

EVIDENCES

FOR THE

TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY,

DEDUCED FROM COMPARING

NUMEROUS PROPHECIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

WITH

PARALLEL PASSAGES IN THE NEW,

PROVING THAT

JESUS IS THE CHRIST.



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PREFATORY REMARKS.

AS one of the strongest evidences of the truth of Christianity rests on the prophecies of the Old Testament, concerning the Messiah, and on the fulfilment of those prophecies in the person and character of Jesus Christ, it is hoped, the following pages, extracted from “A Plea for Religion, addressed to infidels and wavering Christians,” will meet with attention, and be perused by many with interest and profit.

Here will be found more than a hundred different prophecies, contained in the Old Testament, relating to the Messiah, and the parallel passages pointed out in the New, which show with what wonderful accuracy those prophecies were fulfilled in the life of our SAVIOUR.

There is a single chapter in the Old Testament, which, although it does not immediately relate to Jesus Christ, may not improperly be mentioned here. It is the twenty eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, and clearly shows what confidence may be reposed on ancient prophecy. This chapter describes the future condition of the Jews, should they forsake the only living and true God. If we compare this chapter with the history, dispersion, and present state of that extraordinary people, we cannot fail of having our minds strongly impressed with the conviction, that the author must have possessed a prescience, to which no mere man, unaided by divine power, would dare pretend.

EVIDENCES, &c.

2 PETER, i. 19.

We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well, that ye take heed, as unto a light, that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.

IF we consider the prophecies, which relate to human redemption, and the SAVIOUR of mankind, we shall find, they are extremely remarkable and minute, and absolutely conclusive for the *Messiahship* of *Jesus Christ*, the son of Mary. After considering the predictions and fulfilments at some length, we may boldly appeal to the common sense and reason of every man, however prejudiced, to say, whether there be not something far beyond the mere powers of nature, in these strange coincidences.

1. It was predicted, many centuries before it came to pass, that Messiah should come into the world for the redemption of human beings. Messiah did come into the world four thousand years after the first prediction was uttered.*

* Gen. iii. 15 ; Isa. ix. 6, 7 ; Mat. i. 18—25. Dr. Eveleigh in his Sermons says very justly : “ The great object of the prophecies of the Old Testament is the redemption of mankind. This, as soon as Adam’s fall had made it necessary, the mercy of God was pleased to foretel. And, as the time for its accomplishment drew nearer, the predictions concerning it became gradually so clear and determinate, as to mark out with historical precision almost every circumstance in the life and character of infinitely the most extraordinary personage that ever appeared among men. Any one of these predictions is sufficient to indicate a prescience more than human. But the collective force of all, taken together, is such, that nothing more can be necessary to prove the interposition of Omnipotence, than the establishment of their authenticity. And this, even at so remote a period as the present, is placed beyond all doubt.” *Sermon vi. p. 210.*

2. Messiah is frequently prophesied of under the character of him that was to come.—Jesus Christ is several times described in this form, by the writers of the New Testament.*

3. In ancient times there were four monarchies in the world, one succeeding another, more famous than all the rest. It was foretold, that Messiah should appear under the last of them.—Christ was born after the destruction of the three first, and while the fourth was in all its glory.†

4. Messiah was to come among men before the destruction of the second temple.—Jesus Christ preached in that temple, and it was totally destroyed within forty years afterwards.‡

5. Messiah was to come into the world before the dominion of the Jews was taken away.—Christ was born the very year that Augustus Cæsar imposed a tax upon the Jewish nation, as a token of their subjection to the Roman government.§

6. When Messiah should make his appearance among men, it was to be a time of general peace, after dreadful wars and convulsions.—When Jesus Christ came into the world, the Roman wars were just terminated, the temple of Janus was shut, and universal peace reigned through the empire. ||

7. Messiah was to make his appearance among men at a time when there should be a general expectation of him.—When Jesus Christ came into the world, all nations were looking for the advent of some extraordinary person.¶

* Compare Heb. ii. 3, 4; Psalm cxviii. 26; Is. xxxv. 4; lix. 20; lxii. 11; Dan. ix. 26; Zech. ix. 9; Mal. iii. 1; Mat. xi. 3; John i. 30; iv. 25; xi. 27; Acts xix. 4. See Chandler's Defence, ch. ii. sect. 1. p. 160—167.

† Compare Daniel ii. and vii. with Luke ii. and iii.

‡ Compare Haggai ii. 7, with Matthew xxi. 23. See Josephus.

§ Compare Genesis xlix. 10, with Luke ii. 1—7.

|| Compare Haggai ii. 6, 7, 9, with the Roman History of this period.

¶ Compare Haggai ii. 7—9. with Matthew ii. 1—10, and John i. 19—45.

The Heathens, as well as the Jews, had a firm persuasion that some extraordinary person should arise in the world about the time of our SAVIOUR's birth. Suetonius says, "There was an old and fixed opinion all over the East, that it was decreed by heaven, that about that time some person from Judea should obtain the dominion over all."

Tacitus mentions the same prophecy, and almost in the same words :

8. Messiah was to have existed with God before the foundations of the world were laid.—Jesus Christ was in the beginning with God, and by him the worlds were made.*

9. Messiah was to be one, who had been the fellow, the equal, and the companion of the Almighty.—Jesus Christ thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and was with him from eternity.†

10. Messiah was to be the Son of God.—Jesus Christ was confessedly the only-begotten Son of God.‡

11. Messiah was to have had an eternal and ineffable generation.—Jesus Christ was the Son of God, prior to his being born of the virgin Mary, in a way not to be explained by mortal man.§

12. Messiah was also to be the Son of Man.—Jesus Christ sustained this character, and seemed to have a pleasure in being called by that name ||

13. Messiah was not to be born according to the ordinary course of nature, but to descend from a pure virgin.—Jesus Christ was born of the virgin Mary.¶

“Most of the Jews had a persuasion that it was contained in the ancient books of their priests, that at that very time the East should grow powerful, and some person from Judea should gain the dominion.”

To these testimonies of the scriptures and heathen writers we may add that of Josephus, who says in his *History of the Jewish War*, b. vii. c. 12. “That which chiefly excited the Jews to the war against the Romans, was a dubious oracle, found in their sacred writings, that about that time, one of them, from their parts, should reign over the world.”

See the subject drawn out more at large by Mr. Charles Leslie, in his *Short and Easy Method with the Jews*, and again in his *Truth of Christianity demonstrated*. This last treatise, together with his *Short and Easy Method with the Deists*, are absolutely conclusive in favor of the Gospel. One may challenge the most subtle Deist in the world to refute these two treatises: They are indeed unanswerable, except by sneer and sarcasm.

* Compare Proverbs viii. 22, 23, with John i. 1—3; Colossians i. 16, 17.

† Compare Zechariah xiii. 7, with Phil. ii. 6, and John i. 1.

‡ Compare Psalm ii. 12; Proverbs xxx. 4; Hosea xi. 1; Matthew iii. 17; xvii. 5.

§ Compare Micah v. 2, with John i. 1.

|| Daniel vii. 13; Matthew viii. 20.

¶ Compare Genesis iii. 15; Isaiah vii. 14; and Jeremiah xxxi. 22;

14. Messiah was to be the son of Abraham, the father of the faithful, and the friend of God.—Jesus Christ was sprung from that illustrious patriarch.*

15. Messiah was to be the son of Isaac, and not of Ishmael.—Jesus Christ was sprung from Isaac, and not from Ishmael.†

16. Messiah was to be the son of Jacob, and not of Esau.—Jesus Christ did descend from Jacob, and not from his brother Esau.‡

17. Jacob had twelve sons. Messiah was not to spring from any other of the twelve, but from Judah.—Jesus Christ claimed Judah as his ancestor in a direct line.§

18. Messiah was to be sprung from Jesse, the father of David, king of Israel.—Jesus Christ was his descendant.||

19. Jesse had eight sons. David was the youngest. From none of the seven elder, but from David alone, was Messiah to derive his origin.—Jesus Christ was the son of David.¶

20. Messiah was to be born in a poor and mean condition, when the family should be reduced to a very low estate.—Jesus Christ, both on his father and mother's side, was of a very low and mean appearance, though descended from such illustrious ancestors.**

21. Messiah was to have a messenger going before him, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.—Christ had a messenger going before him, who fully bare witness to his pretensions.††

with Matthew i. 22, 23 —It would be well if the opposers of the supernatural incarnation of our Saviour, would soberly read over Dr. Clarke's very sensible discourse on the miraculous birth of Christ, in the 5th volume of his sermons. My own essay on the authenticity of the New Testament too may be consulted, especially the Addend.

* Compare Genesis xxi. 1—12, with Matthew i. 1—16.

† Compare Genesis xvii. 16—21, with Matthew i. 1—16.

‡ Compare Genesis xxv. 24—34 ; xxvii. 27—29 ; xxviii. 13, 14 ; with Matthew i. 1—16.

§ Compare Genesis xlix. 8—12, with Matthew i. 1—16.

|| Compare Isaiah xi. 1, with Matthew i. 1—16.

¶ Compare 1 Samuel xvi. 1—13 ; 2 Samuel vii. 12—15 ; Psalm lxxxix. 19—37 ; Matthew i. 1—16.

** Compare Isaiah liii. 2 ; Luke i. 48, 52 ; ii. 7, 24.

†† Compare Malachi iii. 1, with John i. 19—34, and iii. 26—36.

22. The forerunner of Messiah was either to be Elijah himself, or one in the spirit of Elijah.—John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, was altogether in the spirit of that great prophet.*

23. The forerunner of Messiah was to preach in the wilderness, and to prepare the minds of the people for his coming.—John the Baptist did preach in the wilderness of Judea, and professed himself to be sent to prepare the Jews for the advent of Christ.†

24. The forerunner of Messiah was to be considerably successful in his office.—John the Baptist was treated with great respect by his countrymen, and made large numbers of disciples.‡

25. Messiah was not to be born at Jerusalem, the capital of his kingdom, but at Bethlehem, an obscure country village.—Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem, by a very peculiar providence.§

26. Messiah was to go down into Egypt, and to be called out from thence.—Jesus Christ went down into Egypt soon after his birth, and was called out from thence by an angel of the Lord.||

27. Messiah was to be a preacher of the law of God to his countrymen in the great congregation.—Jesus Christ was indefatigable in his public ministrations, both in the temple, and in all other places, where the people were disposed to hear him.¶

28. The tribes of Zebulon and Naphtali were first to be greatly distressed, and afterwards highly honoured and exalted, by the appearance of Messiah among them.—These tribes principally suffered in the first Assyrian invasion under Tiglath Pilezer, and were afterwards among the first that enjoyed the

* Compare Malachi iv. 5, 6, with Mark i. 1—8.

† Compare Isaiah xl. 3—5, with Mat. iii. 1—6.

‡ Compare Isaiah xl. 3—5, with Luke iii. 21.

§ Compare Micah v. 2, with Matthew ii. 2.

|| Compare Hosea xi. 1, with Matthew ii. 13—23. See too Whiston. on prophecy, pp. 12 and 52.

¶ Compare Psalm xl. 9, 10, with the four Gospels, passim.

blessing of Christ's preaching the gospel, and exhibiting his miraculous works among them.*

29. Messiah was to converse and preach the gospel in the region of Galilee.—Jesus Christ lived and conversed so long in that obscure and despicable part of the land of Israel, that he was, by way of contempt, denominated a Galilean.†

30. Messiah was to have a temple, to which he should come when he made his appearance in human flesh.—Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, claimed the temple of Jerusalem as his own, in a sense no mere mortal could presume.‡

31. Messiah was to be the servant of God, whose name is the *branch*.—Jesus Christ was emphatically the servant of God, and the *day-spring from on high*.§

32. Messiah is spoken of by the ancient prophets under the characters of an Angel—a Messenger—a Redeemer—an Interpreter—One of a thousand—a Plant of renown—a Captain—the Beloved of God—the true David.—Jesus Christ was all these, and whatever else was peculiar to the character of that august Being; as will more fully appear from the following instances.||

33. Messiah was to be the Messenger of the covenant between God and his people.—Jesus Christ was that Messenger.¶

34. Messiah was to sustain the office of a Prophet, when

* Compare Isaiah ix. 1—4; 2 Kings xv. 29; 1 Chron. v. 26, and Matt. iv. 12—16.

† Compare Isaiah ix. 1, 2, with Matthew ii. 22, 23; and Matthew iv. 23—25.

‡ Compare Malachi iii. 1, with Luke ii. 49; and Matthew xxi. 12, 13.

§ Compare Isaiah iv. 2; xi. 1; Jeremiah xxiii. 5; Zechariah iii. 8; Isaiah xlii. 1; Matthew xii. 18; and Luke i. 78.—It should be observed here, that the word translated *branch* signifies also the *East*, or *day-spring*.

|| Compare Genesis xlviii. 16; xxxii. 24—30; Hosea xii. 3, 4; Ex. xxiii. 20—23; Malachi iii. 1; Job xix. 25; xxxiii. 23; Ez. xxxiv. 23, 24, 29; Joshua v. 13, 14; Isaiah xlii. 1; Rev. i. 1; Matthew iii. 17; Hebrews ii. 10.

¶ Compare Jeremiah xxxiii. 20, 21; Malachi iii. 1; Isaiah lxiii. 9; Hebrews viii. 7—13; x. 9; xiii. 20, 21.

he came to redeem mankind.—Jesus Christ sustained that office in all its extent.*

35. Messiah was also to sustain the office of a Priest when he appeared on earth.—Jesus Christ was a Priest, and offered, not indeed the blood of bullocks and of goats, but his own most precious blood.†

36. Messiah, though a Priest, was not to be of the tribe of Levi, and after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek.—Jesus Christ was of the tribe of Judah, and had an everlasting priesthood, after the order of Melchizedek.‡

37. Messiah was, moreover, to sustain the office of a King, when he took on him human nature for the salvation of his elect.—Jesus Christ was a King, even while upon earth; and, now that he is in heaven, his dominion extends over all worlds.§

38. Messiah was to be a righteous King, and emphatically the Prince of Peace.—Jesus Christ was eminently distinguished as a righteous person, and the great Peacemaker, both on earth and in heaven.||

39. The kingdom of Messiah was to be universal and everlasting.—Jesus Christ has a kingdom, that, in due time, shall be universal in its extent, and eternal in its duration.¶

40. Messiah was to be the Sun of Righteousness, who should arise upon the world with salvation in his rays.—Jesus Christ was the Light of the world, who illuminateth every man that cometh into it.

Messiah was also to be the East, or Morning Star.—Jesus Christ is called the Day-Spring from on high, and the bright and Morning Star.**

* Compare Deuteronomy xviii. 15, 18; Acts iii. 22; Luke xxiv. 19; Matthew xxiv.

† Compare Zechariah vi. 13; Hebrews ix. 11—14.

‡ Compare Genesis xiv. 18; Psalm cx. 4; Hebrews vi. 20; vii. 1—28.

§ Compare Psalm ii. 6; Zechariah vi. 13; ix. 9; with Luke i. 32, 33; John xxiii. 36, 37; and Rev. xix. 16.

|| Compare Isaiah xxxii. 1; Psalm xlv. 1—17; lxxii. 1—19; Jeremiah xxiii. 5; Zechariah ix. 9; Isaiah ix. 6; Luke ii. 14; Eph. ii. 4—22.

¶ Daniel vii. 27; Luke i. 32, 33; Rev. v. 12—14.

** Compare Malachi iv. 2; John i. 5, 9; viii. 12; ix. 5; xii. 35, 46; Is. lx. 1, 2; Luke i. 78; and Rev. xxii. 16.

41. Messiah was to be emphatically the Just One.—Jesus Christ not only answered the description, but is repeatedly called by that name.*

42. Messiah, to whom belonged the land of Judea, was to be denominated Emanuel.—Jesus Christ was the proprietor of that holy land, and was expressly called by the name of Emanuel.†

43. Messiah was to be a great Shepherd, and to lay down his life for the sheep.—Jesus Christ was the great and good Shepherd, and shed his blood in defence of his flock.‡

44. Messiah was not only to be a righteous King, and execute judgment and justice in the earth, but his name was to be Jehovah our righteousness.—Jesus Christ is made of God righteousness to every one that believes in his name.§

45. Messiah was to be, like the lion, which is the king of animals, of a noble and generous spirit.—Jesus Christ was the lion of the tribe of Judah ||

46. Messiah was to be anointed with the Holy Ghost, in a larger degree than any other man ever was.—Jesus Christ was favoured in this respect beyond all other persons that ever lived.¶

47. Messiah was to be of a meek and lowly disposition, humbling himself for the redemption of the world.—Jesus Christ was meek and lowly in mind, and answered the prophetic description in every respect.**

48. Messiah was to teach mankind the doctrines of salvation without ostentation and noise.—Jesus Christ was quiet and unambitious in all his public as well as private deportment.††

* 2 Samuel xxiii. 3 ; Isaiah xi. 5 ; Acts iii. 14 ; vii. 52 ; xxii. 14.

† Compare Isaiah vii. 14 ; viii. 8 ; Matthew i. 23 ; and John i. 11.

‡ Compare Zechariah xiii. 7 ; Isaiah lx. 11 ; and Ez. xxxiv. 23, 24 ; with John x. 1—18.

§ Compare Jeremiah xxiii. 5, 6, with 1 Corinthians i. 30.

|| Compare Genesis xlix. 9 ; and Rev. v. 5.

¶ Compare Psalm xlv. 7 ; with Matthew iii. 16, 17 ; and John iii. 34.

** Compare Zechariah ix. 9 ; Matthew xi. 28, 29 ; John xiii. 1—17 ; 2 Corinthians viii. 9.

†† Compare Isaiah xlii. 1—4 ; Matthew xii. 14—21.

49. Messiah was to be endowed with a peculiar degree of wisdom and understanding.—Jesus Christ, his enemies being judges, spake as never man spake, and taught a more pure and excellent doctrine than ever had been received among mankind before.*

50. The doctrine of Messiah was to be of the most healing, encouraging, and consolatory kind.—The doctrine of Jesus Christ was singularly adapted to the healing of wounded minds.†

51. The doctrine which Messiah should preach was to have a powerfully transforming influence upon the minds of men.—The gospel of Christ had all this effect upon the dispositions and conduct of every one of his genuine disciples.‡

52. Messiah was to be peculiarly kind and affectionate to young, distressed, and tender-spirited persons.—Jesus Christ was singularly attentive to all such characters.§

53. In confirmation of his divine mission, Messiah was to display many wonderful works among the people.—Jesus Christ wrought abundance of miracles in confirmation of his pretensions and the doctrines he taught.||

54. Messiah was to have but little success in preaching the gospel among his countrymen the Jews.—Jesus Christ was almost universally rejected by them.¶

55. The minds of the Jews were to be so veiled that they should not know their Messiah when he came among them.—The minds of the Jews were so sealed up, and enveloped in prejudice against Jesus Christ when he appeared, that he was treated by them as an impostor and deceiver.**

* Compare Isaiah xi. 1—5; John vii. 46; Matthew xiii. 54—58; Matthew v. vi. and vii. chapters.

† Compare Isaiah lxi. 1—3; Matthew xi. 28—30; John xiv. 1—3.

‡ Compare Isaiah xi. 6—8; with Acts ii. 41—47.

§ Compare Isaiah xl. 11; lv. 1—3; lxi. 1—3; Matthew xii. 20; and Mark x. 13—16.

|| Compare Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6; with Matthew viii. and ix. chapters, and John xxi. 25.

¶ Compare Isaiah liii. 1; xlix. 4; Rom. x. 1—3, 21.

** Compare Isaiah vi. 9—13; xxix. 9—14; 2 Cor. iii. 5—18.

56. Messiah was to be the chief corner stone in the building of his church, elect, precious.—Jesus Christ was the chief corner stone, elect, and precious.*

57. Messiah was to be rejected by the builders, but yet made the head stone in the corner.—Jesus Christ was almost universally rejected by the great men of his nation ; but yet he was made both Lord and Christ.†

58. Messiah was to preach the gospel to the poor, and to be embraced by a considerable number of that description.—Jesus Christ preached the gospel to the poor, and various of that rank believed in his name.‡

59. Messiah was to be despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.—Jesus Christ was despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.§

60. Messiah was to be seen riding into Jerusalem, sitting upon a young ass, as a token of the humility of his mind.—Jesus Christ answered this prediction, as well as every other that went before concerning him, in the most minute circumstances.||

61. When Messiah should enter Jerusalem in this meek and humble manner, great crowds of the common people should welcome him with shouts and rejoicings.—When Jesus Christ rode into that proud metropolis in low disguise, the general cry of the mob was, Hosanna to the Son of David ! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord : Hosanna in the highest.¶

62. Messiah was to be actuated with such a burning zeal for the house of God, as even to be endangered by it.—Jesus Christ displayed that zeal upon various occasions.**

* Compare Isaiah xxviii. 16 ; Acts iv. 11, 12 ; 1 Peter ii. 6—8.

† Compare Psalm cxviii. 22 ; Isaiah viii. 13, 14 ; John vii. 48 ; Matthew xi. 25, 26 ; 1 Corinthians i. 26—31 ; 1 Peter ii. 7, 8.

‡ Compare Isaiah lxi. 1 ; Luke iv. 18 ; Matthew xi. 5 ; James ii. 5.

§ Compare Isa. liii. with Matthew xxvi. and xxvii. ch. and Phil. ii. 7, 8. See too Chandler's Defence, p. 178—194.

|| Compare Zechariah ix. 9, with Matthew xxi. 1—11.

¶ Ibid. See Chandler's Defence, p. 102—107.

** Compare Psalm lxi. 9 ; John ii. 17.

63. Messiah was to be betrayed into the hands of his enemies by the treachery of an intimate friend.—Christ was betrayed by one of the disciples whom he had chosen.*

64. Messiah was to be sold for thirty pieces of silver.—Jesus Christ was sold for the sum predicted.†

65. Messiah's price, the thirty pieces of silver, was to be cast to the potter in the house of the Lord.—All this was done when Judas betrayed his master.‡

66. Messiah was to be condemned in judgment, and suffer death under the colour of public justice.—Jesus Christ underwent a mock trial, was declared innocent by his very judge, and yet delivered over to be crucified.§

67. The followers of Messiah were all to forsake him in the time of his greatest need.—When Jesus Christ was apprehended, and put upon his trial, all his disciples forsook him and fled.||

68. Messiah was to finish his public employment, in confirming the covenant, in about three years and a half.—Jesus Christ began his public office at thirty years of age, and was put to death at thirty three and a half.¶

69. Messiah was to be ignominiously scourged by his persecutors.—Jesus Christ was treated in this manner.**

70. Messiah was to be smitten on the face in the day of his

* Compare Psalm xli. 9 ; lv. 12, 13 ; Mat. xxvi. 47—50.

† Compare Zechariah xi. 12 ; Matthew xxvi. 14—16.

‡ Compare Zechariah xi. 13 ; Matthew xxvii. 3—10.

§ Compare Isaiah lix. 8, 9 ; Matthew xxvii.

|| Compare Zechariah xiii. 7 ; Isaiah lxiii. 5 ; Matthew xxvi. 56.

¶ Compare Daniel ix. 27, with the period of our Lord's ministry in the four gospels. On this remarkable prediction of Daniel, consult Maclaurin's Essay on the Prophecies, p. 103, and Sir Isaac Newton's Observations on Daniel, ch. x. 11.

N. B. It may be observed, for the information of those who have read but little on the prophecies, that a day, in prophetic language, is one year ; so that, if the sacrifice and the oblation were to cease in the midst or middle of the week, it would be half of seven days or years, that is three years and an half. See Num. xiv. 34 ; Ezek. iv. 6.

** Compare Isaiah l. 6, with Matthew xxvii. 26.

humiliation.—Jesus Christ was basely buffeted by the hands of vile slaves.*

71. Messiah was to have his face befouled with spittle.—Jesus Christ condescended for our sakes even to this indignity without complaining.†

72. Messiah was to be wounded in his hands, even by his own friends.—Jesus Christ had his hands nailed to the cursed tree by his own countrymen.‡

73. Messiah was to be so marred and disfigured in his visage by the ill treatment he should receive, that his friends would scarce know him.—And was not Jesus Christ so disfigured and despoiled ?§

74. Messiah was to be oppressed and afflicted, and yet not open his mouth in complaint. He was to be brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he was not to open his mouth.—Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, before Pilate, held his peace. And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.||

75. Messiah was to be taken up with wicked men in his death.—Christ was suspended on a cross between two thieves.¶

* Compare Isaiah l. 6; liii. 14; Micah v. 1; and Matthew xxvi. 67.

† Compare Isaiah l. 6; Matthew xxv. 67.

‡ Compare Zechariah xiii. 6, with John xx. 27.

§ Compare Isaiah lii. 14, with Matthew xxvii. 29, 30. If it should be objected that several of these circumstances are trifling and unworthy of the Spirit of prophecy to reveal, it may be very justly answered, that, “The more minute some of these circumstances are in themselves, the greater and more convincing is the evidence of divine fore-knowledge in the prediction of them; because the conformity between the prediction and the history is so much the more circumstantial.” See Maclaurin on the Prophecies, p. 63.

|| Compare Isaiah liii. 7, with Matthew xxvi. 63, and xxvii. 12—14.

¶ Compare Isaiah liii. 9, with Matthew xxvii. 38, 60.

See on this whole chapter Aphorp's seventh discourse on prophecy; and Dr. Gregory Sharpe's Second Argument in defence of Christianity, pages 222—274. A comparison of this 53d chapter of Isaiah, with the account given in the four Evangelists of the sufferings of Christ, was made the instrument of convincing the witty and wicked Earl of Rochester. The narrative given of this remarkable transaction by bishop Burnet, is worth

76. Messiah was to be buried in the sepulchre of a rich man.—Christ was buried in the tomb of a rich counsellor.*

77. Messiah was to be put to death at the end of 490 years from the time a commandment should go forth to restore and to build Jerusalem.—Now it is remarkable, that from the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, king of Persia, from whom Ezra received his commission, ch. vii. 8, to the death of Jesus Christ, there are just 490 years.†

78. Messiah was to be presented by his enemies with vinegar and gall during his sufferings.—In this manner was Jesus Christ treated as he hung upon the cross.‡

79. The persecutors of Messiah were to pierce his hands

insertion in this place ;—Rochester said to bishop Burnet, “ Mr. Parsons, “ in order to his conviction, read to him the 53d chapter of Isaiah, and com- “ pared that with our Saviour’s passion, that he might there see a proph- “ ecy concerning it written many ages before it was done ; which the Jews, “ that blasphemed Jesus Christ, still kept in their hands as a book divine- “ ly inspired. He said to me, that, as he heard it read, he felt an inward “ force upon him, which did so enlighten his mind, and convince him, that “ he could resist it no longer : for the words had an authority, which did “ shoot like rays or beams in his mind, so that he was not only convinced “ by the reasonings he had about it, which satisfied his understanding, but “ by a power which did so effectually constrain him, that he did ever after “ as firmly believe in his Saviour, as if he had seen him in the clouds He “ had made it to be read so often to him, that he had got it by heart ; and “ went through a great part of it in discourse with me, with a sort of “ heavenly pleasure, giving me his reflections upon it. Some few I re- “ member : ‘ Who hath believed our report ? ’ Here, he said, was fore- “ told the opposition the gospel was to meet with from such wretches as “ he was. ‘ He hath no form or comeliness ; and when we shall see him, “ there was no beauty, that we should desire him ’ On this, he said, the “ meanness of his appearance and person has made vain and foolish people “ disparage him, because he came not in such a fool’s coat as they delight “ in. What he said on the other parts, I do not, says the Bishop, well re- “ member.” Sharpe’s Second Argument, p. 238—240.

* Ibid.

† Daniel ix. 24. See Sykes’s Essay on the Truth of the Christian Religion, p. 20. And for the times of the birth and passion of Christ, consult the 11th chapter of Sir Isaac Newton’s Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel.

‡ Compare Psalm lxxix. 21, with Matthew xxvii. 34, and John xix. 28—30.

and his feet.—So did the bloody Jews and Romans treat the Redeemer of mankind.*

80. The enemies of Messiah were to laugh him to scorn and to taunt and reproach him with satirical language.—So did the Jews conduct themselves towards Christ in the day of his distress.†

81. When Messiah was put to death, his enemies were to part his garments among them, and for his vesture they were to cast lots.—When Christ was crucified these transactions took place.‡

82. When the Messiah should suffer death, not a bone of his body was to be broken.—When Christ was crucified, not a bone was injured.§

83. When Messiah should be put to death, his side was by some means not declared, to be pierced.—When Jesus Christ was crucified, his side was pierced with a spear.||

84. It was prophesied of Messiah, that he should make intercession for transgressors.—Jesus Christ interceded with God for his very murderers, and now ever liveth at his Father's right hand to plead the cause of the sinful children of men.¶

85. Messiah was to be cut off, but not for himself.—Jesus Christ, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, was cut off by the hands of wicked men, to reconcile God to his rebellious creatures.**

86. When Messiah should come there was to be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.—When Christ came, he ap-

* Compare Psalm xxii. 16, with Matthew xxvii. 35—Crucifixion was a thing not known among the Jews in the time of David, nor for many ages afterwards.

† Compare Psalm xxii. 7, 8, with Matthew xxvii. 39—44.

‡ Compare Psalm xxii. 18, with Matthew xxvii. 35.

§ Compare Exodus xii. 45, and Numbers ix. 12, with John xvi. 31—36.

|| Compare Zechariah xii. 10, with John xix. 34—37.

¶ Compare Isaiah liii. 12; Hebrews vii. 25.

** Compare Daniel ix. 26; Isaiah liii. 8; Matthew xxvi. and xxvii. chapters.

peared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and by the shedding of his blood once for all.*

87. Messiah was to make atonement for the iniquities, transgressions, and sins of the world.—Jesus Christ was a propitiation for the sins of the whole world.†

88. Messiah was to make this atonement in the last of Daniel's seventy weeks.—Jesus Christ was crucified in that very week.‡

89. Messiah was to abolish the old, and introduce a new dispensation.—Jesus Christ abolished the ceremonies of the Law of Moses, and brought in a more perfect and rational œconomy.§

90. The blood of Messiah was to be the blood of the covenant, which should bring prisoners out of the pit where there is no water.—The blood of Jesus Christ was the blood of the new covenant-dispensation, which, whosoever disregards, shall bear the blame forever.||

91. Messiah was not to lie in the grave and be turned to corruption like other men.—Jesus Christ did not continue in the grave, nor did he see corruption like the rest of mankind.¶

92. Messiah was to be raised from the grave on the third day after his interment.—Jesus Christ was buried on the Friday, and rose from the dead on the Sunday morning following.**

* Compare Zechariah xiii. 1; and Hebrews ix. and x. chapters.

† Compare Isaiah liii. 5; Daniel ix. 24; 1 John ii. 1, 2.

‡ Daniel ix. 27. See this remarkable prophecy of Daniel illustrated at large in Prideaux, p. 1. b. 5. Consult also the fourth and fifth of Apthorp's Discourses, and Chandler's Defence, p. 132—150. "The doctrine of atonement," says bishop Sherlock, "is that which, together with the principles on which it is founded, and the consequences naturally flowing from it, distinguishes the Christian religion from all other religions whatever."—Sermons, vol. 4. dis. 3. p. 88.

The present excellent bishop of London also tells us, "It is, without dispute, the great distinguishing character of the Christian dispensation, the wall of partition between natural and revealed religion, the main foundation of all our hopes of pardon and acceptance hereafter."

§ Compare Jeremiah xxxi. 31—34, with Hebrews viii. 6—13.

|| Compare Zechariah ix. 11, with Hebrews x. 29; xiii. 20.

¶ Compare Psalm xvi. 10, with Matthew xxviii. 6.

** Compare Hosea vi. 2; Matthew xx. 19; Matthew xxviii. 1—7; 1 Corinthians xv. 4.

93. When Messiah should arise from the dead, he was to bring some tokens with him of his victory over the infernal powers.—When Jesus Christ entered the state of the dead, he led captivity captive, unloosed the bands of death, and raised many bodies of the saints, which were confined under his dominion.*

94. Messiah was to ascend up into heaven, and reign there at his Father's right hand, invested with universal dominion.—Jesus Christ did ascend up into heaven in the sight of many witnesses, and took his place at the right hand of power, invested with universal dominion.†

95. When Messiah ascended into heaven, his ascension was to be attended with the ministers of heaven, to usher him into his Father's presence.—When Jesus Christ ascended up into heaven, two men stood by the apostles in white apparel, and addressed them on the joyful occasion.‡

96. Messiah was to send down from heaven the gift of the Holy Ghost, as a token and pledge that he was exalted, and that his father was pleased with what he had done upon earth for the redemption of his people.—Jesus Christ sent down the gift of the Holy Ghost, in the most conspicuous and miraculous manner.§

* Compare Psalm lxviii. 18, with Matthew xxvii. 52.

† Compare Psalm xvi. 11; lxviii. 18; Isaiah ix. 6, 7; Luke xxiv. 50, 51; Acts i. 9; and Matthew xxviii. 18.

The excellent Tillotson observes, that “all things which the prophets had foretold concerning the Messiah were punctually made good in the person, and actions, and sufferings of our Saviour.”—Sermon 104.

‡ Compare Daniel vii. 13, 14, with Acts i. 10, 11.

§ Compare Psalm lxviii. 18; Joel ii. 28—32, with Acts ii. 1—4, and Ep. iv. 8—12.

“When our Lord, after his resurrection, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, had expounded unto his apostles in all the scriptures the things concerning himself, and opened their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures; Luke xxiv. 27, 45; then they saw plainly (and any one now, who will trace the whole thread of the Old Testament, may plainly see) that there is a continued series of connexion, one uniform analogy and design, carried on for many ages by divine pre-science through a succession of prophecies; which, as in their proper centre, do all meet together in Christ, and in him only; however, the

97. The doctrine of Messiah was to begin to be preached at Jerusalem, and from thence to spread itself through the nations.—The gospel of Christ was first preached in that city, and actually dispersed itself through all the neighbouring countries in the course of a few years.*

98. Though Messiah was to be generally rejected and despised in his life-time ; after his death, the pleasure of the Lord, in the conversion and salvation of mankind, was to prosper in his hand.—How exactly these circumstances agree with the history of Jesus Christ, is well known to every Christian.†

99. The followers of Messiah should meet with great and severe trials and persecution for their adherence to his cause.—The followers of Jesus Christ had the whole world in arms against them for several ages.‡

100. The rejecters of Messiah should be rejected of God, and his followers called by another name.—The Jews, who would not have Christ to rule over them, were rejected by him, and his followers were called by another name, through divine appointment, as it should seem, to accomplish this prophecy.§

“ single lines, when considered apart, may many of them be imagined to
 “ have another direction, and point to intermediate events. Nothing is
 “ more evident, than that the whole succession of prophecies can possibly
 “ be applied to none but Christ. Nothing is more miraculous, than that
 “ they should all of them be capable of being possibly applied to him. And
 “ whatever intermediate deliverances or deliverers of God’s people may
 “ seemingly or really be spoken of upon particular occasions, nothing is
 “ more reasonable than to believe (in the apostle’s certainty, who convers-
 “ ed personally with our Lord after his resurrection, nothing could be
 “ more reasonable than to believe) that the ultimate and general view of
 “ the prophetic spirit always was fixed on him, of whom in some of the
 “ ancient prophecies it is expressly affirmed, that God’s servant, David,
 “ shall be the prince over his people forever ; that his dominion shall be
 “ an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away ; and his kingdom
 “ that which shall not be destroyed.”—Clarke’s Sermons, vol. v. ser. 1.

* Compare Isaiah ii. 1—4 ; Micah iv. 1—4 ; with Acts 2d chap. and Romans x. 18.

† Isaiah liii. 10—12.

‡ Compare Isaiah lxvi. 5, and Malachi iii. 1—3, with Matthew x. 16—18, and 1 Corinthians iv. 9.

§ Compare Isaiah lxii. 2 ; lxx. 15, with Acts xi. 26.

101. Messiah was to be opposed by kings, and persons in authority, with great vigour and resolution.—Jesus Christ was very generally opposed through the whole of his public ministry, by the great ones of the world, and all the power of the Roman empire was in opposition to his cause and people for upwards of three hundred years.*

102. Notwithstanding the opposition of the kings and princes of the world for a season, the time was to come when kings should be nursing fathers to the church, and queens nursing mothers.—Most of the governors of the nations of Europe have been protectors of the cause of Christ now for many centuries.†

103. It was, upon a great variety of occasions, predicted, that Messiah should enlighten the Gentile nations with the knowledge of the true God.—Jesus Christ gave particular commandment to his apostles, no longer to confine their ministrations to the Jews, as he had done during his life-time; but to go out into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.‡

104. Messiah was to destroy the covering of the face which was cast over all people, and the veil which was spread over all nations.—When Jesus Christ appeared, he, by his word, spirit, and apostles, enlightened the minds of men, and affected a most surprising change in all the nations where his gospel was received.§

105. To Messiah every knee was to bow, every tongue to swear, and every heart to submit.—The whole Christian world, professedly, at least, pay this obedience to Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of souls, and to no other being whatever. And in due time all opposing power shall be everlastingly annihilated.¶

106. It was predicted, that all the enemies of Messiah

* Compare Psalm ii. 2; cx. 5, 6; Luke xxiii. 8—12. See the History of the Church for the first three centuries.

† Isaiah xlix. 23; lx. iii.

‡ Compare Isaiah lx. with Mark xvi. 15.

§ Compare Isaiah xxv. 6—8; Acts ii. 1—11; xxvi. 17, 18.

¶ Compare Psalm cx. 1; Isaiah xlv. 25; 1 Corinthians xv. 24—28; and Philipians ii. 10, 11.

should be ashamed and confounded.—Jesus Christ has already made an awful example of his enemies, the Jews ; first, in the destruction of their city and temple ; secondly, in their present dispersion ; and, in the proper season, every opposing power should be brought into subjection.*

107. It was predicted, that Jesus Christ would make a great and visible difference between his believing and unbelieving countrymen.—When the Romans besieged Jerusalem, near two millions of unbelieving Jews perished, while every single believer fled out of the city, and escaped in safety to the mountains.†

108. Messiah was to appear in the world at the consummation of the ages, to raise mankind from the dead, and judge the human race in righteousness.—Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life, shall appear again at the close of nature, and decide the final fates both of men and angels.‡

109. Messiah was to destroy death itself, triumph over the grave, and create new heavens and a new earth, wherein should dwell universal righteousness.—Jesus Christ is he who alone is equal to the mighty undertaking, and is divinely appointed to that office.¶

This is a concise view of the predictions contained in the Old Testament, concerning the nature, birth, life, doctrine, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, and kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There can be no doubt respecting the priority of the predictions to the birth of Christ, because it is well known by every person, who is at all conversant in these matters, that the Old Testament was translated out of Hebrew into the Greek language, and dispersed over the world many

* Compare Psalm ii. 9 ; Psalm cx. 1 ; Isaiah xlv. 24 ; liv. 17 ; lx. 12 ; with Matthew xxiv ; 2 Thes. i. 7—9 ; and the History of the Jews.

† Compare Malachi 3d and 4th chapters, with the history of that remarkable siege.

‡ Compare Job xix. 23—27 ; Isaiah xxv. 8 ; Daniel xii. 1—3 ; Hosea xiii. 14 ; Micah ii. 13 ; Matthew xxv. 31—46 ; John xi. 25 ; Acts xvii. 30, 31 ; 1 Corinthians vi. 3 ; 2 Corinthians v. 10.

¶ Compare Hosea xiii. 14 ; Isaiah lxxv. 17 ; lxxvi. 22 ; 1 Corinthians xv. 54, 55 ; Revelations xx. 14 ; xxi. 4.

years before Christ came ; and that the latest of the predictions was upwards of three centuries before the birth of the Redeemer of mankind. Such a variety of circumstances, therefore, predicted concerning one man, so many years before he was born, of so extraordinary a nature, and under such convulsions and revolutions of civil governments, all accomplished in Christ, and in no other person, that ever appeared in the world, point him out, with irresistible evidence, as the Saviour of mankind. I call upon, and challenge the most hardened infidel in Christendom to refute the conclusion.

But to render the investigation more simple, and to bring the inquiry within a still narrower compass, let any man, who is sceptically inclined, take the fifty-second and fifty-third chapters of Isaiah, and compare them seriously with the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh chapters of St. Matthew's gospel, and then let him deny that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah, if he can. Rochester and many others have made the experiment, and found it the power of God unto the conviction of their minds, and the salvation of their souls. That all these extremely minute circumstances of time, place, character, and the like, should concenter in Christ, and in no other person, that ever appeared in human nature, is truly remarkable, and absolutely demonstrative of his Messiahship. Indeed, that he should be born at such a time, in such a place, and under circumstances of poverty ; that he should suffer, and be opposed by those that were strangers to his character, and be finally put to an ignominious death : these things were all common to him with many more of our fellow creatures. But, that he should profess to be the Saviour of mankind—that he should be described as one that was to come—be born under the fourth monarchy—while the second temple was yet standing—before the dominion of the Jews was entirely taken away—in a time of profound and universal peace—when there was a general expectation of some extraordinary person :—that he should have existed with God before the foundations of the world were laid—been the companion of the Almighty—been the Son of God—and the Son of man—that he should be the son of

Abraham—Isaac—Jacob—Judah—Jesse—David—born in mean condition—yet having an illustrious herald preceding him—in the spirit of Elijah preaching, not in Jerusalem, but in the wilderness—and successful in his office :—that he should be born in Bethlehem—go down into Egypt—be a preacher of the gospel—exercise his ministry in Galilee—in the neighbourhood of Zebulon and Naphtali—yet be the proprietor of the temple in Jerusalem :—that he should be emphatically the servant of God, whose name is the Branch—a Plant of renown—the Messenger of the covenant—a Prophet—a Priest ; not of the tribe of Levi, and after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek—a King—a righteous King—the Prince of Peace—having a universal and everlasting kingdom :—that he should be the Sun of righteousness—the East—the Just one—Emanuel—the Shepherd—Jehovah our righteousness—the lion of the tribe of Judah :—that he should be anointed, not with oil to his offices, but with the Holy Ghost :—that he should be of a most meek, patient, and humble disposition—teaching mankind the doctrines of salvation without pomp and noise—endowed with a peculiar degree of wisdom and understanding, and speaking the most healing words to tender minds and afflicted consciences—changing thereby all the powers of the soul :—that he should confirm the reality of his mission and the divinity of his doctrine by a variety of benevolent miracles—and yet that the principal persons among his countrymen should not submit to his pretensions—be the chief corner stone of his church—and notwithstanding, rejected by the builders—though embraced by many of the common people :—that he should be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief—seen riding in humble triumph into the capital of his kingdom—the people crying hosanna to the Son of David :—that his zeal for the honour of God should transport him almost to excess :—that he should be betrayed by a friend—sold for thirty pieces of silver--that these pieces should be thrown down in the temple—and applied to the purchase of a potter's field :—that he should be condemned in judgment—forsaken by all his friends in his greatest need—finish his public office in

three years and a half—be ignominiously scourged—smitten on the face—befouled with spittle—wounded in his hands—by his friends—marred and disfigured in his countenance—patient and silent under all his ill-treatment—suspended with wicked men—buried in the tomb of a rich man—put to death exactly at the end of 490 years from a particular period—presented with vinegar and gall—wounded in his hands and feet—laughed to scorn under his sufferings :—that his garment should be parted among his keepers :—that lots should be cast for his seamless vesture : under all his distresses that not a bone of his body should be broken :—that his side should be pierced : that he should make intercession for transgressors—be cut off, though innocent :—that a fountain should be opened to wash away sin—atonement made for the iniquities of the world—in the last of Daniel's 70 weeks—the old covenant abolished—a new one introduced—the blood of Messiah being the seal of the covenant :—that, though he should be buried, he should not see corruption—but be raised from the grave on the third day :—that he should bring from the dead some tokens of his victory—ascend into heaven—attended with angels—take his place at the right hand of God—and send down the Spirit upon his followers :—that the gospel should be first preached in Jerusalem—multitudes converted to the faith—great persecutions endured by those who embrace it—the Jews rejected—and the church called by a new name :—that the gospel should be generally opposed by the kings and governors of the world—yet after some time they should become favourable, and give it encouragement :—that the Gentile nations should be enlightened and called :—that every soul should submit to Messiah—those who reject him being confounded—and those who embrace him being protected :—that he should finally be the judge of the world—destroy death—and crown his faithful people with everlasting joy :—that all these things should be predicted of some one person, several hundred, or even some thousand years asunder from each other ; and that they should all receive accomplishment in Jesus Christ, without any one exempt case, and in

no other person that ever appeared upon earth :—if under such circumstances Jesus Christ were not the person intended in the divine councils, and the Messiah whom all the prophets were inspired to predict, it would be one of the greatest of miracles. Prophecy would be of no use. All evidence would be rendered precarious, and mankind left to roam at large, without any satisfactory guide to direct their steps in pursuit of truth and salvation. I think then we may say, with unshaken confidence, in the words of St. Philip to Nathaniel : *We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.*
