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A REFERENCE
TO
Jewish Tradition
NECESSARY TO AN INTERPRETER
OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT.

— *Ec. 5. 77*

A SERMON

PREACHED
BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
IN
Great St. Mary's Church,
ON
SUNDAY, *December 29*, 1816.

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1581:14

THE object of the following discourse is, to illustrate and enforce a principle of Scripture-interpretation, which, with a few exceptions, has been strangely overlooked by commentators on the New Testament. The application of it involves some important questions of Jewish theology; and these are, in most instances, to be determined by references to the Rabbinical writers, a class of authors of very different degrees of merit, whose works, in order to be used profitably, must be used with much judgment and discrimination. The difficulty attending such studies will perhaps serve to account for the neglect of a most powerful instrument of scriptural exposition. But I have endeavoured to show, that a competent knowledge of the leading doctrines, which were received by the countrymen and contemporaries of our Lord, may be obtained, even without that direct and intimate acquaintance with the recondite parts of Hebrew literature, which is only the result of long and patient study.

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The fact is, that the ground has been cleared, and the difficulty removed, by the labours of Lightfoot, Kidder, and Allix, names illustrious in the annals of the protestant Church, who have culled from the Jewish writings all that is calculated to illustrate the most important doctrines of the New Testament. To *their* works, and to those of Leusden, Schoetgen, Carpzov, and other labourers in the same vineyard, I am indebted for all the extracts which I have quoted from the Targums and commentaries of the Talmudists; an acknowledgement which I deem it necessary to make beforehand, lest I should be thought to affect a kind of learning, to which I have no pretensions. It will therefore be obvious, that, with the exception of one or two illustrations of Scripture, there can be little in the following discourse, which is, properly speaking, original. All the merit that I can claim, is that of having brought into short compass, and of having placed in a comprehensive point of view, the advantages to be derived from a discreet use of those materials of interpretation, which have been collected by divines more learned and more laborious than the commentators of the present age.

It was not till the following discourse had been preached, that I became acquainted with a work

of the late Mr. Wilson of St. John's College, entitled "*An illustration of the method of explaining the New Testament by the early opinions of Jews and Christians concerning Christ.*" Of this work, so far as it concerns the line of argument adopted by me, I have expressed my opinion in the notes. I shall only observe here, that in conceding to Dr. Priestley his position, that the Jews did not expect a divine Messiah, the ingenious author has, in my opinion, unnecessarily retreated from the vantage-ground of the controversy.

There are two books, of which I have been unable to procure a sight, whose titles seem to promise much information on this subject; one is *Io. Iac. Crameri Theologia Israelis*. Francof. 1704. the other, *Bertholdtus de Christologia Judæorum Jesu Apostolorumque ætate*. Erlang. 1811. I have only to add, that in using the works of Lightfoot, with a view to this principle of interpretation, some caution is requisite. He seems to have deferred too much, in one or two material points, to the doctrine of the later Rabbis, to the neglect of the more ancient and more orthodox Targumists. This suggestion, which is made with diffidence, I leave in the hands of those, who are more competent to decide the question; and I conclude with expressing an earnest wish, that the following discourse

may at least induce some younger students in divinity to have recourse to the unfrequented but abundant source of Scriptural illustration, which is therein commended to their attention.

A SERMON,

&c. &c.

MATT. XIII. 52.

Every Scribe, which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

NOTHING would tend more directly to the diffusion of sound theological knowledge, and to the prevention of those acrimonious contests, which injure, while they profess to advance, the cause of religious truth, than the establishing, by common consent, of a few preliminary rules of Scripture-interpretation. Some mischief has no doubt arisen from the attempts which have been made to multiply such rules to an extent, which serves to perplex, rather than to guide us in our researches¹: but nevertheless, that some such are to be discovered, is a position which admits not of

(1.) The figures refer to the notes which are placed at the end of the Sermon.

1. doubt ; because if there be no fixed and unerring
 2. principles, by which we ought to guide ourselves
 3. in the interpretation of the Bible, the study of the
 4. sacred volume, at least of its doctrinal parts,
 5. becomes a matter of uncertainty ; and the exposi-
 6. tion of it's sublime truths must unavoidably be
 intrusted to individual judgment or caprice. That
 this should *of necessity* be the case with a book,
 from which alone mankind must learn what they
 are to believe, and what to practise, is inconsistent
 with the plainest dictates of reason, and with the
 language of inspired wisdom, which assures us that
 no Scripture is of private interpretation. None
 but the sceptic, or the enthusiast, will deny, that
 there are *some* evident and necessary principles
 of interpretation, which are applicable to the New
 Testament, in common with other works of the
 same antiquity ; and that there are some, which
 it's peculiar character confines exclusively to itself.
 But if this be the case, how comes it to pass that
 no such canons have hitherto been sanctioned by
 general consent, in order to facilitate the exposi-
 tion of the Scriptures, and to obviate those fatal
 diversities of interpretation, from which proceed
 false doctrine, heresy and schism ? The truth is,
 that if all men, who profess to set out in search
 of truth, did so with honest and sincere intentions,
 and with minds divested of prepossession and pre-
 judice, there would be no difficulty in coming to an
 agreement upon a few plain and abstract principles
 of interpretation, a strict adherence to which, in
 their subsequent inquiries, would prevent any im-

portant diversity of opinion respecting the main
 articles of Christian faith. But in the present
 state of human knowledge, it is vain to expect that
 this will be the case. The generality of inquirers
 come to the investigation of the doctrines con-
 tained in the Bible, with their systems of divinity
 already constructed ; and that, not always accord-
 ing to any fixed rules, or unchangeable principles,
 but upon the authority of others, or by the scale
 of their own unassisted reason.

The usual, and indeed obvious, objection to
 such arguments as these, is the following² ; ' that
 the Holy Scriptures, being a rule of faith to all
 men, need not to be interpreted in things *essential*
 to salvation, and in *unessentials* need not be
 understood : ' a proposition, which involves the
 fallacy ; ' that nothing is essential, which cannot be
 understood by *all* men, without the aid of inter-
 pretation : ' in which case, the essential points of
 faith must be different for men of different under-
 standings ; or it must be possible, that many new
 and sublime truths may be expressed in human
 language, in a manner equally intelligible to all
 capacities, and in all ages. This would be one
 miracle at least, with which Christianity may well
 dispense. The fact is, as in the nature of things
 one would expect it to be, that the Scriptures are
 not *intrinsically* and *in themselves* obscure, nor, as
 the logicians say, *objectively*, but only *subjectively* ;
 that is to say, by reason of the various causes
 of disqualification, which exist in different readers.

1. And this must ever be the case, until the under-
 2. standings of all men can be brought to a level,
 3. and their minds equally divested of all prejudged
 4. opinions³.

5. The necessity of Scripture-interpretation, and
 6. of some sure and undeviating principles, by which
 it should be regulated, has been so eloquently
 and energetically enforced in this place, that
 it is unnecessary to pursue the subject in it's
 general relations⁴. But I shall select for our pre-
 sent consideration one of these principles, which of
 late years has not been insisted upon in propor-
 tion to it's importance, nor brought to bear with
 it's full force upon the interpretation of the New
 Testament, although the labours of our older
 divines have furnished abundant materials for it's
 application.

X The principle, or rather law, of interpre-
 tation, to which I allude, is this—That in
 our expositions of the evangelical histories, we
 are bound to take the words of our Saviour
 in that sense, which he intended them to con-
 vey to his hearers. I am far from denying,
 that there may have been, in several instances,
 a remote and secondary meaning; of which his
 immediate auditors, perhaps, had no conception;
 but still, he never spake with the express purpose
 of being unintelligible: there must have been a
 primary and definite sense belonging to all that
 he said, which can only be ascertained, by dis-

covering how he intended to be understood by
 those who heard him. Now it is evident, that
 our Lord, who "knew all men and needed not
 not that any should testify of man*," must have
 intended to convey to his hearers that meaning,
 which he knew they would attach to his words.
 So that the enquiry resolves itself into this; 'in
 those discourses of our Saviour, where no intima-
 tion is given of his having been misunderstood,
 what meaning did the Jews, who heard him, give
 to his words?' If this can be ascertained, we shall
 have the primary and original signification of
 them: the remote and secondary meaning, being
 matter of induction, may be less certain. And it
 is very observable, that where he *was* misunder-
 stood, the Evangelists take care to inform us
 of it⁵.

Now in order to determine the sense, in
 which our Saviour's words were of necessity
 understood by those who heard him, it is obvious
 that something more is necessary, than a bare
 grammatical knowledge of the language in which
 they are recorded. We must be acquainted with
 the generally received opinions, and prevailing
 modes of speaking amongst the Jews, whether
 arising from their natural peculiarities, or from
 the particular studies which they were accustomed
 to pursue⁶. In this respect, therefore, a Scribe, or
 expositor of the written word of God, who is himself

* Joh. ii. 25.

1. instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, and would
2. instruct others, must be "like unto a man that is
3. an householder, who bringeth forth out of his
4. treasure things new and old."

5. These words of our Saviour are remarkable,
6. as being the only expression which he is recorded
to have uttered in commendation of the Scribes,
if we except the personal encomium, which on
another occasion he bestowed upon an individual
of that class, "Thou art not far from the kingdom
of God*." And it will not be unprofitable to
consider, what the real object of that commenda-
tion is; for I do not remember any where to have
seen this passage explained in a complete and
satisfactory manner.

Our Saviour, on all occasions censured the
Scribes for perverting the law of Moses, and for
making the commandment of God of none effect by
their multiplied and unauthorized traditions: he re-
buked their hypocrisy, and pride, and worldly mind-
edness: but still they were not without their merit.
They were exceedingly learned in the Scriptures;
although it be true that their prejudices hindered
them from applying even their own principles of
interpretation to the prophecies relating to the
Christ. They had great knowledge; although in
most instances it was a knowledge "which puffed
up." Yet it is manifest, that under certain cir-

* Mark xii. 34.

cumstances, this learning and knowledge might
prove highly beneficial to themselves, and advan-
tageous to the cause of religion. A learned scribe,
like Ezra, "ready in the law*," whose eyes should
be opened to the truths of Christianity, would be
able to apply, with great effect, his scriptural
erudition, to illustrate the mystery of redemption.
Of this we have on record a striking instance in
the case of Apollos, a Jew, educated in all the
traditionary learning of the Alexandrian school,
and "mighty in the Scriptures;" who, "when
the way of God had been expounded unto him
more perfectly, mightily convinced the Jews,
and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures
that Jesus was Christ†." The words of our Sa-
viour therefore in the text, appear to me to bear
the following interpretation: 'Every scribe, that
is, every Jew learned in the Scriptures, who is
converted to Christianity (or as the original words
literally mean, *discipled* into the kingdom of
heaven⁷) is like a householder, who bringeth forth
out of his treasure things new and old, inasmuch
as he is able to apply the scriptural expositions of
the ancient Jews, or, as they were termed, the
elders, to illustrate and enforce the doctrines of
my new religion.' This is surely more agreeable
both to the analogy of language, and to the cir-
cumstances of the case, than the supposition of the
commentators, that our Saviour used the word
γραμματεὺς to designate the Apostles, and the

* Ezra vii. 6. † Acts xviii. 27.

expression *old and new* to denote the various modes of instruction which they were to adopt.

The truth is, and the remark is very important, that the *παλαιά*, or expositions of the ancient prophecies, which were universally received amongst the Jews, with the exception of the Sadducees and Essenes, were continually referred to by our Lord, in his discourses with the learned Jews, as furnishing irrefragable arguments of his own mission, and testimonies against their perverse and wilful blindness. "If ye were blind," said our Lord to the Pharisees, "ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth*." Now certainly no degree of sinfulness could attach to them, unless they did actually perceive, and yet resist the light; or, at least, unless they wilfully shut their eyes against it. Consequently the Pharisees must have had such a knowledge of the scope and import of the prophetic parts of their Scriptures, as might have taught them the true nature of the Messiah's kingdom, had not the light of their understandings been darkened by the clouds of worldly prejudice and passion. In consequence of this state of things, we find our Lord, in his discourses with the Jewish doctors, pursuing a different line of argument from that which he adopted, when conversing with the people. He is perpetually alluding to the interpretations, which *they* had

* John ix. 41.

been accustomed to put upon those passages of Scripture which related to himself, the force of which they were endeavouring to elude. And it may be incidentally remarked, that a principal reason of the peculiar character, which distinguishes the Gospel of St. John from those of the other Evangelists, is, that he thought fit to give a copious account of those discourses of our Lord, which were intended to refute the erroneous notions entertained by some of the learned Jews as to the nature of the Messiah⁸, whereas the other historians dwell chiefly upon his preaching to the people the duties and rewards of his religion⁹.

And here it is necessary to observe, that we should be careful to distinguish between the multiplied and fanciful refinements, which the Jews, from the time of the Seleucidæ, had built upon the law of Moses, and the more ancient and traditional interpretations of the *prophetic* parts of Scripture, the origin of which may with probability be dated from the Babylonish captivity¹⁰. By the former, as our Saviour told them, they had made the Word of God of none effect; but the latter are no where made the object of his censure: on the contrary, both our Lord and his Apostles very frequently refer to them, as sound and legitimate expositions of God's word. St. Paul, who had been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, scruples not to allude, in some instances covertly, and in one at least openly, to the tradi-

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6. tions of the elders¹¹: and in his epistle to the Hebrews¹² he takes for granted throughout, that the comments of the Rabbis upon the prophetic parts of the Bible were, in the main, founded upon truth.

The objects of these remarks is to prove, that, in order to ascertain the sense, in which the Jews of that age almost universally received those parts of their Scriptures which concerned the Messiah, and to which sense our Lord himself, in order to be understood, must have alluded, we should have recourse to a comparison of the various questions and discourses of the learned Jews, recorded in the Gospels, with the ancient Targums, or paraphrases of Scripture, which, although their antiquity has been called in question, may be safely depended upon, as conveying to us the most important features of the Hebrew theology. For granting that these Targums have been interpolated since the time of Jerome, it still appears certain, that those parts of them which are favourable to the claims of Christ, and which are irreconcilable with the glosses of the later Rabbis, must be of an age prior to that of the Gospel. Together with the Targums should be consulted the Talmud, many parts of which unquestionably speak the language of the Jewish doctors, who taught before the Christian æra.

That the grand question, relating to the promised Messiah, had been elucidated by interpreters

before the time of our Saviour's ministry, is evident from many circumstances related in the Gospels, of which a single instance may suffice. The woman of Samaria said at the well, "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ; when he is come he will tell us all things*." Now as the Samaritans received into their canon of Scripture no writings but those of Moses, she could have known this only from traditional interpretation; for it seems very unlikely that the Samaritans should have taken up the notion of the Messiah's advent at second hand from the Jews¹³.

The great importance of the principle of interpretation for which I am contending, will appear most clearly in its application; of which a few instances only can be adduced in the limits of a single discourse.

Within a few days after the baptism of Christ, Nathanael professed his belief in the following remarkable words; "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God! thou art the King of Israel†." Now as the Messiah is no where in the Old Testament expressly and directly called the Son of God, Nathanael most probably knew this title to belong to him, from the comments of the Rabbis upon the second Psalm. In pursuance of these interpretations we find the ancient Chaldee paraphrases speaking of the promised deliverer under that

* John iv. 25. † John i. 49.

1. title¹⁴. And to this notion St. John alludes in the
 2. beginning of his Gospel, where he says of the
 3. Word, (a phrase taken also from the same books¹⁵)
 4. that "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only
 5. begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."
 6. In using this *comparison*, St. John evidently takes
 for granted, that his readers had been accustomed
 to form some idea of the nature and splendour
 of the only-begotten of the Father. No doubt
 therefore Nathanael intended to profess his belief
 that our Saviour was indeed, as Peter afterwards
 called him, "the Christ, the Son of the living
 God*." Nor did He, who was the object of this
 declaration, give any intimation that the pious
 convert was in error; but, on the contrary, ac-
 cepted, and bore testimony to his profession.

Our Lord, in his conference with Nicodemus,
 a master of Israel, used the following expression :
 "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,
 even so must the Son of Man be lifted up†."—
 This was no new nor far-fetched simile in the
 ears of Nicodemus, who had seen in the ancient
 Targum of the Pentateuch the brazen serpent
 explained by the Word of God, or the Messiah¹⁶.
 This we learn, both from the Jewish traditions, and
 from the author of the book of Wisdom, a work
 replete with allusions to the Rabbinical comments,
 who calls the brazen serpent "an emblem of
 salvation," and adds, "for he that turned himself

* Matt. xvi. 16.

† John iii. 14.

towards it, was not saved by the thing that he
 saw, but by thee, that art the Saviour of all*." St. John relates that the Jews murmured, because
 Christ had said, "I am the bread which came
 down from heaven†." They murmured, because,
 as we learn from the same documents, they were
 accustomed to compare the descent of the Manna
 with that of the Schechinah, or divine presence¹⁷.
 So that they considered, and very justly too, that
 our Saviour, in using this expression, took to him-
 self a divine character.

Again, when he applied to himself a pro-
 phesy of Daniel relating to the Messiah, "here-
 after ye shall see the *Son of Man* coming in
 the clouds of heaven," the Pharisees replied,
 "Art thou then the *Son of God*‡?" which may
 seem a strange inference, unless we bear in
 mind, that according to their received traditions,
 the Messiah was to be the Son of Man as to his
 human nature, and as to his divine, the Son of God.
 Our Lord's reply intimated that their conclusion
 was right. "Ye say that I am:" that is, "Ye
 yourselves draw this conclusion, nor do I contra-
 dict it." That these words were uttered with
 such an expression, either of tone or of gesture,
 as denoted assent, is manifest, not only from the
 parallel passage of St. Mark, but from the sub-
 sequent exclamation of the Sanhedrim: "They
 said; what need have we of further witnesses?"

* Wisd. xvi. 7.

† John vi. 41.

‡ Matt. xxvi. 64. Luke xxii. 70.

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for we ourselves have heard it from his own mouth"—heard what? why that in assuming the title of the 'Son of Man,' he made himself the Son of God: and this was all that witnesses were required to prove, in order to convict him of blasphemy. Now there was no blasphemy in the assumption of that title, unless they understood by it, that he claimed a divine character; but this it is clear from the foregoing considerations that they did; and it is equally clear that he acquiesced in their interpretation of his words. The inference from which is too plain to be resisted.

A due application of the same principle will enable us to comprehend certain arguments made use of by our Lord, the force of which is perhaps less evident to us, than it seems to have been to his hearers. The following is an instance in point. "As touching the resurrection of the dead," said our Lord to the Sadducees, "have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*." And by this argument the cavillers were put to silence. Now the proof of the proposition lies, not in the words themselves, but in the inference to be drawn from them. God was the God of the patriarchs, inasmuch as he had made a covenant with them that they should inherit the promised land; but

* Mark xii. 26.

they died without witnessing the fulfilment of this promise: consequently they must live again to become partakers of it.

This is not only a just inference; but it is one which we know, from the Rabbinical writers, that the Jews were accustomed to deduce from these very words of Scripture¹⁸. And hence we may understand the full force of St. Mark's expression, who relates, that one of the Scribes, having heard this reasoning of Christ, "perceived that he had answered them well," i. e. according to the received doctrine of the Synagogue¹⁹.

The utility of this rule is not confined to the illustration of our Lord's discourses. A similar reference to the interpretations of Scripture received amongst the Jews, will enable us to explain some passages in the Gospels, which have given great offence to fastidious and half-learned critics. I mean more particularly the application of certain parts of the prophetic writings to the incidents of our Saviour's life²⁰. Without specifying any particular instance, it may be sufficient to remark, that we should bear in mind this general consideration; that the sacred writers make use of many passages of the Old Testament in illustration of our Saviour's history, because amongst the Jews those passages confessedly related to the Messiah; and although no such relation might be visible upon the surface of the words, yet, on account of their acknowledged bearing, they

were legitimate and forcible arguments to Jewish readers²¹.

And lastly I may add, that, by means of the same rule, we may in some cases determine the genuine reading of a passage, where it is of importance to the interpretation. In the well known exhortation of St. Paul, "neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted him and were destroyed by serpents*," some biblical critics of note would fain read κύριον instead of Χριστόν, thereby annulling an important testimony borne by St. Paul to the pre-existence of our blessed Lord. But if the agreement of the most ancient versions be not sufficient to vindicate the received reading, it derives great additional authority from the well known opinion of the Jewish interpreters, that the Messiah accompanied the Israelites in their wanderings through the wilderness, though not in a visible form; and to this notion, without doubt, the disciple of the learned Gamaliel alludes²². An argument of no inconsiderable force has been deduced from the same sources for the authenticity of the celebrated passage of the three witnesses in the first Epistle of St. John²³.

Instances of this sort might easily be multiplied; but sufficient have been adduced to prove the great importance of that rule of Scripture

* 1 Cor. x. 9.

interpretation which I proposed to enforce; viz. that the discourses of our Lord are to be explained by us in that sense which he intended them to convey to his hearers; i. e. in the sense, which their previous habits of thinking and modes of reasoning would naturally lead them to assign to his words: a principle, which, as I have shewn, is also to be extended to the explanation of the Apostolical Epistles. The justice of this rule scarcely admits of a doubt: the only question which can be raised, is as to the mode of its application. But surely there is no method better calculated to make us acquainted with the prevailing notions of the Jews upon the most important doctrines of their Scriptures, than that of endeavouring to ascertain, what interpretations were generally received amongst them in that age. And this, at least with regard to the most important texts relating to the Messiah, is no difficult nor laborious task, after the researches of Lightfoot, Allix, and some others of the older divines. It is only wonderful that so little use has been made of so powerful an instrument of exposition, by later commentators on the evangelical books, considering how forcible are the arguments which it furnishes, in behalf of some of the leading articles of our faith.

With these considerations is connected another, of too great importance to be passed over in silence. The brief and cursory view which we have taken of some prominent features of the Jewish theo-

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logy, will furnish us with an obvious answer to the question, 'why the grand doctrine of our Saviour's divinity is, in most parts of the discourses recorded in the Gospels, asserted consequentially, and by implication, rather than in direct and express terms?' There is good reason to suppose, that the divine nature of the promised Messiah was a fundamental point of belief amongst the orthodox Jews; and therefore it was not to be expected, that our Saviour would be forward to assert a doctrine, which few of his hearers doubted; viz. the divinity of their Messiah. But he did in effect declare himself, to Jewish ears, the real and proper Son of God, as often as he assumed the title of *the Son of Man*, or *the Messiah*; and so we find that *they* understood him; nor did he at any time intimate that they were in error. In consequence of the opinions which they had built upon Scripture, as to the nature of the Messiah, we find, that when Jesus spoke of his intimate union with the Father, when he declared that he was greater and more ancient than Abraham, and that he was about to return to heaven, from which he had come down, the Jews never objected to him, that no such things were foretold of the Messiah, to which title he laid claim, which assuredly they would have done, had not these peculiarities been characteristic of the Messiah; but they ridiculed the pretensions of the man Jesus, the son of Joseph, and accused him of blasphemy.

The last inference, which I shall draw, is this;

that if an acquaintance with the contemporary theology of the Jews be only one requisite, however important, of those which are necessary to a faithful divider of the word of truth, no Scribe is so far instructed into the kingdom of heaven, as to take upon himself, with advantage, the office of instructing others in its mysteries, who is not able to "bring forth out of his treasure things new and old." It is too much the fashion of the present age to attend only to the first particular of our Saviour's commendation. We have no want of scribes, who bring forth things that are to all intents *new*. But, God be praised, we have also an abundant supply of those, who resemble in *both* respects the thrifty householder; who have in their treasure those stores of ancient learning, without which no ancient writings can be thoroughly understood; and who can array them in that new and pleasing garb, which may be best adapted to the faculties of their respective hearers. And how much more rational and profitable an employment it is, to apply the various stores of biblical learning, the authentic records of history, and the certain rules of philology, to setting in the clear light of sound interpretation the words of Him, "who spake as never man spake," than, on the one hand, to embark with the volume of Scripture upon the ocean of doubt, with no star to guide us, but the glimmering light of human reason, obscured by prejudice and pride; or, on the other hand, to soar on the wings of enthusiasm to that doubtful and misty height, from

which the sure and steady guides of the human mind, the clear lamp of truth, and the beacon of common sense, are no longer to be discerned.

If we neglect to use those helps to interpretation which we have, it is contrary to the economy of God's moral government of the world, to suppose that He will vouchsafe to us any extraordinary assistance; because assuredly He never specially interposes to perform that, which may be accomplished by the operation of ordinary means. Let us, therefore, my brethren in Christ, whose office and duty it is, to discover the truth ourselves, and to point it out to others, adopt, in our researches, some fixed and certain principles of scripture-interpretation. And amongst these, I know of no one more important in its tendency, or more extensive in its bearings, than that which we have now been considering: nor is there any better calculated, in the judicious application of it, to make us resemble that perfect interpreter described by the Apostle; "Holding fast the faithful word, in teaching²⁶; that we may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers*."

* Titus i. 9.

NOTES.

(1.) FOR instance, the hundred and eighty-nine hermeneutical canons of Pfeiffer, of which some are little better than truisms; e. g. "In parabolis explicandis respiciendum est cum primum ad scopum Scripturæ S. et *analogiam fidei*." Which means, in plain English, "that in explaining certain parts of Scripture we must attend to the meaning of Scripture." Again, "Mandata Dei non ostendunt quid valeamus, sed quid debeamus." Can. cxxiii. On this *analogia fidei*, see some judicious remarks of Dr. Campbell, *Dissert. iv. p. 158*.

(2.) Whitby, *Dissert. de S. Scriptur. Interp. Pref. p. x*. "Sacras Scripturas, in rebus creditu factuve necessariis, Interprete non egere ex eo liquet, quod in his omnibus Scripturam esse regulam perspicuam Vir doctus asserit. Quid enim amplius Interpres facere potest quam sensum Scripturæ facere perspicuum? Id autem plane superfluum est, ubi regulam in se perspicuam esse agnoscitur. In iis autem quæ nec factu nec creditu sunt necessaria, interpretem non esse necessarium res ipsa indicat: eo enim, sine salutis periculo, carere is potest, qui omnia ad salutem necessaria prope cognoverit." He then proceeds, with the disingenuousness and inconsistency which are too frequently visible in his controversial writings, to confirm his opinion by the testimony of the fathers, whose authority it is the chief object of his dissertation to destroy.

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It has always appeared to me, that the position, which he endeavours to maintain, is completely overturned by this single consideration: The Scriptures are accessible to the greater part of mankind only through the medium of translations; now translation is the simplest form of interpretation; and the necessity of interpretation, as such, must therefore be admitted. Now all translators are liable to error; they may be, and we know that they frequently are, biassed by preconceived opinions: and upon mistranslations have been founded the most dangerous errors: hence questions will naturally arise as to the fidelity or accuracy of many parts of their translations; this opens a wider field of interpretation, and thus there is, from the very nature of the Scriptures, an absolute necessity of hermeneutical theology. To this it may be added, that the utmost which can safely be affirmed of the Scriptures, is this, that they are a perspicuous rule of faith and action, not to every man, but to every man who avails himself of those helps to the understanding of them, which are placed within his reach. It is surely enough for the goodness of God to give us, not a rule which *must* be understood, but one which *may* be understood by all. This is sufficient to answer all the purposes of Revelation, and, as it appears to me, is agreeable to our notions of the divine economy, and of the state of probation in which we are placed. (See Bp. Conybeare on Script. Difficulties, *Enchirid. Theolog.* II. p. 114.) It is no reflection upon the justice or goodness of God, to say that *some* parts of the book of revealed religion require to be explained to *some* men; since, as the world is circumstanced, there are, and ever will be others, who are competent to explain those parts; those who are sincerely desirous of learning, will never be at a loss to find those, who are able and willing to teach; so that, in this sense, the Scriptures are intelligible to all. From this consideration may be inferred, by a natural consequence, the necessity of an established

priesthood, and the temerity and sinfulness of self-elected and extemporal Evangelists. "So great a thing, as the skill of exposition of the word and Gospel is, so fraught with multiplicity of authors, so full of variety of opinion, must needs be confest to be a matter of great learning, and that it cannot, *especially in our days*, in short time, with a mediocrity of industry, be attained. For if in the Apostle's times, when as yet much of Scripture was scarcely written, when God wrought with men miraculously, to inform their understanding, and supplied by revelation what man's industry could not yield; if, I say, in these times St. Paul required *diligent reading*, and expressly forbad greenness of scholarship; much more then are these conditions required in our times, wherein God doth not supply by miracle our natural defects, and yet the burden of our profession is infinitely increast." *Golden Remains of John Hales*, p. 10. With regard to Dr. Whitby, it may perhaps have been a perception of the argument to be deduced from the fallibility of translators, which induced him to maintain, with so much vehemence and so little judgment, the perfect integrity of the received text of the New Testament, from which our English Version was made. "Danielem Whitby," says Valckenaer, "qui...in libelli cujusdam fronte splendidum hoc mendacium septuagenarius senex ponere non erubuit: *Lectionem textus hodierni in omnibus defendi posse.*" L. C. Valckenaer. *Orat. de Critica Em. in N. T. non adhib.* p. 308. Yet Whitby is not without his disciples even in these days.

(3.) "Distinguiamus inter *obscuritatem subjectivam* et *objectivam*, dicimusque Scripturam S. non esse obscuram in et per se, sive ratione *objecti cognoscendi*, quoad necessaria creditu; verum *per accidens*, *subjecto* scilicet *cognoscenti* non recte disposito, vel præparato; sed laboranti aut ignorantia rerum necessariorum, aut prava dispositione animi." Pfeiffer. *Prolegom. in Thesaur. Hermeneut.* p. 2.

1. When the disciples "understood none of those things" which were said to them by our Lord, the fault was in them, not in the word spoken. The same seed will differ in productiveness, according to the soil upon which it falls. If the Scriptures be, in all their important parts, so clear, that no man can mistake their meaning, then have we nothing to do with the precept, "Take heed *how* ye hear." The *prava animi dispositio*, of which Pfeiffer speaks, is one of the chief impediments to us in our search after divine truth. Yet this is by no means universally acknowledged. The most perverse heretics are usually the loudest in their professions of sincerity and purity of intention, and we are continually reminded, that *belief* in no degree depends upon *inclination*; that in our enquiries after truth, reason is the sole agent, while *the will* remains passive, not interposing its bias on either side. So, perhaps, it *should* be, but so it very seldom, if ever, *is*. How different is the language of the acute and judicious Pascal. "La volonté est un des principaux organes de la créance; non qu'elle forme la créance, mais parceque les choses paroissent vraies ou fausses, selon la face par où on les regarde. La volonté, qui se plaît à l'une plus qu'à l'autre, détourne l'esprit de considérer les qualités de celle qu'elle n'aime pas; et ainsi l'esprit, marchant d'une pièce avec la volonté, s'arrête à regarder la face qu'elle aime; et en jugeant parce qu'elle voit, il règle insensiblement sa créance suivant l'inclination de sa volonté."

(4.) It is scarcely necessary to inform my readers that I refer to Bishop Marsh's Lectures.

(5.) See John ii. 20. vi. 52. vii. 35. viii. 33. 41. 52. x. 6.

(6.) "Scripturam intellecturus debet scriptorum sacrorum personam et affectus induere." Pfeiffer. Canon

xxiii. This is quaintly and affectedly expressed; but it is true, to the extent which I have marked out in defining the principle in question. The two following axioms are stated by Schoetgenius in the preface to his *Horæ Hebraicæ*, as not admitting of dispute. "I. Christum et omnes N. T. scriptores Judæos fuisse, et cum Judæis conversatos et locutos esse. II. Eos cum Judæis illo sermone illisque loquendi formulis locutos esse, quæ tunc temporis ab omnibus intellectæ sunt."

"It must be allowed to be a matter of some moment, that we form a right notion of the different dogmas and prevailing taste of the time (of Christ.) The reason is evident. The sacred writers, in addressing those of their own nation, would doubtless, in order to be understood, adapt themselves, as their great Master had done before them, to the prevailing idiom and phraseology. Now this is to be learned only from the common usages, and from the reigning modes of thinking and reasoning which distinguished the people in that age and nation." *Campbell on the Gospels*, Vol. I. p. 100.

(7.) μαθητευθεῖς εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, *discipled into the kingdom of heaven*. The verb μαθητεῦν occurs thrice in the New Testament, and always in this sense, *to make a disciple of*. Matth. xxviii. 19. μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, *make all nations disciples*. Act. xiv. 21. καὶ μαθητεύσαντες ἱκανοὺς, *and having made many disciples*. This ascertains the sense of the participle. Consequently the words πᾶς γραμματεὺς μαθητευθεῖς can only signify "every scribe, having been made a disciple." First a scribe—then a disciple. This limits the sense with the greatest accuracy, both with regard to the object and the subject. It is quite wonderful that Bengelius, Wetstein, and others, should understand it of the apostles; that Rosenmüller should be of the same opinion, is not at all wonderful; because it is common with him to adopt the opinions of preceding commentators

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and to give them as his own. There is very little that is new in the Scholia of Rosenmüller, and of that little the greater part is not true. Schleusner in v. Γραμματεὺς, falls into the same error, and translates the words thus, *quilibet doctor bene callens et tradens doctrinam evangelii*, Kuinoel, in his ponderous Annotations, Tom. I. p. 416. renders them still more awkwardly, *doctor religionis christianæ doctus*. Independently of the consideration arising from the peculiar force of the verb μαθητεύειν, it is in the highest degree improbable, that our Lord should have given to his Apostles in this unqualified manner, a title which belonged to a class of men, whom he scarcely ever mentioned but in the language of reproof. It is true that in ch. xxiii. 34. the word occurs in a sense which may seem to justify such an interpretation, but it is there qualified in such a manner as to render the two instances different. The commentators are sadly puzzled to shew how the similitude holds good with reference to the "things old and new." When this discourse was preached, I was not aware that any person had suggested the interpretation which I have put upon our Saviour's words. I have since found that D. Heinsius, a scholar whose critical acuteness has been by no means appreciated as it deserves, had pointed out something like the true meaning of them. "Ex sententia Heinsii *Exercitat.* p. 57. γραμματεὺς μαθητευθεὶς ille est, qui quum legis antea peritus esset, hanc scientiam ad finem suum, hoc est, evangelicam doctrinam didicit referre." *Koecheri Analect.* p. 285. In this sense the passage was understood by the author of the Syriac version; *Omnis legis peritus qui edoctus est ad regnum calorum*. Dr. South, in a Sermon on this text (Vol. IV. p. 9.) has entirely mistaken the sense of it, having been misled by a wrong notion as to the meaning of the participle μαθητευθεὶς.

(9.) It is not to be supposed, considering the different sects into which the Jews were divided, that all

of them entertained the same notions of the nature and advent of the Messiah. But that the *prevailing* doctrine was that of his divine nature, will, I think appear from various considerations which will be hereafter stated.

(10.) I think it much more probable that St. John composed his Gospel, with a view to the opinions entertained by the Jews, than that he did it for the purpose of confuting the heresies of Ebion or of Cerinthus. The whole of his proëm has so evident a reference to the doctrines of the Rabbis, that I am surprized that so many learned men should have thought it necessary to ground their interpretations of it upon the tenets of the later Platonists. Dr. Allix, in his admirable book *The Judgment of the Jewish Church against the Unitarians*, after quoting from Philo two remarkable passages, (in one of which the restorer of the Temple is called the *East*, and in the other this *East* or *day-spring* is said to be the Word, the first-born of God, the Creator of the World) observes, "It is a proof, not to be denied, of St. John's following the language of the old Synagogue, when he speaks of the Λόγος in the first chapter of his Gospel." Mr. Bryant supposes that St. John adopted the term Λόγος from the Platonists, and yet at the same time he adduces in his note several passages of the Old Testament where this expression occurs, and where the Hebrew דבר or מלה is rendered in the Alexandrian version by the word Λόγος. The ancient Targums frequently designate the Second Person of the Trinity by this expression, of which many instances are adduced by Dr. Allix. Now the Targums, being paraphrases of Scripture intended for the use of the common people, certainly spoke a language which was well understood amongst the Jews; and it is much more likely that Philo, and after him the Platonists, took this expression from the Rabbinical commentaries, than that St. John should have adopted it from the writings of authors, whose works we know not whether he

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ever saw. "Appellat autem Filium Dei hic et alibi in Epistola sua ac Apocalypsi, septies λόγος, desumpta voce e V. T. Gen. i. 3. Ps. xxxiii. 6. et Targumistarum antiquissimorum, cujus in recentioribus etiam adhuc vestigia extant." *Io. Henr. Maius. Theolog. Evangel.* Pars I. p. 117. The passages from the ancient Targums may be seen in Allix; the *vestiges* of the ancient notions, in the more modern of Jewish commentators, will be found in Schoetgenius on the first Chapter of St. John. "Primum caput Epistolæ ad Hebræos, et initium Evangelii S. Joannis, et Epistola Judæ, varique in Joannis et Petri Epistolis, atque Apocalypsi, et alibi, adeo sapiunt Cabbalam, tum ad materiem, tum ad stylum quod attinet, ut mihi videatur, vel propter eam rationem ea a Judæis libenter admitti debuisse." *Præfat. ad Lightfooti Opera*, Tom. I. ed. 1699. See *Bp. Pearson on the Creed*, Vol. II. p. 122. ed. 1797. *Bp. Kidder's Demonstr. of the Messiah*, Pref. to Part III. p. vii.

(11.) The reader is referred to the admirable account of the two kinds of tradition, which Dr. Allix has given in his second Chapter. Nothing can be more certain, than that our Saviour did not condemn indiscriminately all the traditions of the Elders. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time," is the phrase in which He speaks, in his Sermon on the Mount, of those which concerned the law of Moses; but even there they are not mentioned with disrespect, being for the most part just, as far as they went, although they fell short of that perfect standard, which He established as the rule of human conduct. This observation appears to me to be necessary, because some of the commentators speak of our Saviour's remarks, as being directed *against* the precepts of the Jewish doctors. See *Schoetgenius* on *Matth. v. 21*. "Res quoque occurrunt, et hujusmodi sententiæ quas Ecclesia antiqua Judaica ante Christum natum, tum quoque ipso in his terris versante adhibuit,

ex quibus constat, Christum ejusque Apostolos, bona, quæ apud Judæos occurrebant, non prorsus rejecisse, sed iis contra Pharisæicos abusos feliciter satis usum esse. Porro exinde clarum cuius erit, Christum doctrinas ipsorum notissimas ad ipsos refutandos adhibuisse, proprioque ipsos gladio jugulasse, quod alii harum rerum ignari non satis perspectum habent, sapientiamque Christi disputantis non sufficienter agnoscunt." *Schoetgen. Præf. Sect. xx.* This remark was too just and important to be passed over unnoticed. With regard to the sources from which our knowledge of Jewish tradition is derived; the Targums are Chaldee paraphrases of the Hebrew scriptures. These are supposed to have been used in the Jewish synagogues from the time of the Babylonish captivity; but it seems doubtful whether any paraphrases were committed to writing before the time of Jonathan and Onkelos, the former of whom lived about the time of our Saviour, and the latter a few years afterwards. The Targums, which are at present extant, are by many supposed to be of a later date, but their principal features are the same. It seems to be acknowledged, that some such paraphrases were used in the Jewish Synagogues before the time of Christ; and it is next to impossible that these should have been totally lost, or even materially depraved in point of doctrine, considering the obstinacy with which the Jews adhere to received opinions and the superstitious reverence with which they regard the traditions of the Elders. With this reservation we might, without endangering our argument, agree with Eichorn in supposing that the Targum of Onkelos, in its present form, was composed 300 years after Christ. "Hanc fuisse Judæorum illius ætatis opinionem, pluribus versionum Chaldaicarum locis comprobari potest, quæ si vel maxime recentioris sint ætatis, recte tamen ad antiquiorum etiam Judæorum sententias cognoscendas poterunt adhiberi, cum suarum opinionum Judæi semper fuerint tenacissimi, ut vere judicarunt Keilius de

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doctoribus, &c. Comm. II. p. 89. Bertholdtus, p. 129. alii." Kuinoel *Prolegomm. in Evang. Joann.* p. 85. A good account of the Targums may be found in *Braun's Selecta Sacra*, p. 601. and *Dr. Brett's Dissertation on the Ancient Versions of the Bible*, p. 118. and, at greater length, in *Leusden's Philologus Hebræo-mixtus*, Diss. v. p. 33. *Prideaux, Hist. Jews*, Part II. Book VIII. Dr. Allix gives the following account; "The great business of the Jews in their synagogues, and in their schools, hath been ever since (the Captivity) to understand the books of the Prophets, and to explain them in a language intelligible to the people; the knowledge of the Hebrew being in great part lost during the time of the Babylonish captivity. This was the proper time in which the Jewish paraphrases began first to be formed. They were begun and carried on insensibly; one adding some Chaldee words in the margin of his book, opposite to the text, which the people did not understand so well: another adding to these some notes in another place: till at length Jonathan and Onkelos, or some other doctor of Jerusalem, gathered together all these observations, and made thence those paraphrases which we have under their name*." *Judgment of the Jewish Church*, p. 27. It should however be observed, that it does not seem to be quite certain that the Hebrew language fell into disuse, as a living tongue, during the Babylonish captivity. Alting has written an ingenious dissertation to prove that this did not take place. He supposes that the corruption of the ancient Jewish language was posterior to the age of Alexander the Great; and that it may, with greater probability, be dated from the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, "qui Hierosolyma et Judæa universa fere in potestatem

* i. e. the Targum of Onkelos on the Pentateuch and that of Jonathan on the Prophets; for the Targum of the Pentateuch, which goes under the name of Jonathan, is spurious. See *Bp. Kidder's Demonstrations of the Messiah*, Pref. to part III. p. ix.

redacta, Syram idololatriam, Syra præsidia, Syra judicia, Syras leges invexit. Nam tum Judæi, vel in fugam acti misereque dispersi, vel dura servitute Syris permixti vixerunt; debueruntque uti ritus patrios intermittere Syrosque observare, ita quoque Syram linguam discere atque usurpare. vid. 1 Macc. 1. cap." *Alting. Academ. Dissert.* p. 129. This opinion seems to be adopted by Carpzovius, who supposes, that the Hebrew language having been corrupted under the Syrian dynasty, and still further when Judæa was annexed by the Romans to the province of Syria, a custom was introduced into the synagogues of expounding to the people verse by verse the Hebrew text, either in the Aramæan, which was the vernacular dialect, or in the Chaldæan, which was well understood by the Jews, and which was regarded with a certain degree of reverence. This interpretation was for some time merely oral, till the paraphrases, made by Jonathan and Onkelos for the use of those who knew not the ancient Hebrew, came by degrees to be introduced into the public services. See *Carpzovii Critica Sacra Vet. Testam.* p. 436. An account of the Talmud may be found in the authors referred to above, or in the *British Critic* for Dec. 1816. p. 649. X

(12.) In his second Epistle to Timothy, iii. 8. "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth." These are celebrated persons in the Rabbinical books; the Targum of Jonathan represents them as the two sons of Balaam, and identifies them with the magicians of Pharaoh's court. See *Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud.* p. 945. *Schoetgen.* p. 892. *Hoornbeck Socinianismus Confutatus*, Tom. I. p. 52. This reference of St. Paul to the traditions of the elders, and a similar one in the Epistle of St. Jude, ver. 9. appear to me sufficient to stamp a degree of authority and respect upon the writings of the older Rabbis, which some controvertists are very unwilling to allow to them. Carpzovius gives a

different, and as I think a less probable account of these allusions. "Hæc plurimi ex libris Apocryphis, alii ex traditione orali, nos ex immediata deducimus *θεοπνευστικά*, æque ut illa, quæ Moses de gestis antediluvianis et de creatione universi, vel David Ps. cv. 18. de ferreis compedibus Josephi prodidit." *Carpzov. Critic. Sacr. Vet. Test.* p. 857. The objections to this supposition are so exceedingly obvious, that it would be a waste of time to state them. "Many facts were conveyed down among the Jews by a constant tradition, which were never written in the law or prophets. What the Apostle saith of Jannes and Jambres resisting Moses, is no where written in his law; but yet it was a tradition among the Jews, and the Chaldee paraphrase upon Moses's law mentions these names." *Bp. Kidder's Demonstr.* Part III. p. 75.

(13.) It seems to me that the allusions, which are made in this Epistle to the more recondite parts of the Jewish theology, form a conclusive argument in favour of that opinion, which ascribes it to the Apostle St. Paul. It belongs undoubtedly to the Apostolick age, and who amongst the Apostles, or their contemporaries, was so skilled in the learning of the Rabbis as St. Paul? "Apostolus in reliquis Epistolis, in hac præcipue, Judæorum loquendi morem linguam, doctrinam usurpat: ipsorum dogmata respicit, ut et traditiones et ritus—Vel phraseologia discipulum Gamalielis sapit, melius tamen edoctum et eruditum, quam per præceptorem licuit." *Lightfoot, Opera* Tom. II. p. 110. "Solet Paulus obscura quædam oracula V. T. et priscas historias Christianæ rei applicare, pro insigni sua in his talibus sapientia. In qua re nemo tam frequens est. Idem autem spiritus per totam hanc epistolam elucet." *Witsius in Meletem. Leidens.* p. 203. I would earnestly recommend the perusal of his whole account of the Epistle to the Hebrews, by way of antidote to the perplexing disputation of Michaëlis; he will there find many powerful arguments in behalf of St. Paul's

claim, which Michaëlis has either omitted to notice, or has passed over in a cursory manner.

(14.) See *Bp. Horsley's* 26th and 27th Sermons on this passage of the Gospel history. *Lightfoot, Hora Hebraica in loc.*

(15.) Mr. Wilson, in his learned *Illustration of the method of explaining the New Testament by the early opinions of Jews and Christians concerning Christ*, agrees with Dr. Priestley in thinking that the Jews did not expect their Messiah to be the Son of God. His arguments are ingenious, but, in my opinion, not conclusive. "One class of evidence on this subject" he "dismisses without much examination," and this is the very class upon which so much stress is laid in the foregoing discourse. This does not seem to me a fair mode of proceeding. We know that the Jews used in their synagogues a paraphrastic interpretation of their Scriptures, and it is not difficult to determine, at least with regard to its most important features, what that interpretation was. Whatever it may have been, it was familiar to the Jews at large, and from it they must have imbibed their notions of the nature and character of the expected Messiah. I cannot therefore think it a safe or judicious proceeding, to dismiss the consideration of this part of the question with slight examination. It seems to me impossible that the ancient Jews, who applied to the Messiah the sublime description given in the ninth chapter of Isaiah, (See *Pearson on the Creed*, Vol. II. p. 98. ed. 1797.) "His name shall be Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (or as the Targum has it, *the Messiah of Peace*;) and also those words of the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," could entertain any doubt as to his divine nature; although it appears that they were at a loss how to reconcile this notion with the circumstance

of his descent from David; which was the reason of their silence, when our Saviour asked them, "How then does David call Him Lord?" Matth. xxii. 43. The following words of the Targum of Jerusalem on Gen. iii. 22. are a most important evidence: "The word of Jehovah said, Here Adam whom I created, is the only-begotten Son in the world, as I am the only-begotten Son in the high-heaven." Now it is certain that the Jewish interpreters identified *the Word* with the Messiah. I know not whether any of the Targums can furnish a more remarkable sentence than that which has just been quoted. For although the paraphrase in which it occurs, be of inferior antiquity to those of Onkelos and Jonathan, yet it no doubt speaks the doctrine of the synagogue. In the first place, it furnishes a sufficient answer to those, who contend that in the Rabbinical writings, the Chaldaick *Memra*, which is equivalent to the Greek *Λόγος*, was merely used as a periphrasis to express God himself. (See *Allix*, ch. 24. *Bp. Kidder's* Pref. to his 3d Part, p. xi.) 2dly, It explains to us the allusion of St. John, "And *the Word* was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." 3dly, From the comparison made by the ancient targumist between *the Word* and *Adam*, we may be enabled to perceive the full meaning of St. Paul, who was deeply learned in the expository theology of the Jews, when he calls our Saviour "the second Adam." "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit*." But where is this written? not in the passage of Genesis to which we are referred; but, *probably*, in the ancient interpreters of that passage. The Jews sometimes called their high-priest "the second Adam." See *J. Rhenferdii Obs. in Meuschenii Nov. Test. ex Talmude illustratum*, p. 1048. When Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living

* 1 Cor. xv. 45.

God,*" our Saviour replied, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Upon which passage Mr. Wilson grounds the following argument; "A divine revelation was necessary to convey this important truth, immediately or mediately, to the mind of Peter, it being contrary to the received opinions and above the comprehension of a Jew." But this is not the meaning of our Saviour's reply. The disciples having told him that of the people some said that he was John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets; he enquired, But whom say ye that I am? upon which Peter answered as above. And the meaning of our Saviour's rejoinder is this; "God has enlightened your understanding, and enabled you to perceive that I am not Elias, nor Jeremias, nor one of the prophets, but He of whom the prophets spoke, that is, the Christ." It was his Messiahship to which Peter bore testimony: the belief of his divinity followed of course.

I apprehend that the true state of the case may be this. The Jews knew from their Scriptures that the promised Messiah was to be of the race of David; they knew also that he was the Son of God, the same Being who had guarded them in the wilderness, and who had descended in the Schechinah. That these two qualifications should be at one and the same time united in the same person, was perhaps a doctrine, of which they found it difficult to give a satisfactory account. They probably expected that the Messiah would not manifest his divine character, till he should have fulfilled all the particulars predicted of him as the Son of David, and his kingdom should be fully established. This notion will go a great way towards solving the difficulties, which suggest themselves on both sides of the question upon a perusal of the treatises of Dr. Allix and Mr. Wilson: but it is only proposed; not asserted. The notion of a double Messiah

* Matt. xvi. 16.

was the invention of the Jews after Christ. See *Pearson on the Creed*, Vol. II. p. 222.

Nathanael having acknowledged Jesus to be the Son of God and King of Israel, it is concluded, and justly, as I think, that these must have been established titles of the Messiah amongst the Jews. But Mr. Wilson endeavours to get rid of this argument in the following manner. "On examining the whole account, it is found, that Nathanael uttered this declaration two days after our Saviour had been announced as the Messiah and Son of God at the baptism of John: he seems also to have been near the place, and to have had the means of being informed of the circumstances attending the baptism from one of John's disciples; and a knowledge of these circumstances, acquired in this manner, combined with the proof, which our Lord immediately gave of a foresight more than human, probably induced him to exclaim; "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel." *Illustration*, p. 85. A reference to the original Greek would have shewn Mr. Wilson that his italics throw the emphasis into the wrong place; but, verbal objections apart, I may be allowed to express some surprize, that such an argument should have been adduced by a man of so much judgment as Mr. Wilson. It is perfectly clear, from the words of the Evangelist, that Nathanael *did not know* that Jesus had been proclaimed the Son of God by John the Baptist, for when the disciples, *who did know* it, informed him of it, and told him that they had found "him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph," he enquired, with evident surprize and doubt, "Can any thing good come out of Nazareth?" Whereas it is obvious, that if Nathanael had either heard the remarkable declaration of the Baptist, or had known of it before, he would have acted as the other disciples did, who "followed Jesus" and made enquiries concerning him.

We read in St. John xii. 34. "The people answered

him, We have heard out of the law, *that Christ abideth for ever*; and how sayest thou, the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" As if they had said, "We know indeed the Son of Man described by the prophet, which is Christ, and we know that Christ is to abide for ever: but who is *this* Son of Man that is to be lifted up?" This passage plainly indicates that eternity was one attribute of the expected Messiah. See Whitaker's *Origin of Arianism*, p. 21, &c. a work which contains many useful observations mixed up with a great deal of absurdity and declamation. The following extract from an ancient paraphrase of Isaiah lii. 13. shews that their Messiah was to increase in glory till he should be superior even to the angels. "Hic est Rex Messias, exaltabitur supra Abraham, extolletur supra Mosem, et evehetur supra angelos ministerii." See *Io. Henr. Maii Theolog. Evang.* I. p. 259. *Præfat. in Lightfooti Opera*, Tom. I. Compare Hebr. i. 7. 14. But although the Jews expected their Messiah to be the Son of God, yet it was not perhaps by the same mode of filiation which we ascribe to Christ; the knowledge of *that* was reserved for the Christian Church: yet it appears from the preceding remarks that they attributed to him a participation in the divine nature. The observations of Lightfoot on this subject (*Opera* Tom. II. pp. 388. 622.) refer to the writings of the later Rabbis, who strenuously deny the divinity of the Messiah. Further proofs may be seen in Kuinoël's *Prolegomena* to St. John's Gospel, pp. 86, 87. I forbear from quoting any extracts from Philo, on account of the controversy which has been raised about his age: his testimonies to the divinity of the Λόγος may be seen in Dr. Allix and Bp. Kidder, Part III. p. 93.

(16.) See Note 10.

(17.) *Allix*, p. 60. *Wolfii Cura Philol. ad h. l. Beausobre Remarques*, p. 158.

(18.) *Allix*, pp. 60. 334. *Bp. Kidder*, Part III. p. 101. See *Petri Janki Diss. de vasculo mannae in Opusc. Theolog. Bremens*, Tom. II. p. 408.

(19.) "Let it be observed, that the Sanhedrim calls the Messiah the Son of God, Matt. xxvi. 63. and when Jesus applied to himself a prophecy of the Messiah in Dan. vii. 13. *Hereafter shall you see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven*, Matt. xxvi. 64. We are told by St. Luke what they replied, *Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God?* Luke xxii. 70. which is an argument, that though the title of Son of Man did very well express the humble state of the Messiah, yet they were not ignorant that the *Λόγος* should be the Messiah, and that the Messiah should be the proper Son of God; such a Son, as for whom the clouds, the chariot of the Divinity, should be prepared to attend his triumph, in the time when he should reveal himself from heaven." *Allix*, p. 276. The words of St. Luke, which are very remarkable, should be given in the original language. Ἀπὸ τοῦ ὧν ἔσται ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καθημέως ἐκ δεξιῶν τῆς δυνάμεως τοῦ Θεοῦ. εἶπον δὲ πάντες· Σὺ οὐκ εἶ ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ; The particle οὐν points out the inference; as if they had said; "the prophecy to which you allude, we know: the Son of Man there described is the Messiah in his glorified state, the Son of God. This therefore is the title to which you lay claim." I think this a more natural and more probable account of the meaning of the Sanhedrim than that which Mr. Wilson has given. The question which the high priest puts to our Saviour, according to St. Mark's account, is still more remarkable: "Art thou the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed?" where the two terms are manifestly in apposition. Had the notions of the Messiah and of the Son of God been inconsistent with one another, to the apprehension of the Jews, the high-priest would rather have said, "How canst thou lay claim at once to both

these titles?" See the account given of this whole examination of our Lord before the council in *Antonius Bynæus de Morte Jesu Christi*. Lib. II. p. 397.

(20.) This is an observation of the learned and judicious Joseph Mede, *Works*, p. 801. And to this conclusion of the Jewish Doctors St. Paul seems to allude in the Epistle to the Hebrews, when he says of the patriarchs that "they all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off; and were persuaded of them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Hebr. xi. 13. A somewhat different explanation is given by Alexander More, *Ad quædam loca N. F. notæ*, p. 64.

(21.) εἰδὼς ὅτι καλῶς αὐτοῖς ἀπεκρίθη. The word καλῶς seems in this expression to be equivalent to *ορθῶς*, in an orthodox manner, as opposed to the arguments of the Sadducees, who were called *Minim*, i. e. *Heretics*. Zadok and Bajetos, the founders of that sect (though not, perhaps, the first who broached atheistical opinions amongst the Jews) were called, by way of distinction, *raschi minim*, heads of the heretics: see *Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud.* p. 1199. *Witsii Meletemata Leidensia*, p. 159. It should, however, be observed, that it was not from any respect for the received interpretation of the synagogue, that the Sadducees acquiesced in our Saviour's argument; for they rejected all tradition whatsoever; but they could not resist the inference which was logically deducible from the words of Scripture.

(22.) For instance, St. Matthew refers to the return from Egypt, the following words of Hosea xi. 1. which confessedly relate to the children of Israel, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." This application of a prophecy has been carped at, from the time of Julian to the present day. St. Matthew, it is acknowledged on all hands,

1. wrote more particularly for those Christians who were
 2. Jews by birth and education; and we learn from Jewish
 3. authors, that they were accustomed to refer to the Messiah
 4. many things which were related of the people of Israel,
 5. or of some distinguished individual of their nation, and
 6. many which seem to contain no allusion to any particular
 person. The truth of this observation will appear upon
 a reference to Buxtorf's *Lex. Talmud.* p. 1268. who has
 collected all the passages which the Jewish doctors re-
 ferred by implication to the Messiah, and where the Chaldee
 paraphrasts have inserted the word *Messiah*. In stating
 this plea for the reference made by St. Matthew, I would
 not be understood to deny, that the words of Hosea may
 have been actually prophetic of the event to which they
 are applied by the Evangelist; the Israelites being the
 type, and Christ the antitype. This opinion is maintained
 by Bp. Kidder in his *Demonstration of the Messiah*,
 Part II. p. 203. and by others quoted in *Wolf's Cura Phi-
 lologica* I. p. 39. *Rosenmüller* on Hosea, p. 339. Some
 very useful observations upon the modes of quotation in
 the Gospels, and especially in that of St. Matthew, will
 be found in *Surenhusius de Modis Allegandi* p. 181.
Carpzovius Critica Sacra Vet. Test. p. 854. After all,
 critics are not agreed in referring the words of St. Matthew
 to Hosea. See *Koecheri Analecta* p. 46.

A second instance of the light which is thrown upon
 the quotations made by St. Matthew from the Old Testa-
 ment, is the celebrated passage in chap. xxvii. 9. where
 a prophecy of Zachariah is cited under the name of Jere-
 miah. This difficulty the critics endeavour to surmount
 in various ways. An ingenious, but improbable con-
 jecture of Beza is thus mentioned in Valckenaer's
Scholia on St. Luke. "Scriptum olim fuerat $\zeta\pi\omega\nu$. id
 facile potuit a descriptore mutari in $\iota\pi\omega\nu$, i. e. $\iota\epsilon\pi\epsilon\upsilon\iota\omega\nu$.
Conf. Misc. Obs. II. p. 287." Mede's opinion is, that
 the four last chapters of the book of Zachariah were
 actually written by Jeremiah, which St. Matthew knew,

from the tradition of the Jewish Doctors. This notion is
 adopted by Dr. Allix, *Judgement, &c.* p. 19. The Syriac
 version has only "the Prophet," whence Beausobre sup-
 poses that the name may have crept in from the margin:
 a most improbable supposition; for if any name had
 crept in, it would have been Zaxapiov . It is much more
 likely that the Syrian translator omitted the name, know-
 ing that the prophecy was not to be found in Jeremiah.
 Griesbach, who thinks but lightly of the inspiration of the
 Evangelists, conceive it to have been a slip of memory.
Carpzovius, Crit. Sacra Vet. Test. p. 856. says, that the
 whole cycle of the Prophets is comprehended under the
 name of Jeremiah; as in Luke xxiv. 44. our Saviour quotes
 from the Hagiographa under the title of "the Psalms,"
 because the book of Psalms occupied the first place in
 that division of the Bible. And this perhaps is the best
 account that has been given of this much disputed point.

(23.) "Novi Testamenti Scriptores multa Veteris
 testimonia ad Christum derivant: atque in eo ductum
 S. Sancti (quo praeunte ab errore immunes sunt) ubique
 sequuntur. Evangelii hostes tamen ipsorum factum
 sugillare non desinunt. Hic observandum V. T. locis
 usos esse sanctos Dei homines, cum de Christo, ejusque
 doctrina agerent; quia loca ista eo pertinere, puta ad
 Messiam esse referenda, apud auditore, in confesso erat:
 licet ex ipso contextu non semper manifeste id evinci
 posset. Cum vulgo nihilominus, ut revera eo spectantia,
 in istum sensum reciperentur, merito ad confirmationem
 rei probandae adhibebantur." *L'Empereur Dissertat. ad
 Clav. Talmud.* p. 3. Compare the observations of *Alex-
 ander More, Notæ ad quædam loca N. F.* pp. 23. 26.

(24.) Grotius, Wetstein and Colomies, think that
 $\Theta\epsilon\omega\nu$ is the true reading. The weight of testimony seems
 to me to be in favour of the received text, which is de-
 fended by Mill, Pfaffius, and Bp. Bull, *Defens. Fid.*

Nicæn. I. i. 15. and which is preferred even by Griesbach to either *Κύριον* or *Θεόν*. See *Dr. Magee on the Atonement*, Vol. II. Part II. p. 211. It was a received notion amongst the Jews, that the Messiah watched over the Israelites in the wilderness. See *Kuinoël. Prolegomm. ad Evang. Joann.* p. 86. *Sol. Deylingii Exercit. de Angelo Domini Israelitarum per deserta ductore, Obs. Misc.* p. 753.

(25.) See *Schoetgenius*, p. 1064. sq.

(26.) This is the translation given in the margin of the authorized version, and it is no doubt preferable to that in the context. See *Suiceri Thesaur. v. Διδαχῆς*.

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