THE

OPHION.

THE

OPHION;

OR THE

THEOLOGY OF THE SERPENT,

AND THE

Unity of God.

COMPREHENDING THE CUSTOMS OF THE MOST ANCIENT PEOPLE, WHO WERE INSTRUCTED TO APPLY THE SAGACITY OF THE SERPENT, TO THE

FALL OF MAN.

WITH

Critical Remarks

ON

DR. ADAM CLARKE'S ANNOTATIONS

ON THAT SUBJECT IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

In this work it is shown, from the original language, that, in every age of the Jewish and Christian churches, a Monkey was never understood to be the agent employed to bring about the Fall of Man.

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PREFACE.

THE following observations were originally intended for insertion in the CLASSICAL and BIBLICAL JOURNAL: but as that work is published quarterly, and as the whole could not be inserted at once, it was thought best to lay it before the public altogether.

For satisfactory proof concerning the things advanced in these pages, I have endeavoured to adhere to the Scriptures, when such reference was necessary, and by the undoubted

matters of more importance. Therefore, to prevent the serious effects, which might be consequent on such a supposition, I have laid the following sheets before the public, which I trust will perfectly satisfy those, who may have been unsettled in their minds, by a conclusion of the above novel nature.

JOHN BELLAMY.

THE OPHION.

The commentary on the Book of Genesis by Adam Clarke, L. L. D. is a work which has excited a great degree of curiosity among all ranks of Christians. It must always give pleasure to the thinking part of the community, when they see the Bible coming from the press in so many directions, with notes, said to be explanatory of those parts, which have for ages been involved in obscurity. But when, instead of elucidations of difficult parts, we are presented with new theories, boldly advanced, unsupported by the authority of Scripture, or any other authority but that of conjecture; it is painful to the serious mind, and hurtful to the cause, which such writers are endeavouring to support. I give them credit for their well-meant intentions; but these commentators, above all others, are called upon by God and man, to be

faithful, and to advance nothing with intent to illustrate the Scriptures, but what can be supported by their own authority.

There never was a time, when there was so pressing a necessity for a plain, and literal translation of the Bible, as the present. The progress of Deism, arising from errors, inconsistencies, and wrong translations, is alarming; and when we know that nothing of this nature can possibly be sanctioned by the original, we expect, when commentaries of such a description are published, that some steps are taken towards the attainment of things so desirable. But I am sorry to see that, hitherto, little has been done to remove those errors and inconsistencies which have been, and still are, the cause of all those calumnies, which we have so often witnessed to have been brought against the Bible by this description of men.

The work before us is certainly a work of considerable labor. I sincerely wish that no part of it had called for observation; but when the Scriptures are the subject, being the common right of all men, I hope the writer of those comments will not suppose that the following observations are made with any other view, than to ascertain what is true respecting the most interesting subjects, which can possibly come before the public, viz. THE UNITY OF GOD, AND THE FALL OF MAN.

I know little of the author, but from his general character I believe him to be a gentleman of liberal sentiments, and a sincere promoter of the truths of the Christian religion, according to his views. But many good men have been as zealous in their endeavours, to promulgate their opinions on Biblical subjects, from the best of motives, and have given voluminous comments, which have been proved erroneous. It has been the custom of commentators to condemn the opinions of their predecessors, and this is the case in the work before us. I have learnt by experience not to depend on the opinion of any man; the opinion of yesterday may be contradicted to day, and tomorrow may bring forth something new. Therefore, rejecting the opinions of men, the *Scriptures alone* must determine the true meaning and application of every doubtful and controverted passage. This is that rock, which cannot be shaken by the storms of clashing opinions; when this is not attended to, when the Scripture is not at all times, and on all occasions, resorted to as conclusive evidence of the truth of doctrines, and for the confirmation of opinions, but speculative theories are substituted in its stead: the sincere searcher for truth is altogether unsettled respecting things of the greatest importance, even those things, which relate to his happiness in this life, and in the future state also. For being unsettled as to his faith in the revealed word of God, he may be

induced to neglect those things, which make for his present and eternal peace.

Let the intelligent reader look around, and he will see the thronging multitudes losing themselves in the perplexing labyrinths of opinion; by some we are told that there are a plurality of Gods; by others, that God is one in essence and in person. Yesterday we understood that a *serpent* tempted Eve; to day we are told it was a *monkey;* and tomorrow perhaps the *Leviathan,* (that is, the Crocodile, because it is an inhabitant of the eastern countries, and is supposed by naturalists to be one of the most crafty of the brute creation,) may be chosen as a fit agent to bring about the fall of man.

"We have here," says this writer, "one of the most difficult, as well as one of the most important, narratives in the whole book of God. The last chapter ended with a short but striking account of the perfection and felicity of the first human beings; and this opens with their transgression, degradation, and ruin." There is some pleasure in perusing the work of any author who writes on the Scriptures, whether what he says be true or false, if he be decided in his opinion. The author of these comments comes fairly and openly before the public, and promises to give a satisfactory explanation of the original text, "of the

most important narrative in the whole book of God," and to fix the meaning, and show the propriety and consistency agreeably to the original, of the Mosaic account of the fall of man. He says, " but how, and by what agency this was brought about, here is a great mystery :" he appeals to all persons, who have read the comments that have been written on the Mosaic account, whether they have ever yet been satisfied on this part of the subject; who was the serpent? " these are questions which remain yet to be answered." From which inquiries we are under the necessity of concluding, that none of the comments, which have hitherto been given for the last 3000 years, have developed this mystery; but that we are to be satisfied as to this and other important matters, and that it is to be made known in this enlightened age, by Dr. Adam Clarke.

I am one of those among the great body of professing Christians, who remain altogether dissatisfied with this writer's conclusion, that Eve was tempted by a monkey; and I shall show, to use his own words, that though the monkey goes " on all fours," yet that his statement of this matter is very far from going " on all fours;" and that in this very extraordinary comment, " *the legs of the lame are not equal.*" I am exceedingly sorry that this author has chosen so ludicrous an animal for one of the persons of his drama; the tête-à-tête of Eve, and this sportive creature, if

credited, would furnish abundant matter for wit and ridicule among Deists; it would be impossible gravely to recommend the Scriptures to their serious attention. I may perhaps be told, that the same reasoning will apply to the serpent with those, who are disposed to cavil. If it be true that a serpent literally tempted our mother Eve, some part of such reasoning might be so applied, but of the two, it certainly would be better to choose the serpent, as the less objectionable. It would also be difficult for Christians to defend this part of Scripture with a serious countenance, when they recollected the unintelligible chatter, and disgusting grimace, which that animal must necessarily manifest in such a conversation.

Whoever has seen a monkey must be sensible that, among all creatures, it is the least calculated, on account of its ugly face, to succeed in prevailing on the woman to disobey the divine command; so that I think the author has been rather unfortunate in his choice of a tempter to captivate

"The fairest of her daughters, Eve."

There are two things in this narrative, which this author has forgotten to notice, and which decidedly make against his opinion. It is expressly said, that the serpent should go on its belly, "*on thy belly thou shalt go;*" now these words are more evidently against

the monkey than the serpent, as an agent in this business. The Dr. informs us that if it had been a serpent, it must, before the fall, have walked on its tail,—and I contend, that if it had been a monkey, the divine command was not obeyed, for that animal does not go on its belly, any more than the whole race of quadrupeds: And as to the tale of its walking erect before the fall, it walked no more erect then, than it does now; for the ouran outang monkey always goes erect, when it has occasion; he will frequently attack men, and has the power of rendering himself more formidable, by fighting with offensive weapons.

The second, which this writer has forgotten to notice with due effect, is concerning its speech. We are told that it conversed with Eve, and though it had not the power of *walking*; or *going* erect, which we are necessarily led to believe was the case if it were a literal serpent, or a monkey, the Scripture does not say that it should lose the gift of speech; though we might reasonably suppose, that if by this organ the fall of man had been brought about, God would have pronounced a curse on it, and would have taken away the gift of speech by a solemn denunciation to that effect; instead of condemning it to go on its belly. Therefore whether it were the serpent, or the monkey, the gift of speech must necessarily have remained, as that power was not

by the divine command taken away. Dr. Clarke says, "God did not qualify the serpent with speech for the occasion,"—true; neither has he proved that God qualified the monkey "with speech for the occasion," but by supposing that this was the case; and supposition proves nothing.

I shall pass over the lamentable definition of the *tree of knowledge—eating the forbidden fruit*—the system of *astronomy*, which this writer has crammed into the pages of his Bible; and many other subjects, which would swell these remarks to a large volume. They are all as irrelevant to the grand business of the regeneration of man, which is historically treated of, and which constitutes the sanctity of this part of Scripture; as for him to inform us in his comment on the second verse of the second chapter, what we are already told was the fact, viz. that the deep sleep, which God caused to fall upon Adam, "was neither swoon, nor extasy,"—and come to that part, which is more immediately the subject of this investigation, viz. the agent employed in the fall of man, which Dr. Clarke says was the ouran-outang monkey, and not the serpent, as has been the belief of all the churches, to the time of the dispersion of the Jews, and of all the Christian churches to the present day.

It seems necessary, in the first place, in order to pave the way for the reception of the monkey

instead of the serpent, for this writer to lessen the authority of all the ancient versions, which, he says, are wrong as to the translation of the word נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, by *serpent.* Even the Septuagint is included, who, he says, "translated נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, by ὀφις *ophis*, the Greek word for *serpent;* not because this was its fixed determinate meaning, but because it was the best that occurred to the translators; and they do not seem to have given themselves much trouble to understand the meaning of the original. And the New Testament writers, who scarcely ever quote the Old Testament, *but from the Septuagint translation,* and scarcely ever change a word in their quotations, copy this version in the use of this word." But this gentleman certainly has no authority for asserting, that these ancient translators rendered the original word נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, by ὀφις *ophis,* not as its "determinate meaning" in the sacred writings. Are we to suppose that the Septuagint, who lived 350 years before the Christian era, during the time of the Grecian monarchy, which was an universal monarchy, and the Greek an universal language, well understood by them; and who themselves were the most learned among the Jewish doctors; did not understand the meaning of the word נָחָשׁ *Nachash* in Greek? which must have been the case, if ὀφις *ophis,* is not literally the meaning. Surely it must be admitted, that at this time of the world both these languages were well understood by them, and if

ὀφις *ophis* "was the best word that occurred" to them, by which to render נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, it must necessarily be admitted, agreeably to this reasoning, that נָחָשׁ *Nachash* was understood by the sacred writers, and by these ancient translators, to mean a *serpent.*

I shall first pursue the subject on the ground this writer has taken, viz. "a simple relation of facts, capable of a satisfactory explanation." It is said by the inspired penman, that the *serpent was more wise and intelligent than all the beasts of the field.* He attributes five properties to the animal, in its original state, which tempted Eve.

1st. That "whatever this נָחָשׁ *Nachash* was, he stood at the head of all inferior animals for wisdom and understanding;" but he says, "I cannot find that the serpent genus are remarkable for intelligence; it is true, the wisdom of the serpent has passed into a proverb, but I cannot see on what it is founded." It is probable, that this may be the case with Dr. Clarke, that he "cannot see on what the wisdom and intelligence of the serpent is founded." In order, therefore, to show that this animal was selected with great wisdom by the primæval people, agreeably to its predominant passions, to signify the sensual qualities and propensities in man: I shall, after I have said a few words on the worship of this animal, give the reader a short account of the wisdom,

prudence, intelligence, and sagacity, of the serpent, which naturalists from long observation inform us, are far superior to that of any other animal.

It has been the custom of the most ancient nations, as we learn from the Pagan writers, to consider the serpent as the symbol of wisdom, circumspection, and intelligence, of the sensual principle in man. In the description of Osiris and Isis, the idols of Egypt, a serpent is always depicted with them. Osiris and Isis were the king and queen, who, we are informed, governed with such wisdom and gentleness, that the Egyptians deified them, and caused them to be attended by a serpent.

The Egyptians also gave honors to the Niolic serpent,[1] i. e. the crocodile; but we are not to suppose that this was done without some degree of reason: for as the ant and the bee are used with us as emblems of industry, so was the serpent referred to by them as the symbol of intelligence and circumspection. The same was done by the Phœnicians; according to Sanchoniathon, a serpent was always introduced in their religious rites.

But perhaps there was nothing more significant than the custom of this ancient people, who prefigured

[1] Ælian. de Animalibus, lib. 10. Euseb. præp. Evangel. l. 1. c. 10.

the world by a circle, in the centre of which was a serpent, by which the whole was represented as animated; a symbol of infinite wisdom, by which the world was created. Herodotus also informs us, that in his time there were tame serpents in the principal cities of Egypt, which were sacred to Jupiter, adorned with the most costly jewels, and that they were so sensible of kindness shown them, that they never injured any one; and when they died, they were buried in the temple of Jupiter with divine honors.[1]

Ælian says, that the Egyptians kept serpents as household gods. The Phœnicians and Babylonians worshipped a dragon. The Arabians were famous for worshipping serpents, and according to some, whose testimony is not to be rejected, in some parts of Arabia, at this day, serpents are held as sacred. Melanchthon says, that the priests in Asia expose to public view a serpent, attended with music; the serpent is made to open its mouth, and there appears the face of a beautiful woman. And in German Bibles, before the time of Luther, may be seen the figure of a serpent with the face of a woman.

"*Oph*," says Bryant, "signifies *a serpent;* it was worshipped as a Deity. A serpent was also in the Egyptian language styled *ob*, or *oub*. We are

[1] Euterpe, lib. ii. p. 186.

told by Aurus Apollo, that the Basilisk was named Oubaios;[1] *Ουβαιος, ο εστιν Ελληνισι Βασιλισκος.* The Deity, so denominated, was esteemed prophetic, and his temples were applied to as oracular. This idolatry is alluded to by Moses: *a man also, or woman, that hath a* אוֹב *aoub, familiar spirit, or that is a wizard;* he forbids the Israelites ever to inquire of those dæmons, Oub and Ideone. The symbolical worship of the serpent was in the first ages very extensive, and was introduced into all mysteries wherever celebrated; wherever the Amonians founded any places of worship, and introduced their rites, there was generally some story of a serpent. There was a legend about a serpent at Colchis, at Thebes, and at Delphi; likewise at other places. The Greeks called Apollo himself, *Python,* which is the same as *opis, oupis,* and *oub.* The woman at Endor, who had a familiar spirit, is called אוֹב *oub,* and it is interpreted *Pythonissa.* The place where she resided seems to have been named from the worship there instituted; for בְּעֵין דּוֹר *En dour,* is compounded of *En-Adour,* and signifies *Fons Pythonis,* "the fountain of light, the oracle of the God Adour." Kircher, continues Bryant, says, that *obion* is still, among the people of Egypt, the name of a serpent, אוֹב *oub,* "Mon Python, vox ab Egyptiis sumta, quibus obion hodieque serpentem sonat."[2] The sun was worshipped

[1] Aurus App. c. i. p. 2.

[2] Bochart Hiero. l. i. c. 3. p. 22.

under the figure of a serpent: Hence there was given to the Spartan Menelaus a serpent, for a device upon his shield.[1] The same was also depicted upon the shield and cuirass of Agamemnon.[2] There was also a serpent engraved upon the tomb of Epaminondas,[3] and inclosed in the figure of a shield.

Olympias, says this learned writer, the mother of Alexander, was very fond of these orgies, in which the serpent was introduced. Plutarch mentions, that rites of this sort were practised by the Edonian women, near Mount Hæmus, in Thrace, and carried on to a degree of madness. Olympias copied them closely in all their frantic manœuvres; she used to be followed by many attendants, who had each a thyrsus, with serpents twisted round it. They had also snakes in their hair, and in the chaplets which they wore; the whole was attended with a continual repetition of the word *Evoe*, which is the same as חַוָּה *Eve*.

In the ritual of Zoroaster, it is said, the great expanse of the heavens, and even nature itself, was described under the symbol of *a serpent*.[4] The like was mentioned in the Octateuch of Ostanes; and, moreover, that in Persis, and in other parts of the East, they erected temples to the *serpent tribe*, and

[1] Pausan. l. x. p. 863. [2] Homer. Iliad.

[3] Pausan. l. viii. p. 622. [4] Euseb. P. E. l. i. p. 41, 42.

held festivals to their honor, esteeming them, Θεους τους μεγιστους, και αρχηγους των ολων,[1] *the supreme of all Gods, and the superintendants of the whole world.* This worship began among the Chaldeans, who built the city Opis, upon the Tigris,[2] and were greatly addicted to divination, and to the worship of the *serpent.*[3]

The chief Deity of Egypt is said to have been Vulcan, often called אוֹב אֵל *Aoub-El, the serpent God;* there were pillars sacred to him, with curious hieroglyphical inscriptions, which had the same name; they were very lofty and narrow in comparison to their length. Hence among the Greeks, who copied from the Egyptians, every thing gradually tapering to a point, (after the manner of the serpent,) was styled Obelos and Obeliscus, i. e. the *serpent pillar.*

Sanchoniathon[4] makes mention of a history, which he once wrote upon the worship of the serpent. Another treatise upon the same subject was written by Pherecydes Syrus. The title of this book was *Ophioneus,* the *Theology of Ophion,* or the *Serpent;* and of his worshippers called Ophionidæ. The

[1] Euseb. ibidem. [2] Herod. l. ii. c. 189.

[3] Maimonides, in More Nevochim. — Selden, de Diis Syris. Synt. i. c. 3. p. 49.

[4] Euseb. præp. Evang. l. i. p. 41.

Ethiopians also brought these rites into Greece, and called the island, where they first established them, Ophiopia, "solis serpentis insula,[1] or, the *Serpent Island.*" Hercules was esteemed a chief God, the same as Chronus, and was said to have produced the mundane egg. He was represented, in the Orphic theology, under the mixed symbol of a lion and a serpent;[2] and sometimes of a serpent only.[3] The Cuthites, who were Hivites, or Ophites, i. e. serpent worshippers, settled at Rhodes, so named from Rhod,[4] a Syriac word for a *serpent.* In Phrygia, and upon the Hellespont, whither they sent out colonies very early, was a people styled Οφιογενεις, or the *serpent-breed;* who were said to retain an affinity and correspondence with serpents.[5] Thucydides mentions a people of Etolia, called Ophionians.[6] About Paphos, famous for the residence of Venus, there was said to have been a kind of serpent,[7] with two legs; by this is meant the Ophite race, i. e. *serpent worshippers,* who came from Egypt. The island Seriphus was one vast rock, by the Romans called Saxum Seriphium, and made use of as a kind of prison for banished persons. It is represented allegorically as abounding

[1] Strabo, l. x. p. 683.
[2] Athenæg. Legatio, p. 239.
[3] Ibid. p. 295.
[4] Bochart, G. S. p. 369.
[5] Strabo, l. xiii. p. 880.
[6] L. iii. c. 96—Strabo, l. x. p. 692.
[7] Appollon. Dyscolus. Mirabil. c. 39. οφις ποδας εχων δυο.

with serpents,[1] i. e. these *serpent people*, and is styled by Virgil *serpentifera*. It had this epithet not on account of any real *serpents*, but according to the Greeks, from Medusa's[2] head, which was brought hither by Perseus. By this is meant the *serpent Deity*, whose worship was here introduced by people called Peresians. Medusa's head, which was a human face, encircled with a number of *serpents*, denoted divine wisdom: and the Island was sacred to the *serpent*. The Athenians were esteemed Serpentigenæ, and believed that the chief guardian of their Acropolis was a *serpent*.[3] It is said, that the Goddess placed a dragon for a guardian to her temple at Eleusis, and appointed another to attend on Erectheus. The Cuthites, under the title of Heliadæ, settled at Rhodes, and as they were Hivites, or Ophites, i. e. *serpent worshippers*, the Island in consequence of it was of old named Ophiusa. These Cuthite priests were very learned, and as they were Ophites, whoever had the advantage of their information, was said to be instructed by *serpents*. Hence it was said, that Melampus was rendered prophetic from a communication with these animals.[4] The Cyclops were originally Ophitæ, who worshipped the

[1] Tacitus, Annal. l. iv. c. 21. [2] Strabo, l. x. p. 746.

[3] Herod. l. viii. c. 41.

[4] Apollodorus, l. xii. c. 7. Plin. l. x. c. 44.

symbolical *serpent.* They were a colony of the Egyptians and Babylonians, and were so named from *Κυκλωψ.* "They were an ingenious people, and became famous among the Grecian poets, who, in their fables, have represented them to have been monsters of gigantic stature, with one eye in the middle of their foreheads." But this is as far from the truth as that a monkey tempted Eve. They were an ingenious people, who came into that part of the world, and introduced the refinements of the learned Egyptians and Babylonians, and thus obtained great fame. The Greek poets magnified their superiority of talent into magnitude of stature, and allowed them but one eye in the middle of their foreheads; and thus have represented them as monsters, because they worshipped a solitary *serpent,* instead of a plurality of Gods. Such has been the nature of religious bigotry in all ages: mistakes of this kind are numerous in the Greek Mythology; *Χαρωνος, Charon* is a compound word from the Hebrew כָּר *char, a pleasant pasture,* and אֹן *On,* the Temple of the Sun, literally, "*the pasture of the Temple of the Sun;*" or the land which was appropriated to the use of the priests, attached to the temples under the Mosaic dispensation, which custom has been justly retained in Christian churches, as a living for the clergy, who were not permitted to follow any other profession.

Ægeus,[1] of Athens, according to Androtion, was of the *serpent breed;*[2] and the first king of the country is said to have been Δρακων, a *Dragon.* Cecrops is said to have been διφυης,[3] *of a two-fold nature, being formed with the body of a man, blended with that of a serpent.* Diodorus says, that this was a circumstance deemed by the Athenians inexplicable; some had mentioned of Cecrops, that he underwent a metamorphosis, απο οφεως εις ανθρωπον ελθειν,[4] *that he was changed from a serpent to a man.* With respect to the mixed character of this personage, continues this writer, we may, I think, easily account for it; Cecrops was certainly a title of the Deity, who was worshipped under this emblem. The natives of Thebes, in Bœotia, like the Athenians, esteemed themselves of the *serpent race.* The Lacedæmonians, likewise, referred themselves to the same original; their city is said to have swarmed with *serpents.*[5] The same is said of the city Amyclæ, in Italy, which was of Spartan original. Of Argos the same, when Apis came from Egypt, and settled in that city. He was esteemed as a prophet, the reputed son of Apollo, and a person of great skill and sagacity. But the *serpent brood* came from the very

[1] Herodotus, l. viii. c. 41. [2] Lycophron. Scholia. v. 496.

[3] Meursius. de reg. Athen. l. i. c. 6. [4] Eustat. on Dionys. p. 56.

[5] Aristot. de Mirabilibus, vol. II. p. 717.

quarter from whence Apis came. They were certainly Hivites, or Ophites, i. e. *serpent worshippers* from Egypt. They were *serpents* of another nature, with which those cities were infested; and the history relates to the Cuthites, the original Ophitæ, who for a long time possessed that country. The chief Deity of the Gentile world was almost universally worshipped under this symbolical representation. The story of Cadmus, and the *serpent* which he engaged upon his arrival in Bœotia, relates to the *serpent worship* which was then instituted by the Cadmians. So Jason in Colchis, Apollo in Phocis, Hercules at Lerna, engaged with *serpents*, are histories of the same purport.

Cadmus, and his wife Harmonia, were said at the close of their lives, to have been transformed to a *serpent* of stone. The *serpent* was understood at that day, to represent wisdom, and therefore honored his memory with this ensign, because he first introduced civilization, and the worship of Divine wisdom into Greece. But in after-ages, the Greeks, who became idolators, worshipped him under this symbol. This worship prevailed in Babylonia, Egypt, and Syria, from which countries it was brought by the Cadmians into Greece: Serpentis eam venerationem acceperunt Græci à Cadmo.[1] Thus were the

[1] Vossius de Idol. vol. III. Comment in Rabbi M. Maimonidem de sacrificiis, p. 76.

companions of Cadmus, who first brought letters into Greece, and the Giant in Homer, called *serpents*. So Alexander the Great, and Scipio Africanus, were said to be born of *serpents*,[1] i. e. wisdom, which they thought to be the most honorable insignia; every thing was looked upon as divine and magnificent, that was attended by the figure of a *serpent*; many things in creation were dignified by this name, as trees, plants, herbs, rivers, stones, islands, stars, men, and women."

In the Heathen Mythology, which was founded on the scriptures, we have a description of the garden of Jupiter, i. e. Joa-pater; and the golden apples of the Hesperides, kept by a sleepless dragon, which was evidently taken from the *serpent*, and the forbidden fruit in Paradise. Hercules killing the *serpent* is also taken from the scripture account, where it is said, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the *serpent*." A serpent was consecrated to Apollo, in his temple where he was worshipped, who was said to have been educated in Arabia;[2] but this is also taken from the Bible; Moses fled into Arabia from the face of Pharaoh, where he was forty years; and when he led the Israelites out of Egypt, he set up the brazen *serpent* in the wilderness, not a brazen monkey.

[1] Euseb. Præp. Evang. [2] Pausan. l. viii. p. 613.

† or rather "tree of life" — This was the
Serpent that John Christ slew when

Having introduced thus much from this learned writer, concerning the origin of *serpent worship*, I shall now make a few observations on the natural history of the *serpent*, that we may see "on what the wisdom and intelligence of that animal is founded," and on what ground it was that it "passed into a proverb" among the primæval people.

THE

SUBTILTY OF THE SERPENT.

THE whole tribe of serpents rest with their eyes open, and are perpetually on the watch during the whole of the winter season; this property of the serpent became famous among the *serpent worshippers* as an emblem of the Deity. Homer borrowing the idea, from the ever-watchful eye of the serpent, describes the Gods, at one time, as asleep,

"All but the ever-wakeful eye of Jove."

Among the whole family of *serpents*, there appears to be but one, which answers to the description given in the sacred writings, as being that creature so frequently mentioned in the woeful narrative of the fall of man. The Niolic *serpent*, the leviathan, or crocodile, is described by the prophets as a creature superior to others of its kind, for strength, intelligence, and patience; he enjoys, says Buffon, more

absolute rule than either the king of the forest, or the sovereign of the skies, and his dominion is the more durable as it belongs to both elements.

This terrible creature being a native of that part of the world where our first parents were placed, when they came from the hand of the Creator, it is reasonable to conclude, that our inspired progenitor Adam, who gave names to the creatures corresponding with their natures, would not have given the name נָחָשׁ *Nachash* to any species of the simia genus, as it does not express any one property of the monkey, but is most admirably descriptive of those qualities, which the ancients found by experience the whole tribe of serpents were more famous for, than *all the beasts of the field.* The prophets perfectly agree in describing this animal to be a native of both elements; Amos, ix. 3. *and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence,* וְאֶצְוֶּה אֶת הַנָּחָשׁ וְנִשְׁכָם *I will command the serpent and he shall bite them.* Here the word נָחָשׁ *Nachash,* written with the same vowels, signifies a serpent which lives in the sea, as well as on land; but which certainly cannot be applied to mean the monkey. In Chaldee, and Rab. Hebrew, it has the same meaning as in the pure Hebrew.

Some are of opinion, that נְחֹשׁ *Nachesh, brazen,* was given to brass, because it resembles the color of

a serpent; but there is no certainty in this etymology, for there are serpents of different colors. נָחָשׁ *Nachesh* was used to signify *brass*, in allusion to the living *serpent;* for as the color of brass is yellow, and the metal pernicious, so the fluid, issuing from the little bladders of serpents when they bite, is yellow. These primæval people had better reasons for giving names to things, which, as above, were descriptive of their natures; which power of description is to be found in the Hebrew language only, and which is one proof of its divine origin. The word נָחַשׁ *Nachash* primarily signifies to *eye*, to *view attentively*, with a peculiar quickness; and as this is more particularly the case with the *serpent's* eye, than it is with the eye of any other creature, it has been applied to mean a *serpent.* The Greeks derived *Δρακων*, a *dragon*, or serpent, from *δερκειν*, *to view*, and *οφις*, a *serpent*, from *οπτομαι*, *to see.* Among the eastern nations this word was applied to those who were keen in their transactions, who saw things with quickness, and used this gift to the injury of others; or, in other words, those who prostituted a good understanding to bad purposes; so that the phrase, *a serpent's eye*, became proverbial among them.

Naturalists[1] inform us, that the Niolic serpent supports the dignity of his rule with clemency; his

[1] Buffon. Nat. Hist.

power is not combined with cruelty and rapine, and is only exerted for supplying his urgent necessities, but is never actuated by ferocity. When he is pinched by hunger he covers himself with mud, on the slimy banks of rivers, and appearing like the large trunk of a fallen tree, remains motionless, watching with astonishing patience for an opportunity to seize his prey; his stillness, color, and form, impose on fishes, sea-fowl, tortoises, and other animals, so that they approach without suspicion. While swimming along great rivers, he seldom raises his head above water so as to see around, seeking to surprise any of the larger animals that may come close to the shore; when he sees any approach to drink, he dives, and swims craftily under the water, till he gets near enough to catch the creature by the legs, then drags it into the water till it is drowned, and devours it at his leisure. He is much more dangerous in the water, which seems to be his favorite element, in which he enjoys the whole of his strength with greater advantage than on land; notwithstanding his vast size, frequently thirty feet long, he moves about with great swiftness; he often waits contentedly at the bottom of a deep river, looking attentively for his prey above, and often attacks boats, using his tail to overturn them, in expectation of procuring food, which is carried from one place to another, and will pursue his prey with great velocity to the bottom of the sea. Such is the wonderful sagacity of this

animal, which we are at present acquainted with; but had we in this region, so far remote from the native place of this *serpent*, as complete a knowledge of its natural history, as the people of those countries had at the time, when the arts florished among them, when their naturalists, philosophers, and literary men well knew from observation, more particulars concerning the subtilty of the serpent, we should, no doubt, have more proof of the intelligence of this creature, if more were necessary, to prove, that it is more subtile, intelligent, and sagacious, *than all the beasts of the field.*

It may appear wonderful to many, how it was possible for a creature so disgusting to become an object of worship; of all the beasts in creation, a more ungraceful idol, as to the external form, could not have been chosen; we shall, however, I trust, have a more favorable opinion of these ancient *serpent-worshippers*, when we know the true ground why this worship obtained so universally. This circumstance was, perhaps, not thought of by this writer, or it must have had its degree of weight in convincing him, that the *monkey* had nothing to do in this business. The adoration which was paid to *serpents* in all the nations of the East, from the most remote times, and is even continued to this day in some of the Eastern countries, is a convincing proof, that it took its rise from the *serpent in Paradise;*

and like a flood spread over the surrounding nations, when the cures done by the *brazen serpent* in the wilderness were confirmed, which must necessarily appear to them to have been done by infinite wisdom, prefigured in outward nature by a serpent. These ancient people had another reason for preferring the *serpent* in their figurative representations to any other creature; they considered the first cause of things to be without beginning and without end, and that as the *serpent*, when it is at rest, forms a circle, with its head in the centre, so they supposed it to be representative of the Deity, worshipped it in the form of a circle, and fixed an eye in the centre as descriptive of the omniscience of God; the latter emblem is often used at this day, as representative of the all-seeing eye of Providence.

THE MONKEY.

If we contrast the character of the *monkey* with that of the *serpent*, we shall find that the author of nature has not raised the former so high in the scale of instinctive sensibility, as he has many other creatures; and that it cannot be put in competition with the *serpent*, whose intelligence has been allowed in all ages to approach the nearest of any other creature to the lowest degree of reason in man. Neither shall we find that any property of this sportive animal, the *monkey*, answers to the meaning of the word נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, as given by the sacred writers.

According to the best information from those, who have resided in the countries where the ouran outang monkey is a native, all concur with the best writers of

natural history, in declaring, that this animal goes erect naturally,[1] and not on "all fours," as is asserted by this writer. The pongo jocko, of Java, and the interior parts of Guinea, which is from five to seven feet high; the great gibbon, which inhabits India, Malacca, and the Molucca isles; the great black ape of Kiangsi, in China, and all the kinds of the ouran outang monkey, walk erect, which is the natural posture of this animal. The female carries her young in her arms, and leaps with the greatest agility from tree to tree. The structure of the hands, feet, and other parts of the body, when examined with mechanical exactness, prove, in the opinion of those best capable of judging with accuracy on the subject, that the animal was designed by the Creator to walk erect.[2] Man, and the ouran outang, are the only animals who have buttocks, and the calf of the leg, and of course are formed to go upright. But, nevertheless, though this creature approaches nearest to the form of man, it is incapable of thinking consistently with any degree of reason, like the serpent; "for if the principle of imitation," says Buffon, "by which he mimics human actions, were a result of thought, he would ascend in the scale of

[1] Vide Voyages of Pyrard, tom. II. p. 331.—Purchas's Collection—and Descript. Historique du Royaume de Macæur p. 51.

[2] Encyclop. Brit. vol. XVII. Edin. edit.

beings above every other beast of the field, which is not the case. This animal possesses instinctive sagacity, like other brute creatures, but does not manifest any marks of intellectual operation like the serpent; it approximates something near the human form, without possessing any of the faculties of the human mind." Its faculty of imitation is singular; but not more so than that of many other creatures, some of which can be taught articulation, to give answers, and ask questions; but all the ingenuity and application of man could never teach the monkey to articulate a single word.

It appears strange, that the author of these comments should have neglected the consideration of the natural history of these animals, on a subject so novel as this he has introduced. For it is right to conclude, that God acts consistently, agreeably to rationality, and probability; that there must have been some natural qualification in this animal, which is said to have been employed in this business, superior to all others, which intitled it to this pre-eminence. We find throughout the scriptures, that when any thing of importance was to be done, or others significantly represented, that such persons were always chosen by divine wisdom, who had proper qualifications by nature for the undertaking; and such things introduced as bore some resemblance to the subject intended to be made known. Thus,

Moses was prepared by being first skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians and the Arabians; therefore a proper person for the office he was appointed to. Joshua was trained up as the leader or general, to settle the people in the land, and to destroy idolatry; and therefore a proper person to govern Israel. The princely prophet Isaiah was chosen as a fit person to prophesy to the king and nobles; and the learned Paul to preach to the polished Gentile nations. But it was only necessary for an unlettered shepherd to be sent to the lower estates of the people of Israel, who delivered his prophesies agreeably to the simplicity of his education. Such must have been the consideration of the subject before us; the *monkey* was not framed with those natural qualifications which would authorize the inspired writers to apply them for the representation of the things mentioned in the sacred text. But the serpent has been deservedly noticed in all ages for its intuitive knowledge; he plans and executes with all that order, foresight, and certainty, which is not to be equalled by any of *the beasts of the field*, neither as far as the habits of its nature extend, is it inferior in wisdom and intelligence to man.

Having said as much as I think is necessary for my purpose concerning the qualities of the *serpent* and the *monkey*, and, I trust, sufficiently proved, that the wisdom of the *serpent* in its acts approaches

nearer to the reason of man than any other creature; and that this has been the universal opinion from the beginning. I shall now answer this writer's observation where to prepare the mind for the reception of the Monkey in the business of the fall of man instead of the serpent, he has attempted to cast a shade on the translation of the word נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, by the septuagint, who rendered it by the word οφις *ophis*, a *serpent*. He says, "from the septuagint we can expect no light, nor from any other of the ancient versions which are all subsequent to the septuagint, that the Arabic may be expected to afford some help, from its great similarity to the Hebrew, and that a root in this language very nearly similar to that in the text, seems to cast considerable light on the subject. خنس *Chanas*, signifies *he departed, drew off, lay hid, seduced;* from this root came اخنس *akhanas*, خنسا *khanasa*, which signify an ape, or satyrus, or any of the simia kind, or ape genus: also from the same root comes خناس *khanas*, 'the devil,' which appellative he bears from the meaning of خنس *Chanas*." But if all the ancient versions were subsequent to the septuagint, as this writer asserts, what necessity was there for him to substitute the Arabic? why may we not go to the septuagint version, in preference to the Arabic, as the septuagint is allowed by him to be more ancient? And there, as I have observed, those translators render the word נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, by οφις, *serpent;* and the New Testament

writers have also chosen the word οφις, *serpent*, to signify the ancient serpent נָחָשׁ *Nachash*. I have before noticed the great absurdity of supposing that the septuagint, by rendering נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, by οφις *ophis*, *serpent*, did not make use of a proper word; this objection has no foundation in truth. Neither have the New Testament writers erred in following the septuagint in the adoption of this word to signify נָחָשׁ *Nachash*; for we certainly are under the necessity of allowing, that Christ and the Apostles understood the true meaning of נָחָשׁ *Nachash*. If this be granted, then it amounts to the same, whether the New Testament writers followed the septuagint or the Hebrew; for as οφις *ophis*, is used by them to mean ο οφις ο αρχαιος, ο καλουμενος Διαβολος, *that old serpent, called the devil and satan*,[1] alluding to the serpent in Paradise: it certainly is a convincing proof that נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, was originally understood by them to mean a serpent: and consequently it is futile to suppose, that a root in Arabic which has but a very remote meaning, should "cast any light on the subject."

This writer labors much to show, that the Arabic language is to be resorted to when we are at a loss to determine any word in Hebrew; he says, "because the deficient roots in the Hebrew are to be sought

[1] Rev. xii. 9.

for in the Arabic," this would be a very dangerous principle to act upon. For instance, suppose a person who understood a little Arabic, and had but a trifling knowledge of the elements of the Hebrew, but meeting with words in that language, the meaning of which he could not ascertain, were to incorporate with the Hebrew such words from the Arabic as he thought would elucidate any passage; we might very soon have the Bible crowded with Arabic words, and meanings from the Arabic. "Were the Hebrew a complete language," says this gentleman. Is it possible that an expression of this nature can come from any one that pretends to understand the Hebrew language? the Hebrew is so complete a language, that there is not any necessity for us to seek in the Arabic, or in any other language, for what he is pleased to call "defective roots in Hebrew." The Hebrew is so complete a language, that I believe it is allowed by those who understand it, to be the most complete and comprehensive language in the world.× The English language is capable of enabling us to express our thoughts with as much elegance, power, and precision, as any of the European languages; but it certainly is not possible in the English language to clothe our ideas in so rich a dress, attended with such energy of expression, striking imagery, sublimity and simplicity in all its variety of application, as is to be done in the Hebrew: no one learned in Hebrew can be at a loss to express any action, or, to

× The author misunderstands Dr. Clarke who in saying that the Hebrew is not a complete language only means that owing to the Bible

describe any idea, which the mind is capable of conceiving. That simple copy of nature, the history of Joseph and his brethren, even as it is in the translation, cannot be read without touching in the most sensible manner the soul of those feelings, which dignify human nature; it is the finest picture of embodied affection that was ever drawn in any language: but in the original, it is almost affection speaking in a visible form. The picture of the horse in Job, where every nerve is represented as being alive, was never equalled by the finest poets; nor have the sublime productions of David, and Isaiah, according to the opinion of the most learned oriental scholars, been equalled by the best writers in any age. But in order to establish it as a rule, when we observe any word in Hebrew for which no root can be found, (which is impossible) that we may find these deficient roots in the Arabic, he says, "If a man meet with an English word, which he cannot find in an ample concordance or dictionary of the Bible, he must of course seek for that word in a general English dictionary. In like manner, if a particular form of a word in Hebrew occurs, that cannot be traced to a root in the Hebrew Bible, it is expedient, it is perfectly lawful, and often indispensably necessary, to seek the deficient root in the Arabic." This, as is observed above, would be a very dangerous expedient, because every writer, who has made a greater progress, in acquiring a knowledge of any of the eastern

languages than he has of the Hebrew, not having acquainted himself with the meaning of certain words, may contend in like manner, that such or such a language with which he is more familiar, must be resorted to in order to find the root which appears to him to be deficient in the Hebrew. So that the Coptic, the Ethiopic, and even all the languages of the east, may on this principle be called in to aid us in getting a knowledge of the will of God, as revealed to man.

Dr. Clarke is not willing to commit himself by saying, that the Hebrew was derived from the Arabic, though he says, there are great authorities on both sides; he tells us a great truth, viz. "either the Arabic was derived from the Hebrew, or the Hebrew from the Arabic." One could hardly suppose that such a wild notion could ever have been entertained by any one acquainted either with profane or sacred history. The Jews, from the dispersion to the present day, remain a people; and the Hebrew is a distinct language, in which the Jews write and converse. So far the Hebrew is a living language, though the Jews are in a state of non-existence as a nation. But the Hebrew is no more lost than it was during their captivity in Babylon. Almost all the ancient profane writers give testimony to the priority and descent of the Hebrew language. It appears that it was the language

of ancient Egypt, when the sons of Jacob went there; the natives spoke it, and when they came to Joseph, they were also understood: for it does not appear that he spoke to them by an interpreter. The verb *to speak* does not occur in the original, neither does מְמֵלִיץ *Meelits*, mean "an interpreter." Now when there are living testimonies in all nations, which confirm the antiquity and descent of this language, in regular historical succession, as contained in the Bible, which reaches far beyond the history of any nation; it is wonderful that a supposition of this nature could suggest itself to so intelligent a man.

This writer continues, "If, for example, we meet with a term in our ancient English language, the meaning of which we find difficult to ascertain, common sense teaches us that we should seek for it in the Anglo-Saxon, from which our language springs; no person disputes the legitimacy of this measure." This is admitted, as far as it is applicable to the English which springs from the Anglo-Saxon, and from other languages; but this reasoning cannot be allowed as applicable to the Hebrew. The same "common sense teaches us that" as the Hebrew did not spring from any other language, no other can be resorted to for an elucidation of this primæval language, whose very root is in nature. It would be like examining the branches of a tree to find some supposed defect in the root.

It must appear evident, that no comparison can be made as to the infinitude of expression between the Hebrew language, which has thirteen vowels for the variation of sense, and the certainty of application; near fifty pauses, for giving force to words and sentences, marking *rapidity*, *slowness*, *gravity*, *love*, *anger*, and the various passions by which they are to be delivered: and the Arabic, which has properly but *two* vowels. For the vowels *Fatha*, and *Casra*, are the same, which are only known to differ in pronunciation, by being placed above or under the consonant; and the vowel *Damma*, which forms the dipthong *ou:* yet did the Arabians, with this unmusical two-stringed, ding-dong language, sounding like *ba*, *bou*, communicate their ideas in a similarity of sound. But the Hebrew, on account of its number of vowels, necessarily becomes, when rightly pronounced, one of the most musical, as it is, one of the most comprehensive, of all languages. And yet we are told by this writer, that " the Arabic is the most comprehensive language in the world." From these considerations it will also appear, that this well-meaning writer should not have been so hasty in his conclusion, where he says, " the whole of the Hebrew language is lost, except what is in the Bible." He has not supported this assertion by any proof. Does not this gentleman know that the Hebrew is no more lost than the Arabic? that pure Arabic is no more spoken either in Arabia

or Turkey, than the pure Hebrew is among the Jews —that the language of these countries is a kind of Lingua Franca, a mixture of the languages of other nations with Arabic—that the Koran, which is written in pure Arabic, is esteemed to be the holy language of the Turks and Arabs, as the Hebrew is of the Jews and Christians? and does he not know that the Hebrew writers are far more numerous, and their writings, now extant, far more voluminous, than those of the ancient Greeks and Romans? how then can it be said that the Hebrew language is lost, except what is in the Bible?

But admitting this were so, that "the whole of the Hebrew language were lost, except what is in the Bible," no person having a conception of the spirit, idiom, or exclusive properties of the Hebrew, could make the following observation: "As the English Bible does not contain the whole of the English language; so the Hebrew Bible does not contain the whole of the Hebrew language." There is a degree of plausibility in this remark, I must acknowledge, but such reasoning is superficial; it argues but a scanty knowledge even of the rudiments of the language, and will not apply to the case before us.

It is impossible for a comparison to be made between the Hebrew and any language, when it is

known that a Hebrew word differing in *form*, *termination*, and *orthographical order*, is capable of such variation as to meaning and application, that it would supply sufficient words to fill an octavo page in the English, or in any of the European languages. The Hebrew, as it stands in the Bible, is the language of nature in all her variety of ideal conception, which is capable of such an infinitude of expression, as to supply words that would stock a moderate library in any of the modern languages. This is sufficiently known to the learned Hebraist; abundance of examples might be given, but this is enough for the present.

By applying to the Arabic for an illustration of the Hebrew language, this writer supposes that either the Arabic was the original language, or that the Hebrew is defective. This error of supposing the Arabic to have been more ancient than the Hebrew, is not new; others have entertained a similar opinion, as he informs us; but then the cause has originated in not having a sufficient knowledge of the Hebrew, which has been so neglected among the learned, that it has not been made a necessary part of collegiate education. It is a mere delusion to attempt, through the cognate languages, or dialects, to elucidate the Hebrew, from whence these languages had their origin; as well may we attempt to elucidate pure English by a quotation from the Lancashire or York-

shire dialects. The learned Pococke, who was allowed to be the best Arabic scholar that ever Europe produced, and who, on account of his knowledge of that language, was admitted to read the choice manuscripts in the Emperor's library at Constantinople, candidly says, that he never could get any information from the Arabic, which would enable him to elucidate any part of the sacred scriptures.

We may perhaps be told that Moses was the writer, that the Arabic language was known to him, and therefore he might mean that נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, and اخنس *akhanas*, i. e. the monkey, were the same, and that the former might be derived from the latter; but this cannot be admitted. It would be more plausible to attempt to prove that אָב *Ab, father*, was derived from the Arabic اب *Ab, father*—רָב *Raab, God*, from راب *Raab, God*—חָם *Ham, hot*, from حم *Ham, hot*—רָד *Rad, great, to subdue*, from رد *Rad, great*—or קָרָא *Kara, to call*, from قرا *Kara*, "to call, or collect together;" which, with great numbers of words in the Arabic, are only Hebrew words in Arabic letters; than to assert that נָחָשׁ *Nachash* is derived from, has the same meaning, or "is similar" to خناس *khanas*, because this word in Arabic means the Devil. This method of proving the relation of one word to another, is what we may call, in a familiar phrase, *far-fetched*.

It would be altogether unnecessary, and perhaps impossible, to show, at what period of the world the Arabic language took its rise. The only data we have to guide us through the mazes of antiquity, is, when what is called the confusion of tongues took place; but it is absolutely necessary for us to know, that prior to this epoch there was but one language, and that this was the Hebrew.

The writer of this comment does not seem to have attended sufficiently to this part of the history, for it is expressly said in the 10th chapter, and 11th verse of Genesis, two thousand years after the fall, *and the beginning of his kingdom was Babel;* this was at the commencement of the Babylonish or Chaldean empire, and the first verse of the next chapter says, *and the whole earth was of one language and of one speech.* This *one language and one speech,* was the ancient *Chaldean Hebrew,* so named from Eber, the great grandson of Shem, in whose days the earth was divided. That is, *the whole* EARTH *which was of one language, and of one speech,* was divided, or separated into distinct patriarchal governments; for so the word נִפְלְגָה *Niphilegaah,* signifies. Eber being the supreme patriarchal head at the time, when these divisions of the land among the numerous descendants of Noah took place, the language was stiled after him, Hebrew; which descended in a direct line to

of Ishmael and Esau who were both
sprung from a Hebrew virgin inhabited
Arabia [illegible] the Chal-
dean Abraham had [illegible]

Abraham, and from him to Moses. When Abraham left Ur, of the Chaldees, he spoke the Chaldean language, and was understood by the people of Canaan and Egypt; consequently, the Chaldee must have been the language of Canaan and Egypt, at the time of Abraham. Notwithstanding, it is said in the translation, that Joseph spake to them by an interpreter, the word מֵלִיץ *Meelits*, does not mean an interpreter, as will be shown in the CLASSICAL JOURNAL, to which I refer the reader. Now, unless this commentator can prove, that this *one language* and *one speech*, was the Arabic, he has not any authority whatever for supposing that נָחָשׁ *Nachash* is derived from the Arabic, which he must suppose, if there were "a root in that language very nearly similar to that in the text, which casts light on the subject;" nor that any word in that language casts light on the subject. But we find that this *one language and one speech*, which was at the time of the building of Babel, the universal, the only language; was the *Babylonish or Chaldean Hebrew*, which as above, took its name from Eber; and descended pure from the beginning of the kingdom of Babel, at the time of Cush, the grandson of Noah; and continued to the end of that monarchy. From which it is undeniably evident, that the Hebrew was the language spoken by Noah, and the Antediluvian patriarchs;

consequently that, in which God spake to Adam, before the Arabic, or any other language was in existence.

This writer says, that " a root in the Arabic language, very nearly similar to that in the text, seems to cast considerable light on the subject." I hope we shall find in the course of this inquiry, that we want no light from the similarity of roots in any language, to cast light on this, or any other passage of the sacred writ. Were this the case, it certainly could not be applied here, for this writer cannot mean that خنس *Chanas*, is similar to נָחָשׁ *Nachash;* as to the literal form of the word, there is not the least similarity between them. And on the other hand, if he supposes that because خناس *khanas*, from خنس *Chanas*, which signifies a species of the ape genus, is applied by the Arabians to mean the Devil, that there is a similarity between this root and נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, because οφις *ophis*, from נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, is used to mean figuratively ο οφις ο αρχαιος, ο καλουμενος Διαβολος, *that old serpent the Devil*, it adds no force to his reasoning; it is only calling the Devil by the name of an ape, and does not prove that a *monkey* tempted Eve. The Devil is called in the Rabbinnical writings מלאך המות Malech Hammouth, *the angel of death*, יצר הרע Jezer Harang, *the corrupt nature*. Raach Hatthuma, *the unclean spirit*—Hesher, *the Ox*—Hakkelef, *the Dog*—Chamor, *an Ass*—Seir

ISSIM, *a Goat.* SAREF MEASEF, *the fiery flying serpent.* But I no where find in the writings of the Rabbies, either ancient or modern, that he is called by the name of a MONKEY. Now, if the name of the Devil in Arabic, were derived from that of a monkey, it certainly does not prove that a *monkey* was the agent that brought about the fall of man, any more than being called by the name of an *Ox*, a *Dog*, a *Goat*, or an *Ass*, in Hebrew, proves that any one of these animals was employed to bring about this woeful business.

Had this novel writer made choice of any of the above animals to have tempted Eve, as an Ox, a Dog, a Goat, or an Ass; he would at any rate have had the authority of these ancient Rabbies, to have supported him in asserting, that the Devil was called by such a name, which is not the case in any of these writings. He might, certainly, with far greater propriety, conclude that οφις, *a serpent*, or Δραχων, *a dragon*, which are used by the Septuagint, and the New Testament writers to mean *that old serpent the Devil*, were the animals that brought about the fall of man, from what we learn concerning the subtilty of those creatures. In the sense he has given, every language on earth, in which is a word that means the *Devil*, is similar to נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, in the text; but, nevertheless, like the Arabic word خنس *Chanas*, no light is cast on the subject, on this account, I believe,

if Dr. Clarke recollects himself, he will find that كاز *kaaz*, is the Arabic name for the Devil.

But if this root in Arabic, which this writer wishes to exchange for נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, were "very nearly similar to that in the text," then there would be no necessity for going to the Arabic, in order to illustrate it. I would ask, if he can point out any difference between נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, and خنس *Chanas?* if خنس *chanas*, means, to *seduce*, to *lie hid;* נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, means to *deceive, enchant*, or *fascinate;* and so is applied to the serpent, because of this peculiar property which it possesses. *Subtile observation* from *selfish motives.* See 1 Kings, 20. 33. יְנַחֲשׁוּ *Yenachashou, now the men did diligently observe*, i. e. to seduce, or flatter Ahab, for when they saw that Ahab spoke favorably of Ben-hadad, though he was the great enemy of the king of Israel, they said, *thy brother Ben-hadad.* The same occurs, Gen. 30. 27. נִחַשְׁתִּי *Nichashthi, I have learned by experience*, which should be rendered, *I have flattered, or deceived, but the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake.* That this was Jacob's true meaning, is obvious: after the very next trial, Laban deceives him again; for Jacob says, *your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages these ten times.* To enchant, 2 Kings, 21. 6. וְנִחֵשׁ *Venicheesh, and enchantments*, 2 Chron. 33. 6. —וְנִחֵשׁ *Venicheesh.*

To *divine*, Gen. 44. 5. נָחֵשׁ *Nacheeh, he divineth.* Another form of the word נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, signifies *brass*, the metal in an unmanufactured state—בַּנְחֹשֶׁת *Bannecheshet, in Brass*, 1 Kings, 7. 14.—2 Chron. 2. 14.—Exod. 31. 4.—Joshua, 22. 8.—1 Chron. 22. 14.—when it signifies brass in a manufactured state, it is thus written נְחֻשְׁתִּי *Nechushthi*, Lam. 3. 7. *my chain*—נְחֻשְׁתָּם *Nechushtham, the brass of them*, 2 Kings, 25. 13.—Jer. 52. 17.—נְחֻשְׁתָּן *Nechushthan*, i. e. *a piece of brass*—Judges, 16. 21.

But when a living serpent is signified, the word is thus written נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, Gen. 3. 1.—49. 17.—Job, 26. 13.—Psalm, 58. 4.—Numb. 21. 9. נָחָשׁ *Nachash, a serpent had bitten.*

Thus do these branches of the root נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, vary accordingly as they are applicable to things signified, and are always written in conformity to the idea intended to be given, as to *deceive*, *seduce*, *observe diligently*, *enchant*, *divine*, *brass unmanufactured*, and *brass* in a *manufactured* state; which words are all as distinctly different from each other, as the things they represent. But unless they, who attempt to interpret the Hebrew scriptures, attend to the orthography of the language, written with the true oriental vowels, which some, for want of knowing better, call points, they will find it altogether impossible to determine the true sense of scripture.

Dr. Clarke has given us a proof of the truth of this observation; he says, "We have already seen, that the New Testament writers have borrowed the word from the *Septuagint*, and that the Septuagint themselves use it in a vast variety and latitude of meaning; and surely the *ouran-outang monkey* is as likely to be the animal in question, as נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, and οφις *ophis*, are likely to mean at once a *snake*, a *crocodile*, a *hypopotamus*, *fornication*, a *chain*, a *pair of fetters*, a *piece of brass*, a *piece of steel*, a *conjuror*, for we have seen above, that all these are acceptations of the original word." By the words, "we have seen that the New Testament writers have borrowed the word from the Septuagint," we must conclude it to be the opinion of this writer, that (on account of this uncertain mode of borrowing words at random, with which he charges the New Testament writers) the New Testament is the work of man, and not inspired by the spirit of God. Here is a proof also, that he has not attended to the orthography of the language, which alone, as in all other languages, determines the true meaning and application of words. For as the most learned Septuagint have used this word, "in a vast variety and latitude of meaning," it is a proof that they were perfect masters of the Greek language, when they gave the translation of the Hebrew in that tongue. For the reason why they used "οφις *ophis* in a vast variety and latitude of meaning," was in conformity to the orthographical variation of the

Hebrew, as above, but which appears to have been neglected by this writer, and which accounts for this, and other serious mistakes in his voluminous comments.

From which it is plain, that the New Testament writers were right, had they borrowed the word from the Septuagint: and as Dr. Clarke must allow that the New Testament writers were inspired: he must also acknowledge, that this *borrowed word* οφις *ophis*, a *serpent*, is the true meaning of נָחָשׁ *Nachash*, because it is confirmed by Christ and the Apostles.

"Such a creature," continues Dr. Clarke, "answers to every part of the description in the text." But I think, from these, and the following observations, it will be acknowledged, that the *ouran-outang monkey*, does not answer to any part of the description in the text whatever. The text says, *thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field, upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.* But the *monkey* is not cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. A moment's reflection will convince any writer, that this cannot in any shape be applied to the *monkey;* so far is the *monkey* from being cursed *above all cattle, and above every beast of the field,* that we find this animal is

blessed above most of the beasts of the field, in many things, and in others, he is not inferior to any.

Following the Doctor on the ground of the letter, as applied to the *monkey*, we find that this animal accomplished the business of the fall of man; and, therefore, on that account, is cursed above every beast of the field. But we are not to affirm without scripture authority, that the serpent walked erect, or because it is absurd, to suppose this, that we are to change the serpent for a *monkey*. Neither are we authorized to say, that because the *monkey* had done this, all the rest were to be cursed, being innocent. But to be serious, this writer must necessarily prove, that the *monkey* is cursed *above all the beasts of the field*, which is altogether impossible for him to do, before he can lay any claim to it, as being the agent in the fall of man.

The second judgment on the animal is, *on thy belly thou shalt go*. This writer supposes, from the expression, ON THY BELLY THOU SHALT GO, whatever it was that tempted Eve, it must necessarily have walked erect. He is not singular as to this opinion, and being sensible that the serpent could not walk on its tail, he has endeavoured to get rid of this objection, by introducing a *monkey*. But by getting rid of one difficulty, he gets into a worse, for, as is proved above, if the *monkey* were to walk constantly on "all

fours," it could not with any degree of truth, be said that it *goes on its belly*, any more than the whole race of quadrupeds, which go on "all fours." And he is under the necessity of proving also, that the *monkey* eats dust as food *all the days of his life;* and that it accomplished the business of the fall of man without the interference of Satan, for it is not said, *and the Lord God said unto Satan,* but, expressly, *and the Lord God said unto the* SERPENT, *because* THOU *hast done this;* all which is impossible for him to do. Therefore so far the *monkey* does not answer to this part of the description in the text, as he does not go on his belly, or with his belly touching the ground, but walks upright, and sometimes to suit his own convenience, on "all fours," like other quadrupeds.

There is a word in the original of this passage, the true meaning of which has escaped the notice of this writer, and which has not, when truly rendered, the exact meaning it has in the translation, this is the word גְּחֹנְךָ *Gechonke,* rendered *belly.* For the satisfaction of the reader, I believe, I have examined all the passages in which the words occur, that mean the belly. Numb. ch. 5. 22. בֶּטֶן—ch. 25. 8. Deut. 28. 11. 53. קֵבָתָהּ—Judges, 3. 21. בִּבְטְנוֹ—ver. 22. ch. 3. 12.—1 Kings, 7. 20.—Judges, 15. 2. 35. 19. 17.—ch. 20. 15. 20. 23.—ch. 32. 18, 19.—ch. 40. 16. Psalm, 17. 14.—22. 10.—31. 9.—58. 3.—132.

11. Prov. 13. 25.—ch. 18. 8. 20.—ch. 20. 27. 30. 22. 18.—ch. 26. 22. Cantic. 5. 14. סַעְיָו—Jonah, 1. 17.—ch. 2. 1. Dan. 2. 32. Cantic. 7. 2. בִּטְנֵךְ—Isaiah, 46. 3. Jer. 1. 5. Ezek. 3. 3. Jonah, 2. 2. Mic. 6. 7. Hab. 3. 16. Jer. 51. 34. כְּרֵשׂוֹ—In all these passages, which are used to signify the *belly*, we never meet with the word נְחֹנֵךְ *Gechonke*. I believe, it is only to be found in one place in the Bible, besides the above in Genesis, viz. Lev. 11. 42. *whatsoever goeth upon the belly*, which though it is not altogether contrary to the sense of the passage, yet this branch of the root calls for a different mode of expression. I shall, therefore, say a few words on this verse, which will lead us to the true understanding and application of the above word in Genesis. גִּיחוֹן *Gechon*, is a very ancient word, used among the Chaldeans before the language obtained the title of Hebrew; it was in use from the beginning to the going forth of the children of Israel, but when they were established in the land of Canaan, it was discontinued by the sacred writers, having become too familiar in their verbal communications, by being quoted and applied in a way of sensual levity; and the noun עֲקַלְתּוֹן *Akallaathoun*, was adopted, which means *perverse, wrong, crooked.* Hab. 1. 4. מְעֻקָּל *wrong*, the Septuagint διεραμμενον, and the Vulgate *perversum.* Isaiah, 27. 1. נָחָשׁ עֲקַלָּתוֹן *crooked serpent.* Job, 26. 13. the Septuagint σκολων, Vulgate *tortuosum.* It means to *bow, bend, prostrate, incline, incurvation, crooked.*

As a substantive, *inclination*, it is used in this sense by the Rabbies, and by the Targumists, וְנָחִיו, *and he bowed.*[1] נָחֲנוּ, *they are bent.*[2] נָחָו, Mordecai did *not bow.*[3] נָחֲנִיו, *bowed themselves.*[4] וְנִגְחוּ, *and bow down.*[5] It means one who is fond of indulging the appetite of any kind, to excess, literally the sensual appetite, one who has a natural inclination to indulge in sensuality. It must be evident to every Hebraist, that the word נְחוֹן *Gechoun*, cannot be applied to mean the *belly;* אַלּוּף *Allouph, instruction*, comes from אָלַף *Alleeph*, to *teach*, or *guide;* so נְחוֹן *Gechon, inclination, propensity*, comes from נָחַן *Gacheen*, to *bow*, or *incline*, to the most external inordinate concupiscences of the flesh. The above observations will be allowed by the learned, to prove that the word נְחוֹן *Gechon*, should be rendered as it is by the ancient Jewish writers, who at that time must have perfectly understood the true meaning, thus, to *bow, bend, incline, desire*, which, as it has respect to the indulgence of sensual pleasure, is properly used to signify the disorderly gratification of that internal desire, by comparing it to that most sensual animal, the serpent.

I now come to apply this to the passage before us, viz. אֲשֶׁר גְּחֹנְךָ תֵלֵךְ rendered, *on thy belly thou shalt go.* תֵלֵךְ *Theeleeke* literally, *thou wilt go* or *pursue*, Gen. 24. 4. 39. Psalm, 97. 3. Jer. 48. 2. the clause

[1] Targum, Jon. 1 Kings, 18. 42. [2] Targ. Jerus. Psalm, 20. 9.
[3] Ibid. Esth 3. 2. [4] Ibid. [5] Ibid. Psalm, 45. 6.

will then truly read consistently with the understanding of the original writer, as confirmed in the writings of the learned Doctors among the Jews, to the time of their dispersion, *after thy desire thou wilt follow*, or agreeably to English syntax, *thou wilt follow after thy inclination.* Now, as it appears that נָחָשׁ *Nachash* was a *serpent*, and not a *monkey*, and that the *serpent* goes as it did from the beginning, the words, *on thy belly shalt thou go*, could not be intended as a curse on that animal; and as they could not be applied to the *monkey*, because he does not go on his belly any more than the rest of the quadrupeds, they must have been used by those primæval people to signify something to which they could be applied.

The third sentence on this animal is, *Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life*; but this assertion concerning the *ouran outang monkey*, does not answer to this part of the description in the text, "for he does not eat dust," or live upon dust; it is universally known that he lives upon vegetables and fruits. And it is also worthy of remark, that this creature is rather nice in the choice of his food, for he picks out what is good, and throws the bad away. It must be allowed that there is not any thing nutritive in dust, that were an animal to eat the dust as food, it would, instead of supporting life, lie as an inert mass in the stomach, and soon produce death. It is also confirmed by naturalists, that he will not eat the dust at all any more

than other creatures, therefore this cannot be considered as a curse above any other beast or reptile; as it might, with more propriety, be applied to moles, worms, and many other creatures that burrow in the earth, so that the *monkey* answers to no one of these essentials. Neither does the monkey gather the fruit from the ground, "which is the reason," says this writer, "that they are literally obliged to eat dust," for they mount the trees, and there gather and eat the fruit. Had this been the case, that they were literally obliged to eat the dust, because it might adhere to the fruit, when it fell upon the ground, all other creatures that gather the fruit from the ground might also be said to eat the dust as well as the monkey.

But this author says, "he (the monkey) was endued with the gift of speech, for a conversation is here related between him and the woman," and hence he infers, that the *monkey* was a more likely creature to speak than the *serpent*. It does not follow, that because "a conversation is related between the *serpent* and the woman," that either the *serpent* or the *monkey* could speak. In order to refute this assertion, we must suffer the scripture to produce the like examples, and yet it must be allowed that such creatures did not, nor were ever supposed to have had the gift of speech. He forgets that the sacred writers communicated information agreeably to the

custom of the East, by giving language to animals, as well as language and action to inanimate nature. Job, 12. 7. *But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee. Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee, and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.* Here we are told that the beasts, the fowls, and the fishes, were capable of speaking, of giving answers, and were also said to be capable of teaching man: nay, the earth itself is said to have the power of teaching when asked so to do. But no man on reflection will say that this is "a relation of a fact capable of a satisfactory explanation," according to the letter.

It is generally allowed by those best capable of judging, viz. those who have attended to the anatomy of this creature, that according to the construction of his organs, he is farther removed from the power of speech than any other quadruped. On being informed that an ingenious and learned gentleman, Mr. Mason Good, in some lectures he had delivered at the Surry Institution, had introduced this subject, and had given a variety of satisfactory proof, that this creature never was intended by the Creator to articulate; I applied to him, and he kindly afforded me the following information:

"That the natural language of the *monkey*, notwithstanding the general resemblance of his organs to

those of man, appears to be more confined than that of other quadrupeds. Buffon, Danbentez, and other naturalists, and every comparative anatomist who has accurately examined his vocal organs, has declared him to be physically incapable of articulation, from the peculiarity of a bag, in some species of the animal single, in others double, immediately connected with the upper part of the larynx, and into which the air is driven as it ascends from the lungs through the trachea, instead of being driven into the glottis, where alone it will acquire an articulate power. From this bag it afterwards passes into the mouth by a variety of small apertures, or fissures, by which the whole of its force, and consequently of its oral effect, is lost."

This peculiarity of formation appears first to have been noticed by Galen, but for the most correct account of it, we are indebted to Camper, who in a paper published in the Philosophical Transactions for 1779, minutely describes it as it exists in the *ouran outang monkey*.

Hence the *ouran outang monkey*, though more capable than any other animal of imitating the actions of men, is far less capable of imitating his voice, than the parrot, or the jack-daw. While he approaches nearer to his form, he is further removed from his speech than any other quadruped.

This commentator is hard put to it indeed, to make the *monkey* answer to the "description given in the text," and after all his labor, he cannot make it go "ON ALL FOURS." He seems to have no conception of the sanctity of scripture! or why the scriptures are called *sacred!* he reads them as an "historical relation of facts, capable of a satisfactory explanation," on which account he is under the necessity of leaving a great part involved in obscurity, or to use his own words, to "leave the passage among those which are inscrutible;" and he tells us, "if it be an allegory, no attempt should be made to explain it." The scriptures contain not only an account of literal things as historically related, but by this historical relation the sacred writers conveyed things of a spiritual nature, as is confirmed by the Prophets, by Christ, and by the Apostles. This sense, by a relative connection of things chosen from animate and inanimate nature, and applied to the mind of man, at the same time that it gave them a most comprehensive view of the knowledge of all natural things, it inculcated the principles of true religion, and constituted the sanctity of scripture. On this ground only the scriptures can be called sacred; otherwise they would be no more sacred than natural history, or than the history of any country.

The fourth declaration is, *and I will put enmity between thee and the woman.* Here, without contro-

versy, we are at issue; there is not any enmity put in man against the *monkey*, any more than there is against any other harmless beast; they are even kept for amusement by many people. The monkey excites pleasantry, but never inspires us with fear, whereas the very figure of a serpent fills us with horror. I appeal to this writer, and to all the world, whether there is not a deadly enmity planted in man against the serpent above every other animal. How then can he say, that the monkey "answers to every part of the description in the text?"

I am really ashamed to intrude so much on the time of the reader, by attending to the views of this writer, on a subject too absurd for criticism; but I have, as I promised, followed him on his own ground, viz. that of the letter. And from what has been said, it must, if conviction be not stifled, have its due weight in convincing him, that the *serpent* is far superior to the *monkey*, or any other creature in subtilty, agreeably to the scripture; and therefore a more proper subject to be used by the sacred writers, for conveying their views, and for impressing the mind with the nature of that predominant sensual principle in men, of which it was the most proper representative in outward nature. I have also shown, that the *monkey* does not "answer to any part of the description in the text." Yet if we were to go no farther than this outward figure of the

serpent, many might still remain in a state of uncertainty respecting this transaction. If nothing more had been intended, than a "simple relation of historical facts, capable of a satisfactory explanation," the whole sanctity of scripture would be gone at once. It would be of little consequence whether it were a *serpent* or a *monkey* by which our first parents fell in such case, only the latter is better calculated to sharpen the wit of Deists, who are generally disposed to ridicule the scriptures. From which consideration it appears, that it is only contending to change one animal for another, and were we to stop among these beggarly representative figures, we should imitate the old Egyptians, who quarrelled with each other because they did not worship the same serpent.

Bryant, the learned inquirer into the Mythology of the Heathens, does not appear satisfied with the definition, which has been given for so many ages concerning this transaction. He thinks there is something still to be attained with regard to the origin of this ancient veneration for the serpent; otherwise he would not have said, "It would be a noble undertaking, and very edifying in its consequences, if some person would go through with the history of the serpent."[1] I am of this learned author's opinion; but if we "go through with the history of the serpent,"

[1] Bryant, vol. ii. p. 219.

as far as is necessary for our present design, or the true theological meaning and application, as understood by the primæval people, which is the meaning of this learned writer: it must be done by attending to the scriptures. Neither words, nor roots, preserved either in Arabic, or in any other language, can be of use here, no information from ancient writers can be allowed as sufficient authority to ascertain the true meaning. Profane customs can only be introduced as a guide to direct us to a rational understanding of these things, when they agree with the manners of the people in those remote ages, as recorded in the Bible. The proof already given of the high veneration which the ancient pagan nations had for the worship of the *serpent*, carries that conviction with it which must prevail on every thinking man to conclude, that something of a recondite nature was understood by the original writer in these passages. I shall therefore endeavour to give, in the language and obvious meaning of the Bible, what appears beyond the possibility of contradiction, to have been the original meaning as understood by the first race of men. We shall, I trust, have sufficient reason to conclude that they were not so ignorant as has been supposed by Deists, and those who go no farther than the shell of scripture; but that they had far higher views of this transaction, and yet consistently with what is said concerning this animal, introduced by the sacred writers in the fall of man.

Dr. Clarke says, " The whole account is either a simple narrative of facts, or it is an allegory. If it be an historical relation, its literal meaning should be sought out: if it be an *allegory*, no attempt should be made to explain it, as it would require a direct revelation to ascertain the sense in which it should be understood." What! if it be an allegory, is no attempt to be made to explain it? Have we then arrived at a period when it is asserted that we are not to attempt to explain, or understand the allegorical meaning of the scriptures, and that it is impossible to do it without " a direct revelation?"

Are all those numerous allegories, figures, emblems, symbols, or representations, we meet with, which are given for our instruction and edification, involved in such clouds of darkness, that they are not to be understood?—What should we say of the divine revelator, if he had given his word to man in such an enigmatical way, so obscure and ambiguous, " that no attempt should be made to explain it." Are we to reject any part of the scripture, under the delusive notion that there is not any explanation to be given concerning those passages which are allegorical? It is expressly said, that Agar was mount Sinai in Arabic. The apostle says, that the things under the law were to be understood allegorically, Gal. 4. 21. 24. *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? for it is written, that Abraham*

had two sons, which things are an allegory, for these are the two covenants, the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth bondage which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabic.

We are encouraged in scripture to search; *search the scriptures*, to learn to *understand the dark sayings of the wise, to receive the instruction of wisdom.* By dark sayings and parables, Solomon evidently refers to the first ages. David does the same, but he informs us, that he had gained a knowledge of the meaning of those dark sayings of old. Psalm 78. 2. *I will open my mouth in a parable. I will utter dark sayings of old.* 49. 9. *I will open my mouth in dark sayings upon the harp.* Surely the Psalmist did not mean that he would utter dark sayings of old, which he did not understand, for he addresses low and high, rich and poor, saying, *my mouth shall speak of wisdom.* It is written, *without a parable* (allegory, or similitude) *spake he not unto them.* Now if we search the scriptures for an elucidation of these parables, allegories, or similitudes, as we are directed to do, we undoubtedly shall be able to gain a knowledge of their meaning. The scriptures alone, without "a direct revelation to ascertain the sense in which they are to be understood," will explain them.

If all the creatures were to be cursed on account of

the transgression of man, either through the *serpent* or the *monkey*, how on this ground are we to believe that the divine being is a God of impartial justice, to curse the innocent for the crime of the guilty? Again, were it the Devil that inspired either the *serpent* or the *monkey*, where was the necessity for this observation, *now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field;* as in such case it must have been Satan and not the serpent that transgressed the divine command. But this is plainly denied in the address to the serpent, viz. *dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life*, which certainly could not be applied to Satan, because he is an immortal spirit. This is not a " simple relation of a literal fact capable of a satisfactory explanation." The curse on the ground of reason, and the justice and wisdom of God, could not be applied to a literal *serpent*, or a *monkey*, because, had this been the case, the creature must have been under the necessity of committing this crime through the mighty influence of a superior power, which could not be resisted. We may be told, that these are some of the dark things of God, and that we are not to inquire into what we cannot comprehend. Thus ignorance is substituted for piety. To such I answer, these things are revealed for our information, and there certainly can be nothing dark or hidden in what is revealed, otherwise it ceases to be a revelation.

Luther complains, that none of the ancient fathers or bishops, who were men eminent for knowledge and piety, had explained this passage as it deserved. He says, that the principal articles of the doctrine of the gospel are contained in the history of the fall of man. But the ancient fathers and bishops explained the words, *he shall bruise thy head*, to refer to Christ. Therefore Luther saw that there was still something, which was not explained concerning the serpent. Something more is to be understood here, says Witsius, than merely restricting this address of the Deity to a beast incapable of reason, and intelligent only in its order above other beasts.

The ancient Hebrews, according to the custom of the east, spake and wrote hyperbolically when they said, *the cities were fortified unto heaven*, by which nothing more was intended than that the walls were so high, that it was impossible to scale them. So that in this sense they were the same in effect, as if they had been built unto heaven, had such a thing been possible. This method of speaking and writing allegorically was so customary in those ancient times among all the eastern nations, and it was so well understood by habitual communication, that the sacred writings abound with allegory and metaphor. In Judges, ch. ix. when the people of Shechem had made Abimelech king; Jotham spake to them metaphorically, in order to convince them of their folly

and injustice; and informed them that the trees went forth to choose a king, when a personification is introduced, and the trees converse with each other. But this is not "a relation of a fact capable of a satisfactory explanation," agreeably to the literal acceptation of things, or agreeably to the letter; for it must be admitted that the trees could not speak, it is contrary to that order which God has established in nature. Sampson spake to the enemies of Israel in this allegorical way. Nathan came to David with an allegory; and Joah, king of Israel, sent a figurative message to Ahaziah, king of Judah. The prophet Isaiah spake to the people in allegory when he said, "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them; the cow and the bear shall feed, the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand to the den of the cockatrice." Ezekiel spake to the people in allegory, when he informed them that he was shown the unclean beasts pourtrayed upon the wall in the chamber of imagery; which was an allegorical representation of the abominations of the house of Israel.

This was again confirmed by divine authority when God condescended to show the apostle all manner of *unclean creatures* which descended from heaven. That they signified, not only all the gentile nations,

but, agreeably to the declaration of the apostle when he was instructed to know the meaning, he saw that the *unclean creatures* signified the *unclean affections* of man, which were to be purified by *fearing God and working righteousness.* For it is evident, that by the *clean beasts*, neither the nation of the Jews, nor the gentile nations were signified, but such among them as lived in uncleanness, or in unclean affections, and who were to be cleansed from their filthiness, by redemption and newness of life, or in the apostle's words, *I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, be that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.* We are also told by Rabbinical writers, that the Messiah should speak in metaphors, which was true, for when he came, it is said, *without a parable spake he not unto them.*

The learned Maimonides says, in the preface to his *More Novechim*, that " this was the method by which, in ancient times, they instructed the people, and which at that period was well understood by them." Now if the ancient wise men and poets communicated knowledge by figure and metaphor, as appears above, and as is also known to us from the writings of that master of figure Æsop; is it not as reasonable to suppose, that by the serpent's conversing with Eve, something more is intended to be conveyed to posterity, than that which appears on the

face of the letter; as to conclude that trees literally held a conversation together which of them should govern the rest.

The literal interpretation of the first part of Genesis, has been involved in doubts and difficulties for ages. Celsus, one of the first opposers of the Gospel, treats with satirical merriment the history of Adam's formation, and of Eve made from his rib, of the commands that were given them, and of the serpent's cunning in being able to evade the effect of those commands. Origen, in answer to him, says, that he does not treat the subject with candor, but hides what he ought to have made known, viz. that all this was to be understood in a figurative sense, not giving the words, which would have convinced him that they were spoken allegorically. Origen also replies to Celsus, referring him to their own writers, theologians and philosophers, who frequently communicated their doctrines in this representative style: instances of which he gives from Hesiod and Plato, which were all interpreted in a figurative sense by their followers, and concludes by observing, that it is unreasonable to deny to Moses the possession of truth, under the veil of allegory, which was then the practice of all the eastern nations.[1]

[1] Cont. Cels. l. iv. p. 189.

Eusebius[1] informs us, that there were two sorts of Jews, the learned and the unlearned. The unlearned were confined to the literal observance of the law, but the learned were admitted to the contemplation of a more refined philosophy. That the interpreters explained to them the figurative sense; which he confirms, not only by the authority of Aristobulus and Philo, but by the constant practice of that strict sect of the Jews, the Essenes, who always followed this allegorical manner of expounding, which was in the days of Aristobulus, 500 years before Christ, called ancient.

Philo[2] says, it is a manifest proof of ignorance to suppose that God really was employed six days in the production of things. And Origen[3] says, what rational man will believe, that the first, second, and third days, and the evenings and mornings, passed without the sun, moon, and stars; and the first evening without the heavens? Who so silly as to suppose, that God, like an husbandman, planted a garden, and in it a real tree of life, to be tasted by corporeal teeth? or that the knowledge of good and evil was to be obtained by eating the fruit of another tree? and as to the voice of God, walking in the garden, and Adam hiding himself from him among the trees,

[1] Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. 8. [2] Vid. Sixt. Senens, Biblioth, l. 5. p. 338. [3] Orig. Philocal. c. i. p. 12.

no man can doubt but that these things are to be understood *figuratively*, and not literally, to signify certain mysteries, or recondite senses.

St. Austin, in the preface to his twelve books of the literal interpretation of the three first chapters of Genesis, says: No Christian will say that they are not to be understood figuratively, when he recollects that the Apostle declares, how all these things happened to them in a figure. Philo explained all the allegories of the Mosaic law, and in a treatise on the formation of the world, according to Moses' account of it, he says, "these are not fabulous tales, such as the poets make use of, but they are figurative descriptions, leading us to allegorical and recondite senses, to which, if any one rationally attends, he will see that the serpent is used for the emblem of *sensual pleasure*."

The learned Rabbi, Maimonides,[1] says, that the serpent has relation to the mind of man, and that in the account that is given of the creation, the ancient Drs. from the time of Moses, held that these things in the first chapters of Genesis were not to be literally understood. Clemens Alexandrinus, who lived in the second century, was also of the same opinion.

[1] In More Novechim, ch. xxix. p. 265, 273.

In the Rabbinical work called ZEROR HAMMOR, it is said, "the adversary, which is the *serpent, satan, and corrupt nature,* who by his smooth words, smoother than oil, mislead our first parents, and entices all creatures to him, in the pursuit of *sensual delight.*" Also in NISHMATH CHASIM,[1] "For Messias will purify the uncleanliness of the serpent, by which is signified, that Messias shall destroy the serpent." In the Avodath Hakkodesh, it is written, "The *serpent* that is the Devil is the *evil part.*"

In the work, *Shene Luchoth Habberith,* it is said, "The evil nature, or *the corrupt nature* (as in Zeror Hammor) *he* is Satan; *Melech hamoth,* the angel of death. And again, in the Zeror Hammor, because Jacob tarried on his way, he was bit by the old serpent, which is יצר הרע, *the corrupt nature.*

We read in the Revelation, ch. xiii. 11. *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.* This is not "an historical fact capable of a satisfactory explanation," according to the literal meaning of the words. Since the commencement of the christian æra, we have never heard of *dragons* and *serpents* that could speak. This is evidently an allegory, but is "no attempt to be made to explain it without a

[1] Fol. 184. 359.

new revelation?" It must be obvious to every one, that this was applied to the apostle, agreeably to ancient custom, to signify that principle of circumspection in man, which is capable of putting on a cloak of hypocrisy to deceive or ensnare those, who are unsuspecting.

The ancient fathers knew, that the history of this transaction did not contain " a simple relation of facts capable of a satisfactory explanation," according to the literal acceptation of things. This will appear evident from what follows. In the 15th verse, it is said, " *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman.*" That the whole is allegorical is plain; of what consequence could it be to man for him to hate a *serpent,* or for enmity to be put between man and the *serpent?* or between man and the *monkey?* for though man naturally hates a serpent more than any other creature, yet this would be of very little consequence, as he is not troubled with that creature. This enmity here spoken of, which was to be put between the seed of the serpent and the woman, will be best explained by the apostle, for it cannot be " a simple relation of a fact capable of a satisfactory explanation." It is asserted by him, as well as by the ancient Jewish doctors, to mean the carnal sensual mind of man, which is enmity against God. Rom. 8. 7. *because the carnal mind is enmity against God.* Ephes. 2. 15, 16. *having abolished in his flesh the enmity,*

that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. And agreeably to this style of writing and speaking, in the days of our Lord, this description of men are called a generation of *vipers*, or *serpents*. But what puts this matter out of the reach of contradiction, and proves it to be written agreeably to the custom of the primeval people, who introduced the *serpent* as a symbol to represent the wisdom, intelligence, subtility, or prudence of the sensual principle in man, is that of the apostle, 2 Cor. 11. 2. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled *Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.* Thus does the apostle give the true meaning of the allegory, signifying in plain language, that Eve was beguiled, or seduced from her native simplicity, by giving way to the gratification of the sensual principle, signified by that sensual animal, by which improper indulgence they disobeyed the divine command.

But this writer may say, they were created perfect, without sin, how then could they be induced by the sensual principle to transgress? I answer. There is no evil in the sensual principle, Adam was created with a *sensual principle*, or with a power of enjoying all the pleasures of the senses; viz. with those feelings and sensations without which man would not be man. It was the abuse of these sensual affections, that gave

birth to sin in our first parents, and which constitutes sin at this day.

This was the prohibited fruit of which they were not to eat. This was the fear which Paul expressed, viz. so, or *in like manner, your minds should be corrupted, as the mind of Eve was corrupted by the serpent,* i. e. the sensual passions represented by the serpent: and this was the sense in which the Corinthians understood him, otherwise the comparison would not have been at all applicable, unless they had understood the serpent to be the symbol of the sensual principle in man, as the most ancient Jews did before them.

Thus it appears that it has been the custom of the most primeval people, and of the ancients before and from the time of Moses, to consider these passages as containing a figurative description of the sensual passions in man, by comparing them to those natural propensities in the serpent which is the most sensual, as well as the most subtle beast in creation.

Every clause confirms the settled opinion of the ancient christian fathers, and doctors among the Jews, that the whole account is *allegorical. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,* but this is not the true reading, the masculine pronoun singular of the third person occurs, הוּא there is no neutral pronoun in Hebrew: it reads, *he shall bruise thy head.*

I suppose this writer will admit, that this is not "a simple relation of a fact capable of a satisfactory explanation," on the literal ground he has taken; and that these words convey something which does not appear, nor can possibly be understood, in the letter. How in the name of common sense can it be said that the *monkey* shall bruise the heel of man? monkies are never remarked for any such thing, whereas the serpent has scarcely any other means of defence, than by coming behind and biting the heel. To come to the point, this writer must necessarily admit, that this was the first manifestation of the mercy of God to man in his fallen state, that this was the first promise of the coming of the great deliverer, the שִׁילֹה Shilo, the Lord of David, the Immanuel of the prophets, and the redeemer of men. Now, if these words concerning the serpent were to be understood as literally as this gentleman has taken them, and that this was not a figure, or allegory, taken from animal nature, where the propensities of the most sensual beast in creation are figuratively applied to man in a natural state, being in perpetual enmity to the seed, or offspring of Christ,[1] the serpent bruiser in man: he is under the necessity of showing, that this was all fulfilled literally. For as it must be allowed that this refers to Christ, the serpent must of course have literally bitten his heel, and he must also have literally bruised the

[1] 2 Acts, 16. 28, 29.

head of the serpent. And even then, this would bring us no nearer to the meaning, because thousands since the time of Christ, have literally bruised the heads of serpents, and thousands have been bitten by them; so that this would apply to man in general, instead of Christ. Therefore as the words, *he shall bruise thy head*, cannot possibly be literally understood, and as all christians must necessarily believe that they were originally applied to Christ; I leave it for them to judge, whether we are to say with Dr. Clarke, that we are not to look for an explanation, or credit the Apostle, who not only admits it to be an allegory, but also explains it, by applying this prophesy of bruising the serpent's head to Christ; who was to bruise this principle, i. e. the head of the serpent in man. I say, every clause confirms the settled opinion of the ancient christian fathers and doctors among the Jews, that the whole account is allegorical. The allegory is also plain from the words, *dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life*, for as is shown above, these words cannot be applied to Satan, because he is an immortal spirit, and does not eat dust. But as the serpent in going over the dust and burning sands, having his head next to the earth, unavoidably takes the dust into his mouth; so the life or delight of the sensual passions are represented by the serpent, as closely connected with, and moving in the dust or earth of the body: they being placed the very lowest

of all the passions in the order or composition of the internal man. They are evidently applied to man in a state of nature, signifying that his delight or life is in the low gratification of the sensual passions, which are meant by the *dust.* In this allegorical sense, the word is used throughout the scripture—Amos, 2. 7. *That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek, and a man and his father will go in unto the same maid, to profane my holy name.*

Hence it appears that this was the belief of the most ancient people before the time of Moses, of the learned Jews to the time of Christ—of Christ himself and the Apostles. And lastly, as it was the universal opinion of the venerable fathers and bishops who succeeded them; no man can be justified in saying, that " if it be an allegory, no attempt should be made to explain it, as it would require a direct revelation to ascertain the sense in which it should be understood;" it has been so understood and explained from Adam, to the establishment of the Christian church for the first three hundred years after Christ. It has only been involved in darkness and uncertainty from the time when men began to understand this part of scripture, as " a simple relation of facts capable of a literal explanation," instead of a representative figure, taken from that creature in whom the natural subtilty

of the sensual principle was more apparent, than in any other beast of the field, and applied by those wise ancients to signify that principle in man (as above).

From the above observations, it appears manifest, that the primeval people first worshipped God in purity, and understood that all visible things in nature represented something in man, as is evident from the sacred Scriptures which I have shown in the prophets, where this is expressly said to be the case, and which will not admit of a contradiction without denying sacred writ. And in this wise application of visible things, and of the passions and propensities of the animal to the passions and propensities in man, consists the wisdom and sanctity of the divine writings. But in process of time, by little and little, their descendants departed from the purity of divine worship, when they began to prefer sensuality to innocence, and instead of looking on the things in outward nature as copies of natural propensities in themselves, which served as visible indexes to remind them of the necessity of restraining inordinate passion, showing them the beauty of virtue and innocence; these representative things were worshipped, and their figures set up in temples: hence the origin of idolatry. Like streams issuing from a pure fountain, which are rendered more turbid the farther they are from their original source: so the Mosaic history concerning the CREATION OF THE FIRST PEOPLE—

of PARADISE—the FALL OF MAN—the SERPENT—and NOAH'S FLOOD, which are plain and easily understood when the above-mentioned style is attended to, has been rendered obscure and unintelligible, by forsaking the obvious application of these things, in which consists the true sanctity of the scriptures; and by supposing what is plainly contradicted, that these things were "capable of a satisfactory explanation" by the letter of scripture, which is proved to be altogether impossible, and contrary to the obvious meaning of the sacred writers.

This style of writing was preferred among the ancient Grecians. Pegasus, or the flying horse, was feigned by them to be the winged horse of Perseus; this has been received as a fable, but it is not so, as there is a significative reality in the object, and as it is true in its application. Perseus was a man famous for wisdom and understanding; he was industrious in applying his mind to the invention of arts and sciences, which were useful to man: for that reason, his understanding was compared to the horse, on account of its utility to man, and its quick transition from place to place. Thus the horse of Perseus is said to have broken open a fountain with his hoof, and that this fountain was afterwards consecrated to the nine Muses; by which we understand, agreeably to this significative mode of speech, that the hoof of the horse meant the industry, and the winged horse

the understanding of Perseus. So that though this has been received as a fable, it is a beautiful allegory, and as such, had a real existence, agreeably to the style of the eastern languages, and the method by which the ancients communicated knowledge to posterity.

The understanding is the rudder of the mind; it makes a swift transition from one place to another, it guides and directs all our actions, and on this account is of the greatest utility to man: in like manner these ancient people, to prefigure the understanding by a similar likeness in animal nature, as is customary throughout the Scriptures, in their emblematical representations, gave wings to the horse, that animal being the most useful to man, and the swiftest of all others, if we calculate on time and distance, and hence a fit subject to represent the qualities of the understanding.

Now, after all this author has said concerning the necessity of a "new revelation to explain this allegory," we find to a demonstration, that *it is an allegorical expression founded on a comparison of things in nature, with the passions and affections in man; not according to notion or opinion, but confirmed by other parts of scripture, and that this circumstance concerning the fall of man, conveyed to us in the style of allegory, agreeably to the custom of the eastern nations,*

impresses the mind with a more rational view of the real cause of that departure from the commands of God, and gives us higher and more dignified sentiments concerning the sanctity of the scriptures than we can possibly have by understanding that a literal serpent, or a monkey tempted Eve; consequently his assertion concerning the "necessity of a new revelation to prove it an allegory," falls to the ground.

I refer the reader to the questions asked by this writer, where he says, "how, and by what agency was this brought about? Here is the great mystery: I appeal to all persons who have read the various comments that have been written on the Mosaic account, whether they have yet been satisfied on this part of the subject, though convinced of the fact. Who was the *serpent?* of what *kind,* in *what way* did he seduce the first happy pair? These are questions which remain yet to be answered."

Referring then to these questions, I may be allowed to appeal to all persons who have read the comment he has given, "whether they have been satisfied with what he has said on this part of the subject?" whether they can give credit to his assertion, that the *monkey* was the agent that brought about the fall of man? I believe he stands alone, the solitary promulgator of *some new thing,* which has no tendency to give us a rational view of this transaction; neither does it

answer to any one "part of the description in the text." And as to his inquiry, "in what way did he seduce the first happy pair?" though he says, "this is a question which remains yet to be answered," he has given us no answer but what is given in the text, viz. *that it was by eating the forbidden fruit.*

I have, however, in what is advanced in these pages, scrupulously abided by the meaning of the original word. And in showing that the singular properties of this beast were applied by the inspired writers to those principles in man in a state of nature, I have suffered the scriptures to prove, that *this* was the "kind" of serpent which was the agent in the fall of man, and that in *this way* he "seduced the first happy pair." The scripture is my authority, which is also confirmed by the universal consent of all the ancient Hebrews, and by the venerable fathers and bishops of the first Christian churches (as above). I appeal to all persons, if this view of the serpent be not calculated to satisfy the most obstinate objector, who, as he feels those propensities in himself which are prefigured in outward nature by the *serpent*, must necessarily feel his mind impressed with the wisdom of these ancient people, and with the truth and sanctity of the scriptures.

I now ask this gentleman in his own words, whether his assertion concerning the monkey, is

"such as becomes the oracles of God;" are these reflections of his, "properly inductive reasonings on the facts stated, or the doctrines delivered;" how is he justified in saying, "through the flimsy, futile, and false dealing of the immense herd of *Spiritualizers*, *Metaphor-men*, and *Allegorists*, pure religion has been disgraced:" when, as is proved above, a great part of the scriptures are written in *allegory or metaphor*. What is more calculated to bring pure religion into disgrace, or to assist the Deist in defaming the scriptures, than supposing that a *monkey* was the agent employed in the fall of man?

It may probably be expected that some proof should be given, that a great part of the scriptures are written in this allegorical style, by which, things in outward nature were chosen, and applied by the inspired writers to signify the passions and affections in man: to illustrate truth by the application of external things, which bore some resemblance in their nature, to the subject introduced; and which only can lead us to a true knowledge of the sanctity of scripture.

Therefore for the satisfaction of those, who are desirous of seeing something of the ancient method of communicating information to the mind by means of sensible objects, as is the case throughout the scriptures: I refer the reader to the CLASSICAL and BIBLICAL JOURNAL, where it is shown from the

scripture that a great part of the sacred volume cannot be understood unless this be attended to. And that this emblematical representation, by figures chosen from nature to signify the passions and affections of the mind, was well understood by the patriarchs and the prophets, from the beginning of time to the end of the Israelitish church.

THE UNITY OF GOD.

It certainly is a matter of the first importance to have proper views of the object of our adoration. To enter into a description of that ineffable being who spake, and the universe was created, would be presumption. We cannot define what is not in the power of mortals to comprehend; but as much as God has revealed of himself in the divine human person of Christ, the promised Shilo and true Messiah, is within the grasp of our understanding.

In every age since the time of the council of Nice, the doctrine of the Trinity has been held forth by those who have been esteemed sound in their views of this great essential of faith. That there is a Trinity IN the divine nature, no one can deny in truth, but it appears that those who have hitherto contended for a trinity of persons, have supposed a trinity OUT of the divine nature. Here has arisen the objection

concerning a plurality of Gods, a charge which those who call themselves Unitarians, always bring against the defenders of the divine Trinity. But to worship a Trinity OUT of the divine nature, is certainly not consistent with the scriptures, nor with the doctrine of the Church of England. Those who worship a Trinity *out* of the divine nature, or three distinct persons co-eval, co-existent, and co-eternal with each other, all partaking of the essential principles of Deity, do not worship *one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity*, according to the scriptures, but *confound the persons, and divide the substance.* But if we worship a Trinity IN the divine nature, "then the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is all one: *the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Spirit eternal, and yet they are not three eternals, three incomprehensibles, three uncreates, three Almighties; but one.*"

Those, on the other hand, who maintain the unity of the divine Being, reject a Trinity IN the divine nature, and do not in their addresses personify the Deity, must necessarily attempt to worship an *unknown God;* like the Jews of old, *they worship they know not what,* an infinitely extended metaphysical being, like infinite space, which cannot possibly be an object of worship. An essence cannot exist but in some form, therefore to address a divine being,

or essence, without that being existing in a form, must be to address a non-entity. Such, consequently, cannot worship a God at all; it is a vain phantasm, an airy appearance; *it* is a God of their own forming, which only appears in their imagination. But if they have any object of their worship, they then must attempt to personify the infinite and incomprehensible essence of Deity, or the Father, to the exclusion of the person of Christ; such worshippers are truly followers of the Sabellian heresy. This was also the doctrine of Arius, or anti-christ, by which he caused a schism in the church, but the great body of christians at that day, rejected this heresy, by which we learn that *one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity,* was the doctrine of the apostolic churches.

To confirm the doctrine of three persons, or a plurality of Gods, Dr. Clarke attempts to prove that the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim,* God, is a plural noun, which he says, "is certainly the plural form of אֵל *el.* As this plurality appears in so many parts of the sacred writings to be confined to *three* persons, hence the doctrine of the Trinity." But being aware that this noun is joined with a verb singular, he defines his subject as follows. "The verb בָּרָא, *he created,* being joined in the singular number with this plural noun, has been considered as pointing out, and not obscurely, the unity of these divine persons in this work of creation. In the ever blessed Trinity, from

the infinite and indivisible unity of the persons, there can be but one will, one purpose, and one infinite and uncontrollable energy."

As Dr. Clarke must have formed some conception of this mystery, he should have told us how these three persons were connected in "one indivisible unity," and by familiar examples have shown, how these three infinites, these three eternals, could be actuated "by one will," and not by three wills; "by one infinite and uncontrollable energy," and not by three infinite and uncontrollable energies. These are high sounding words, but I must candidly confess that they convey no information to my mind, nor can any person, from such a definition, possibly understand the doctrine of the Trinity.

I cannot find that the view which this writer has given of the Trinity, "has formed a part of the creed of all those, who have been deemed sound in the faith, from the earliest ages of Christianity." Faith has become so familiar a word, that we find it applied, in all cases, to things which cannot be understood. It is not possible for us to have faith or belief in that which is impossible to enter into our comprehension, however it may be the confession of the lip, if the door of the understanding be not opened to receive it, no conception can be formed concerning it: consequently there cannot be an object of faith.

We may be asked, if we can comprehend God? if by comprehending God, be meant his infinite perfections, the answer must necessarily be in the negative; and the reason is obvious: that which is *finite* cannot possibly extend its researches to that which is *infinite*. When we are told that there are three distinct and visible persons OUT of the divine nature, and in the same breath, that these three persons are one, it never can be comprehended, because it is inconsistent with scripture and common sense, and can never form a part of our faith. So far as God has made himself known BY THE PERSON OF CHRIST, so far God becomes an object of our faith in *Unity;* and this unity "has formed a part of the creed of all those, who have been deemed sound in the faith from the earliest ages of christianity."

In order to obviate the plain and incontrovertible declarations which prove that the noun אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim,* is not a plural, but a singular noun, Dr. Clarke refers to the following passages, noticed by Parkhurst, who says, "let those who have any doubt whether אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim,* when meaning the true God, Jehovah, be *plural* or not, consult the following passages, where they will find it joined with adjectives, verbs, and pronouns *plural.*" Gen. 1. 26.—ch. 3. 22.—11. 7. —20. 13.—31. 7. 53.—35. 7. Deut. 4. 7.—5. 23. Josh. 24. 19. 1 Sam. 4. 8. 2 Sam. 7. 23. Psalm 58. 12. Jer. 10. 10.—ch. 23. 36. Also Prov. 9. 10.

—ch. 30. 3. Psalm 149. 2. Eccl. 5. 7.—12. 1. Job. 5. 1. Isa. 6. 3.—54. 5.—62. 5. Hos. 11. 12. Mal. 1. 6. Dan. 5. 18. 20.—7. 18. 22. To all these passages we are referred by Dr. Clarke for proof that the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, is a plural noun, because Parkhurst and he say, it is connected with "adjectives, verbs, and pronouns plural." Twelve of the first are noticed by Parkhurst, in which the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim* is found, but in the remainder, which are added by Dr. Clarke, אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, does not occur at all, except in one passage, and אֱלֹהֵי *Eloehea*, in two. And even if it did, the following clauses, יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ *the Lord of Hosts is* HIS *name.* אֱלֹהֵי כָל הָאָרֶץ יִקָּרֵא *the God of the whole earth shall* HE *be called*, could not mean that אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, is a plural noun. The learned Abarbanal, and the most eminent Rabbies say, that אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, and אֱלֹהֵי *Eloehea*, have the same meaning, and the difference in form arises from this, that אֱלֹהֵי *Eloehea* is conjunctive, or in regimen, which is true, as Psalm 1. אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב *God of Jacob*—אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *God of Israel*—אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם *God of Heaven*—but that אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, is the absolute form.

I shall now proceed to examine the above passages where the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, is found, and which we are told, "that as it is connected with *adjectives*, *verbs*, and *pronouns* plural, must be plural also."

In Jer. 23. 36. and ch. 10. 10. we find the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, God; but it does not follow because it is connected with חַיִּים *Hayim*, *life*, that it is a plural noun. ים *yim*, does not form the plural, as I shall have occasion to show in the course of this investigation. The same word is rendered "running water, or living water," Lev. 14. 5. מַיִם חַיִּים; also Gen. 27. 46. לִי חַיִּים, *my life to me.* Job, 10. 12. *thou hast granted me* חַיִּים, *life and favor.*

Psalm 58. 12. verily he is a אֱלֹהִים שֹׁפְטִים, *God that judgeth;* but שֹׁפְטִים *Shophetim*, is not plural, therefore the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, cannot on that account be considered as a noun plural.

2 Sam. 7. 23. אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, *God*, is connected with לִפְדּוֹת *lipheddoth*, which means "to redeem," the translation is consistent with reason and sound speech, viz. *whom God went to redeem:* but if אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, *God*, were to be rendered as a plural noun, it would be, *whom Gods went to redeem.* The same reasoning is applicable to Eccless. 5. 7. *fear thou God*, ch. 12. 13. *fear God and keep his commandments.*

1st Samuel, 4. 8. In this verse the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, *God*, is supposed by Parkhurst and Dr. Clarke to be plural, because it is connected with הָאַדִּירִים *haaddirim*, on the hacknied ground of the

plural termination; but this cannot be allowed, as will be shown. The translation of this verse, as it stands at present in our Bible, is, *Woe unto us, who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods, these are the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.* Had the Dr. attended to the original, he would not have been so hasty in concluding that Elhoim, God, was a plural noun; he must certainly have been sensible that the Egyptians were not smitten with the plagues in the wilderness, but in Egypt: and that for this reason there must be some error in the translation of this passage. There are three words in the original Hebrew, which are not truly rendered, and which are only noticed by the word *these*, viz. הָאֵלֶּה אֱלֹהִים which ought to be rendered as in Gen. 39. 19. *after this manner*, or *with these things*, 1 Kings, 22. 11. The word מַכָּה *makkaah*, is also rendered *plagues*, but as the plagues were inflicted in Egypt, and not in the wilderness, as observed; neither can it be truly rendered. This word is used here as in many other places, to signify *slaughter;* see the passages where the same word occurs, and is thus rendered. Josh. 10. 10. 20. Jud. 11. 3.—15. 8. 1 Sam. 6. 19.—ch. 14. 30.—ch. 19. 8. 1 Kings 20. 21. 2 Chron. 13. 17. In this chapter we are informed, that the Philistines and the Israelites were opposed to each other: they had heard how God had interposed in their behalf, when they left Egypt at the

red sea, they had heard of the ark of God, and of the destruction that took place on the Egyptians, when it was carried out of the sea to the Israelites. And now at this time, when they heard a great shout in the camp of Israel, and were told that the ark of God had arrived at the camp, they said, *Woe unto us, who shall deliver us out of the hand of this mighty God? after this manner God smote the Egyptians with all the slaughter in the wilderness.* From which it appears, that Elhoim, God, is not a plural noun, and that it is most incorrectly rendered by the translators.

Joshua, 24. 19. אֱלֹהִים קְדֹשִׁים, *a holy God.* This is the Bible translation, and it will puzzle Dr. Clarke to mend it in sense. קְדֹשִׁים is not plural, it is truly rendered by *holiness*, and connected with Elhoim, God; it reads *a God of holiness.*

Deut. 5. 23. *God doth talk with man, and he liveth.* Here again is no proof that *Elhoim*, God, is joined with a plural. הָאָדָם *Adam*, is a noun singular, but admitting it were plural, the Dr. should have recollected that the ה *he*, prefixed, is not noticed in the translation, it is emphatic, and is to be rendered by *the*, *this.* He also should have remembered that God did not speak *with man*, in the plural, but *with the man.* They indeed heard his voice, but God spake only with Moses. The clause truly reads, *God doth talk with the man, and he liveth.*

Ch. 4. 7. אֱלֹהִי *Elohea*, God, which is evidently singular, is joined with אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, God, but had אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim* been plural, the venerable writer could not have committed such a blunder, as the verse would read thus, *for what nation is so great who hath* Gods so nigh unto them, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ as the Lord our Gods.

Gen. 35. 7. *And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el, because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.* Here we are told again that the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, God, must be plural, as it is connected with a plural verb. נִגְלוּ *Niglou*, is no doubt plural, but it is not connected with אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, therefore it is no proof that it is a plural noun. This writer should have told us that the translators have erred in the application of נִגְלוּ *Niglou*, as well as in the translation of that word, for it is rendered as the third person singular preter of the verb in kal; whereas it is the third person plural in Niphal. And instead of being applied to God as appearing to Jacob *when he fled from the face of his brother*, it is in the original, necessarily applied to Jacob and all his house, when they removed from Shechem to Bethel. It must be acknowledged, that if אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, God, were a plural noun, the clause should be rendered thus: *Gods appeared unto him.*

נִגְלוּ *Niglou*, is the third person plural preter of the verb in Niphal, *to appear, be discovered, revealed; to be removed—captivity*, Sam. 2. 14. וְלֹא נִגְלוּ *and they have not discovered*, Ezek. 23. 11. הֵמָּה נִגְלוּ *these discovered*, Jer. 13. 22. thy skirts נִגְלוּ *are discovered.*

The words אֵל בֵּית אֵל *El-beth-el*, which are thus retained in the translation, confuse the passage; they truly read thus: *the mighty one of Bethel*, and the ה *he*, prefixed to אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, which is omitted in the translation, and not noticed by Dr. Clarke, is as necessary a word as any in the passage. It is emphatic, and is the same as the Greek ο, and the Latin *hic*, literally *the, this*, viz. הָאֱלֹהִים THIS GOD, in opposition to the strange Gods, which his family had brought with them.

בְּבָרְחוֹ *Bebarcho* is rendered in the translation as the third person singular preter, viz. *when he fled*, but it is properly the infinitive, and should be rendered in his flying, or *of his flying*. The verse will be rendered consistently with the Hebrew as follows. *And he built there an altar, and called the place, the mighty one of Bethel, because there they appeared* נִגְלוּ *(Jacob and his family) before him, the God, of his flying from the face of his brother.* From which it is plain, that this passage is consistent without making אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim* a plural noun, admitting it were connected with נִגְלוּ *Niglou*, Jacob and

his family ceased to worship the idols they had brought with them, and they appeared before, or worshipped before הָאֱלֹהִים, *this God*, the mighty one of Bethel, the God who protected him IN HIS FLYING *from the face of his brother.*

Ch. 31. 7. וְלֹא נְתָנוֹ אֱלֹהִים *but God would not suffer him*, here אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, God, is plural we are told, because it is connected with נְתָנוֹ *Nethano*, which is supposed to be plural. I shall pursue my usual method of suffering the scripture to speak for itself. נְתָנוֹ *Nethano*, is, as it stands in the translation, truly rendered by *suffer him*, See Jud. 15. 1. *but her father would not* נְתָנוֹ *suffer him.* 1 Sam. 18. 2. *and would not* נְתָנוֹ *let him return.* Ch. 23. 14. *delivered him not ;* therefore it is no proof that אֱלֹהִים Elhoim is a plural noun.

Gen. 31. 53. *The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor Judge.* This is perfectly right as it stands in the English Bible. יִשְׁפְּטוּ *Yishiphetou* is plural, very well ; but אֱלֹהֵי *Eloehea* is not on that account to be rendered as a plural noun, it is only a noun singular in regimen.

There are in this verse two Gods mentioned by Laban, viz. the God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor. Abraham was a worshipper of the true God, Nahor was an idolater; so that Laban, who

worshipped after the manner of his fathers, calls his God to witness, as well as the God of Abraham. Therefore the passage is correct, without supposing אֱלֹהִים Elhoim to be a plural noun.

Ch. 11. 7. *Go to, let us go down and confound their language.* Parkhurst and Dr. Clarke should have pointed out the noun or verb plural, which they say is connected with אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, God, in this verse. אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, however, is not to be met with in the whole chapter, so that this commentator must have copied it from Parkhurst, without examining either the chapter or the verse. It must therefore have been an oversight in both these good men, and consequently cannot be any proof that אֱלֹהִים Elhoim, is a plural noun.

The whole of this narrative, concerning the confusion of tongues, is very incorrectly rendered in the translation; and I am sorry to find that these writers have not given us any information on this important subject. An article on this miracle of Ages is intended to be sent to the CLASSICAL JOURNAL, to which I refer the reader.

Ch. 3. 22. *And the Lord God said, behold the man* הָיָה כְּאַחַד מִמֶּנּוּ לָדַעַת טוֹב וָרָע *is become as one of us to know good and evil.* There are two things in this clause which require our serious attention,

viz. to whom the words הָיָה כְּאַחַד מִמֶּנּוּ *is become as one of us,* are applied: and the true meaning and application of לָדַעַת טוֹב וָרָע *to know good and evil.* It must be admitted that Adam knew good and evil before the fall, otherwise he could not have been an accountable creature; evil to him would have been as good, and good the same as evil. "This passage," says Dr. Clarke, "on all hands is allowed to be difficult, and the difficulty is increased by our translation." I have no doubt but that the errors which have crept into many churches respecting the unity of God, have arisen from this rendering, and from that similar one, Gen. 1. 26. The word מִמֶּנּוּ *Mimmennou,* is rendered in all the European translations, as the oblique case of *we,* but its true meaning is *to appoint,* see Job, 7. 3. *and wearisome nights,* מִנּוּ *Minnou, are appointed to me.* Also to number, Gen. 13. 16. יִמָּנֶה *shall be numbered.*—2 Chron. 5. 6. יִמָּנוּ *Yimmaanou, be numbered.*—Dan. 1. 5. and the מ *mem* prefixed, forms the comparative. It must be admitted that Adam was *appointed to know* good and evil; let the contrary for a moment be supposed, and he becomes incapable of thinking or acting rationally. Adam was blessed with all knowledge intuitively, he understood the natures of the animals, their passions and affections, and gave them names agreeably thereto; thus he was *appointed* to know good and evil, but the great difference is between the knowledge of good and evil, and the rejection of good by the actual commission of evil.

The verb הָיָה *haayaah*, which is in all the European translations rendered, *is become*, is the preter, and not the present tense of the verb; it ought to have been rendered, WAS: the passage will then read agreeably to the literal sense of the Hebrew, thus; *behold the man* WAS כְּאַחַד EQUALLY THE SAME APPOINTED *to know good and evil.* Though this text is "allowed on all hands to be difficult, and the difficulty increased by our translation," this view of the subject relieves us from the difficulty altogether. It clears the moral character of God from the imputation of blame, by placing man in a situation so as to be ignorant concerning the nature of good and evil, as we understand by the words in our Bible: *the man is become as one of us to know good and evil*, and with Dr. Clarke, that he only knew good, viz. "he has added (says he) to the knowledge of the good, the knowledge of the evil;" it finally silences this old objection of the Deist, and shows us that Adam, in his primary state, was not ignorant concerning the nature of evil, but that he was innocent as to the commission of it, or the transgression of the commands of God. From all which it is evident that אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God*, by being connected with מִמֶּנּוּ *mimmennou*, which has been erroneously considered as the oblique case of *we*, is no proof that it is a plural noun.

Gen. ch. 1. 26. I now come to notice one of the most difficult passages on this subject in the whole

scriptures. The translation of this verse, as we have it in our Bible, and as it stands in all the European translations, has laid a foundation for endless disputes. The unitarian contends that God is *One Only*, while others are led from this rendering, to believe in the existence of a Trinity in distinct personality *out* of the divine nature. I am constrained to reject all the translations hitherto given of this important passage which I have seen; and to abide by the literal meaning of the original words, as rendered in other parts of scripture. It will therefore be seen, that I not only reject any pre-conceived opinion of my own, but all others, when such opinions are unsupported by that unerring authority, the sacred scriptures.

The passage in the original is as follows: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כִּדְמוּתֵנוּ *And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness.* Dr. Clarke says, "the text tells us he was the work of the Elhoim, the divine plurality, marked here more distinctly by the plural pronouns *us*, and *our:* and to show that he was a master-piece of God's creation, all the persons in the Godhead are represented as united in council and effort to produce this astonishing creature." Alas! to what a state are we reduced, if this be the doctrine of the Bible on the creation of man. Were we to tell this lame tale to the Deist, he would show a want of intellect indeed, if he did not expel it with a blast of ridicule. He would tell

the Doctor, that if all the persons in the Godhead were called together, united in council and effort at the creation of man only, for the production of this wonderful creature, to show that he was a master-piece of God's creation, as we must understand by his own words: then it would follow, that all the persons in the Godhead were not united in council, or effort to produce other astonishing creatures which also in their order, are master-pieces of God's creation. It is impossible for words to mark more strongly this writer's belief in Polytheism, or a plurality of God's, distinct persons; all actuated by "one will, and one infinite uncontroulable energy." I would rather write three words to be understood, than a thousand which convey no information on the subject. It is impossible for the Doctor to understand his own definition of the Trinity.

Moses was here instructed to communicate to the Israelites, the knowledge of the creation of the world, and of man. And in the whole narrative he speaks of the procedure of the Divine Being in the imperative, or commanding, style, which adds a grandeur and dignity to the subject, that is not in the translation, which only says, "*and God said.*" The obvious reason was, when God spake to man, having no equal, this style of speaking was observed, as appears throughout the Scriptures, when kings commanded the laws to be obeyed, or when any thing was to be

done which required the interference of supreme authority.

The word וַיֹּאמֶר *Vayomer*, as applied to the Supreme, in this sense means, literally, *he commanded.* Chron. 21. 27. וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה *The Lord commanded.* Ch. 22. 2. וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִיד *and David commanded.* 2 Chron. 14. 4. וַיֹּאמֶר לִיהוּדָה *and commanded Judah.* Ch. 29. 30. וַיֹּאמֶר יְחִזְקִיָּהוּ *and Hezekiah commanded.* Ch. 31. 4. וַיֹּאמֶר לָעָם *And he commanded the people.* Ch. 32. 12. וַיֹּאמֶר לִיהוּדָה *And he commanded Judah.* Ch. 33. 16. וַיֹּאמֶר *And commanded.* Esth. 4. 13. וַיֹּאמֶר מָרְדְּכַי *Then Mordecai commanded.* Ch. 9. 14. וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ *And the king commanded.* Dan. 2. 2. *And the king commanded.* I have examined upwards of two thousand places of Scripture where וַיֹּאמֶר *Vayomer* occurs; and I find that the word thus written was always used when God commanded; also, by kings, patriarchs, and all, in every situation, exercising authority, in the imperative, or commanding style. Thus, when any thing was to be done, which required the interference of a superior power, as when God commands Jacob to go to Bethel, and to build an altar to him; and, in the next verse, where Jacob commands his household to put away the strange Gods that were among them, it is written וַיֹּאמֶר *Vayomer*, and is universally followed by its corresponding noun. But, when וַיֹּאמַר *Vayomar*, occurs, it never is understood in the imperative style, it is always used as the third

person singular preter of the verb, to prevent the too frequent repetition of the noun. I have examined some hundreds of places, where this word occurs, so written, and I find it to be so throughout the Scriptures. Thus it appears consistently with other parts of Scripture, where the same word written with the same vowels, can have no other meaning, that the words וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים *Vayomer Elhoim*, should be rendered in conformity with the above passages, taken in connection with the following word נַעֲשֶׂה *Nangaseh*, of which below. From what has been said, it will be allowed by the learned, that this word וַיֹּאמֶר *Vayomer* comprehends וַיֹּאמַר *Vayomar*, but the latter does not comprehend the former; which circumstance alone proves, that this word conveys an idea of superiority, and therefore is always used and applied in that sense throughout the Scriptures.

The next word in this verse, which requires our notice, is נַעֲשֶׂה *Nangaseh*, which is rendered, *let us make*. I have selected, I believe, all the passages, where this form of the word occurs, which is rendered in the first person plural future of kal. I shall therefore show that the word in these places may be rendered more consistently with the Hebrew, and more agreeably with the idiom of our language. I do not mean to contend that the word does not comprehend, in its effect, the plural; but I do assert that, as it is the passive of kal, it ought to be rendered in the

English in conformity thereto. The following passages, being rendered as the first person plural future in kal, read thus, *we will do*—what *shall we do*—*through God we shall do;*—but as the verb is in Niphal, there must necessarily be a distinction between the futures of the two conjugations; and we find that the ancient Hebrews always attended to this distinction, as is evident from the *difference in the orthography.* This word is properly rendered thus: *let be made;* which will make a material difference as to the reading of these passages. They will read thus: 2 Kings, 4. 10. LET THERE BE MADE *a little chamber.* Cant. 1. 11. Exod. 19. 8. *all that the Lord hath spoken,* SHALL BE DONE.—ch. 24. 3. v. 7. Numb. 32. 31. Josh. 1. 16.—ch. 9. 20. *what shall be done.*—ch. 20. 9. *which shall be done.*—ch. 21. 7. WHAT SHALL BE DONE *for wives.*—ch. 22. 26. v. 16. *let there be prepared.* 1 Sam. 5. 8.—ch. 6. 2. 2 Sam. 16. 30. 2 Kings, 6. 15.—ch. 10. 5. Neh. 5. 12. Psalm, 60. 12. *for God will do valiantly.* —108. 13. Cant. 8. 8. Jer. 18. 12.—ch. 42. 3. —ch. 44. 17.—ch. 44. 25. *our vows* SHALL BE PERFORMED. Isaiah, 26. 18. *shall be wrought.* 2 Chron. 20. 12. *what* SHALL BE DONE. Jud. 11. 10. *if there be not done.*

These I believe are nearly all the places where this word occurs in the Niphal form, which I have selected to show that this reading is not only consis-

tent with the grammar of the language, but also, that it reads much better than the present translation of the above passages. This will justify me in so rendering this word in the passage under consideration, viz. Gen. 1. 26. נַעֲשֶׂה *Nangaseh, let be made.* From which proofs it will be seen that this passage cannot, consistently with the original, be read as it is in the translation, viz. *and God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness;* but, agreeably to the meaning of the inspired writer, who was commanded to communicate to the Hebrews, and to posterity, the knowledge of the creation of the world, and of man. Now, as in this narrative, Moses was speaking with the people, he informed them, that God created man in *their image*, viz. בְּצַלְמֵנוּ *in our image*, says Moses, which image he obviously applies to themselves. So that, though the word בְּצַלְמֵנוּ *Betsalmeenou*, be truly rendered, its application is wrong, for it is represented in the translation, as though it were applied to God, whereas it was applied to the Israelites by Moses. Thus: *and God commanded man to be made in our image;* or thus: *and God said, let man be made in our image.* Hence it appears that אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, God, is not a plural noun, by being connected with נַעֲשֶׂה *Nangaseh*, which has been rendered by the plural *us*, ever since the time of Jerome, the first translator of the Hebrew Bible into the Latin language, but which was understood as above by the Hebrew legislator, and all the ancient

Hebrews before the dispersion. This rendering of the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, God, as a noun singular, is also confirmed in the very next verse, where the word is connected with the third person singular of the verb, and the pronoun singular *his*, viz. וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים so GOD CREATED *man* בְּצַלְמוֹ *in* HIS *image; in the image* אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא *of God created* HE *him;* which, agreeably to our idiom, may be thus rendered, as the repetition of the noun is consistent with the rules of the language: *so God created man in his, man's image, which image was created in the similitude of God.*

Now as it is expressly said, that man was created בְּצֶלֶם *in the image* of God; and it is proved above that צֶלֶם *Tselem*, refers *only* to the external visible image or form; it must be admitted, if Scripture be allowed to decide this important matter, that אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*, means the external visible form of God, which is said to be that of man. If it be contended that the infinite attributes of the Supreme Being in all their distinct existence in him constitute a plurality, this must be allowed; but this was not understood by the ancient Hebrews as constituting a plurality of visible persons, any more than the finite attributes in man constitute a plurality of visible persons. The difference is: in God they are INFINITE, in man they are *finite* and circumscribed. And it must appear obvious to the unlearned, as well as to the learned, that the attributes, or properties cannot be

visible in their origin, but can only be known to exist by their effect. We know by experience that the attributes or properties of the soul of man are not seen, they only operate by means of the visible body.

Having thus shown that אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God,* by being connected with *verbs, nouns,* and *adjectives,* which have been supposed to be plural, is not a plural noun, I shall refer the reader to such passages, as will incontrovertibly prove that this word is used as a noun singular, which will establish the *scriptural doctrine* of the unity of God.

We cannot understand from the writings of the Apostles, or the venerable bishops during the continuance of the Apostolic churches, that the notion of a plurality of persons existing *out of the divine nature,* was entertained by them. In the time of the prophets, the unity of God was the established belief of the whole nation; and Moses was commanded to say in the first person singular אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה *I am, that I am.* The same doctrine was given to Abraham. Exod. 6. 3. וָאֵרָא AND I APPEARED *unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty,* שְׁמִי *but by* MY *name Jehovah* נוֹדַעְתִּי *was* I NOT KNOWN *to them.* Here also the pronoun of the first person singular is used to signify the Unity of God in one divine person.

It is an invariable rule in the Hebrew language, that the noun agrees with the verb in number and person. The first verse in the Bible begins with the Unity of God: In the beginning בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים GOD CREATED *the heaven and the earth.* אֱלֹהִים *Elohim* necessarily agrees with בָּרָא *he created.* But if Elhoim, *God,* were to be rendered as Dr. Clarke supposes, then בָּרָא *Baara,* could not have been written and rendered as the third person singular preter of the verb, but it must have been written and rendered as the third person plural, viz. בָּרְאוּ *they created;* which would incontrovertibly have established polytheism.

The same order was always observed by the inspired writers. It is never said וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֱלֹהִים *and Gods said,* but וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים *and God said—God saw —God made.* Psalm, 100. 3. דְּעוּ כִּי יְהוָה הוּא אֱלֹהִים הוּא עָשָׂנוּ וְלֹא אֲנַחְנוּ עַמּוֹ וְצֹאן מַרְעִיתוֹ, *Know ye that the Lord* HE *is God, it is* HE *that hath made us, and not we ourselves, we are* HIS *people, and the sheep of* HIS *pasture.* Here the pronoun of the third person singular הוּא אֱלֹהִים HE *is God.* הוּא עָשָׂנוּ HE *hath made us;* and the pronoun possessive עַמּוֹ HIS *people,* מַרְעִיתוֹ HIS *pasture;* regularly occur; but if אֱלֹהִים Elhoim had been plural, these pronouns must necessarily have been plural also, which must have been rendered, *know ye that the* LORDS THEY *are* GODS, *it is* THEY *that hath made us and not we ourselves,*

we are THEIR *people and the sheep of* THEIR *pasture.*

Gen. 2. 2. אֱלֹהִים *God ended his work—to grow.*—ch. 6. 12. וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים *and God looked.*—ch. 17. 3. *and God talked with him.*—ch. 20. 17. and God healed Abimelech.—ch. 31. 24. Levit. 18. 4.—ch. 19. 2. Deut. 5. 6. v. 9.—ch. 6. 4.—ch. 7. 9. Psalm, 78. 59.—81. 10. Isaiah, 45. 21.—ch. 44. 6.—ch. 4. 6. Jer. 10. 10. Hos. 13. 4. Jonah, 4. 6.

I could cite hundreds more, but these are sufficient. In all these passages, and uniformly throughout the Scriptures, the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God,* is joined with *verbs, adjectives,* and *pronouns,* singular, except where the translators in two or three places, have erred in the application, as noticed above; which is unquestionable evidence that the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God,* is a noun singular, and consequently cannot refer to a plurality of persons existing *out of* the divine nature.

There is one passage, in which this word has been evidently misunderstood by the translators, 1 Sam. 28. 14. 15. *And the king said unto her, be not afraid; for what seest thou? and the woman said unto him, I saw Gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, what form is* HE *of? and she said, an old man cometh up; and* HE *is covered with*

a mantle. Here again, the pronoun of the third person singular occurs, הוּא HE, viz, what form is HE of, HE is covered with a mantle, which shows that אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God,* should have been rendered a noun singular. Dr. Clarke says, "We have seen that the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God,* is plural;" and this is the opinion of many well-meaning writers. But, on the contrary, if the original scriptures are to decide the matter, we have seen that this word was used by all the sacred writers as a noun singular, to denote the unity of God.

Neither is the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God,* plural, because some have supposed that it has a plural termination. I have before observed, that יִם *yim,* was not a plural termination; and I have given the reason. There are great numbers of words which have the same termination, and which nevertheless are singular; on which account, these might be said to be plural also, as מִצְרַיִם, *Egypt*—הַשָּׁמַיִם, *the Heaven*—פָּנִים אֶל פָּנִים, *face to face.* And though we are told that "both the noun and the root of אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God,* are preserved in the Arabic," I assert, without the fear of contradiction, that this word never had a root, because it is not a derivative, but a compound word from יְהוָה *Jehovah,* and אֵל *El,* viz. the יה *Yod* and *he,* comprehending the *existence* of Deity, and אֵל *El,* his *power, strength, might,* which is its meaning in all the Scriptures; by which

manifested power he created the world. These together form the word אֱלֹהִי *Eloehea, God,* and which is the same as the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God;* only it regularly occurs in regimen, as observed; but when the ם *Mem* is added, it forms the absolute, by which it is distinguished from אֱלֹהִי *Eloehea,* the relative.

This word being a compound word, there is not any necessity for us to go to the Arabic, as Dr. Clarke thinks, to find a supposed root for it. الله *Allah,* is no doubt the common name for God in Arabic, which is literally a copy of the Chaldean אֱלָהּ *Elaah, God.*

It is for this reason, as is observed by the learned Abarbanal, and others among the Rabbies, that the words יְהוָה *Jehovah,* and אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God,* as they always are to be met with either together or separate when any command or prophecy is given, and never any of the other names of God; therefore that the one signifies his *Essence,* the other his *influence,* or *external manifestation.* From what has been said on this subject, there cannot be any doubt but that יְהוָה *Jehovah,* means "the unsearchable and incommunicable principles of Deity." Therefore, to inculcate that degree of sanctity and reverence, which the ancient Jews entertained concerning the incommunicable nature of Deity, they never wrote, nor

pronounced the word יְהוָה *Jehovah;* but with regard to the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God,* it means his essence, joined with his almighty power in visible existence, as by this power God brought forth all his works in visible creation. Therefore, in the first chapter of Genesis we always meet with the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God;* but never יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים *Lord God,* as in the second chapter; for the first chapter relates to the existence, or most external manifestation of God, operating from the essence, or inmost ground, for the production of created things: hence it is said, *In the beginning* אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God created the heaven and the earth.*

Now יְהוָה *Jehovah,* the essence, being self-essent, and self-existent, it must appear demonstrably evident that one self-essent, self-existent being could not possibly produce another self-essent, self-existent being; consequently, there cannot be two beings of the same self-existing essence. Therefore from the word אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim, God,* to infer the doctrine of a Trinity of persons OUT of the divine nature, *co-eval, co-equal,* and *co-eternal* with each other, must appear as inconsistent with reason, as it is with Scripture.

As I do not wish to go beyond what is written for our information in Scripture, I shall attend to the literal and obvious meaning of the inspired writers,

in the following passages, and leave every man to think for himself. It is said, Gen. 1. 27. *So God created man* בְּצַלְמוֹ *in his own image, in the image of God created he him.* בְּצַלְמוֹ *Betsalemo*, is a noun substantive, and with this form and construction, throughout the Scriptures, is applied to the external form, or image. Numb. 32. 52. *Destroy all their images.* 1 Sam. 6. 5. 11. *make images.* Ezek. 7. 20. *but they made the images of their abomination*, i. e. the external form of the idols they worshipped. Which evidently proves, that the same word was in this first chapter of Genesis applied by the venerable penman to the external form, outward appearance, or figure of man, which is said to be in the image of God. This is confirmed in the 7th verse of the next chapter, where a distinction is made between the body and the soul: *and the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.* This form of God is also confirmed in various parts of Scripture, where the language cannot be metaphorically understood. Ezek. 1. 26. *And upon the likeness of the throne, was the likeness as the appearance of a* MAN *above, upon it.* Dan. 7. 13. 14. *And behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days; and they brought him near before him.* From which it is evident, that God appeared to the prophets in a human form, which form refers to אֱלֹהִים *Elhoim*,

God, or the externally visible manifestation of the Deity.

This explanation, here given by the prophets, concerning the manifested form of God, will but ill agree with Dr. Clarke's notion; for he does not allow him to have any form at all. He says: "God is an infinite spirit, and cannot be confined to any form, so He can have no personal appearance." Now, as the prophets declare him to be in the form of man, whether are we to believe the prophets, or Dr. Clarke, who has fallen into this error? If this were true, what a lamentable state should we be reduced to! for, though God is infinite, if He could not manifest Himself in His own form, which is the form in which He created man, we could have no idea of God, any more than we can of *infinite space;* and it brings us to the Socinian notion adopted by Dr. Priestley, that "we can have no idea of God, but that of *infinite space.*" God is the object of worship, but we cannot worship a God, if we cannot form some determinate conception of such a being. If then "God has no personal appearance" but is like to *infinite space*, as infinite space is not an object that comes within the limit of our comprehension, neither could an infinite and incomprehensible being be an object of our worship, unless he condescended to manifest himself in human form, because there would be no object for our adoration.

I come now to the application, viz. to show from the express letter of Scripture, consistently with what has been said, who we are to understand this אֱלֹהִים Elhoim, *God*, of the Old Dispensation, and the Θεος, Theos, of the New Testament, to be. The Apostle, speaking of the Israelites, when they came out of Egypt, and the mighty things that אֱלֹהִים Elhoim, *God* did for them, says: that this *Elhoim* was the rock that followed them, and that THIS ROCK WAS CHRIST. Isaiah says, concerning this *Elhoim, behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, God with us.* The Apostle Matthew confirms it: *Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord* (i. e. Christ) *by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which, being interpreted, is "God with us."* John, ch. i. 1. calls him Θεος, *God*, which is farther confirmed by the Apostle Paul, who says, *in him dwelleth* ALL *the fullness of the Godhead bodily.* Now, if "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwells in Christ," where are we to direct our views in divine worship, but to Him in whom the whole fullness of the Godhead dwells?

Having proved from Scripture that the visible manifestation of Deity is Christ, or, which is the same, that the manifestation of Deity in human form

is Christ, I may be asked the same question as was put to me by the late Dr. Priestley, viz. "if Christ be God, was heaven without God, when Christ was upon the earth?" Such reasoners suppose that God possesses perfections in common with themselves. They forget that He alone possesses *ubiquity;* that He is *omnipresent* and *omniscient,* and therefore the Supreme Being can manifest Himself in all places at the same time. Now as God only can possess these infinite perfections, I hope there is not a member of the Church of England, or of any other church, who believes in the divinity of Christ, but that also believes in his *ubiquity.* However, as in all these cases the Scripture is to determine the matter, we will turn to that authority. Christ, in plain terms, informs us, that He possesses these infinite perfections, and that He manifests Himself in all places at the same time. John, 3. 13. *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven.*

That there are three visible persons *out* of the divine nature, "united in council and effort," is not only asserted by this writer, but has also been the belief of many of the learned in former ages. I trust it will appear that this view of the subject is not scriptural. That there are three persons *in* the divine nature is the language of the Scripture. But this must be understood agreeably to the true and

ancient meaning, and application of the Latin word PERSONA, from whence comes the English word *person.*

This error has no doubt been confirmed by the very improper understanding, and customary application, of the word *persona*, which, in ancient Latinity, was never used in the sense in which it is now understood. When the Latin was a living language, the word *persona* was understood to mean the qualities of the mind, as constituting a *character*, either good or bad; but it has so far degenerated into tangible materiality, that, instead of being used as anciently to signify a *character*, *office*, or *personal qualities*, it is applied to mean the material body of man. That it was originally applied to signify *personal qualities, particular constitution of the mind, a character*, or *office*, is confirmed by the following authorities: Sustineo unus tres personas, meam adversari judices.[1] Persona tragica.[2] Eripitur persona, manet res.[3] Magistratus gerit personam civitatis.[4] Ad tuendam personam magistratûs.[5] From which it appears that the word *persona*, in ancient Latinity, meant a character, and not literally a *person*, in which sense it is now commonly understood.

Hence it is certain, without any controversy, that the true doctrine of the Scriptures on this subject is:

[1] Cic. [2] Phædr. [3] Lucr. [4] Plan. 100. [5] de Or. 169.

That there is *one God,* operating in *three distinct characters;* that the ineffable Deity cannot be known, or seen, only as He has been pleased to embody His glory in the divine human of Christ, who, in His divine body, is the visible manifestation of God, in visible human form, independent of created matter. The visible medium IN whom the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily—THROUGH whom He made the worlds, and BY whom He redeemed man. This is the view, which the Apostle had of the eternal TRINITY IN UNITY, in one divine human form, even Christ, who *followed them through the wilderness,* which he confirms in those ever memorable words, *for in Him dwelleth* ALL *the fulness of the Godhead bodily.* Thus he understood that the Godhead was the Father, who dwells in Christ, as the soul dwells in the body of man; *my Father that dwelleth* IN ME, *He doeth the works.* So that, consistently with the express declaration of Scripture, if I may be allowed the expression, and it were possible to speak with that reverence which the subject requires, the body of the FATHER is the SON, the divine essence or soul of the SON is the FATHER, and the HOLY PROCEEDING from the FATHER and the SON, which creative influence manifested the visible creation, and by perpetual influx supports the universe, is the HOLY SPIRIT.

This scriptural definition of the divine Trinity IN the Supreme Being, will perfectly agree with that copy of the genuine faith of the Apostolic churches, which is called the Athanasian creed. It becomes plain to the meanest capacity, that *we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one character of the* FATHER, *another of the* SON, *and another of the* HOLY SPIRIT. *But the Godhead of the* FATHER, *of the* SON, *and of the* HOLY SPIRIT, *is all one, the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal. The* FATHER UNCREATE, *the* SON UNCREATE, *and the* HOLY SPIRIT UNCREATE.

The FATHER ETERNAL, the SON ETERNAL, and the HOLY SPIRIT ETERNAL; and yet there are not *three eternals*, but ONE ETERNAL.

The *Father is God*, the *Son is God*, and the *Holy Spirit is God.* And yet they are not *three Gods*, but ONE GOD. Before I conclude, I think it necessary to say by way of caution, that, whoever may be disposed to cavil, on the ground of their own understanding, independently of the authority of Scripture, to which I have uniformly attended for proof of what is advanced in these pages, that they do not charge me with inconsistency because I have said God manifests Himself in human form, that I mean He is necessarily confined to that one human form in one

place. I again repeat what I before said, that, such persons form ideas of God similar to those they form of man; they forget that He alone possesses *ubiquity;* and that, by this attribute, inconceivable to us, He is omnipresent, agreeably to the words of Christ himself: *no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven,* EVEN THE SON OF MAN, WHICH IS IN HEAVEN. This is He who declares himself to be the FATHER and the SON. *Philip saith, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, show us the Father.* This is He who declares himself to be the *Father, Son,* and *Holy Spirit.* John, 16. 17. *Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart,* I WILL SEND HIM *unto you.* This is He who declares himself to be the omnipotent. Matt. 28. 18. *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying,* ALL POWER IS GIVEN TO ME *in heaven and in earth.* Omniscient, Matt. 9. 4. *And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?* John, 2. 24. *And Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because* HE KNEW ALL MEN, *and He needed not that any should testify of him: for* HE KNEW WHAT WAS IN MAN. ch. 6. 64. *For Jesus knew from the beginning, who*

they were that believed not, and who should betray him. That He forgives sin, Matt. 9. 6. *that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins.* Luke, 7. 48. *thy sins are forgiven.* And, lastly, that He gives eternal life. John, 10. v. 1. 28. *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And* I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE, *neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.*—ch. 17. 2. *As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that* HE SHOULD GIVE ETERNAL LIFE TO AS MANY AS THOU HAST GIVEN HIM.—ch. 5. 21. *For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them: even so the* SON *quickeneth* WHOM HE WILL.

I shall conclude these remarks by observing, that in what this industrious writer has hitherto said, I cannot find that he has illustrated any difficult or controverted passages—nothing hitherto is advanced to silence the objections of the Deist—no contradictions, nor inconsistencies, as they stand in the translation of the book of Genesis, reconciled;—no satisfactory attempt to remove the veil of sophistry and false philosophy, which the enemies of the Bible have drawn over the face of truth; he has not so far looked over the gloomy mountains of error, by contending for the faith delivered to the Apostles, Fathers, and Bishops, of the Christian Churches, respecting the Trinity; but he calmly swims down the unruffled

stream of popular opinion, except in the solitary instance of adopting the monkey for the serpent, to bring about the fall of man.

These remarks are not made with a view to interest, as according to appearance the author must be a considerable loser by writing and publishing them. He can say of a truth, that they are made only with a view to restore as much as possible the true reading, ancient meaning, and application of the Scriptures, as understood by the inspired writers. Yet he has found that the publishers of those things, against which he has thought it his duty to speak in favor of the truths of the Bible, have been offended, though what he has said has been acknowledged by them to be consistent with the original Hebrew. But, in this Augustine age, in this truly liberal and noble nation, where the Bible is in the hand of the school boy, and all sects are protected alike in the worship of God, agreeably to the dictates of their consciences, truth must finally of necessity prevail: like a hidden fire, which, though it may have been smothered for a time, it will break forth from the humble solitude, and, with all the energy of its pure nature, the sacred flame will ascend unadulterated to its native heaven.

If the author of these commentaries should feel the truth of any thing here advanced, and should see a greater beauty and sanctity in the Scriptures by

acknowledging what cannot be denied, without rejecting the solemn declarations of the inspired writers, and also of the ancient Hebrews before Christ, that the above particulars respecting the serpent are to be understood in an *allegorical sense*, as descriptive of the sensual principle in man; it will be a proof of his candor, and that he is open to conviction. As truth appears to be his object, though he may feel unpleasant on having suffered himself to have been so hurried away by opinion, as to contradict the plain assertion of the sacred writer, who says, that *these things are to be understood allegorically;* and to attach blame to those who do not see with our eyes, by applying to them, in a way of contempt, the epithets of "Spiritualisers, Metaphor-men, and Allegorists, who have disgraced pure religion." I say, as truth is his object, he will be as thankful for information that leads out of the labyrinths of error, as the weary traveller, who, having lost his way, is directed into the path, which leads to his habitation.

In his voluminous comments, he has introduced a variety of languages, but I cannot see that these languages cast any light on the original Scriptures. It can be of little consequence to know, that "the English word woman comes from the Saxon word wombman, or a man with a womb;" that the word "loaf comes from hlaf, bread;" and of less consequence in an elucidation of the Scriptures, to be

informed, that our English noblemen were once very hospitable, and kept open house, where all strangers were at liberty to enter, and eat as much as they would. These things appear to me altogether as unnecessary, when giving a literal interpretation of Scripture, as for him to introduce a system of philosophical chemistry, and as inconsistent with reason, as to suppose that the sun is a habitable world.

It was reasonable to expect from such a display of various languages, that we should have had many mistranslations in the book of Genesis rectified, and the Scriptures in those places rendered something nearer to the native beauty of the original. But as this is not the case, it is another proof that the Hebrew language can interpret itself, and that other languages cannot possibly give us any information so as to elucidate any part of the divine writings.

These observations will be attended with a greater degree of conviction, when it is recollected that God gave his word to man in the Hebrew language, (as above) therefore, if the Hebrew Scriptures, in which God made known his will to man, were so incomplete, so defective, or so difficult to be understood, that we were under the necessity of resorting to all the Eastern languages, which were not then in existence, in order to gain a knowledge of the will of

God; it would cast a shade over infinite wisdom, and prove that his will was never known from Adam to the time of the birth of languages at Babylon.

THE END.

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