah.

692 Alseck says, that evils borne with a willing mind are here spoken of.

693 Alseck here says, that by the word *seed* in the Hebrew, is meant *disciples*. Thus the *seed of the serpent* is by the Hebrews interpreted the *Canaanites*; and so some understand it to mean their *children*. *Isaiah viii. 18.* as the Jerusalem Talmud observes, under the title concerning the council.

694 Abarbanel refers these words to a future age.

695 The Babylonish Gemara, entitled סובה, tells us, that these words are to be understood in a spiritual sense. Alseck upon this place, says, that by spoils are to be understood the honours and rewards of wise men.

of the sacred writings, which declare, that no misfortunes should befall the Jews,⁶⁹⁶ which, and much greater than which, they have not deserved by their actions. Further, the order itself of the prophetic discourse, will not bear such all interpretation. For the prophet, or, which seems more agreeable to that place, God, says, *This evil hath happened to him for the sins of my people*. Now Isaiah's people, or God's people, are the Hebrew people; wherefore, he who is said by Isaiah to have endured such grievous things, cannot be the same people. The ancient Hebrew teachers more rightly confessed, that these things were spoken of the Messiah; which when some of the latter saw, they imagined two Messiahs;⁶⁹⁷ one of which they call the son of Joseph, who endured many evils, and a cruel death; the other the son of David, to whom all things succeeded prosperously; though it is much easier, and more agreeable to the writings of the prophets,⁶⁹⁸ to acknowledge one, who arrived at his kingdom through adversity and death, which we believe concerning Jesus, and which the thing itself shews us to be true.



696 This appears from those places of the prophets cited above, and from [Daniel ix.](#) and [Nehemiah ix.](#) To which we may add, that he of whom Isaiah speaks, was to pray to God for the heathens, which the Jews do not do.

697 See the Talmud, entitled, *Succha*, r. Solomon, and r. David Kimchi.

698 Which Abarbanel follows, not in one place only, on this chapter of Isaiah.

SECT. XX. *And as though they were good men who delivered him to death.*

MANY are withheld from embracing the doctrine of Jesus, out of a prejudiced notion they have entertained of the virtue and goodness of their forefathers, and especially of the chief priests; who condemned Jesus, and rejected his doctrine, without any just reason. But what sort of persons their forefathers often were, that they may not think I falsely slander them, let them hear in the very words of their law, and of the prophets, by whom they are often called uncircumcised in ears and heart;⁶⁹⁹ a people who honoured God with their lips,⁷⁰⁰ and with costly rites, but their mind was far removed from him. It was their forefathers, who were very near killing their brother Joseph, and who actually sold him into bondage;⁷⁰¹ it was their forefathers also, who made Moses, their captain and deliverer,⁷⁰² whom the earth, sea, and air obeyed, weary of his life, by their continual rebellions; who despised the bread sent from heaven;⁷⁰³ who complained as if they were in extreme want,⁷⁰⁴ when they could scarce contain within them the birds they had eaten. It was their forefathers who forsook the great and good king David, to follow his rebellious son:⁷⁰⁵ it was their forefathers who slew Zacharias, the son of Jehoiada,⁷⁰⁶ in the most holy place, making the very priest himself a sacrifice of their cruelty. And as to the high-priests,⁷⁰⁷ they were such as treacherously designed the death of Jeremiah, and had effected it, if they had not been hindered by the authority of some of the rulers; however, they extorted thus much, that he should be held a captive till the very moment the city was taken.⁷⁰⁸ If any one think that they who lived in the times of Jesus were better, Josephus can free them from this mistake, who describes their most horrid crimes, and their punishments, which were heavier than any that were ever heard of; and yet, as he himself thinks, beneath what they deserved.⁷⁰⁹ Neither are we to think better of the council, especially when at that time the members of it were not admitted, according to the ancient custom, by the imposition of bands, but were wont



699 [Jer. iv. 4. vi. 10.](#)

700 [Deut. xxxii. 5, 6, 15, 28. Isaiah xxix. 13. Amos v. 21. Ezekiel xvi. 3.](#)

701 [Gen. xxxvii.](#)

702 The places are observed before in the second book.

703 [Numb. xi. 6.](#)

704 In the [fore-cited xi. chapter](#), towards the end.

705 [2 Sam. xv.](#)

706 [2 Chron. xxiv. 21.](#)

707 [Jer. xxvi.](#)

708 [Jer. xxxviii.](#)

709 He says no other city ever endured such calamities, nor was there ever any age so fruitful of all kinds of wickedness. The Jews brought greater mischiefs upon themselves than the Romans did, who came to expiate their crimes.

to be chosen at the will of great men;⁷¹⁰ as the chief priests also were, whose dignity was not now perpetual, but yearly, and oftentimes purchased.⁷¹¹ So that we ought not to wonder that men swelled with pride, whose avarice and ambition were insatiable, should be enraged at the sight of a man, who urged the most holy precepts, and reprov'd their lives by their difference from his. Nor was he accused of any thing, but what the best men of old were: thus Micaiah,⁷¹² who lived in the time of Jehosaphat, was delivered to prison, for resolutely asserting the truth against four hundred false prophets. Ahab charged Elijah, just as the chief priests did Jesus, with being a disturber of the peace of Israel.⁷¹³ And Jeremiah was accused, as Jesus was, of prophesying against the temple.⁷¹⁴ To which may be added, what the ancient Hebrew teachers have left us in writing,⁷¹⁵ that in the times of the Messiah, men would have the impudence of dogs, the stubbornness of an ass, and the cruelty of a wild beast. And God himself, who saw long before what sort of men many of the Jews would be in the times of the Messiah, foretold that they who were not his people, should be admitted to be his people;⁷¹⁶ and that out of every city and village of the Jews, not above one or two should go up to the holy mountain;⁷¹⁷ but that what was wanting in their number should be tilled up by strangers. And also that the Messiah should be the destruction of the Hebrews;⁷¹⁸ but that this stone, which was rejected by the master-builders, should be put in the chief place, to hold the whole fabric together.

220

221

710 Josephus xiv. 17.

711 Josephus xviii. 3. and 6.

712 1 Kings xxii.

713 1 Kings xviii. 17. Ahab said to Elijah, *Art not thou he that troubles Israel?* And thus the high-priests said of Jesus, Luke xxiii. 2. *We found this man a troubler of Israel.*

714 Jer. vii. 4. and following; xxvi. 6, 11.

715 See the Talmud, concerning the council; Ketuboth and Sota. R. Solomon on the fore-mentioned title, concerning the council, c. Helec, and the Talmud, entitled concerning weights. And also the tradition of rabbi Judah, in the Gemara, ou the same title, concerning the council, c. Helec; "At that time, when the son of David shall come, the house that was appointed of God, shall be made a brothel-house." See Jeremiah x. 21. xxiii. 14.—(Here was a great mistake, for the Masoreth was put instead of the Gemara, for these words are to be found in the Gemara, chap. xi. entitled concerning the council. "At that time, when the son of David shall come, the house of assembling together, **בית המיער**, shall be made a brothel-house." Ed. Cocceius, Sect. 27. *Le Clerc.*)

716 Hosea ii. 23.

717 Jerem. iii. 19, 17. and Isaiah liii.

718 Isaiah viii. 14. Psalm cxviii. 22.

SECT. XXI. An answer to the objection of the Christians worshipping many gods.

IT remains that we answer two accusations, which the Jews assault the doctrine and worship of the Christians with. The first is this; they affirm that we worship many gods: but this is no more than an odious explication of a doctrine which appears strange to them. For there is no more reason why this should be objected against the Christians, than against Philo the Jew,⁷¹⁹ who often affirms, that there are three things in God; and he calls the reason, or word of God, the name of God,⁷²⁰ the Maker of the world,⁷²¹ not unbegotten as is God the Father of all;⁷²² nor yet begotten in like manner as men are: the same is likewise called the angel, or the ambassador,⁷²³ who takes care of the universe by Philo himself, and



719 Concerning the sacrifices of Abel and Cain. “When God, attended with his two principal powers, government and goodness; himself, who is one only, being between them, he framed three conceptions in the contemplative soul: each of which can by no means be comprehended, for his powers are unlimited; they each contain the whole.” Afterwards he calls *government*, *power*; and *goodness*, he calls *beneficence*; and says, that they are not pronounced by a pious mind, but kept in silent secrecy. And the same we find in his book of Cherubim. In the second book of the husbandry of Noah, he mentions *existence*, the *governing power*, the *merciful power*. Maimonides, in the beginning of his book of fundamentals, and after him Joseph Albo, distinguish in God, “that which understandeth; that by which any thing is understood; and the understanding.” We find something belonging to this matter in Abenesdras, on [Gen. xviii.](#) and Maimonides’s guide to the doubting, part i. chap. 68.

720 In his Allegories, and of the Confusion of Tongues.

721 In his Allegories: “His word, by making use of which, as of an instrument, he made the world.” Concerning Cain: “The word of God was the instrument by which it (the world) was made.”—(The word λόγον might better be translated *reason*, here in Philo, as I have abundantly shewn in the dissertation on the beginning of St. John. *Le Clerc.*)

722 The place is in the book, entitled, Who shall inherit divine things. The same word is called by Philo, the image of God, in his book of monarchy: and in that of dreams sent by God; sometimes ἀπεικόνισμα, *the resemblance*, as in the book entitled, The wicked lay snares for the righteous. Sometimes χαρακτήρ, *the form*, as in book ii. of agriculture. Compare [John i. Heb. i. 3.](#)

723 He calls him ἄγγελον, *angel*, in his Allegories, and in his book of Cherubim; ἀρχάγγελον, *archangel*, in his book entitled, Who shall inherit divine good things, and in his book of The confusion of tongues. And the same is called *angel* and יהוה *Jehovah* by r. Samuel in Mecor Chaim.

by Muses the sun of Nehemannus:⁷²⁴ or against the cabalists,⁷²⁵ who distinguish God into three lights, and some of them by the same names as the Christians do, of the Father, Son or Word, and Holy Ghost. And to take that which is chiefly allowed amongst all the Hebrews; that spirit by which the prophets were moved is not any created thing, and yet is distinguished from him that seat it; as likewise that which is commonly called the Schechinah.⁷²⁶ Now, many of the Hebrews have this tradition,⁷²⁷ that that divine power, which they call Wisdom, should dwell in the Messiah, whence the Chaldee paraphrast calls the Messiah the Word of

223

224

724 The learned Masius has translated his words thus, on the vth chapter of Joshua: “That angel, to speak the truth, is the angel, the Redeemer, of whom it is written, because my name is in him. That angel, I say, who said to Jacob, I am the God of Bethel. He of whom it is said, And God called Moses out of the bush. And he is called an angel, because he governs the world. For it is written, Jehovah (that is, the Lord God) brought us out of Egypt: and in other places, He sent his angel, and brought us out of Egypt. Besides it is written, And the angel of his presence hath made them safe; namely, that angel which is the presence of God, concerning whom it is said, My presence shall go before, and I will cause thee to rest. Lastly, this is that angel of whom the prophet said, and suddenly the Lord whom ye seek shall come into his temple, even the angel of the covenant, whom ye desire.” And again, other words of the same person to this purpose “Consider diligently what those things mean; for Moses and the Israelites always wished for the first angel; but they could not rightly understand who he was. For they had it not from others, nor could they arrive fully at it by prophetic knowledge. But the presence of God signifies God himself, as is confessed by all interpreters; neither could any one understand those things by dreams, unless he were skilled in the mysteries of the law.” And again; “My presence shall go before, that is, the angel of the covenant whom ye desire, in whom my presence will be seen. Of whom it is said, I will hear thee in an acceptable time; for my name is in him, and I will make thee to rest; or I will cause him to be kind and merciful to thee. Nor shall he guide thee by a rigid law, but kindly and gently.” Compare with this, what we find in Manasses Conciliator, in the xix. quest. on Genesis.—(The name of this rabbi’s father may better be pronounced *Nachman*, for it is written נַחֲמָן. *Nahhman. Le Clerc.*)

725 See the appendix to Schindler’s Hebrew Lexicon, in the characters אִכּוּ. And the book called Schep-tal says סְפֵרוּתָהּ *Siperoth*. Number in God does not destroy his unity.

726 And they distinguish it from the Holy Ghost. See the Jerusalem Gemara, entitled concerning instructions, chap. 3. And the Babylonish Gemara, entitled Joma, chap. 1. R. Jonathan, in his preface to Ecka Rabthi, says, that the Schechinah remained three years and a half upon mount Olivet, expecting the conversion of the Jews; which is very true, if we apprehend him right.

727 Rabbi Solomon, on Genesis xix. 18. acknowledges, that God can take upon him human nature, which he thinks was formerly done for a time; to which agrees the Talmud, entitled Schebuoth and Sabbathoth.

God;⁷²⁸ as the Messiah is also called by David, and others, by the venerable name of God,⁷²⁹ and also of Lord.⁷³⁰

728 As [Hosea i. 7.](#)—(But they are mistaken who think that the Chaldee paraphrast means any thing else by the *Name of God*, but God himself; as a very learned man hath shewn, in the balance of truth, published in the year 1700, a long time after the author's death. *Le Clerc.*)

729 Namely, יהוה *Jehovah*; Jonathan and David Kimchi, on [Jeremiah xxiii. 6.](#) with which agrees Abba in Ecka Rabthi. יהוה צבאות. *Jehovah Sabaoth*, Zachariah xiv. 16. The Talmud in Taanith, from [Isaiah xxv. 9.](#) saith, in that time God, יהוה *Jehovah*, shall be shewn, as it were, with the finger.

730 אלהים *Elohim*, [Psalm xlv. 7.](#) which psalm, the Chaldee paraphrast there owns, treats of the Messiah, as he did before in that place of Isaiah now cited. Also אדוני *Adonai*, in [Psalm cx.](#) which treats of the Messiah, as will presently appear.

SECT. XXII. And that human nature is worshipped by them.

To the other objection they make against us, namely, that we give the worship due to God to a being made by God; the answer is ready: for we say, that we pay no other worship or honour to the Messiah but what we are commanded in [Psalm ii.](#) and [cx.](#)⁷³¹ the former of which was fulfilled in David only in an incomplete manner, and belonged more eminently to the Messiah, as David Kimchi, a great enemy to the Christians, acknowledges;⁷³² and the latter cannot be explained of any other but the Messiah: for the fictions of the latter Jews, some of Abraham, some of David, and others of Hezekiah, are very trifling. The Hebrew inscription skews us, that it was a psalm of David's own. Therefore, what David says was said to his Lord, cannot agree to David himself, nor to Hezekiah, who was of the posterity of David, and no way more excellent than David. And Abraham had not a more excellent priesthood; nay, Melchisedech gave him his blessing, as inferior to himself.⁷³³ But both this, and that which is added, concerning a sceptre's coming out of Sion,⁷³⁴ and extending to the most distant places, plainly agrees to the Messiah; as is clear from those places which, without doubt, speak of the Messiah;⁷³⁵ neither did the ancient Hebrews and parsphrasts understand them otherwise. Now that Jesus of Nazareth was truly the person in whom these things was fulfilled, I could believe upon the affirmation of his disciples only, upon the account of their great honesty; in the same manner as the Jews believe Moses, without any other witness, in those things which he says were delivered to him from God. But there are very many and very strong arguments besides this, of that exceeding power which we affirm Jesus to have obtained.⁷³⁶ He himself was seen by many after he was restored to life: he was seen to be taken up into heaven: moreover devils were cast out, and diseases healed, by his name only; and the gift of tongues was given to his disciples: which things Jesus himself promised, as signs of his kingdom. Add to this, that his sceptre, that is, the word of the gospel, came out of Sion, and, without any human assistance, extended itself to the utmost limits of the earth, by the divine power alone; and made nations and kings subject unto it, as the psalms expressly foretold. The cabalistical Jews made the son of Enoch a certain middle person betwixt God and men, who had no token of any such great power.⁷³⁷ How



731 The very learned rabbi Saadia, explains these places, and [Zachariah ix. 9.](#) of the Messiah.

732 The same second psalm is expounded of the Messiah, by Abraham Esdras, and r. Jonathan in Beresith Rabba.

733 And received the tith of him by a sacerdotal right. [Gen. xiv.19, 20.](#)

734 [Psalm cx. 2.](#)

735 As [Gen. xlix. 10.](#) and those before cited out of the prophets.

736 See them handled before in the second book; and what is said in the beginning of this book.

737 The name which the Hebrews give him is **בוטטרי** *Metator*. So the Latins call him who prepares the way for the king. Thus Lucan:— As harbinger to the Hesperian fields, I boldly come. Vegetius, book ii. says,

much more reasonable then is it for us to do it to him who gave us such instructions! Neither does this at all tend to the lessening of God the Father, from whom this power of Jesus was derived,⁷³⁸ and to whom it will return,⁷³⁹ and whose honour it serves.⁷⁴⁰



“They were called *metatores*, harbingers in the camps, who went before and chose a place fit for the camp.” And thus Suidas; “Μετάτωρ, a harbinger, is a messenger, who is sent before from the prince.”—(The rabbies rather call it *Metatron* **בִּמְטְרוֹן**, pious, concerning which see John Buxtorf’s Chaldee and Rabbinical Lexicon. *Le Clerc.*)

738 As himself confesses, [John v. 19, 30, 36, 43. vi. 38, 57. xiii. 28, 49. x. 18, 29. xiv. 28, 31. xvi. 28. xx. 21.](#) And the apostle to the [Heb. v. 5. Rom. vi. 4. 1 Cor. xi. 3.](#)

739 As the apostle confesses, [1 Cor. xv. 24.](#)

740 [John xiii. 31. xiv. 13. Rom. xvi. 27.](#) Therefore the Talmud, entitled concerning the council, denies Jesus to be the name of an idol; seeing the Christians in honouring him have a regard to God the Maker of the world.

SECT. XXIII. The conclusion of this part, with a prayer for the Jews.

IT is not the design of this treatise, to examine more nicely into these things: nor had we treated of them at all, but to make it appear, that there is nothing in the Christian religion either impious or absurd, which any man can pretend against embracing a religion recommended by so great miracles, whose precepts are so virtuous, and whose promises are so excellent. For he who has once embraced it, ought to consult those books, which we have before shewn to contain the doctrines of the Christian religion, for particular questions. Which that it may be done, let us beseech God, that he would enlighten the minds of the Jews, with his own light, and render those prayers effectual, which Christ put up for them when he hung upon the cross.⁷⁴¹



741 [Luke xxiii. 34.](#)

**THE TRUTH
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.**

BOOK VI.

SECT. I. A confutation of Mahometanism: the original thereof.

INSTEAD of a preface to this sixth book, which is designed against the Mahometans, it relates the judgments of Cod against the Christians, down to the original of Mahometanism; namely, how that sincere and unfeigned piety, which flourished amongst the Christians, who were most grievously afflicted and tormented, began by degrees to abate:⁷⁴² after Constantine and the following emperors had made the profession of the Christian religion not only safe, but honourable, by having, as it were, brought the world into the church.⁷⁴³ First, the Christian princes waged war without measure, even when they might have enjoyed peace.⁷⁴⁴ The bishops quarrelled with each other most bitterly about the highest places:⁷⁴⁵



742 See Ammianus Marcellinus, at the end of the twenty-first book concerning Constantino: “And above all, he was very ready to take away what he had given; confounding the Christian religion, which is perfect and sincere, with old wives’ fables; by more intricately searching into which, rather than seriously settling them, he caused a great many differences: which spreading further, be kept up by quarrelling about words; that the body of prelates, who were the public pack-horses, running here and there in synods, as they call them, might cut the nerves of their carriage, by endeavouring to make every rite conformable to their own opinion.”

743 See what is excellently said about this, in Chrysostom’s second moral discourse on the xiith chapter of 2 Cor. after [ver. 10](#).

744 It is a commendable saying of Marcian in Zonaras, “That a king ought not to take up arms, so long as he can maintain peace.”

745 Ammianus, book xxvii. “The cruel seditions of the quarrel. some people, which gave rise to this business, frighted this man also (Viventius, chief commissioner of the palace). Damasus and Ursicinus, being above all reasonable measure desirous of seizing the episcopal chair, contended with each other most vehemently by different interests; their accomplices on each side carrying on their differences as far as death and wounds; which Viventius not being able to correct or soften, being compelled by a great force, retired into the suburbs; and Damasus overcame in the contest, the party which favoured him pressing hard. And it is evident, that in the palace of Sicininus, where the assemblies of the Chris. liens used to be, there were found the dead bodies of one hundred and thirty-seven, slain in one day; and it was a long time before the enraged common people could be appeased. Nor do I deny, when I consider the city’s pomp, but that they, who are desirous of such things, may lawfully contend, by stretching their lungs to the utmost, in order to obtain what they aim at. Because when they are arrived at it, they will be so secure, that they may enrich themselves with the gifts of matrons, may sit and ride in their chariots, be neatly dressed, have large feasts provided, insomuch that their banquets will exceed the royal tables; but such persons might have been more truly happy, if they had despised the grandeur of the city, which flattered their vices; and had lived after the manner of some of the provincial bishops, whose sparingness, in eating and drinking moderately, and meanness in clothes and eyes fixed on the ground continually, recommend them as pure and modest to the Deity, and to those that worship him.” And a little after; “The chief justice, whilst he takes care of the govern. went in a higher degree, amongst other things, by manifold acts of integrity and goodness, for which he has been famous from the beginning of his youth, has obtained that which

and, as of old, the preferring the tree of knowledge to the tree of life, was the occasion of the greatest evils;[Gen. ii. and iii.](#) so then nice inquiries were esteemed more than piety, and religion was made an art.⁷⁴⁶ The consequence of which was, that after the example of them

229

230

seldom happens; that at the same time that he is feared, he does not lose the love of his subjects; which is seldom very strong towards those judges they are afraid of. By whose authority and just determinations of truth, the tumult, raised by the quarrels of the Christians, was appeased; and Ursicinus being driven away, the Roman subjects grew into a firm peace jointly, and with one mind; which is the glory of an eminent ruler, regulating many and advantageous things.” This was that chief justice of whom Jerome tells a story, not unworthy to be mentioned here, to Pammachius, against the errors of John of Jerusalem. “The chief justice, that died when he was designed for consul, used to say jestingly to the holy pope Damasus, Make me bishop of the city of Rome, and I will be a Christian immediately.” See also what the same Ammianus says, book xv. The African council did not without reason admonish the bishop of the city of Rome thus: “That we may not seem to bring the vain arrogance of the age into the church of Christ, which affords the light of simplicity, and the day of humility, to them who desire to see God.” To which we may add the noble epistles of the Roman bishop Gregory, truly styled the great, book iv. 32, 34, 36. book vi. 30. book vii. Indict. 1. Epist. 30.

746 See what was before quoted out of the twenty-first book of Ammianus. The same historian, book xxii. in the history of Julian, says, “And that his disposition of things might produce a more certain effect, having admitted the disagreeing prelates of the Christians, together with the divided multitude, into the palace; he admonished them that every one, laying aside their civil discords, should apply himself without fear to his religion; which he urged the more earnestly, because liberty is apt to increase dissensions; that he might have the less reason to fear the common people, when they were all of one mind, knowing that no beasts are so mischeivous to mankind, as very many of the Christians were, who were so outrageous against one another.” See also Procopius, in the first of his gothics, to be read with some abatement here, as in other places. “Ambassadors came from Byzantium, to the bishop of Rome, viz. Hypatius, bishop of Ephesus, and Demetrius, bishop of Philippi, in Macedonia, concerning an opinion, which was controverted amongst the Christians. Though I know what opposition they made, yet I ant very unwilling to relate it; for I think it the maddest folly so search nicely into the nature of God, and wherein it consists. For, as I conceive, man cannot fully comprehend human things, much less those that appertain to the divine nature, I may therefore securely pass by these things in silence, and not disturb what they reverence. As for myself I can say nothing more of God, but that he is every way good, and upholds all things by his power; he that knows more, whether he be a priest, or one of the common people, let him speak it.” Gregoras, book viii. cites the saying of Lysis the Pythagorean, and afterwards of Synesius; “That talking philosophy among the vulgar, was the cause of men’s so much contemning divine things.” So also book the xth, he much dissuades men from such disputes; and speaking of the Latins of his time, he says, “I blame and condemn the Italians highly, because they run into divine matters with great arrogance.” Afterwards he adds; “Amongst them the mechanics utter the mysteries of divinity, and they are all as eager of reasoning syllogistically, as the

who built the tower of Babel,⁷⁴⁷ their rashly affecting matters, produced different languages and confusion among them; which the common people taking notice of, many times not knowing which way to turn themselves, cast all the blame upon the sacred writings, and began to avoid them, as if they were infected. And religion began every where to be placed, not in purity of mind, but in rites, as if Judaism were brought back again: and in those things, which contained in them more of bodily exercise, than improvement of the mind;⁷⁴⁸ and also in a violent adhering to the party they had chosen;⁷⁴⁹ the final event of which was, that there were every where a great many Christians in name, but very few in reality.⁷⁵⁰ God did not overlook these faults of his people; but from the farthest corners of Scythia,⁷⁵¹ and Germany,⁷⁵² poured vast armies, like a deluge, upon the Christian world: and when the great slaughter made by these, did not suffice to reform those which remained; by the just permission of God, Mahomet planted in Arabia a new religion directly opposite to the Christian religion;⁷⁵³ yet such as did, in a good measure, express in words, the life of a great part of the Christians. This religion was first embraced by the Saracens, who revolted from the emperor Heraclius; whose arms quickly subdued Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Persia; and afterwards they invaded Africa, and came over sea into Spain. But the power of the Saracens was derived to others, particularly to the Turks, a very warlike people;⁷⁵⁴ who after many long engagements with the Saracens, being desired to enter into a league, they easily embraced a religion agreeable to their manners, and transferred the imperial power to themselves. Having taken the cities of Asia and Greece, and the success of their arms increasing, they came into the borders of Hungary and Germany.



cattle are of food and grass. Both they who doubt of what they ought to believe rightly, and they who know not what they ought to believe, nor what they say they believe; these fill all the theatres, forums, and walks, with their divinity, and are not ashamed to make the sun a witness of their impudence.”

747 [Gen. xi.](#) Mahomet often reproaches these controversies of the Christians, particularly in Azoara xxvi. xxxii.

748 [1 Tim. iv. 8.](#) [Colos. ii. 23.](#)

749 [Romans x. 2.](#) [1 Cor. i. 12.](#) and following verses.

750 See Salvian book iii. concerning the government of God. “Excepting a very few who avoid wickedness, what else is the whole body of Christians, but a sink of vice?”

751 Huns, Avari, Sabiri, Alani, Euthalites, and Turks.

752 Goths, Ernii, Gepidæ, Vandals, Franks, Burgundians, Swedes, Almain, Saxons, Varni, and Lombards.

753 Dr. Prideaux’s life of Mahomet, wrote in English, is very well worth reading, published at London, anno 1697. *Le Clerc.*

754 See Leunclavius’s history of Turkey, and Laonicus Chalcocondylas.

SECT. II. The Mahometans' foundation overturned, in that they do not examine into religion.

THIS religion, which was plainly calculated for bloodshed, delights much in ceremonies, and would be believed, without allowing liberty to enquire into it:⁷⁵⁵ for which reason the vulgar are prohibited reading those books which they account sacred; which is a manifest sign of their iniquity. For those goods may justly be suspected, which are imposed upon us with this condition, that they must not be looked into. It is true, indeed, all men have not like capacities for understanding every thing; many are drawn into error by pride, others by passion, and some by custom; but the Divine Goodness will not allow us to believe, that the way to eternal salvation cannot be known by those who seek it, without any regard to profit or honour; submitting themselves, and all that belong to them, to God and begging assistance from him.⁷⁵⁶ And, indeed, since God has planted in the mind of man a power of judging; no part of truth is more worthy to employ it about, than that which they cannot be ignorant of, without being in danger of missing eternal salvation.

232

755 See the Alcoran, Azoara xiii. according to the first Latin edition, which, for the reader's sake, we here follow.

756 See the answer to the Orthodox, question the fourth, among the works of Justin: "That it is impossible for him not to find the truth, who seeks it with all his heart and power; this our Lord testifies, when he says, He that asks receives, he that seeks shall find, and to him that knocks, it shall be opened." And Origen in his eighth book against Celsus "He ought to consider that he who sees and hears all things, the common Parent and Maker of the universe, judges according to men's deserts, of the disposition of every one that seeks Min, and is willing to worship him; and he will render to every one of these the fruit of his piety."

SECT. III. A proof against the Mahometans, taken out of the sacred books of the Hebrews and Christians; and that they are not corrupted.

MAHOMET and his followers confess, that both Moses⁷⁵⁷ and Jesus were sent by God;⁷⁵⁸ and that they who first propagated the institution of Jesus were holy men.⁷⁵⁹ But there are many things related in the Alcoran,⁷⁶⁰ which is the law of Mahomet, directly contrary to what is delivered by Moses, and the disciples of Jesus. To instance in one example out of many: all the apostles and disciples of Jesus entirely agree in this testimony, that Jesus died upon the cross, returned to life upon the third day, and was seen of many: on the contrary, Mahomet says, that Jesus was privately taken up into heaven,⁷⁶¹ and that a certain resemblance of him was fixed to the cross; and consequently Jesus was not dead, but the eyes of the Jews were deceived. This objection cannot be evaded, unless Mahomet will say, as indeed he does, that the books both of Moses, and of the disciples of Jesus,⁷⁶² have not continued as they were, but are corrupted; but this fiction we have already confuted in the third book. Certainly, if any one should say, that the Alcoran is corrupted, the Mahometans would deny it, and say, that that was a sufficient answer to a thing which was not proved. Bat they cannot easily bring such arguments for the uncorruptedness of their book, as we bring for ours, viz. that copies of them were immediately dispersed all over the world; and that not, like the Alcoran, in one language only; and were faithfully preserved, by so many sects, who differed so much in other things. The Mahometans persuade themselves, that in the [xivth chapter of St. John](#), which speaks of sending the Comforter, there was something written of Mahomet, which the Christians have put out: but here we may ask them; do they suppose this alteration of the Scripture to have been made after the coming of Mahomet, or before? It is plainly impossible to have been done after the coming of Mahomet, because at that time there were extant, all over the world, very many copies, not only Greek, but Syriac, Arabic, and in places distant from Arabia, Ethiopic and Latin, of more versions than one. Before the coming of Mahomet, there was no reason for such a change; for nobody could know what Mahomet would teach; further, if the doctrine of Mahomet had nothing

757 Azoara v. xxi.

758 Azoara v. xii.

759 Azoara v. lxxi.

760 As the temple of Mecha, built by Abraham, Azoara xi. and many other things of Abraham, Azoara xxxi. A confused history of Gideon and Saul, Azoara iii. Many things in the history of Exodus, Azoara xvii. xxx. and xxxviii. Many things in the history of Joseph, Azoara xxii. Concerning the birds cut in pieces by Abraham, and called to life again, Azoara iv. Concerning Mary's being brought up with Zachariah, Azoara v. Concerning the birds made of clay by Jesus, *ibid.* and xiii.

761 Azoara xi.

762 Azoara ix.

in it contrary to the doctrine of Jesus, the Christians would as easily have received his books, as they did the books of Moses and the Hebrew prophets. Let us suppose on each side, that there was nothing written either of the doctrine of Jesus, or of that of Mahomet; equity will tell us, that that is to be esteemed the doctrine of Jesus, in which all Christians agree; and that the doctrine of Mahomet, in which all Mahometans agree.

SECT. IV. From comparing Mahomet with Christ.

LET us now compare the adjuncts and circumstances of each doctrine together, that we may see which is to be preferred to the other: and first let us examine their authors, Mahomet himself confessed that Jesus was the Messiah promised in the law and the prophets;⁷⁶³ he is called by Mahomet himself the word,⁷⁶⁴ mind,⁷⁶⁵ and wisdom of God;⁷⁶⁶ he is also said by him to have had no father amongst men.⁷⁶⁷ Mahomet is acknowledged by his own disciples, to have been begotten according to the common course of nature.⁷⁶⁸ Jesus led an innocent life, against which no objection can be made. Mahomet was a long time a robber,⁷⁶⁹ and always effeminate.⁷⁷⁰ Jesus was taken up into heaven, by the confession of Mahomet;⁷⁷¹ but Mahomet remains in the grave. And now can any one doubt which to follow?



763 Azoara xxix.

764 Azoara v. and xi. and in the book of Mahomet's doctrine: Euthymius Zigabenus, in his disputations against the Saracens, says, that Jesus is called by Mahomet, "the Word and Spirit of God."

765 Azoara iv. xi. xxix. and in the fore-mentioned book.

766 In the fore-cited places.

767 Azoara xxxi.

768 See the book of Mahomet's generation.

769 See Mahomet's Chronicon, translated out of Arabic. See a dispute betwixt a Saracen and a Christian, published by Peter, abbot of Clugny.

770 Azoara xlii. xliii. lxxv. and lxxvi. See the fore-mentioned disputation.

771 Azoara xi.

SECT. V. And the works of each of them.

LET us now proceed to the works of each of them. Jesus gave sight to the blind, made the lame to walk, and recovered the sick;⁷⁷² nay, as Mahomet confesses, he restored the dead to life. Mahomet says, that he himself was not sent with miracles, but with arms;⁷⁷³ however, there were some afterwards, who ascribed miracles to him, but what were they? None but such as might easily be the effects of human art; as that of the dove flying to his ear; or such as had no witnesses, as that of the camel's speaking to him by night; or else such as are confuted by their own absurdity, as that of a great piece of the moon falling into his sleeve, and sent back again by him, to make the planet round.⁷⁷⁴ Who is there that will not say, but that in a doubtful cause, we are to stick to that law, which has on its side the most certain testimony of the Divine approbation? Let us also examine them, who first embraced each of these laws.



772 Azoara v. xiii.

773 Azoara iii. xiv. xvii. xxx. lxxi. Concerning this matter, see the life of Mahomet, published in English, by the learned dr. Prideaux, p. 30. where he chews at large, that the false prophet dared not boast of any miracles. *Le Clerc.*

774 Azoara xliv. See this fable more at large, in the chapter Ceramur, in Cantacuzenus's oration against Mahomet, sect. 23.

SECT. VI. And those who first embraced each of these religions.

THEY who embraced the law of Christ were men who feared God, and led innocent lives; and it is not reasonable that God should suffer such persons to be deceived with cunning words, or with a shew of miracles. But they who first embraced Mahometanism were robbers, and men void of humanity and piety.⁷⁷⁵

775 This the word *Saracen* shews, which signifies *robber*. See Scaliger's emendation of the times, book iii. chap. of the Arabian period.—(The first followers of Mahomet were, indeed, truly robbers; but the Arabian word, to which Scaliger refers, signifies *to steal privately*, not *to rob*; nor is it credible that they would take upon themselves such an infamous name; not to mention that this was more ancient than Mahomet, for we find it in Ptolemy and Philostorgius; wherefore, I rather follow the opinion of those who deduce the name *Saracen* from the word שַׂרְקָן *Schark*, which signifies *Eastern*, whence comes שַׂרְקִיִּין, *Sharkiin*, *Saracens*, or *people dwelling in the east*, as the Arabians are called in Scripture. About which see Edward Pocock on the specimen of the history of the Arabians, in the beginning. Le Clerc).

SECT. VII. *And of the methods by which each law was propagated.*

NEXT let us see the method by which each religion was propagated. As for the Christian religion, we have already said several times that its increase was owing to the miracles not only of Christ, but of his disciples and their successors; and also to their patiently enduring of hardships and torments. But the teachers of Mahometanism did not work any miracles, did not endure any grievous troubles, nor any severe kinds of death, for that profession. But that religion follows where arms lead the way;⁷⁷⁶ it is the companion of arms; nor do its teachers bring any other arguments for it,⁷⁷⁷ but the success of war, and the greatness of its power; than which nothing is more fallacious. They themselves condemn the Pagan rites, and yet we know how great the victories of the Persians, Macedonians, and Romans were, and how far their enemies extended themselves. Neither was the event of war always prosperous to the Mahometans; there are remarkable slaughters which they have received in very many places, both by land and sea.⁷⁷⁸ They are driven out of all Spain. That thing cannot be a certain mark of true religion, which has such uncertain turns, and which may be common both to good and bad: and so much the less, because their arms were unjust, and often taken up against a people who no ways disturbed them,⁷⁷⁹ nor were distinguished for any injury they had done; so that they could have no pretence for their arms but religion, which is the most profane thing that can be; for there is no worship of God, but such as proceeds from a willing mind.⁷⁸⁰ Now the will is inclined only by instruction and persuasion, not by threats and force. He that is compelled to believe a thing, does not believe it, but only pretends to believe it that he may avoid some evil. He that would extort assent, from a sense of evil, or from fear, shews by that very thing that he distrusts arguments. And again, they themselves destroy this very pretence of religion, when they suffer those who are reduced

237

238

776 Azoara x. xviii. xxxii.

777 Azoara xxxii. lvii.

778 And greater since the time of Grotius. For they were driven, after many slaughters, from the Austrian dominions, from Hungary, Transylvania, and Peloponnesus, not many years since. And since that time, the Turkish empire seems to decrease. In the year 1715, after these short notes were first published, the Turks recovered the Morea, which was poorly defended by the Venetian governors; but in the following year, 1716, when they attempted to invade Hungary and the island of Corsica, they were first overthrown in a great fight by the Germans, under the command of prince Eugene of Savoy, and lost Temeswaer, which was forced to yield after a stout siege; then being repulsed by the valour of count Schulembourg, not without loss, they retired to their fleet. While I was writing this, April 1717, they threatened they would attempt the same again with new forces, but the Germans did not seem to be much affected with it. *Le Clerc.*

779 Azoara xix.

780 Lactantius, book x. chap. 20. "For there is nothing so voluntary as religion: in which, if the mind of the sacrificer goes contrary, it is taken away; there remains none."

to their obedience to be of what religion they please: nay, and sometimes they openly acknowledge, that Christians may be saved by their own law.⁷⁸¹

781 Azoara ii. and xii. The book of the doctrine of Mahomet—see Euthymius.

SECT. VIII. And of their precepts compared with one another.

LET us also compare their precepts together. The one commands patience, nay kindness, towards those who wish ill to us: the other, revenge. The one commands that the bonds of matrimony should be perpetual, that they should bear with each other's behaviour; the other gives a liberty of separating.⁷⁸² Here, the husband does the same himself, which he requires of his wife; and shews by his own example, that love is to be fixed on one: there, women upon women are allowed, as being always new incitements to lust.⁷⁸³ Here, religion is reduced inwardly to the mind; that, being well cultivated there, it may bring forth fruits profitable to mankind there, almost the whole force of it is spent in circumcision,⁷⁸⁴ and things indifferent in themselves.⁷⁸⁵ Here, a moderate use of wine and meat is allowed: there, the eating swine's flesh,⁷⁸⁶ and drinking wine, is forbidden;⁷⁸⁷ which is the great gift of God, for the good of the mind and body, if taken moderately. And, indeed, it is no wonder, that childish rudiments should precede the most perfect law, such as that of Christ is; but it is very preposterous, after the publication thereof, to return to figures and types. Nor can any reason be given, why any other religion ought to be published, after the Christian religion, which is far the best.



782 See Euthymius, and others who have wrote of the Turkish affairs.

783 Azoara viii. ix. xxxiii.

784 See also Bartholomew Gorgivitius of the rites of the Turks.

785 As washings, Azoara ix. See also Euthymius.

786 Azoara iii. xxvi.

787 See Euthymius, and others who have wrote of the affairs of the Saracens.

SECT. IX. A solution of the Mahometans' objection concerning the Son of God.

THE Mahometans say, they are offended, because we ascribe a Son to God, who makes no use of a wife; as if the word son, as it refers to God, could not have a more divine signification. But Mahomet himself ascribes many things to God, no less unworthy of him, than if it were said he had a wife; for instance, that he has a cold hand, and that himself experienced it by a touch;⁷⁸⁸ that he is carried about in a chair, and the like.⁷⁸⁹ Now we, when we call Jesus the Son of God, mean the same thing that he did, when he calls him the Word of God:⁷⁹⁰ for the word is in a peculiar manner produced from the mind:⁷⁹¹ to which we may add, that he was born of a virgin, by the help of God alone, who supplied the power of a father; that he was taken up into heaven by the power of God; which things, and those that Mahomet confesses, shew, that Jesus may and ought to be called the Son of God, by a peculiar right.⁷⁹²



788 See the place in Richardus against the Mahometans, chap. 1. and 14. and in Cantacuzenus, in the second oration against Mahomet, sect. xviii. and in the fourth oration, not far from the beginning.

789 In the same place.

790 See above.

791 See Plato in his banquet, and Abarbanel in his dialogue, which is commonly called that of Leo Hebræus. See Euthymius concerning this matter, in the fore-mentioned dispute, where he says, "In like manner as our word proceeds from the mind," &c. And Cardinal Cusan, i. chap. 13. &c. against the Maometaus; and Richardus, chap. 9. and 15.

792 [Luke i. 35.](#) [John x. 36.](#) [Acts iii. 13, 14, 15.](#) [xiii. 33.](#) [Heb i. 6. v. 5.](#) In the fore-mentioned book of the doctrine of Mahomet, Jesus is brought in, calling God his Father.

SECT. X. There are many absurd things in the Mahometan books.

BUT, on the other hand, it would be tedious to relate bow many things there are in the Mahometan writings that do not agree to the truth of history;⁷⁹³ and how many that are very ridiculous. Such as the story of a beautiful woman,⁷⁹⁴ who learnt a famous song from angels overtaken with wine; by which she used to ascend up into heaven, and to descend from thence; who when she was ascended very high into the heavens, was apprehended by God, and fixed there, and that she is the star Venus. Such another is that of the mouse in Noah's ark, that sprung out of the dung of an elephant;⁷⁹⁵ and, on the contrary, that of a cat bred out of the breath of a lion.⁷⁹⁶ And particularly that of death's being changed into a ram,⁷⁹⁷ which was to stand in the middle space betwixt heaven and hell; and that of getting rid of banquets in the other life by sweat;⁷⁹⁸ and that of a company of women's being appointed to every one, for sensual pleasure.⁷⁹⁹ Which things are really all of them such, that they are deservedly given over to senselessness who eau give any credit to them, especially when the light of the gospel shines upon them.



793 As that of Alexander the great, who came to a fountain where the sun stood still, Azoara xxviii. Concerning Solomon, Azoara xxxvii.

794 This fable is in the book of the doctrine of Mahomet, taken out of the book of Enarrations. See also Cantacuzenus, in his second oration against Mahomet, chap. 15.

795 This is in the fore-mentioned book of the doctrine of Mahomet.

796 In the same book.

797 In the end of the fore-mentioned book of the doctrine of Mahomet.

798 In the fore-cited book of the doctrine of Mahomet.

799 See what was above alleged on the second book.

SECT. XI. The conclusion to the Christians; who are admonished of their duty upon occasion of the foregoing things.

HAVING finished this last dispute, I come now to the conclusion, which regards not strangers but Christians of all sorts and conditions: briefly shewing the use of those things which have been hitherto said; that those which are right may be done, and those which are wrong may be avoided. First, that they lift up undefiled hands⁸⁰⁰ to that God who made all things, visible and invisible, out of nothing;⁸⁰¹ with a firm persuasion that he takes care of mankind,⁸⁰² since not a sparrow falls to the ground without his leave:⁸⁰³ and that they do not fear them who can only hurt the body,⁸⁰⁴ before him who hath an equal power over both body and soul: that they should trust not only on God the Father, but also on Jesus,⁸⁰⁵ since there is none other name on earth by which we can be saved:⁸⁰⁶ which they will rightly perform,⁸⁰⁷ if they consider that not they, who call one by the name of Father, and the other by the name of Lord shall live eternally; but they who conform their lives to his will. They are moreover exhorted carefully to preserve the holy doctrine of Christ, as a most valuable treasure;⁸⁰⁸ and to that end, often to read the sacred writings,⁸⁰⁹ by which no one can possibly be deceived, who has not first deceived himself. For the authors of them were more faithful,⁸¹⁰ and more full of the divine influence, than either willingly to deceive us in any necessary truth, or to hide it in obscurity; but we must bring a mind prepared to obey,⁸¹¹ which if we do, none of those things will escape us, which we are to believe, hope,



800 [1 Tim. ii.](#) [James iv. 8.](#) Tertullian in his Apology: “Thither the Christians direct their eyes, with hands extended, because innocent; with head uncovered, because we are not ashamed; without any instructor, because from our heart we pray for all emperors, that they may enjoy a long life, a secure government, a safe house, courageous armies, a faithful senate, an honest people, and a peaceful land.”

801 [Coloss. i. 16.](#) [Heb. xi. 3.](#) [Acts iv. 24.](#) [2 Mac. vii. 28.](#)

802 [1 Pet. iii. 12. v. 7.](#)

803 [Matt. x. 29.](#)

804 [Matt. x. 28.](#) [Luke xii. 4.](#)

805 [John xiv. 1.](#) [Heb. xiv. 15, 16.](#) [Ephes. iii. 12. and 17.](#)

806 [Acts iv. 12.](#)

807 [John viii. 41. and following.](#) [Matt. vii. 21.](#) [John iv. 14.](#) [1 John ii. 3, 4.](#)

808 [Matt. xiii. 44, 45.](#) [1 Cor. iv. 7.](#) [1 Tim. vi. 20.](#) [2 Tim. i. 14.](#)

809 [Colos. iv. 16.](#) [1 Thess. v. 27.](#) [Rev. i. 3.](#)

810 Tertullian speaks thus concerning the heretics in his prescription: “They were wont to say, that the apostles did not know all things; being actuated by the same madness, by which they again change, and say that the apostles did, indeed, know all things, but did not deliver all things to all men; in both of which they make Christ subject to reproach; who sent apostles either nut well instructed or not very honest.” See what there follows, which is very useful.

811 [John vii. 17. v. 44.](#) [Matt. xi. 25.](#) [Philip. iii. 15.](#) [2 Pet. iii. 16.](#) [Hosea xiv. 9.](#)

or do;⁸¹² and by this means, that spirit will be cherished and excited in us,⁸¹³ which is given us as a pledge of future happiness.⁸¹⁴ Further, they are to be deterred from imitating the heathen; first, in the worship of false gods,⁸¹⁵ which are nothing but empty names;⁸¹⁶ which evil angels make use of⁸¹⁷ to turn us from the worship of the true God;⁸¹⁸ wherefore, we cannot partake of their rites,⁸¹⁹ and at the same time be profited by the sacrifice of Christ. Secondly, in a licentious way of living,⁸²⁰ having no other law but what lust dictates, which Christians ought to be the furthest from;⁸²¹ because they ought not only far to exceed the heathen,⁸²² but also the scribes and pharisees among the Jews,⁸²³ whose righteousness, which consisted in certain external acts, was not sufficient to secure them a heavenly kingdom. The circumcision made with hands availeth nothing now,⁸²⁴ but that other internal circumcision of the heart, obedience to the commands of God,⁸²⁵ a new creature,⁸²⁶ faith which is effectual by love,⁸²⁷ by which the true Israelites are distinguished,⁸²⁸ the mystical Jews, that is, such as praise God.⁸²⁹ The differences of meats,⁸³⁰ sabbaths,⁸³¹ festival days,⁸³² were the shadows of things, which really are in Christ and Christians.⁸³³ Mahometanism gave occasion for mentioning the following admonitions: it was foretold by our Lord Jesus,



812 2 Tim. ii. 15, 16. John xx. 31. 1 Pet. i. 23.

813 2 Tim. i. 6. 1 Thess. v. 19.

814 Ephes. i. 14. 2 Cor. i. 22. v. 5.

815 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.

816 In the same, ver. 4. x. 19.

817 1 Cor. x. 20. Rev. ix. 20.

818 Ephes. ii. 2. Rev. ix. 20. 2 Thess. ii. 9.

819 1 Cor. x. 20.

820 Ephes. ii. 3. Tit. ii. 12.

821 2 Cor. vi. 15.

822 Matt. v. 47. vi. 7, 32.

823 Matt. v. 20. xxiii. 23. Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16.

824 1 Cor. vii. 19. Gal. v. 6. vi. 15. Philip. iii. 3. Ephes. ii. 11. Coloss. ii. 11. Rom. ii. 29.

825 1 Cor. vii. 19.

826 Gal. vi. 15.

827 Gal. v. 6.

828 Rom. ix. 6. 1 Cor. x. 18. Gal. vi. 16. John i. 47.

829 Rom. ii. 29. Philo, concerning allegories: "Judas was a symbol of him that professes (God)."

830 Acts x. 13, 14, 15. xv. 19, 20. 1 Cor. x. 25. Coloss. ii. 16, 21.

831 In the fore-cited place of the Colossians.

832 In the same place, and Rom. xiv. 5.

833 Coloss. ii. 17. Heb. x. 1.

that alter his time there should come some who should falsely say they were sent of God;⁸³⁴ but though an angel should come from heaven,⁸³⁵ we are not to receive any other doctrine than that of Christ, confirmed by so many testimonies.⁸³⁶ In times past, indeed, God spake in many and various manners to the pious men that then were;⁸³⁷ but last of all he was pleased to call us by his Son, the Lord of all things,⁸³⁸ the brightness of his Father's glory,⁸³⁹ and the express image of his substance; by whom all things were made,⁸⁴⁰ which were or shall be; who acts and upholds all things by his power;⁸⁴¹ and who having made atonement for our sins,⁸⁴² is advanced to the right hand of God, having obtained a higher dignity than the angels;⁸⁴³ and therefore nothing more noble can be expected than such a lawgiver.⁸⁴⁴ They may also take occasion from hence to remember, that the weapons appointed for the soldiers of Christ are not such as Mahomet depends upon, but proper to the Spirit,⁸⁴⁵ fitted for the pulling down of strong holds, erected against the knowledge of God, the shield of faith,⁸⁴⁶ which may repel the fiery darts of the devil; the breastplate of righteousness, or holiness of life; for a helmet which covers the weakest part, the hope of eternal salvation; and for a sword, the word delivered by the Spirit,⁸⁴⁷ which can enter into the innermost parts of the mind. Next follows an exhortation to mutual agreement,⁸⁴⁸ which Christ seriously commended to his disciples when he was about to leave them: we ought not to have amongst us many masters, but only Jesus Christ.⁸⁴⁹ all Christians were baptized into the same name,⁸⁵⁰



834 [John v. 43.](#) [2 Thess. ii. 9.](#) [Matt. vii. 15.](#) [xxiv.11.](#) [Mark xiii. 22.](#) [1 John iv. 1.](#)

835 [Gal. i. 8.](#)

836 [1 John v. 7, 8.](#) [Heb. ii. 4. xii. 1.](#) [John i. 7, 32. v. 32, 37, 39, 46.](#) [Luke xiv. 27.](#) [Acts ii. 22, 32. x. 43.](#)

837 [Heb. i. 2.](#)

838 [1 Cor. xv. 27.](#) [Heb. ii. 5.](#)

839 [Heb. i. 3.](#)

840 In the same chap. [Col. i. 16.](#)

841 [Heb. i. 3.](#) [Rev. i. 5.](#)

842 [Heb. i. 3. ix. 12.](#) [Matt. xx. 28.](#) [1 John ii. 2. iv. 10.](#) [Matt. xxvi. 64.](#) [Mark xvi. 19.](#) [Acts ii. 33, 34. vii. 55, 56.](#) [Rom. viii. 34.](#) [Ephes. i. 20.](#) [Coloss. iii. 1.](#) [Heb. viii. 1. x. 12. xii. 2.](#)

843 [1 Pet. iii. 22.](#) [Heb. i. 13.](#) [Ephes. i. 21.](#)

844 [Heb. ii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.](#) [iii. 3, 4, 5, 6.](#)

845 [Rom. xiii. 12.](#) [2 Cor. vi. 7. x. 4.](#) [Ephes. vi. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.](#)

846 See, beside the afore-cited place to the Ephes. [1 Thess. v. 8.](#)

847 See, beside the fore-mentioned place, [Ephes. vi. 17.](#) [Heb. iv. 12.](#) [Rev. i. 16.](#)

848 [John xiv. 27. xiii. 34, 35. xv. 12, 17. xvii. 20.](#) and following; [xx. 19, 26.](#) [1 John iii. 23.](#) Also [Ephes. iii. 14.](#) and following; [iv. 16.](#) [Heb. xiii. 20.](#) [Matt. v. 9.](#)

849 [Matt. xxiii. 8.](#) [James iii. 1.](#)

850 [Rom. vi. 3, 4.](#) [1 Cor. 13, 12.](#) [Gal. iii. 57.](#) [Ephes. iv. 5.](#) [Coloss. ii. 12.](#)

therefore there ought to be no sects or divisions amongst them:⁸⁵¹ to which that there may be some remedy applied, those words of the apostle are suggested, to be temperate in our wisdom,⁸⁵² according to the measure of the knowledge God has afforded us:⁸⁵³ if any have not so good an understanding of all things,⁸⁵⁴ that we bear with their infirmities, that they may quietly, and without quarrelling, unite with us:⁸⁵⁵ if any exceed the rest in understanding, it is reasonable he should exceed in goodwill towards them:⁸⁵⁶ and as to those who in some things think otherwise than we do,⁸⁵⁷ we are to wait till God shall make the hidden truth manifest unto them: in the mean time, we are to hold fast, and fulfil those things We are agreed in.⁸⁵⁸ Now we know in part;⁸⁵⁹ the time will come when all things shall be most certainly known.⁸⁶⁰ But this is required of every one, that they do not unprofitably keep by them the talent committed to their charge,⁸⁶¹ but use their utmost endeavours to gain others unto Christ;⁸⁶² in order whereunto, we are not only to give them good and wholesome advice,⁸⁶³ but to set before them an example of reformation of life;⁸⁶⁴ that men may judge of the goodness of the master by the servant, and of the purity of the law by their actions. In the last place, we direct our discourse, as we did in the beginning, to common readers, beseeching them to give God the glory, if they receive any good from what has been said;⁸⁶⁵ and if there be any thing they dislike,⁸⁶⁶ let them impute it to the errors all mankind are prone to fall into; and to the place and time in which this was delivered, more according to truth than elaborately.⁸⁶⁷



851 1 Cor. i. 10. xi. 18. xii. 25.

852 Rom. xii. 3, 16. 1 Cor. iv. 6.

853 In the fore-cited place to the Romans, and xii. 6. 2 Cor. x. 13. Ephes. iv. 7, 15, 16.

854 Rom. xiv. xv. 2. 1 Cor. viii. 7.

855 Rom. xiv. 1. 2 Cor. xii. 20. Gal. v. 20. Philip. i. 16. ii. 3, 15. 1 Cor. xi. 16.

856 Rom. viii. 1, 2, 3, 9. xii. 8. xiii. 3, 14, 16. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. 2 Cor. vi. 6. viii. 7. 2 Pet. i. 5, 6.

857 Philip. iii. 15. Ephes. iv. 2. 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 7. 1 Thess. v. 14. 2 Cor. vi. 6. Gal. v. 22. Coloss. iii. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 2. Luke ix. 54, 55.

858 Philip. iii. 16. James i. 22, 23, 24, 25.

859 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12.

860 1 Cor. xiii. 10, 12. 1 John. iii. 2. Matt. v. 9.

861 Matt. xxv. 15. and following.

862 1 Cor. ix. 19, 20, 21, 22.

863 Gal. vi. 6. Ephes. iv. 29. 2 Tim. i. 13. Titus ii. 8.

864 1 Pet. iii. 1, 16. Ephes. vi. 6. 2 Tim. ii. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 12. Ephes. iv. 1. Phil. i. 27.

865 James i. 17. 2 Thess. i. 3. 1 Cor. i. 4.

866 James iii. Gal. vi. 1, 2.

867 Because this very excellent and learned man was kept in Lipstadt prison, to which he was condemned for life; at which time, and in which place, he could never have taken so great pains in accomplishing so many pieces

remarkable for great learning, accurate judgment, and singular brightness, without incredible firmness and constancy of mind, and unshaken faith in Cod; for which endowments bestowed upon him by God, for the benefit of all Christendom, let every one who reads his other works, or this, with a mind intent upon truth, give thanks to God, as I do from the bottom of my heart. *Le Clerc.*

TWO BOOKS

BY

MONSIEUR LE CLERC.

BOOK I.

CONCERNING

**THE CHOICE OF OUR OPINION AMONGST THE
DIFFERENT SECTS OF CHRISTIANS.**

BOOK II.

INDIFFERENCE IN THE CHOICE OF OUR RELIGION.



MONS. LE CLERC'S BOOKS.

BOOK I.

**CONCERNING THE CHOICE OF OUR OPINION AMONGST THE
DIFFERENT SECTS OF CHRISTIANS.**

SECT. I. We must enquire amongst what Christians the true doctrine of Christ flourisheth most at this time.

WHOEVER reads over the books of the New Testament, with a desire to come at the knowledge of the truth, and does not want judgment, will not be able to deny, but that every one of the marks of truth, alleged by Hugo Grotius, in his second and third books, are to be found there. Wherefore, if he has any concern for a blessed immortality, he will apprehend it to be his duty to embrace what is proposed to him in those books as matter of belief; to do what he is commanded, and to expect what he is there taught to hope for. Otherwise, if any one should deny that he doubts of the truth of the Christian religion, and at the same time thinks the doctrines, precepts, and promises of it not fit to be believed or obeyed in every particular; such an one would be inconsistent with himself, and manifestly shew that he is not a sincere Christian. Now this is one of the precepts of Christ and his apostles,¹ that we should profess ourselves the disciples of Christ before men, if we would have him own us for his, when he shall pass sentence on the quick and dead at the last day; and if we do not, as we have denied him to be our Master before men, so he also, in that last assembly of mankind, will deny us to be his disciples before God. For Christ would not have those that believe on him to be his disciples privately;² as if they were ashamed of his doctrine, or as if they valued the kindnesses, threats, or punishments of men more than his precepts, and the promises of eternal life; but be Christians openly and before all the world, that they may invite other men to embrace the true religion, and render back to God that life which they received from him,³ in the most exquisite torments, if it so seem good to him; whilst they openly profess that they prefer his precepts above all things. And thus St. Paul teaches us, that if we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in our heart that God hath raised him from the dead, we shall be saved:⁴for, says he, *with the heart man believeth unto*



1 Thus Christ saith, [Matt. x. 32](#). “Whosoever therefore shall confess me (*to be his Master*) before men, him will I confess also (*to be my disciple*) before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me (*to be his Master*) before men, him will I also deny (*to be my disciple*) before my Father which is in heaven.” See also [2 Tim. ii. 12](#). [Rev. iii. 5](#).

2 Therefore, he says, [Matt. v. 14](#). “That his disciples are the light of the world; that a city set on a hill cannot be hid; neither is a candle lighted to be put under a bushel, but set on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house,” &c.

3 [Luke xii. 4](#). Christ bids us, “not to be afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do;” and commands us “to fear him, which after we are killed can cast us into hell fire.” And, moreover, he foretells all manner of evils to his disciples, [Matt. x. 39](#). and following; and says, “that he who shall lose his life for his sake shall find it, (again),” &c. which precept, were particularly observed by the primitive Christians; who, for the testimony they gave to the doctrine of the Gospel, are called *martyrs.*, that is, witnesses.

4 [Rom. x. 9, 10, 11](#).

righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; for the Scripture saith, *Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.* Which being thus, it is his duty, wits thinks the Christian religion to be true, to discover and profess boldly, and without fear, this his sincere opinion, upon all occasions that offer themselves.

And it is further necessary for him to enquire, if there be any of the same opinion with himself, and to maintain a particular peace and friendship with them;⁵ for Christ tells us, this is one mark his disciples are to be known by, if they love one another, and perform all acts of love and kindness towards each other. Moreover, he exhorts them to have congregations *in his name*, that is, such as should be called Christian;⁶ and promises that he would be present there, where two or three are met together upon that account; by this means, beside the mutual love and strict friendship of Christians united into one society, there is also a provision made for preserving their doctrines;⁷ which can hardly continue, if every one has a private opinion to himself, and does not declare the sense of his mind to another; unless for his own advantage; for those things that are concealed, are by degrees forgotten, and come in time to be quite extinguished; but Christ would have his doctrine, and the churches which profess it, be perpetual, that it may not cease to be beneficial to mankind.

Wherefore, whoever derives his knowledge of the Christian religion from the New Testament, and thinks it true, such an one ought to make profession of it, and to join himself with those of the like profession.⁸ But because there is not at this time (neither was there formerly) one sort of men only, or one congregation of such as are gathered together *in the name of Christ*; we are not therefore presently to believe that he is a true Christian, who desires to be called by that holy name; neither ought we to join ourselves, without examination, to any assembly who style themselves Christians.⁹ We must consider, above all things, whether their doctrines agree with that form of sound words, which we have entertained in our mind, from an attentive reading of the New Testament; otherwise it may happen, that

5 [John xiii. 31, 35.](#) "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another; that as I have loved you, so ye love one another: by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one towards another." See [1 John ii. 7. iii. 11, 16, 23.](#)

6 [Matt. xviii. 19, 20.](#)

7 Thus likewise all the philosophers transmitted their doctrine to posterity, by the help of schools in which it was taught; but the Christian churches, which are united by a much firmer and stronger bond, will, with more certainty and ease, propagate the doctrine they received from their Master, to the end of the world, which may hardly be done without congregations. Pythagoras would have effected this, but in vain, because his doctrine had nothing divine in it. See Laërtius and Jamblichus.

8 See the epistles to Timothy and Titus, where they are commanded to found churches. And [Heb. x. 25.](#)

9 See [1 Thess. v. 21.](#) But more expressly, [1 John iv. 1.](#) "Beloved," says he, "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God; for many false prophets are come into the world," &c.

we may esteem that a Christian congregation, which is no further Christian than in name. It is, therefore, the part of a prudent man, not to enter himself into any congregation, at least for a continuance; unless it be such, in which he perceives that doctrine established, which he truly thinks to be the Christian doctrine; lest he should put himself under the necessity of saying or doing something contrary to what he thinks delivered and commanded by Christ.

SECT. II. We are to join ourselves with those who are most worthy the name of Christians.

AMONGST Christians that differ from each other, and not only differ, but (to their shame!) condemn one another, and with cruel hatred banish them their society; to agree to any of them without examination, or, according to their order, to condemn others without consideration, shews a man not only to be imprudent, but very rash and unjust. That congregation which rejects, though but in part, the true religion, (a representation of which he has formed in his mind), and condemns him that believes it, cannot be thought by such an one a truly Christian congregation in all things; nor can it prevail with him to condemn every man which that church shall esteem worthy to be condemned, and cast out of the society of Christians. Wherefore a wise and honest man ought above all things to examine, in these dissensions amongst Christians, who they are which best deserve the holy name of disciples of Christ, and to adhere to them. If any one should ask, what we are required to do by the Christian religion, supposing there were no such Christian society at all, amongst whom the true doctrine of Christ seems to be taught, and amongst whom there is not a necessity laid upon us of condemning some doctrine which we judge to be true: in this case, he who apprehends these errors, ought to endeavour to withdraw others from them; in doing of which, he must use the greatest candour,¹⁰ joined with the highest prudence and constancy, lest he offend men without doing them any advantage, or lest all hopes of bringing them to truth and moderation be too suddenly cast off. In the mean time, we are to speak, modestly and prudently, what we think to be the truth; nor should any one be condemned by the judgment of another, as infected with error, who seems to think right. God has never forsaken, nor never will forsake, the Christian name so far, as that there shall remain no true Christians; or at least none such as cannot be brought back into the true way; with whom we may maintain a stricter society, if others will not return to a more sound opinion; and openly withdraw ourselves from the obstinate, (which yet we ought not to do without having tried all other means to no purpose); if it be not allowed you to speak your opinion fairly and modestly amongst them, and to forbear condemning those whom you think are not to be condemned.¹¹ The Christian religion forbids us speaking contrary to our mind, and falsifying and condemning the innocent; nor can he be unacceptable to God, who, out of respect and admiration of those divine precepts, can endure any thing rather than that they

253

254

10 Here that precept of Christ's takes place, [Matt. x. 16.](#) where we are commanded "to be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves;" that is, to be as far simple, as not to fall into imprudence; so wise as not to be crafty, and offend against sincerity; in which matter, there are but few who know how to steer their course in all things, between the rocks of imprudence and craftiness.

11 Whilst it is allowed to have a different opinion, and to profess our disagreement, there is no reason to depart from a public society, unless the fundamentals of Christianity be perverted by it; but where this is not allowed,

should be broke. Such a disposition of mind arising from a sense of our duty, and a most ardent love of God, cannot but be highly well-pleasing to him.

Wherefore, amongst Christians who differ from each other, we are to examine which of them all think the most right; nor are we ever to condemn any but such as seem to us worthy to be condemned after a full examination of the matter; and we are to adhere to those who do not require any doctrines to be believed, which are esteemed by us to be false, nor any to be condemned which we think to be true. If we cannot obtain this of any Christian society, we, together with those who are of the same opinion with ourselves, ought to separate from them all, that we betray not the truth, and utter a falsity.

and we cannot, without dissembling or denying the truth, live in it, then we ought to forsake that society; for it is not lawful to tell a lie, or to dissemble the truth, whilst a lie possesses the place of it, and claims to itself the honour due to truth only. If this be not done, “the candle is put under a bushel.” Thus Christ did not depart from the assemblies of the Jews, neither did the apostles forsake them, so long as they were allowed to profess and teach the doctrine of their Master in them. See [Acts xiii. 46.](#)

SECT. III. They are most worthy the name of Christians who, in the purest manner of all, profess the doctrine the truth of which hath been proved by Grotius.

BUT it is a question of no small importance, and not easily to be resolved, who of all the societies of the present Christians have the truest opinions, and are most worthy of that name by which they are called. All the Christian churches, as well those who have long since separated from the Romish church, as the Romish church itself, do every one of them claim this to themselves; and if we lay aside all the reasons we ought no more to give credit to the one than to the other; for it were a very foolish thing to suffer such a choice to be determined by chance, and to decide all controversies as it were by the cast of a die.¹²

Now since Grotius has not proved the truth of the particular opinions of any present sect of Christians, but only of that religion which was taught mankind by Christ and his apostles; it follows, that that sect of Christians is to be preferred before all others, which does most of all defend those things which Christ and his apostles taught. In a word, that is in every particular truly the Christian religion, which, without any mixture of human invention, may be wholly ascribed to Christ as the author. To this agree all those arguments of truth, which are laid down in the second book *Of the Truth of the Christian Religion*; nor do they agree to any other any further than it agrees with that.

If any one adds to, or diminishes from, the doctrine delivered by Christ, the more he adds or diminishes, so much the farther he goes from the truth. Now when I speak of the doctrine of Christ, I mean by it, the doctrine which all Christians are clearly agreed upon to be the doctrine of Christ, that is, which, according to the judgment of all Christians, is either expressly to be found in the books of the New Testament. or is by necessary consequence to be deduced from them only. As to those opinions, which, as some Christians think, were delivered by word of mouth, by Christ and his apostles, and derived to posterity in a different method, namely, either by tradition, which was done by speaking only; or which were preserved by some rite, as they imagine, and not set down in writing till a great while after; I shall pass no other judgment upon them here, but only this, that all Christians are not agreed upon them, as they are upon the books of the New Testament. I will not say they are false, unless they are repugnant to right reason and revelation; but only that they are not agreed about the original of them, and therefore they are controverted amongst Christians, who in other respects agree in those opinions, the truth of which Grotius has demonstrated: for no wise man will allow us to depend upon a thing as certain, so long as it appears uncertain to us; especially if it be a matter of great moment.¹³

12 See note the 9th, on Section ii.

13 This is the very thing St. Paul means, [Rom. xiv. 23.](#) where he teaches us that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." On which place we have quoted the words of Philo, out of his book concerning fugitives, ed. Paris, p. 469. "The best sacrifice is being quiet, and not meddling in those things which we are not persuaded of." And a little after; "To be quiet in the dark is most safe;" that is, where we are not agreed what is to be done.

SECT. IV. Concerning the agreement and disagreement of Christians.

THOUGH the controversies amongst Christians be very sharp, and managed with great heat and animosity, so that we may hear complaints made on all sides, of very obvious things being denied by some of the contending parties) yet notwithstanding this, there are some things so evident, that they are all agreed in them. And it is no mean argument of the truth of such, that they are allowed of by the common consent of those who are most set upon contention, and most blinded by passion. I do not mean by this, that all other things about which there is any contention are doubtful or obscure, because all Christians are not agreed in them. It may easily happen that that may be obscure to some, which would be very plain, if they were not hindered by passion; but it is hardly possible that the fiercest adversaries, who are most eager in disputing, should agree about an obscure point.

First, then, all Christians now alive are agreed concerning the number and truth of the books of the New Testament; and though there be some small controversies amongst learned men about some epistles of the apostles, this is no great matter;¹⁴ and they all acknowledge, that there is nothing but truth contained in them, and that the Christian doctrine is not at all altered, either by keeping or rejecting them. And this consent is of no small moment in a discourse about the undoubted original of a divine revelation, under the new covenant. For all other records or footsteps of ancient revelation, that have been preserved according to the opinions of some, are called in question by others.

Further, Christians are agreed in many articles of faith, which they embrace, as things to be believed, practised, and hoped for. For instance; all who have any understanding, believe, (I shall mention only the principal heads here), **I.** That there is one God, eternal, all powerful, infinitely good and holy; in a word, endued with all the most excellent attributes, without the least mixture of imperfection: that the world and all things contained in it. and consequently mankind were created by this same God; and that by him all things are governed and directed with the highest wisdom. **II.** That Jesus Christ is the only Son of the same God; that he was born at Bethlehem, of the virgin Mary. without the knowledge of a man, in the latter part of the life of Herod the great, in the reign of Augustus Cæsar; that he was afterwards crucified and died in the reign of Tiberius, when Pontius Palate was governor of Judæa: that his life is truly related in the history of the Gospel; that he was therefore sent from the Father, that he might teach men the way to salvation, redeem them from their sins, and reconcile them to God by his death; and that this his mission was confirmed by innumerable miracles; that he died, as I before said, and rose again, and, after he had been very often seen by many, who had discoursed with him, and handled him, he was taken up into heaven, where he now reigns, and from whence he will one day return, to pass a final judgment,



14 The epistle to the Hebrews, the second epistle of Peter, the two last epistles of John, the authors of which are disputed by learned men.

according to the laws of the Gospel, upon those who were then alive, and upon all them that are dead, when they shall be raised out of their graves; that all the things that he taught are to be believed, and all that he commanded are to be obeyed, whether they relate to the worship of God, or to temperance in restraining our passions, or to charity to be exercised towards others; that nothing could be appointed more holy, more excellent, more advantageous, and more agreeable to human nature, than these precepts; however, that all men (Jesus only excepted) violate them, and cannot arrive at salvation but through the mercy of God. **III.** That there is a Holy Ghost, who inspired the apostles of Jesus Christ, worked miracles to recommend them, and inclines the minds of pious men constantly to obey God, and supports them in the afflictions of life: that we are to give the same credit, and in all things to obey this Spirit speaking by the apostles, as we do the Father and the Son. **IV.** That the Christian church owes its original and preservation from the days of Christ to this time, to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that all they who believe these things, and observe the precepts of the Gospel, shall obtain mercy of God, whereby they shall be made partakers of the resurrection, (if they be dead when Christ shall come), and of a happy life to eternity; on the contrary, all they who have diminished from the faith of the Gospel, and have not observed its precepts, shall rise (if they be dead) to be punished, and their punishment shall be eternal death. **V.** Lastly, That Christians ought to profess all these things, both at their baptism, in which we declare, that we will lead a life free from the filthiness of iniquity, according to the direction of the Gospel; and also at the Lord's supper, in which we celebrate the death of Christ, according to his command, till he comes; and shew that we are willing to be esteemed his disciples, and the brethren of those who celebrate it in like manner; moreover, that those rites, if they are observed by us, as is reasonable, and are celebrated with a religious mind, convey heavenly grace, and the divine Spirit to us.

These things, and others that are necessarily connected with them, (for it is not to our present purpose to mention them all particularly), all Christians believe;¹⁵ nor is there any other difference but only this, that some add many other things to these, whereby they think the foregoing doctrines ought to be explained or enlarged with additions; and those such

15 In the foregoing explication of the Christian doctrine, we have followed the method of that which they call the apostles creed, and have avoided all expressions, which have caused any controversies amongst Christians; because we are treating of those things in which they are agreed: and we do not for this reason condemn as false any thing that may be added by way of explication or confirmation; on the contrary, we highly approve of their endeavours, who explain and confirm divine truths; and we doubt not but that many things have been already found, and may yet be found, to illustrate it. Tertullian judges rightly of this matter, in the first chapter of his book concerning veiling virgins: "The rule of faith is altogether one and the same, entirely firm and unalterable; namely, that we believe in one all-powerful God, the creator of the world, and in his Son Jesus Christ, who was born of the virgin Mary, was sacrificed under Pontius Pilate, was raised from the dead the third day,

as they imagine were delivered to posterity, not by the writings of the apostles, but by the tradition and custom of the church, or by the writings of latter ages. Concerning these additions, I shall say nothing more than what I before advised; that Christians are not agreed upon them, as they are upon the doctrines now explained, which are put beyond all manner of doubt by their own plainness, if we allow but the authority of the Holy Scripture, which no Christian in his senses can refuse.

If any one weighs the arguments by which the truth of the Christian religion is proved, with these doctrines in his view, he will observe, (and if it be well observed, it will be of great use), that all the force of the argument is employed about these things, and not about those points which divide the Christian world, as was before hinted.



was taken up into heaven, sits now at the right hand of the Father, and will come to judge the quick and dead by the resurrection of the flesh. Keeping to this rule of faith, other matters of discipline (or doctrine) and behaviour admit of correction, viz. the grace of God operating and assisting to the end," &c.

SECT. V. Whence every one ought to learn the knowledge of the Christian.

IN this agreement and disagreement amongst Christians, prudent men will judge it most safe to take their knowledge of the Christian religion from the fountain, which is not in the least suspected, and whose streams all confess to be pure and undefiled. And this fountain is not the creed or the confession of faith of any particular church, but only the books of the New Testament, which all acknowledge to be genuine. I confess some Christians do sometimes say, that those books cannot be understood but by the doctrine of their church; but others again deny it; and (to mention but this one thing) that opinion is very suspicious which depends only on the testimony of those that affirm it; and they such, whose chief interest it is that it should seem true. Others say, that there is need of the extraordinary assistance of the Holy Spirit, not only in order to the belief of the Scripture, (which may without any great difficulty be allowed), but also in order to understand the meaning of the words contained in it; which I do not see how it can be proved; but we will grant this also, provided they will acknowledge that all men, who read the books of the New Testament with a religious mind, intent upon the truth, are afforded this Spirit by the goodness of God; there is no need of contending for any thing more than this. Every one, therefore, may wisely and safely gather his knowledge of the Christian religion from these books; yet making use of those helps that are necessary or profitable for the understanding of such books; which we will not now enquire after.

Whoever, therefore, believes that the revelation of the will of God made by Christ is faithfully related in the books of the New Testament, such an one must of necessity embrace all things which he there meets with, according as he understands them, as matters of faith, practice, and hope; for Whoever believes in Christ, ought to receive with a religious mind, every thing which he thinks comes from him; he cannot defend himself with any excuse, whereby to admit some and reject others, of those things which he acknowledges to come from Christ. And such are those doctrines I before explained, and concerning which all Christians, as I said are agreed.

As to the rest, about which they contest, since they are not so very plain, a religious and pious man may and ought to deliberate concerning them, and withhold his judgment till they appear more evident to him: for it is very imprudent to admit or reject any thing, before it sufficiently appears to be either true or false. Nor is eternal salvation, in the books of the New Testament. promised to any one who embraces this or that controverted opinion; but to him who heartily receives in his mind, and expresses in his actions, the sum of the Christian religion, as we have described it.

SECT. VI. *Nothing else ought to be imposed upon Christian, but what they can gather from the New Testament.*

This, therefore, is the only thing that can justly be imposed upon all Christians.¹⁶ viz. that they embrace whatever they think is contained in the books of the New Testament, and obey those things which they find there commanded, and abstain from those things which are there forbidden; if any thing further be required of them as necessary, it is without any authority. For would any fair judge require a Christian to believe a doctrine came from Christ, which he does not find in the only faithful and undoubted records, in which all are agreed the revelation of Christ is derived down to us? Let other doctrines be true; let us take this for granted a little while; they cannot however be esteemed as true by him, who, amongst the different sorts of Christians, follows the middle way, and allows of no certain record of the revelation of Christ, but the books of the New Testament. Whilst he believes this, nothing else can justly be required of him; and he will believe this, till it shall be made appear to him by plain arguments, that the knowledge of Christianity is safely to be had somewhere else, which I believe will never be done.

If any one, therefore, attempts to take away from Christians the books of the New Testament, or to add to them such things as do not appear to be true, we are by no means to hearken to such an one;¹⁷ because he requires that of us, which no prudent man will allow, viz. that we should believe that which we are not certain of, or neglect that which all own to be the sure record of the revelation of the Gospel. There is no need of examining all controversies singly, and one by one; which would be an endless thing, and cannot be done but by very learned men, who have abundance of leisure. Whoever imposes any thing upon us, as necessary to be believed, which we cannot believe, he derives us from himself; because belief cannot be extorted by force; nor will any one who fears God, and is a lover of truth, suffer himself to profess what he does not believe, for the sake of another.

But they who differ from this, object, that if every one be left to their own liberty, in judging of the meaning of the books of the New Testament, there will be as many religions

16 To this belongs what Christ saith, [Matt. xxiii. ver. 8.](#) and following: "Be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. And call *no man* your Father upon the earth, for one is your father which is in heaven; neither be ye called Masters, for one is your Master, even Christ." See also [James iii. 1.](#) To the same purpose, [Rev. iii. 7.](#) where Christ is said to have the "key of David," which is thus described, "which opens (namely heaven) and no one shuts, and which shutteth and no one openeth." If we are to believe Christ only, and there remains no other certain record of the revelation made by Christ but the New Testament; it is manifest from hence, that in matters of faith we ought to give credit only to these books.

17 To this relates that saying of Paul, [Gal. i. 8.](#) "If we, or an angel from heaven preach any other thing for the Gospel, than that Gospel we have preached to you, let him be accursed." And indeed it is no man's business to add any thing to the Gospel, an necessary; nor to diminish any thing from it, as unprofitable.

as there are men and truth, which is but one, will immediately be oppressed by a multitude of errors. But I think, that before an opinion, which is established upon Solid arguments, be opposed by objections, the foundation upon which it is built ought to be overthrown; because so long as that remains firm, the whole superstructure raised Upon it cannot be shaken; as we see here. For, if any inconvenience should follow from what has been said, it is nevertheless true, till it be made appear not to be fixed on a firm bottom. But to pass by this now; it is false that the revelation of the New Testament is so obscure, that the sum of the Christian religion cannot be truly learned from it, by any one of a sound mind, who is desirous of truth. It is evident from experience, that it may be truly learned from thence; for all Christians. as has been already shewn, agree in the principal parts of it; which was observed by Grotius, book II. sect. xvii. We have no regard here to a few simple or wicked men; since whole societies of Christians, who, in other respects, out of their too great eagerness of contention, are apt to differ from one another, and to run into the contrary extremes, are here agreed.



SECT. VII. The providence of God in preserving the Christian doctrine is very wonderful.

In this particular, as in numberless others which relate to the government of human affairs, the Divine Providence is very wonderful; which notwithstanding so many differences, as were of old, and are at this day amongst Christians, yet hath preserved the books of the New Testament entire, even to our times; that the Christian doctrine may be recovered out of them as often as it happens to be corrupted. Nor has it only delivered down to us this treasure entire, but also in the midst of the hottest differences, has so secured the Christian doctrine itself, that the sum of religion has never been forgot amongst Christians.

No inconsiderable number of Christians at this day contend, that many errors, in former ages, crept by degrees in amongst the sects of Christians; which when others denied, in the sixteenth century after the birth of Christ, that famous separation in the west was made upon that account, by which Christianity was divided into two parts, not very unequal. Yet in those ages, whose errors are reproved by that part of the Christians which made the separation I now mentioned, and whose faults were highly aggravated by both sides, and that not without grounds, the sum of the Christian religion before drawn up by us was all along maintained. There is no age so thick clouded with ignorance and vice,¹⁸ but the fore-mentioned articles of faith may easily be collected from their writings that remain. It must not, indeed, be dissembled, that many things foreign and unknown to the books of the New Testament have been added and thrust into the Christian theology; whence it is, that the true wheat of the sower in the Gospel, hath not brought forth so much fruit as it would otherwise have done, had the ground been cleared of thorns and hurtful and unprofitable weeds. Many vices and faults were not only admitted or borne with, but applauded also. Yet was not sound doctrine ever the less safe, whilst the books of the New Testament remained, and whilst Christians were endued with common sense; for by this means, very eminent men were often raised up, who corrected the errors and vices of their age, and ventured to oppose the torrent. Thus, according to the promise of Christ, God hindered



18 None have a worse report than the tenth and eleventh centuries, as is granted by those who stick to the see of Rome, as much as by those who have made a separation from it. Yet if any one, for his own satisfaction, will read amongst the books of the fathers, the writings of those centuries, he may easily collect all the doctrines mentioned in the fourth section. At the beginning of the twelfth century, lived Bernard, abbot of the monastery of Claravallis, whose learning, piety, and constancy, are commended by very many, and whose writings were often read in the following ages, and never condemned. Now from thence an entire body of the Christian doctrine may easily be collected: and it is no less certain of the following centuries down to the sixteenth. Nor is there any doubt of those that follow.

*the gates of death from prevailing against the church;*¹⁹ that is, did not suffer every society wherein the Christian doctrine was preserved entire to be extinguished; though sometimes they were blended and obscured with foreign and contrary opinions, and sometimes were more sincere and pure. Wherefore, (to observe this by the way), unless this doctrine was really sent to us from God, it could never have escaped out of such a deluge of vices and errors, but would at length have been overwhelmed by the changeableness and folly of human nature, and have entirely perished.



¹⁹ So we explain πύλας ἄδου, because neither that word, nor the Hebrew, שְׂאֵל *Scheol*, which answers to it, ever signifies in the sacred writings, an evil spirit, but only the grave, or the state of the dead, as Grotius and others have observed. Therefore, this one thing may be gathered from this place, that it will never happen that the Christian church should entirely perish, or that there should be no society left, amongst whom the sum of the doctrine of the Gospel should not remain.

SECT. VIII. An answer to that question, Why God permits differences and errors to arise amongst Christians.

PERHAPS some may here object against what has been said, that the Divine Providence would have better consulted the preservation of the Christian doctrine, if it had prevented the errors that are and have been amongst Christians, and maintained truth and constant agreement, which is the companion of it, amongst them, by its omnipotence. But it is not for us to instruct God how he ought to direct himself in the government of human affairs, that they might be better. On the contrary, it is our duty to think that God had very wise reasons for suffering what he did suffer, though we cannot so much as guess at what they are. But if any probable reasons can be given for the things that are done, we ought to believe, that God permits those things which daily come to pass, to be done for these or more weighty reasons.

To make a conjecture from the reason of things; we are above all things sure, that the design of God was to create men free, and to suffer them to continue so to the end;²⁰ that is, not so good, that they must necessarily continue good always; nor so bad that they must of necessity always submit to vice; but mutable, so as that they might pass from vice to virtue, and again from virtue to vice; and this with more or less ease, according as they had longer or shorter time given up themselves to virtue or vice. Such we see the Hebrew people of old were, and such were the Christians afterwards. Neither of them were drawn by an irresistible force either to virtue or vice; but only restrained by laws, which proposed reward to the good, and punishment to the bad; to which were added, by the Divine Providence, various incitements to virtue, and discouragements from vice; but yet neither of them deprived man of his native liberty, whereby he had a power of obeying or disobeying God, as is evident from experience; for there were always good and bad, though the divine laws prescribed virtue, and prohibited vice equally to all. That this would be so amongst Christians, Christ has plainly signified in two parables, the one of the tares which the enemy sowed, after the wheat was sown;²¹ the other of the net, which took good and bad fish alike;²² by which he signified that there would always be in the church a mixture of good and bad Christians; whence it follows, that he very well saw the evils that would always be in the Christian church. Moreover, Paul tells the Christians, *that there must be sects amongst Christians,*



20 This is taught with the highest consent by all Christian antiquity. See Justin the Martyr's Apology i. chap. 54. and 55. Irenæus, book iv. ch. 9. and 29. towards the end, ch. 71. and 72. Origen's Philocalia, chap. 21. Eusebius's Gospel Preparation, book vi. chap. 6. and others, whose sayings are quoted by Dionysius Petavius, in his theological doctrines, tom. i. book vi. chap. 6. There are also many things to this purpose, tom. iii. book iv.

21 [Matt. xiii. 24.](#) and following.

22 [Matt. xiii. 47.](#) and following.

that they who are approved may be made manifest.²³ And, indeed, unless there had been differences among Christians concerning doctrine, there had been no room left for choice, and for that sort of virtue, by which truth is preferred to all other things.²⁴ Therefore, even is this particular also, the divine wisdom shines bright; which caused an excellent virtue to flourish out of the midst of the vices of men.

267

If any one should object here, as some do, that it were better there were no such kind of virtue,²⁵ than that there should be vices contrary to it, from whence so many horrid crimes, so many calamities, and so great miseries should befall mankind, and such heavy punishment attend them after this life: to this we answer, that these evils were not of such a consideration with God, that upon their account he should not give an instance of his power in creating free agents. Unless this had been done no creature would have believed that it could have been done. Nay, God himself would not have been thought to be free, unless he himself had planted this opinion of himself by his omnipotence in the minds of men, which otherwise they never could have conceived from his works. Nor could he have been worshipped, if he had been thought to do, or to have done all things, not out of his free goodness, but by a certain fatal necessity; unless by a fatal worship also, and such an one as is not at all free. The vices and calamities of this or the other life are not comparable to so great an evil, as the supposing God to be ignorant of any thing; for if we find any difficulty about them, we ought to consider that God is most good, just, powerful, and wise, and will not act otherwise than agreeable to his perfections; and will easily find a way, and go in it, whereby to clear those things which seem to us to be entangled; and to shew to all intelligent creatures, that nothing was done by him which ought not to have been done. In the mean time, till that day-spring, in which all the clouds of our ignorance shall be dispersed, he hath given us such experience of himself, and such instances of his perfections; on the account of which, we may and ought entirely to confide in him, and patiently to wait for what he will have come to pass. More might be said on this matter, but that it would divert us from that end we are tending to, and carry us to what does not belong to this place.

268

23 1 Cor. xi. 19. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you; that is, as they are men, there is a necessity, unless they were changed for the better, that there should arise sects amongst them, by which the good may be distinguished from the bad; whilst the good stick to truth and charity, and the rest run into all other things. See Matt. xviii. 7.

24 See this handled more at large in my ecclesiastical history, century anno lxxxiii. 8. *Le Clerc*.

25 This objection is largely proposed, and set off with rhetorical flourishes by Peter Bayle; whom we have confuted in some of the volumes of the choice library, and especially in the xth, xith, and xiiiith, in French.

SECT. IX. They profess and teach the Christian doctrine in the purest manner of all, who propose those things only as necessary to be believed, practised, or hoped for, which Christians are agreed in.

TO pass by these things, therefore, and return to the choice of our opinion amongst the different sects of Christians; nothing seems possible to be done more safe and wise, in this state of affairs, than for us to join ourselves with that sect of Christians which acknowledges the New Testament only for the rule of their faith, without any mixture of human decrees; and who think it sufficient that every one should learn their form of faith from thence, conform their lives to its precepts, and expect the promises which are there made. Which if it be done sincerely, and without any dissimulation, the end of such a search will be that very form of sound words, which we have made appear to have remained the same, amidst so many and so great storms of errors and dissensions, during the passing of so many ages, and the changes of kingdoms and cities. In it are contained all things that are necessary to faith and practice; to which if any one would have any other things added it may lawfully be done, according to the circumstances of time and place; provided they be not imposed as necessary, (which belongs only to the supreme Lawgiver),²⁶ nor contrary doctrines to these obtruded.

Christians disposed in the manner we have been speaking of, ought not to submit their neck to the yoke of human opinions, nor to profess they believe what they do not believe: nor to do that which they cannot approve in their own minds, because they think in contrary to the precepts of Christ. Therefore, wherever that Christian liberty, which I have now mentioned, is not allowed, they must of necessity depart thence; not as if they condemned all that are of a different opinion from themselves, but because every one is absolutely obliged to follow the light of his own mind, and not that of another's; and to do that which he judges best to be done, and to avoid that which he thinks to be evil.



²⁶ See what Paul says upon this matter, [Rom. xiv. 1.](#) and so on, where he speaks of those who impose rites on others; or who condemn those that observe them which right he declares to belong to Christ only. And to this may be referred what St. James says, [chap. iv. 12.](#) “There is but one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy.”

SECT. X. All prudent persons ought to partake of the sacrament with those who require nothing else of Christians but what every one finds in the books of the New Testament.

SINCE Christ has appointed two signs or symbols of Christianity, baptism and the Lord's supper, it was not, indeed, in our power to receive baptism where we judged the Christian religion to be most pure, because we were baptized very young; but since we do not come to the other sacrament till we are of riper age, we may distinguish that society of Christians, in which we are willing to be partakers of it; which if we have not already done, we ought to do it now.

There are some who make the sacrament (which according to Christ's institution, is a token of that peace and love which is between Christians) a mark of distinction;²⁷ and exclude from it all those who do not think it safe to submit to any yoke but what Christ has laid upon them; or to receive any things as necessary to be believed, practised, or hoped for, but those which they are verily persuaded are contained in the books of the New Testament; and who are therefore very cautious of admitting any other forms of faith besides that which we have mentioned. It is but just and reasonable, indeed, that we should maintain peace with such men as these; but for receiving the sacrament upon this condition, that we should embrace any other rule of faith and practice, beside the books of the New Testament, and think all those excluded the church who will not admit them; this a religious and prudent man will think very wicked.²⁸ But all they who are true lovers of the Gospel, safely may and ought to approach the sacramental table of them who know no other laws of obtaining eternal salvation, but those laid down by Christ and his apostles in the books of the Gospel covenant, as every one can understand them. For whoever acknowledges the books of the New Testament for the only rule of faith and practice; who sincerely conform their lives to that rule; in a word, who allow of no idolatry, nor treat others ill, that they may profess they believe certain doctrines which they do not believe; all such are received by these, and also invited to this table. It is manifest, indeed, that communion cannot be maintained with him who makes use of force to impose his opinions upon others; who worships other gods, besides the true God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; or who by his conversation shews that he makes light of the precepts of the Gospel; or who owns any other laws of salvation, than



²⁷ See 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. where mentioning the sacramental cup and bread, of which many are partakers, the apostle adds, "For we being many are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread." Which words shew, that by the sacrament is signified the mutual agreement of Christians; and so the best interpreters understand it.

²⁸ And this was the opinion of Grotius, as appears from the little book of his, *Whether we ought always to join in receiving the sacrament*; where he speaks of the reasons of forbearing the communion. Tom. iv. of his theological works, page 511.

those wrote in the books of the eternal covenant: but he who behaves himself the direct contrary, is worthy to have all Christians maintain communion with him, and to be preferred to all the rest who are of a different opinion. No mortal man, nay, no angel, can impose any new Gospel upon Christians, to be believed by them:²⁹ now according to this Gospel, he is a true disciple of Christ, who from his heart believes his doctrines, and his only, so as to obey it the best he is able, according to the infirmity of this life; who worships one God, loves his neighbour as himself, and lives temperately in respect to all things. If any thing be diminished from this the laws of the covenant, which none but God can abate any thing of, are maimed: and if any thing be added, it is an useless yoke, which none ought to impose on Christians. Such laws can be received from God only, who alone is the determiner of eternal salvation.

Perhaps some may here ask me by what name these Christian societies, which I have now described, may be distinguished? But it signifies nothing what denomination they go under: the reader may conceive all churches to be meant in which what I have said is to be found. Wheresoever that only rule of faith, and that liberty which I have described, is, there they may be assured true Christianity is, and they need not enquire for a name, which makes nothing to the purpose. I believe there are many such societies; and I pray the good and great God that there may be more and more every day; that at length *his kingdom may come* into all the earth, and that mankind may obey it only.



²⁹ See the note on sect. i.

SECT. XI. Concerning church-government.

A SMALL difficulty may here be objected to us, which arises from the form of church-government and discipline, commonly called ecclesiastical: for no society, such as a church is; can subsist without order, and therefore there must be some form of government appointed. Now it is debated amongst Christians, what form of government was appointed by the apostles; for that seems preferable to all others, which was appointed from the beginning; and therefore of two churches, in which the Gospel is taught with equal purity and sincerity in all other respects, that is to be preferred, in which the. form of government is apostolical; though government without the thing itself, that is, the Gospel, is only the faint shadow of a church.

There are now two forms of government, one of which is that wherein the church acts under one bishop, who alone has the right of ordaining presbyters, or the inferior order of the Gospel ministers; the other is that, where the church is governed by an equality of presbyters, joined with some lay persons of prudence and honesty. They who without prejudice have read over the most ancient Christian writers that now remain, very well know that the former manner of discipline, which is called episcopal, such as that in the south part of Great Britain, prevailed every where in the age immediately after the apostles; whence we may collect that it is of apostolical institution.³⁰ The other, which they call presbyterian, was instituted in many places of France, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, by those who in the sixteenth century made a separation from the church of Rome.

They who read with attention the histories of that century, are fully satisfied that this latter form of government was introduced for this reason only, because the bishops would not allow to them, who contended that the doctrine and manners of Christians stood in need of necessary amendment, that those things should be reformed, which they complained were corrupted. Otherwise, if the bishops every where at that time had been willing to do of their own accord, what was not long after done in England; that government had prevailed even to this day amongst all those who separated from the Romish church; and the numberless calamities which happened, when all things were disturbed and confounded, had then been prevented. For if we would judge of the matter truly, there was no other reason for changing the government but this, that whilst the ancient government remained, nothing could be procured, however just in itself. Therefore, the presbyterian form is appointed in many places; which after it was once done, was so much for the interest of all them who presided in the state affairs in those places, and is so at this time, not to have it changed, that it must of necessity continue; unless any one had rather, upon that account, that all the dominions in which it prevails should be put into the most dangerous disorders; which prudent men will never allow, nor is it to be wished. The form of government was appointed

³⁰ See my ecclesiastical history, century i. to the year iii, 6. and lxxiii. 8. and the following ones. *Le Clerc.*

of old to preserve the Christian doctrine, and not to disturb the commonwealth, which can scarce happen without endangering the religion itself.

Wherefore prudent men, though they above all things wish for the apostolical form of church-government, and that it might be every where alike; yet they think things had better be left in the state in which they now are, than venture the hazards which always attend the attempt of new things. In the mean time, they that are wise, will by no means hate, reproach, nor condemn one another upon that account, as the most violent men are apt to do; as if eternal salvation depended upon either form, which do not seem to be taught any where in the apostolical writings, nor can it be gathered from the nature of the Christian religion.

***SECT. XII. The ancient church-government was highly esteemed by Grotius,
without condemning others.***

WHOEVER reads over the works of that great man, Hugo Grotius, and examines into his doctrine and practice, will find that he had entertained in his mind that form of sound words, the truth of which he has proved;³¹ nor did he esteem any thing else as true religion; but after he had diligently read the writings of Christian antiquity, and understood that the original form was that of episcopacy, he highly approved of it in the manner it is maintained in England, as appears from his own express words, which we have wrote down at the bottom of the page.³²

Therefore, it is not to be doubted but if it had been in his power, and he had not been so vehemently tossed to and fro by adversity, and exasperated and vexed by the baseness and reproachfulness of his enemies, at whose bands he did not deserve it, he would have joined himself with those who maintained the ancient form of discipline, and required nothing further than what has been already said, the truth of which he has proved excellently well; the arguments for which practice appear to us to be so weighty, that we have thought good to add them to this little treatise.



31 See amongst other things, “The institution of children that are baptized,” which the author himself translated out of Dutch verse into Latin, in his theological works, tom. iv. page 629. And in his latter works, he often affirms, that whatever is necessary to salvation, is plainly enough contained in the New Testament. See his Annotations on Cassander’s Consultation, towards the end, where he speaks of the sufficiency and plainness of the Scripture. Which being granted, it is manifest from thence, that the sum of the Christian religion, as it was before produced by us, may be collected thence by any one.

32 In his annotations on the consultation of Cassander, art. xiv. “Bishops are the heads of the presbyters, and that pre-eminence was foreshewn in Peter, and was appointed by the apostles wherever it could be done, and approved by the Holy Ghost, in the Revelations. Wherefore, as it was to be wished that that superiority were appointed every where,” &c. See also what follows concerning the ecclesiastical power, and the discussion of Rivetus’s Apology, p. 714. col. 2. Other things are also alleged in the epistles added to this little treatise.

SECT. XIII. An exhortation to all Christians who differ from each other, not to require of one another any points of doctrine, but such as every one finds in the New Testament, and have always been believed.

SEEING these things are so, we cannot but earnestly exhort all Christians who differ in opinions, to remember that that only is the true sum and substance of the Christian religion, the truth of which can be proved by the arguments Grotius has alleged; and not those controverted points which each side deny, and which have been the cause of so many evils: further no one that reads over the New Testament with a religious mind, and meditates upon it, can be persuaded that there is any other lawgiver but Christ, upon whose law eternal life depends;³³ nor that any one who is so disposed, can or ought to persuade himself to admit of any thing as necessary to salvation, beside what is the doctrine of Christ and his apostles; or to believe that to be true, which he thinks is contrary to it: wherefore, there is none more certain and present remedy of their differences than this; that nothing be imposed upon Christians, but those things which every one is fully satisfied in his own mind are revealed; nor need we fear any inconvenience from hence, since it is evident, from the experience of all ages past from Christ to this time, that the sum of the Christian religion before laid down was never rejected by any. If this one thing only were at this time required of all Christians as necessary, all their differences would immediately cease;³⁴ and whatever disagreement remained in opinions, it would not belong to the body of the church, but to private persons; every one of which must render an account of their conscience to God. If they did but once understand that they were agreed in the principal matters, as they really are agreed, and would bear with one another in other things, and would not endeavour to bring over others in their opinion or rites, by force, or other wicked arts, this would be the only agreement that can be expected on earth. In this ignorance and want of knowledge in

275

276

33 The words of James, [chap. iv. 12.](#) quoted in sect. i. are very express in this matter; where more is said relating hereto. Besides the thing itself speaks here; because amongst the different sects of Christians, none of them believe their adversaries' authority.

34 It This was the opinion of James I. king of Great Britain, if we may give credit to Isaac Casaubon, who has these words in his answer to cardinal Perron's epistle, on the third observation, pag. 30. edit. Loud. 1612. "It is most truly written, in the explication of those things which are absolutely necessary, that it is the king's opinion that the number of those things which are absolutely necessary to salvation is not great. Wherefore, his majesty thinks, that there is no shorter way to enter in an agreement, than by carefully separating those things that are necessary from those that are not; and that their whole care be employed in agreeing about the necessary things; and that in those things that are not necessary, there be an allowance made for Christian liberty," &c.

mankind,³⁵ hindered by so many passions, no prudent person can expect that all can be brought, either by force or reason, to think and do the same thing. The more generous and understanding minds can never approve of force, which is the attendant of lies, and not of truth; nor do they who are less learned, or who are blinded by passion, or the prejudices of education, or any other thing, as the far greatest part will always be, fully understand the force of reason; nor in the mean time are they to be compelled to do or speak contrary to what they think. Let them who preside in the government of the church think it sufficient. that men, through the help of the immortal God, believe the Gospel; that that faith alone is to be preached as necessary; that the precepts of it are alone to be obeyed, and salvation to be expected from the observation of its laws; and all things will go well. Whilst human things are made equal with divine, and doubtful things, to say no worse of them, equalled with those that are certain, there can be no end of contention, no hopes of peace; which all pious men ought with their most earnest wishes, to desire of the great God, and to endeavour to promote as far as in their power.



35 It was very well said by Hilary, concerning the trinity. b. x. ch. 70. "that God does not invite us to happiness through difficult questions, confound us with various sorts of eloquence. Eternity is plain and easy to us, to believe that God raised up Jesus from the dead, and to confess him to be Lord."

MONS. LE CLERC'S BOOKS.

BOOK II.

AGAINST INDIFFERENCE IN THE CHOICE OF OVR RELIGION.

SECT. I. That we ought to have a love for truth in all things, but more especially in such as are of great moment.

I THINK that person judged very rightly, whoever he was, that said, there is an eternal alliance betwixt truth and the mind of man;¹ the effects of which, though they may sometimes be, as it were, suspended or discontinued for a while, by reason of the inconstancy and affections of human nature, yet the alliance itself can never be entirely broke. For nobody is desirous of being deceived; nay, there is nobody but had rather know the truth in any matter whatsoever, but especially in any matter of moment, than be mistaken, though it be only in things of mere speculation. We are naturally delighted with truth, and have as natural an aversion to error; and if we knew any way in which we could certainly arrive at truth, we should most readily enter into it. Hence it is, that there always have been found very eminent men, whom all the world have most highly applauded, because they spent their whole lives in the pursuit of truth. There have been, and are at this day, innumerable natural philosophers and geometers, who have taken incredible pains to come at truth; and who affirm, that they never feel so great pleasure as when they find out a truth which they have long been in search after.² So that the love and the knowledge of truth may very justly be reckoned amongst the many other things that men excel brutes in.



But all truths are not of the same moment, and many theoretic notions, though they be true, may be laid aside, because little or no advantage can be had from them, and therefore it is not worth while to be at much pains about them; but, on the other hand, there are some truths of so great moment, that we justly think them worth purchasing at any rate. Of this sort are all those that relate to our well-being and happiness; the knowledge of which is most valued by every body, and most diligently pursued by them. To which if we add, that the consequence of a well-spent and happy life, (and we must always allow, that what is good, that is, agreeable to truth, is also an ingredient of happiness), during our short stay here, will be an eternal happiness hereafter, as all Christians of every sect whatsoever profess to believe; we cannot but own, that the knowledge of the way by which we may arrive at such happiness cannot be purchased at too dear a rate.

1 John Smith, in his *Select Discourses*, published at London, 1660. Hence St. Austin, in his cxlth Sermon concerning the words of the evangelist St. John, tom. v. col. 682. "Every man searches after truth and life; but every man does not find the way to them." And Again, Sermon cl. col. 716. "The mind cannot endure to be deceived. And how much the mind naturally hates to be deceived, we may learn from this single thing, that every man of sense pities a changling. If it were proposed to any one, whether he would choose to be deceived, or to persist in the truth; there is nobody but would answer, that he had rather persist in the truth."

2 See the Life of Pythagoras in Diogenes Laërtius, book viii. 12.

SECT. II. Nothing can be of greater moment than religion; and therefore we ought to use our utmost endeavours to come at the true knowledge of it.

OUR business is not now with such persons as despise all religion; these have been sufficiently confuted by that great man Hugo Grotius, in the foregoing books; which who-soever has read, with a mind really desirous of coming at the truth, can have no doubt but that there is a God who would be worshipped by men, and, as things now are, with that very worship which is commanded by Christ; and that he has promised everlasting happiness, after this mortal life, to all who thus worship him.

Thus much being allowed, nobody can doubt but that religion is a matter of the highest concern; and, therefore, as we see that Christians do not consist of one entire body, we ought to endeavour to find out which sect of them is most agreeable, in its doctrines and precepts, to those which are left us by Jesus Christ; for we cannot have an equal regard for them all, because some of them are so very different from others both in doctrine and worship, that they accuse one another of the greatest errors, and of having corrupted the divine worship; nay, some of them speak of the rest as absolutely excluded eternal life. Now if this could be made plainly appear, without doubt, we ought to withdraw ourselves from all other sects, as soon as we can, and join with that alone which with truth makes such objections against all others. For not only this present short life lies at stake, which is subject to innumerable evils and misfortunes, let us live how we will; but we render ourselves liable to the punishments which God has threatened to those who do not believe the Gospel, and hazard that happiness which has no defect, and will have no end. Yet there are some men, not indeed very learned, nor very much addicted to reading the scriptures seriously, in order to judge of the divisions amongst Christians, and to find out on which side the truth lies; for they have no concern at all for that; but their notion of these divisions is, that they think it all one, let their opinions be what they will, and that it is the same thing whatever worship they follow: they imagine it to be quite indifferent what party of Christians we really join ourselves with, or indeed only profess to join ourselves with. I do not now speak of the common people only; there are kingdoms, in which not only the common people, but the magistrates and nobility have separated from the see of Rome, and yet in a very short time, upon having a new king, have returned to it again; and then after this, have been assisting to the supreme power in opposing the same see. In the reign of Henry VIII. of England, there were many acts made not only by the king, but agreed to by the parliament, against the see of Rome, which king Henry was angry with, for a reason that few people approved of. After his death, when his son, Edward VI. joined in with that party, who had not only renounced all the authority of the see of Rome, as his father had done, but also had embraced other opinions, which were condemned by that see; they likewise openly declared that they approved of them. A little after king Edward died, when queen Mary, a great bigot to the pope of Rome, succeeded her brother; this very nobility assisted this queen to oppress that party who had

279

280

despised the authority of the pope, and were in so flourishing a condition when Edward was king. Some time after, upon the death of Mary, queen Elizabeth succeeded, who was of the same sect with her brother Edward, and so strongly established it by a long reign, that it remains to this day upon the same foundation on which it was then built. Whoever peruses the history of those times, will see how fluctuating the nobility of that nation were; and he will be hardly able to persuade himself, but that they were of the same mind with those that believe it to be all one with respect to their eternal salvation, what sect of Christians they join themselves with. I agree with those who ascribe these changes in a good measure to fear; but when I consider the constancy, courage, and contempt of death, which we so frequently see in the English nation I can hardly persuade myself, but that the love of this present life, and an indifference about religion, were the principal causes of these several changes.

SECT. III. That an indifference in religion is in its own nature unlawful, forbidden by the laws of God, and condemned by all sects of Christians.

FOR any one to think that religion is one of those things that are of an indifferent nature; so that we may change it as we do our clothes; or at least, that we may profess or deny it just as the times change, is a most heinous crime; as will appear by many reasons, the principal of which we will produce from the nature of the thing, the laws of God, and the consent of all Christian nations.

First, to tell a lie is a very dishonest thing., especially in an affair of any great moment, when it is not so much as allowed in trifling matters, unless perhaps in such particulars where a lie is upon the whole more advantageous than the truth. But, in the affair of religion, it must be a very grievous fault for men to lie, or even to dissemble; because thereby they do all in their power to confirm a lie, in a thing of the greatest importance; to stifle truth, which is contrary to it, and to condemn it to perpetual obscurity. It is the worst example that can be set, especially in persons advanced to any dignity, which the people of a lower rank are but too apt to imitate; whence it comes to pass, that they are not only offenders themselves, but they cause others to offend also by their example; which has the greatest influence over the common people, because they give a much greater attention to the actions of those they have a great respect for than to their words.

It is also a very dishonourable thing, and altogether unworthy a man of courage, to tell a lie for the sake of this short life, and to choose to displease God rather than men. For this reason the most eminent philosophers chose rather to expose themselves to certain death, than to do a thing which they thought was displeasing to the Deity; as we see in the instance of Socrates, who chose rather to drink a dose of poison, than to leave off the study of philosophy, which he had so much accustomed himself to, and live.³ Other philosophers also chose rather to go to the plough, than give up those notions which they believed to be true, and had undertaken to defend.⁴ And there have been such valiant men amongst the heathens, who by their good lives severely reproached the age they lived in; and thought it much more preferable to die, than to flatter tyrants, and thereby forsake the true way of life; of which were Thræseas Pætus⁵ and Helvidius Priscus,⁶ who chose to die rather than to

3 See what I have collected about him in my *Silvæ Philologicæ*, book i. chap. 3.

4 See Galen, in that book where he says, "That the passions and affections of the mind depend upon the constitution of the body;" in the last chapter, towards the end, where speaking of the stoics, he states, "They were fully persuaded, that they ought to forsake their country rather than their opinions."

5 Who was put to death by Nero, because he would not flatter him. See Tacitus's annals, book xvi. 24. and following sections.

6 The son-in-law of Thræseas, who, as Tacitus there tells us, was commanded to depart out of Italy at the same time. He was afterwards slain by Vespasian, because he would not pay sufficient reverence to his new master,

dissemble or approve of the vices and wicked actions of the Roman emperors. Now if this was done by men who had but faint hopes of another and more happy life hereafter, how much more are they obliged to do it, who have so much plainer and more certain hope of an eternal happiness afforded them!

All ages have seen and commended such as have, with an intrepid mind, submitted to death for the sake of their earthly country. Now, after this, who is it but must applaud all those who prefer a heavenly country to an earthly one; and that eternal life which the Scriptures have revealed to us, to a temporal one? Who can forbear despising those mean creatures that choose to preserve such a life as they have in common with brute beasts, and which they must lose in a short time, rather than to take the first opportunity of obtaining a life that can never be lost? We see soldiers, with great bravery, face the most imminent dangers, in order to obtain the favour of kings or princes to themselves, or their families after them; and rejoice within themselves that they got such wounds as they must in a very short time die of. Nay, even hired troops themselves will fight very valiantly, and venture their lives for those who employ them, though it be but for very small wages; and yet there are some who will not expose themselves to any hazard, I do not say of their lives, but of the loss of their goods, or of their uncertain dignities, for the defence of truth, which will last to eternity, is most acceptable to God, and has the highest reward annexed to it.

Therefore, what Christ has commanded us in this respect is in the following words: *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*⁷ In which words he tells us, that he will own all those for his disciples, and will give them eternal life at the day of judgment, who have not dissembled his doctrine, either in their deeds or words. He does, indeed, in another place declare, that this ought to be done with prudence, when he says, *That we should not cast pearls before swine.*⁸ But this prudence does not extend so far as to allow us to play the hypocrite all our lives long, if need be, or so much as to tell a direct lie; but only not to try at an improper time and place to convince such persons as obstinately persist in their errors, when we see it will have no effect upon them. For he expressly declares, a little after the fore-mentioned words concerning confessing our religion, that sometimes it ought to be done, though it brings upon us the hatred of all those about us, and the imminent danger of certain death: *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.*⁹ And such are all they who dissemble the doctrines and precepts which they

as Suetonius informs us in the xvth chapter of the life of that emperor. His son was slain by Domitian. See Suetonius's life of him, and Tacitus in the life of Agricola, chapter xlv.

7 [Matt. x. 32.](#)

8 [Matt. viii. 6.](#)

9 [Matt. x. 37.](#)

have received from Christ, for their families' sake. Nor has Christ omitted to tell us, that death must be expected for such constancy; and yet, notwithstanding, they ought to persist in their design; and that he who does lose his life upon this account, shall obtain a blessed immortality in the world to come. *And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life (in this world) shall lose it, (in another), and he that loseth his life (on earth) for my sake, shall find it,*¹⁰ in heaven, and that an infinitely more happy and eternal one.

This doctrine is so plain and evident, that there are no sects of Christians at this time that differ at all about it; they who own the pope's authority, and they of all sorts who disown such authority, do every one of them, with one consent, affirm it to be a very wicked thing to dissemble our sentiments concerning religion; when opinions of the greatest moment are debated, and where the thing may be done without sedition and tumult. For, in those things in which faith towards God and uncorruptness of manners may be preserved, it may be right to conceal our notions, rather than raise perpetual contentions amongst Christians, when there are so few learned men who think alike in every thing. I say conceal, not dissemble; for to conceal your opinion is not to lie; but to affirm you believe that which you really do not believe, this is to lie. To which may be added, that if any opinion be established by the common law, which you think to be false, you ought modestly, and without contention or tumult, to declare your dissent from it; otherwise, instead of that mild and gentle government of Christian churches which does not exclude any dissent, provided it be done with charity, we shall run into absolute tyranny, which will allow of no dissent at all upon any account. There are innumerable obscure speculative questions, especially to those who never took any great pains in such sort of studies, in which Christian liberty ought to be allowed, as is confessed by all Christians; for there are a multitude of places in Scripture, and a vast number of theological opinions, in which learned men always have, and still do differ from each other with impunity, even amongst those who in other things require consent more strictly than they ought to do.

284

285

¹⁰ Matt. x. 38, 39.

SECT. IV. *We ought not hastily to condemn those who differ from us, as if they were guilty of such a crime, or such unlawful worship, as is inconsistent with eternal life; so that none who admit such persons should be capable of the mercy of God; nor yet, on the other hand, is it lawful for us to profess that we believe what we do not really believe, or to do what, at the same time, we condemn.*

THEY who have separated from the church of Rome do no more agree with each other in all points, than they who continue in it; but, according to the judgment of some of the most learned men, they do not differ in any thing that is consistent with that faith which is owing to God, and that obedience which ought to be paid to him. But they object many things to the church of Rome, both in doctrine and worship, which they think are plainly false and unlawful. Whether they judge right in this or no, I shall not now inquire: however, thus much is evident, that, according to the opinion even of that church, it is not lawful for them to profess that they approve of what they do not approve of, nor do they admit any persons to communion with them who profess to dissent from it in such things. However, amongst those that dissent from the church of Rome, there are some famous and learned men,¹¹ who, though they think it utterly unlawful to join with that church themselves, on the account of those doctrines and that worship in which they differ from it; yet, notwithstanding, they do not think it right to exclude from eternal happiness all those, both learned and unlearned, who live and die in it. They, indeed, who think that there is any thing in them which is contrary to the fundamental principles of Christianity, judge it to be by no means lawful for themselves to give their assent to them, and that it would be the highest crime in them to pretend to consent to what they really condemn, and for which crime, if they should fall into it, and continue in it to their death, they believe they should be excluded eternal happiness. But as to such as do sincerely embrace those doctrines, because they believe them to be agreeable to divine revelation, or at least not so repugnant to it as to subvert the faith or holiness of the gospel; whether it be owing to that sort of study which they have employed themselves in from their youth, or whether it ariseth from a defect of knowledge or judgment; such persons as these, I say, they do not presume to exclude from salvation, because they cannot tell how far the mercy of God may extend, with respect to such men as these. There are innumerable circumstances both of time and place, and various dispositions of mind, which are quite unknown to us, which may very much diminish the crimes of wretched men in the sight of God, so as to procure pardon for such, which would be condemned in men of more learning. Wherefore, they look upon it as a part of Christian equity and prudence, at the same time that they condemn the doctrine and the worship, to leave the men to the wise and merciful judgment of God; though they themselves are determ-



¹¹ Amongst others is mr. William Chillingworth, in his English book, entitled, *The Religion of Protestants, the safe way to Salvation*, where he mentions others who also think them as safe.

ined neither to assent to their doctrines, nor to be present at their worship, because they think it absolutely unlawful.

Surely no man can think that, from what has been said, it will follow that any person, who is brought up in a different opinion, and has employed himself in reading the Scriptures in the manner that the reformers do; if he should, contrary to his own conscience, say or do any thing which he thinks unlawful or false, for any present advantage; that any such person, I say, can hope for pardon from God; if he should die with a habit of saying and doing what he himself disapproves of, and would have said and done so, if he had lived longer. There is not at present, and I hope there never will be, any sect, which shall go under the name of Christians, who will allow that such a man can arrive at salvation.

Let hypocrites, therefore, look to themselves, whilst they behave so, as shamefully to despise the light of reason and revelation, to resist the conviction of them, and to look upon the judgment of all Christians whatsoever as nothing. Such persons cannot be thought learned men, or such as have thoroughly and maturely considered the thing. There are them that so far despise all theological learning, that they will not so much as attempt it; but without this there can be no judgment at all passed upon the matter. These equally despise that noble philosophy which the great men amongst the Romans of old set such a value upon, as being deduced from the light of nature, in order to indulge those passions which the heathen philosophy would not allow of. Having thus secured themselves from the judgment of past ages, despising every thing in the present, and having little concern for what is to come, they are more like beasts than men endued with reason, which they never make use of. They who dissemble and lie in such a manner as this, ought not to be looked upon as men of any value or account; they ought not to be trusted even in temporal and worldly affairs, because they endeavour to impose upon God and man in a matter of the greatest importance. There are some amongst these who dare to affirm that we ought always to be of the religion that the state is of, and when that changes, we ought to change also; but it is not at all to be wondered at that these persons should have so ill an opinion of the Christian faith, when they have not so much as the common principles of natural religion in them, nor do they shew any regard to right reason or virtue. What a wretched condition are those kings and states in, who put their confidence in such men as believe neither natural nor revealed religion! Indeed, men who are themselves void of learning; who give no credit to the judgment of any learned men whatsoever; who have no sort of concern for truth, but live in perpetual hypocrisy, are by no means fit to be trusted in any matters whatsoever, not even to such as relate to the public.

Yet these very men, as much despisers as they are of truth and virtue, look upon themselves as better subjects and more ingenious persons than others; though they be neither, and though it be impossible they should be either, whilst they make no distinction betwixt truth and falsehood, virtue and vice, and whilst they are ready to say or any thing that may

SECT. IV. We ought not hastily to condemn those who differ from us, as if...

be of advantage to themselves. All such men have renounced a right temper of mind, and every good action; and therefore ought to be despised and avoided by every body.



SECT. V. A man that commits a sin by mistake may be accepted of God, but a hypocrite cannot.

THE condition of human nature is such, that a great many men (who, in other respects, are not the worst of men, and yet, either by bad education, or for want of teachers or books, which might bring them off from their errors; or because they have not capacity enough to understand the controversies amongst Christians, and to form a judgment of them), lead their lives, as it were, in utter darkness. Such persons, as they sincerely believe and obey what they are taught concerning the Christian religion, so far as their capacity reaches, are more the objects of compassion than of anger, considering the natural state of mankind. Their religion, indeed, is very lame and defective, and abounds with mistakes, but yet they themselves are very sincere. Wherefore it is highly probable that He, *who does not reap where he has not sown*, will, out of his abundant equity, pardon those who are in such circumstances; or certainly will inflict a much lighter punishment upon them.

But if we consider that there are men to be found who have not wanted either education or teachers, either books, or capacity to understand who have the best and who the worst side of the question in controversies of religion; and yet have followed the wrong side, only for the sake of the wealth, or pleasure, or honours, that attend them in this present life; we cannot but have great indignation against such men, nor can any one presume to excuse them, much less to defend such a purpose of life, without the most consummate impudence. Whence it is easy to apprehend, that if we ourselves, whose virtue is very imperfect, could not pardon such persons, how much more severe will the infinite justice of God be against those who have knowingly and designedly preferred a lie to the truth, for the sake of the frail and uncertain good things of this present life.

God, out of his abundant mercy, is ready to pardon such ignorance as does not proceed from vice; to pity our imperfect virtues; and to allow for the errors of such as are deceived; especially if there was no previous iniquity, nor no contempt of religion: but, as our Saviour assures us, he will never pardon those who, when they knew the truth, chose rather to profess a lie. We see that such a hypocrite as this is by no means acceptable to men; for nobody would choose a person for a friend, who, to gain any small advantage to himself, would trample under foot all the rights of ancient friendship. Whence it follows, from what has been said, that there is not a baser nor more dangerous piece of iniquity, than the crime of those who, in matters of the highest moment and concern, dissemble that which they really think is the best, and openly favour them who, are in the wrong. This is what reason itself teaches us, and what is confirmed by the Christian religion, and has the consent of all sects of Christians whatsoever.

TESTIMONIES
CONCERNING
HUGO Grotius'S
AFFECTION
FOR THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

TESTIMONIES, &c.



TO THE READER.

HAVING the following letters from that most excellent and learned person, Henry Newton, ambassador extraordinary from the most serene queen of Great Britain to his royal highness the most serene grand duke of Tuscany, to whose singular goodness I am very much indebted; I thought I should do a very acceptable thing to all that love the name of GROTIUS, and no small honour to the church of England, if I published them here. It appears plainly from them, that this very great man had the highest opinion of the church of England, and would Most willingly have lived in it, if he could. Make the best use of them you can therefore, courteous reader, and continue to have a good opinion of a man that deserved so well of the whole body of Christians.

LETTER I.

HENRY NEWTON TO PETER HIERON. BARCELLINUS, ABBOT OF ST. EUSEBIUS DE URBE.

BEING at length returned safe and well to Florence from Leghorn and Pisa, where, through the intemperateness of the air, I was very near contracting a fever; the first thing I had to do. most excellent Barcellinus, being furnished with the most noble library of the illustrious Magliahechius, was to discharge my promise concerning that great man HUGO GROTIUS, and to shew from his writings, particularly his letters, in which truth, candour, integrity of heart, and the inward thoughts of his mind are discovered, how highly he thought and wrote concerning us all his life-time, and a little before his departure, and when death and immortality were in his view. I know what was said of him by that principal man of his rank, Petavius, and also Brietius and Valesius, and many other celebrated men of your communion, who wished well and favourably to a man born for the public good of Christianity. It is known to all how greatly he suffered in goods, honour, and report, from the Calvinists, both in his own country and in his banishment, even after he was advanced to a higher rank by foreigners; and how much the heats of controversy (whilst he set his mind upon this one thing, to establish peace in the commonwealth and between the churches, which highly displeased many; a strange and grievous thing!) fretted that disposition which was otherwise peaceable and modest, after he saw himself treated in such an unworthy manner by his own friends; and sometimes prevailed over that meek wisdom which was in him both by nature and judgment. Yet these did not hinder his son, who was also a great man, from saying those things which I shall presently add concerning his father, to that great prince, Charles the second of Great Britain, to whom he dedicated his father's works, and in him to all others, and this when he had no reason to flatter or fear him, because, in the commonwealth, he was of the contrary part to Charles's sister's son; and because he was a private man, wedded to a country and learned life, and an old man, not far from death, nor consequently from liberty: for he published his father's works but saw them not after they were published; and his own life is to be seen and read with the life of his father in the same volume. "For thou," says Peter Grotius, "art he alone, whom, if not the greater, yet the wiser part of the Christian world have for a long time acknowledged for their protector. Thou art he to whose protection or defence the Christian faith willingly commits itself; in whose kingdoms principally that knowledge of the sacred writings, that worship of the Deity, that moderation of the too free exercise of liberty, in disputing concerning the secret doctrines of faith, is established; whose agreement with which the author, my father, has long since declared, and publicly professed in his writings."

Here now Hugo Grotius's own words, how he expresses his own sense, in his epistle to Johannes Corvinus, dated ix the year MDCXXXVIII, who was not an English, but a Dutch

294

295

divine, of another church, and also a lawyer, and consequently skilled in matters both divine and human; concerning the reformation of religion made amongst us in the last age:—"You see how great a progress they have made in England, in purging out pernicious doctrines; chiefly for this reason, because they who undertook that holy work admitted of nothing new, nothing of their own, but had their eyes wholly fixed upon another world." Then was it in a flourishing condition, before a civil war broke out, before the king was vanquished, taken captive, condemned, and beheaded; and it afterwards sprung up and flourished again, contrary to all human hopes, when his son returned to the throne of his ancestors, to the surprise of all Europe, and, after various turns, threats, and fears, continues still to flourish secure and unhurt.

Nor had he only a good opinion of the church of England himself, but also advised his friends in Holland, who were of his party, and, which was no small thing, who joined with him in partaking of the same danger and losses, to take holy orders from our bishops; whom it is certain he did not believe, nor would have others believe, to be schismatical, or heretical, upon that account. He addressed his brother in these words: "I would persuade them (that is, the remonstrants) to appoint some amongst them in a more eminent station, such as bishops; and that they receive the laying on of hands from the Irish archbishop who is there, and that when they are so ordained, they afterwards ordain other pastors;" and this in the beginning of the year MDCXLV, which was fatal to him, and unfortunate to learning itself. The bishop he here speaks of is, if I be not mistaken, John Bramhall, who was at that time bishop of Londonderry in Ireland, and, at the restoration of king Charles II. archbishop of Armagh, and next to the most learned Usher, primate of Ireland, and who afterwards in that country published a vindication of our church against Miletorius. See also what is said to the same person, April 8, in the year MDCXLV, concerning the public worship of God amongst us: "The English liturgy was always accounted the best by all learned men."

It seems very probable that this man, who calls the reformation of the church of England *a most holy work*; who believed that the holy orders given and received from the bishops of that church, and the rites appointed about holy things, and the prescribed form of worshipping the Supreme Deity, exceeded all other churches in the Christian world; world have joined himself to that church, as well in outward worship, as in the judgment of his mind; and so have become now really, what he before was in wish, a member of the Catholic church. But he was never able to effect the thing, because death immediately after overtook him; for in the same year he went from France to Stockholm to resign his ambassadorship, and returning from thence home, and having suffered shipwreck, he departed this life at Rostock, on the 28th of August; a man never enough to be lamented, because study and learning decayed with him; and never enough to be praised, upon the account of what he began and finished in all parts of learning. He was a great lover of peace, if truth was not injured, (always having regard to times and differences), and of the ancient church-govern-

ment, (freed from abuses), as it was settled from the beginning in England, and as it was from the very apostles' time, if we may believe ecclesiastical annals. He always studied and consulted the peace of empires and churches, both in his discourses, and by his example, and in his writings. May he be rewarded with God and our common Lord! and may the memory of him be ever grateful to posterity *Farewell.*

Florence, XII. of the Kalends of May.

MDCCVI.



LETTER. II.

HENRY NEWTON TO JOHN CLERC.

MOST LEARNED SIR,

I SEND you a new and ample testimony concerning HUGO GROTIUS, more weighty than the former, if we consider the author's dignity in the commonwealth, or his knowledge of things, or that it was writ while Grotius was alive. It is taken from letters to that great prelate, William Laud, then archbishop of Canterbury, with whom he often had correspondence by letters; they were written from Paris, October 24, Gregorian style, in the year MDCXXXIII, and were procured me lately out of England, by the kindness of that most illustrious person, John lord Sommers, formerly high chancellor of that flourishing kingdom, then president of the law, now of the council. In those letters that most illustrious viscount Scudamore, at the time ambassador for our nation in France, has the following words concerning Grotius:—

“The next time I see ambassador Grotius, I will not fail to perform your commands concerning him. Certainly, my lord, I am persuaded that he doth unfeignedly and highly love and reverence your person and proceedings. Body and soul he professeth himself to be for the church of England; and gives this judgment of it, that it is the likeliest to last of any church this day in being.”

Genoa, XVII. of the Kalends of February,

MDCCVII.

298 TESTIMONIES CONCERNING



LETTER III.

FRANCIS CHOLMONDLY TO ALEXANDER FORRESTER.

THAT which you desire to know of me concerning HUGO GROTIUS, who was one of the greatest men that ever any age produced, is this:—It happened that I came to Paris a little after the transaction of that matter. Being very well acquainted with dr. Crowder, he often told me with assurance, that it was the last advice this great man gave to his wife, as he thought it was his duty, that he declared he died in the communion of the church of England, in which church he wished her to live. This she discovered when she came on purpose to our church, (which was in the house of Richard Brown, who was then in France upon the king of England's account), where she received the sacrament of the Lord's supper at the hands of dr. Crowder, then chaplain to the duke of York. This was done as soon as matters would permit after the death of that man. Archbishop Bramhall, primate of Ireland, in defence of himself and the episcopal clergy, against Richard Baxter the presbyterian's accusation of popery, speaks thus concerning the religion of Grotius, p. 21.—“He was a friend in his affection to the church of England, and a true son in his love for it: he commended it to his wife and other friends, and was the cause of their family adhering to it, as far as they had opportunity. I myself, and many others, have seen his wife obeying the commands of her husband, as she openly testified, in coming to our prayers, and the celebration of the sacrament.” When Matthew Turner, a great friend of Grotius, desired to know why he did not go over to the communion of the church of England, he answered, that he would very willingly have done it, if the office of ambassador to Swedeland had not hindered it. Otherwise he very highly approved of our doctrine and discipline, and wished to live and die in our communion. If any one thinks that he can know Grotius's mind better from conjectures and inferences, or that he dissembled it before his wife and children, let him enjoy his own opinion; he will not have many agree with him. *Farewell.*

June 23, MDCCVII.

FROM ANOTHER LETTER,

DATED OCT. 8, MDCCVII.

I LATELY told you very fully what I knew of the widow of that great man, Hugo Grotius. Afterwards I called to mind, that that pious and singular good man, sir Spencer Compton, knight, son of the earl of Northampton, told me he was present when Grotius's widow professed this, and received the sacrament.

FINIS.

Indexes

Index of Scripture References

Genesis

1:26 2:1-25 2:17 3:1-24 3:19 4 9:20 11:1-9 11:5 14 17:5 17:8-10 17:10 18 18:21
19 19:18 22:2 32 36:1-7 37 49 49:10

Exodus

2:1 3 4:1 4:2 4:10 4:13 4:14 15 20:8 21:6 22:18 23:17 23:17 27:1 28:26 28:30
28:30 31:13 31:16 31:31 32 32:11 32:12 32:13 32:31 33:19 34:11 34:12 34:22-23
34:24 34:26 35:2

Leviticus

4:15 8:8 8:8 18:1-30 20:6 20:27 21:14 22:25 23:3 24:20 25:40 25:47 26 26:5

Numbers

11:1-35 11:1-35 11:2 11:6 12:1-16 12:13 14:1-45 14:13 16:1-50 20:1-29 20:12
20:12 20:14 21:7-8 22:27 23:23 25:1-18 27:21 27:21 27:21 28:9 33:52

Deuteronomy

1:28 4:1-49 4:2 5:1 5:15 6:1-25 7:1-2 7:1-26 9:1 9:18 9:26 10:16 11:1-32 11:1-32
11:1-32 12:1 12:5 12:20 13 13:3 13:5 14:21 14:21 14:23 16:16 17:16-17 17:22
18:10 18:20 19:21 20:19 21:15 23:13 23:19 24:1 24:2 24:3 24:4 26:2 28:1-68
28:1-68 28:1-68 28:4-5 28:6 28:7 28:8 28:11 28:12 30:1-20 30:6 32:5 32:6 32:15
32:28 33 33:1 33:9 34:4

Joshua

5:5-6 6 6:26

1 Samuel

1:22 2:8 7:17 13:8 16:7 16:11 21:2 22:10 22:13 22:15 23:2 23:4 23:9 23:10
23:11 23:12 28 28:6 28:6 28:9

2 Samuel

8:5 12:8 15 16:10 18:5

1 Kings

5:3 16:34 18:17 18:38 19:15 20 22

2 Kings

4 4:1 5 8:13 12:17 13:3 13:24 17:3 17:17 18:4 18:9 18:13 20:12 21:6 25:27

1 Chronicles

18

2 Chronicles

24:21 32:1 35:22

Nehemiah

1:1-11 7:65 9 12:22

Psalms

1 2:1-12 2:8 5:15 6:30 8:5 8:6 10 10:2 18:8 22:28 31:2 34:15 34:18 40:6-10
45:7 50:7-14 51:16-17 68:32 72:8 72:17 78:51 79:1-13 89:4 105:23 105:27 106:22
106:31 110:1-4 110:1-7 118:22

Proverbs

11:2

Ecclesiastes

12:7

Song of Solomon

1:14 8:2

Isaiah

1:11-12 1:14 1:17 2 2:2 2:2 2:18 2:20 3:14-15 5:23 7:14 8:14 8:18 9:1 9:7
11:2-3 11:6 11:6 11:10 11:10 11:10 14:1 19:1-25 19:18 19:18 19:24 25:9 27:13
29:11 29:13 31:7 33:15 35:1-10 35:5 36 37:1-38 38:1-22 39 39:1-8 42:1-25 42:2-3
42:4 43:1-28 46:1 49:6 51:2 51:5 52:15 53 53:1-12 53:4 54:1-17 55:4-5 56:1
57:15 59:1-21 60:3 61:1 61:1 61:2 65:1-2 65:1-25 66:1-24 66:2 66:19 66:23

Jeremiah

2:1-37 2:15 3:1-25 3:16 3:17 3:19 4:4 4:4 5:1-31 5:6 6:10 7:4 7:21-23 7:31
8:1-22 9:12 10:1-25 10:21 11:1-23 16:1-21 16:1-21 22:1-30 23:1-40 23:5 23:6
23:14 25:12 26 26:6 26:11 29:10 30:1-24 31:1-40 31:31 31:31-33 31:31-33 32:37
33:1-26 38 51:29-30 51:30 51:31 51:32

Ezekiel

2:1-10 6:1-14 7:1-27 8:1-18 11:19 11:21 14:14 16 16:1-63 16:3 22:1-31 24:1-27
28:3 34:24 36:1-38 37:1-28

Daniel

1:7 2:32 2:32 2:33 2:39 2:39 2:40 2:45 4:30 5:28 7:5 7:6 7:7 7:8 7:11 7:13
7:19 7:20 7:23 7:24 7:24 7:25 8:3 8:5-6 8:7 8:8 8:9-14 8:20 8:21 8:22 8:23-26
9 9:1-27 9:24 9:24 9:27 10:16 10:20 10:20 11:2 11:3-4 11:5-6 11:7 11:8 11:9
11:10 11:11 11:12 11:13 11:14 11:15 11:16 11:17 11:18 11:19 11:20 11:21-45
12:1-3 12:4 12:9 12:11

Hosea

1:7 2:23 2:23 2:23 3:4 6:6 14:9

Amos

2:6 5:6 5:21

Micah

2:1-2 2:3 4:1 4:2 5:2 5:2 6:8 6:8

Habakkuk

2:4

Zephaniah

1:4-5 1:6

Haggai

2:1-23

Zechariah

2:11 8:20 8:20 9:9 9:9 9:9-10 9:11 12:1 13:2 14:16

Malachi

1:1-14 3:1 3:1

Matthew

1:18 1:20 1:20 1:22 1:23 2:1 2:2 2:3 2:4 2:5 2:6 4:12-13 5:9 5:9 5:14 5:20
5:21 5:28 5:32 5:33-37 5:33-37 5:38-44 5:42 5:42 5:45 5:47 6:1 6:1-2 6:2 6:7
6:10 6:18 6:20 6:24 6:26 6:28 6:32 6:32 6:34 7:12 7:12 7:15 7:21 8:4 8:6 8:11
9:18 9:20 9:27 10:16 10:16 10:17 10:21 10:28 10:29 10:32 10:32 10:37 10:38
10:39 10:39 10:39 11:5 11:5 11:25 11:27 12:5 12:11 12:19 12:20 12:21 12:23
12:36 13:22 13:24 13:33 13:44 13:45 13:47 15:22 17:21 18:4 18:7 18:19 18:20
19:9 20:28 20:30-31 21:9 21:15 21:21 21:33 21:33 21:43 22 22:1-14 22:16 22:23
22:37 22:39 22:42 23:8 23:8 23:12 23:23 23:34 23:34 23:38 24:11 24:16 24:20
25:15 26:31 26:50 26:52 26:56 26:64 26:69 28 28:1-20 28:20

Mark

1:14 1:44 3:6 8:15 10:47 12:13 12:14 12:29 12:32 12:35-36 12:37 13:22 14:66
16:1 16:1-20 16:10 16:17 16:19 16:19

Luke

1:27 1:32 1:33 1:35 1:35 1:56 1:69 2:4 2:4 2:11 2:21 2:41 3:23 4:14 4:15 4:16
4:18 5:14 6:31 6:35 8:14 9:54-55 10:18 10:27 11:28 12 12:4 12:4 12:7 12:33
13:34 14:11 14:12 14:27 15:11 18:14 18:38-39 19:9 20:12 20:21 20:44 21:18
21:24 21:34 22:54 23:2 23:34 23:34 24:1 24:1-53 24:51-52 24:52 25:46-47

John

1 1:7 1:32 1:47 2:6 2:13 2:23 4:14 4:24 5:19 5:30 5:32 5:36 5:37 5:39 5:43
5:43 5:44 5:44 5:46 6:10 6:19 6:38 6:57 7:2 7:17 7:22 7:42 8:23 8:37 8:40 8:41
8:44-45 10:18 10:29 10:32 10:36 11:1 11:50 12:1 12:32 12:44 13:17 13:28 13:31
13:31 13:34-35 13:35 13:49 14 14:1 14:12 14:13 14:16 14:16 14:16 14:17 14:27
14:28 14:31 15:12 15:17 15:26 15:27 16:13 16:28 17:3 17:17 17:18 17:19 17:20
19:14 20:19 20:21 20:26 20:27-28 20:29 20:31 21:1

Acts

1 1:9-10 1:11 1:21-22 2:3-4 2:11 2:22 2:32 2:33-34 2:36 2:46 3:13-14 3:15 4:12
4:24 5:1 5:16 5:37 5:42 6:9 7:55 7:55-56 8:1 8:7 8:32 9:1 9:3-4 9:4-5 9:5 9:6
9:20 10 10:1 10:13-14 10:15 10:43 10:46 11:1 11:20 12:34 13:1 13:5 13:8-9
13:10 13:12 13:33 13:46 14:1 14:11 14:19 15 15 15:16 15:19-20 15:20 16:1 16:3
16:3 16:18 16:18 17 17:28 17:34 18:1 18:2 19 19:1 19:6 19:19 19:19 20 20:1

20:6 20:29 21:1 21:1-40 21:24 21:38 22:1-30 22:3 22:6 22:6-7 22:8 23:8 26:25
26:26 28:1 28:17

Romans

1:3 1:25 2:28-29 2:29 2:29 3:20 3:32 4:11 4:13 4:16 4:17 4:20 5:3 6:3-4 6:4 8
8:1-2 8:3 8:9 8:12 8:14 8:15 8:24 8:34 8:36 9:1 9:6 10:2 10:4 10:9 10:10 10:11
11:33-34 11:35 11:52 12:1 12:3 12:6 12:8 12:16 13:1 13:3 13:8 13:9-10 13:11
13:12 13:13 13:14 13:16 14 14:1 14:1 14:1-23 14:1-23 14:5 14:23 15:2 15:4
15:19 15:19 15:25 15:28 16:27

1 Corinthians

1 1:1 1:4 1:10 1:12 1:13 1:15 1:17 1:25 2:3 2:11 2:16 3:1 4:6 4:7 4:11 5:8
5:10-11 5:13 6:9 7:4 7:5 7:10 7:12 7:19 7:19 7:19 8:4 8:5 8:6 8:7 9:19 9:20
9:20 9:21 9:22 10:7 10:16 10:16 10:17 10:18 10:19 10:20 10:20 10:25 11 11:3
11:16 11:18 11:19 12:2 12:10 12:25 12:28 12:30 13:1 13:2 13:4 13:4 13:7 13:8
13:9 13:10 13:12 13:12 14:2 14:4 14:5 14:6 14:9 14:13 14:14 14:18 14:19 14:22
14:23 14:27 14:39 15:1 15:3 15:4 15:5 15:6 15:6 15:7 15:8 15:8 15:8 15:24
15:27 15:52

2 Corinthians

1:4 1:8 1:22 2:4 3:10 3:14 3:16 4:11 5:1 5:4 5:5 5:7 5:21 6:4 6:4 6:6 6:6 6:6
6:7 6:8 6:15 6:16 7:1 7:14 8:7 9:1 9:2 9:2 9:4 9:7 10:4 10:13 11:2 11:5 11:14
11:23 11:30 11:31 11:31 12:4 12:10 12:10 12:10 12:11 12:12 12:12 12:20

Galatians

1:6 1:8 1:8 1:20 1:20 2:3 2:9 2:11 2:14 2:16 3:7 3:24 3:29 3:57 4:5 4:10 5:6
5:6 5:6 5:6 5:14 5:20 5:21 5:22 5:22 6:1-2 6:6 6:12 6:13-14 6:15 6:15 6:16

Ephesians

1:8 1:14 1:20 1:21 2:2 2:2-3 2:3 2:11 3:12 3:14 3:17 4:1 4:2 4:2 4:5 4:7 4:15
4:15 4:16 4:16 4:25 4:25 4:29 5:3 5:9 5:18 5:22-23 5:24 5:25 5:28 5:33 6:1 6:2
6:3 6:4 6:5-10 6:6 6:11-12 6:13 6:14 6:15 6:16 6:17 6:18

Philippians

1:16 1:20 1:27 2:3 2:3 2:15 3:3 3:3 3:5 3:15 3:15 3:16 3:18 4:8 4:8 4:9 4:18

Colossians

1:16 1:16 2:11 2:12 2:14 2:16 2:17 2:18 2:21 2:23 2:23 3:1 3:9 3:9 3:11 3:11
3:12 3:18-19 3:20-21 3:22 3:23 3:24 3:25 4:14 4:16 24

1 Thessalonians

1:6 1:9 2:6 3:6 4:15 4:16 5:8 5:14 5:19 5:21 5:27

2 Thessalonians

1:3 1:6 1:6 2 2:9 2:9-10 2:10

1 Timothy

1:10 2 2:2 2:2 2:7 2:9 2:12 3:4 4:8 5:3 5:5 6:7 6:8 6:9 6:17 6:18 6:20

2 Timothy

1:3 1:6 1:10 1:12 1:13 1:14 2:8 2:12 2:15 2:16 2:24 4:2 4:11

Titus

2:2 2:7 2:8 2:12 2:12

Philemon

1:14

Hebrews

1:2 1:3 1:3 1:3 1:3 1:6 1:13 2:3-4 2:4 2:4 2:4 2:5 2:5 2:6 2:7 2:8 3:3-4 3:5
3:6 3:6 4 4 4:12 5:5 5:5 5:14 6:11 7:19 7:22 8:1 8:6 8:6 8:7 9:12 10:1 10:12
10:25 11:3 12:1 12:2 12:4 12:28 13:7-8 13:20 13:23 14:15-16

James

1:17 1:22-23 1:24 1:25 1:25 2:8 3 3:1 3:1 3:14 4:8 4:12 4:12 5:12

1 Peter

1:2 1:23 1:24 2:12 2:13 2:17 2:21 2:22 2:22 3:1 3:2 3:3 3:12 3:16 4:3 5:5 5:7

2 Peter

3:16

1 John

1:1 1:1-10 1:6 1:8 2:2 2:3-4 2:4 2:7 2:16 2:21 3:2 3:11 3:16 3:23 3:23 4:1 4:1
4:10 5:7 5:8 5:21

Revelation

1:1-2 1:3 1:5 1:5 1:16 3:5 3:7 4:1 5:5 6:17 9:20 9:20 22:15 22:16 22:18 22:20
22:21 22:29

Wisdom of Solomon

9:15

1 Maccabees

2:54 4:46 9:27

2 Maccabees

7:1-42 7:28

Sirach

28:3 45:21

Index of Greek Words and Phrases

ἄως : 67
άνήρ πύρρας: 65
ἄξουμίται : 67
ἀχμῶθ : 67
ἄβρα : 67
Ἄδράμυττος: 67
Ἄρχάγγελον: 227
Ἄφερ : 74
Ἄδράμυττος : 67
Ἄβυσσος: 47 47
Ἄγγελον: 227
Ἐρυθρᾶν : 73
Ἐλλαδικόν: 76
Ἐριβος: 50
ἦως : 67
ιάονες : 67
ἱαοναῦ : 67
ἴλ: 65
ἴλ : 65
Ἰάω: 78 78
Ἰαβαί: 78
Ἰαοῦ: 78
Ἰευῶ: 78
Ἰσραήλ: 65
Ἰσραήλ : 65
ύδογενής: 76
ύλογενής: 76
Αβυσσος: 50
Γέλωτα: 65
Γομαρεῖς : 68
Εὔα: 61
Κίττιον : 68
Κρόνος : 65
Λόγος: 55 55
Λοξίας: 181

Μέσσοι: 69
Μόθος: 47
Μώτ: 47 47
Μεσιρὶ: 69
Μετάτωρ: 231
Μισώρ: 69
Ούσωός : 73
Φιλοκαλία: 73
Χαΐτος : 160
Χνᾶ : 69
ἄρχων: 219
ἀλήθειαν: 81
ἀπεικόνισμα: 227
αἰών: 61
αἰών : 67
αίολεῖς : 68
αύως : 67
βάαν: 48
γ : 69 70 70
δηλα: 81
δήλωσιν: 81
ἐκουσία: 219
ἐκπύρωσιν: 115
ἐρώτημα δήλων: 81
κολπία: 48
λάρναξ : 65
λαΐτος : 160
λόγον: 227
νεκυΐα: 89
ξ : 68
π : 67
περὶ οὐσίας: 55
πρωτόγονος: 61
πύλας ἄδου: 268
σ : 69
σαββατίσαι: 207
σκῆνος: 54

σκήπτρον: 219

τ : 69

τὸ ποιοῦν: 55

ταυῶς : 67

τελειότης: 27

τοὺς Ἕλληνας κάλουσιν ἰαῦνας: 67

φ : 67

χαρακτήρ: 227

ων : 67

Index of Hebrew Words and Phrases

אדוני : 229
אדם : 61
אופר : 70
אור : 70
אורים : 81
אחד : 75
אל : 65 65 65
איש אדמה : 65
איש בוטר : 215
אכר : 70
אכו : 228
אל : 65
אלהים : 229
אלישה : 68
ארודי : 69
ארך : 70
ארם : 69
ארץ : 47
אשור : 69
אשכנז : 68
בגן : 219
בהו : 48
בוטטרי : 230

בומטרון : 231
בית המיעד : 226
גמר : 68
גרנשי : 69
הולן : 70
הוצ : 70
המחי : 69
הנה : 67
ומוט : 47
זביר : 207
ח : 67
חברה : 67
חזה : 61
חול : 70
חיה : 67
חכמת : 67
חלנה : 70
חני־בעל : 67
חנעו : 69
חפרע : 164
חצר־בעל : 67
חצר־מות : 67
חצרמוח : 70
חרן : 70

חשים : 67

יברה : 48

יהוה : 227 229 229

יהוה צבאות : 229

יוז : 68

יחווה : 78

יפת : 67

יקטוו : 70

כוש : 68

כלה : 70

כתים : 68

כתים : 47

להבים : 69

לוד : 69

לעולם : 200

מגוג : 68

מדי : 68

מצרים : 69

מרחפת : 47 47 47 50

מש : 70

משד : 68

נהר : 70

נחמן : 228

נינוה : 70

נפתחים: 69

ס : 68

סבא : 69

סבתה : 69

סובה: 223

ספרה: 70

ספרות : 228

ע: 69 70

עד עולם : 200

עוה : 70

עילם : 69

עפר : 74

ערב : 50

ערקין : 69

פ: 67

פית : 69

פצריסים: 69

צ: 70

צ : 69

צור : 69 69

צידו: 69

קל־פיה: 48

ריפח: 68

רסן : 70

רעמה : 69

שאל : 268

שבמ : 219

שילח : 219

שלטן : 219

שמור : 207

שנער : 70

שרק : 242

שרקיין : 242

תבה : 65

תבל : 68

תהום : 47 50

תירס : 68

תלוי : 98

תמים : 81

תרשיש : 68

Index of Pages of the Print Edition

i ii iii iv v vi vii viii ix x xi xii xiii xiv xv xvi xvii xviii xix xx 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 50 45
46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 71 73 74 75 76
77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105
106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128
129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151
152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174
175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 191
198 109 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212 213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220
221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243
244 245 246 247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265 266
267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279 280 281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289
290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297 298 299