THE
Truth of Christianity
DEMONSTRATED,
IN A
DIALOGUE
BETWIXT A
CHRISTIAN AND A DEIST;
Wherein the Case of the JEWS is likewise
considered.

By the late
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TO THE

PRESENT EDITION.

The following Piece may be considered as a Sequel to A Short and Easy Method with the Deists, by the same Author, lately republished by Desire of The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; with a Preface, by the Rev. W. Jones, M.A. Author of "The Catholick Doctrine of the Trinity," &c.
IT is strange you should stand it out so against your own happiness, and employ your whole wit and skill to work in yourself a disbelief of any future rewards or punishments, only that you may live easy (as you think) in this world, and enjoy your pleasures. Which yet you cannot enjoy free and undisturbed from the fear of those things that are to come, the event of which you pretend not to be sure of; and therefore are sure of a life full of trouble, that admits not of any consolation, and of a miserable and
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wretched death, according to the utmost that you yourself propose.

DEIST. How can you say that? When I propose to live without any fear of those things. I fear not hell, and I have discarded the expectation of heaven, because I believe neither.

CHR. Are you sure there are no such things?

DE. That is a negative, and I pretend not to prove it.

CHR. Then you must remain in a doubt of it. And what a condition is it to die in this doubt, when the issue is eternal misery! And this is the utmost, by your own confession, that you can propose to yourself. Therefore I call yours a disbelief, rather than a belief of any thing. It is we Christians who believe, you Deists only disbelieve.

And if the event should prove as you would have it, and that we should all be annihilated at our death, we should be in as good a condition as you. But on the other side, if the event should prove as we expect it,
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it; then you are eternally miserable, and we eternally happy. Therefore one would think it the wisest part to take our side of the question; especially considering that those poor pleasures, for the sake of which you determine yourselves against us, are but mere amusements, and no real enjoyments. Nay, we had better be without them than have them, even as to this life itself. Is not temperance and a healthful constitution more pleasant than those pains and aches, sick head and stomach, that are the inseparable companions of debauchery and excess, besides the clouding our reason, and turning sottish in our understanding?

De. We take pleasure in them for the time, and mind not the consequences. But however, a man cannot believe as he pleases. And therefore, notwithstanding all the glorious and terrible things which you speak of, it makes nothing to me, unless you can evidently prove them to be so. And you must still leave me to judge for myself, after you have done all you can.
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CHR. What I have said, is only to dispose you to hear me impartially, and not to be prejudiced against your own happiness, both here and hereafter.

(2.) DE. Well, without more preface, the case is this: I believe a God, as well as you; but for revelation, and what you call the Holy Scriptures, I may think they were wrote by pious and good men, who might take this method of speaking as from God, and in his name, as supposing that those good thoughts came from Him, and that it would have a greater effect upon the people; and might couch their morals under histories of things supposed to be done, as several of the wise Heathens have taken this course, in what they told of Jupiter and Juno, and the rest of their gods and goddesses. But as to the facts themselves, I believe the one no more than the other; or that all the facts in Ovid's Metamorphoses, or in Aesop's Fables, were true.

CHR. You seem willing by this to preserve a respectful esteem and value for the Holy Scriptures,
The Truth of Christianity demonstrated. Scriptures, as being wrote by pious and good men, and with a good design to reform the manners of men.

But your argument proves directly against the purpose for which you brought it, and makes the penmen of the Scriptures to be far from good men, to be not only cheats and impostors, but blasphemers, and an abomination before God. For such these same Scriptures frequently call those who presume to speak as from God, and in his name, when he had not sent them, and given them authority so to do. And the Law in the Scriptures condemns such to be stoned to death as blasphemers.

It was not so with the Heathens, their moralists did not use the style of "Thus faith the Lord;" and their philosophers opposed and wrote against one another without any offence. For all the matter was which of them could reason best; they pretended to no more.

And for the facts of the fables of their gods, themselves did not believe them, and
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have wrote the mythology or moral that was intended by them.

De. But many of the common people did believe the facts themselves. As it is with the common people now in the church of Rome, who believe the most senseless and ridiculous stories in their books of legends to be as true as the Gospel; though the more wise among them call them only pious frauds, to increase the devotion of the people. And so we think of your Gospel itself, and all the other books you say were wrote by men divinely inspired. We will let you keep them to cajole the mob, but when you would impose them upon men of sense, we must come to the test with you.

CHR. That is what I desire; and to see whether there are no more evidences to be given for the truth of Christianity, that is, of the Holy Scriptures, than are given for the legends, and all the fabulous stories of the Heathen gods. And if so, I will give up my argument, and confess that it is not in my power to convince you.
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Dr. I cannot refuse to join issue with you upon this. To begin, then, I desire to know your evidences for the truth of your Scriptures, and the facts therein related.

(3.) Chr. If the truth of the book, and the facts therein related be proved, I suppose you will not deny the doctrines to be true.

Dr. No: for if I saw such miracles with my eyes as are said to have been done by Moses and Christ, I could not think of any greater proof to be given, that such an one was sent of God. Therefore if your Bible be true as to the facts, I must believe it in the doctrine too. But there are other books which pretend to give us revelations from God, and we must know which of these is true.

Chr. To distinguish this book from all others which pretend to give revelations from God, these four marks or rules were set down.

I. That the facts related be such of which men's outward senses, their eyes and ears, may judge.

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[This cuts off enthusiasts' pretences to revelation, and opinions which may be propagated in the dark, and like the tares, not known till they are grown up, and the first beginning of them not discovered.]

II. That these facts be done openly in the face of the world.

III. That not only public monuments, but outward institutions and actions should be appointed, and perpetually kept up in memory of them.

IV. That these institutions to be observed should commence from the time that the facts were done; and consequently that the book wherein these facts and institutions are recorded, should be written at the time, and by those who did the facts, or by eye and ear-witnesses. For that is included in this mark, and is the main part of it; to prevent false stories being coined in after ages of things done many hundred years before, which none alive can disprove. Thus Moses wrote his five books containing his actions and institutions; and those of Christ were wrote by his disciples, who were eye and ear-
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ear-witnesses of what they related. And
particular care was taken of this, as you
may see, Acts i. 21, 22. upon choosing one
to supply the place of Judas. "Where-
fore of these men which have companied
with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus
went in and out among us, beginning
from the baptism of John, until that
same day that he was taken up from us;
must one be ordained to be witness with,
us of his resurrection." And St. John
begins his first Epistle thus: "That which
was from the beginning, which we have
heard, which we have seen with our eyes,
which we have looked upon, and our
hands have handled—That, which we
have seen and heard declare we unto
you."
I have explained this fourth mark, be-
cause the author of the detection, either
wilfully or ignorantly, seems not to under-
stand it. And this alone overthrows all the
stories he has told, which he would make
parallel to the facts of Moses, and of
Christ; and therefore alleges that they have
all
all these four marks. But he must begin again, and own that these four marks still stand an irrefragable proof of the truth of any fact which has them all, till he can produce a book which was wrote by the actors or eye-witnesses of the facts it relates, and shew that such facts, having the other three marks, have been detected to be false. Which when he can do, I will give him up these four marks as an insufficient proof, and own I was mistaken in them. But hitherto they have stood the test; for he himself will not say, he has produced any such book in all his detection.

If he says that facts may be true, though no such book can be produced for them, and though they have not all the aforesaid marks, I will easily grant it. But all I contend for is, that whatever fact has all these four marks, cannot be false. For example; could Moses have persuaded six hundred thousand men that he had led them through the sea in the manner related in Exodus, if it had not been true? If he could, it would have been a greater miracle than
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than the other. The like of their being fed forty years in the wilderness without bread, by manna rained down to them from heaven. The like of Christ's feeding five thousand at a time with five loaves; and so of all the rest. The two first marks secure from any cheat or imposture at the time the facts were done; and the two last marks secure equally from any imposition in after ages, because this book which relates these facts speaks of itself as written at that time by the actors or eye-witnesses, and as commanded by God to be carefully kept and preserved to all generations, and read publicly to all the people, at stated times, as is commanded, Deut. xxxi. 10, 11, 12. And was practised, Josh. viii. 34, 35. Neh. viii. &c. And the institutions appointed in this book were to be perpetually observed from the day of the institution for ever among these people, in memory of the facts, as the passover, Exod. xii. and so of the rest. Now suppose this book to have been forged a thousand years after Moses, would not every one say when it first appeared,
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appeared, we never heard of this book before, we know of no such institutions, as of a passover, or circumcision, or sabbaths, and the many feasts and fasts therein appointed, of a tribe of Levi, and a tabernacle wherein they were to serve in such an order of priesthood, &c. Therefore this book must be an errant forgery, for it wants all those marks it gives of itself, as to its own continuance, and of those institutions it relates. No instance can be shewn since the world began of any book so circumstantiated, that was a forgery, and passed as truth upon any people. I think it impossible; and therefore that the four marks are still an invincible proof of the truth of that book, and those facts wherein all these marks do meet.

But since I am come upon this subject again, I will endeavour to improve it, and give four other marks, some of which no fact, however true, ever had, or can have, but the fact of Christ alone. Thus while I support the fact of Moses, I set that of Christ above him, as the lord is above the servant.
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And the Jews being herein principally concerned, I will consider their case likewise as we go along; therefore I add this fifth mark as peculiar to our Bible, and to distinguish it from all other histories which relate facts formerly done.

(V.) That the book which relates the facts contains likewise the law of that people to whom it belongs, and be their statute-book by which their causes are determined. This will make it impossible for any to coin or forge such a book, so as to make it pass upon any people. For example; If I should forge a statute-book for England, and publish it next term, could I make all the Judges, Lawyers, and people believe, that this was their true and only statute-book by which their causes had been determined these many hundred years past? They must forget their old statute-book, and believe that this new book, which they never saw or heard of before, was that same old book which has been pleaded in Westminster-Hall for so many ages, which has been so often printed, and the originals of which
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which are now kept in the Tower, to be consulted as there is occasion.

Dr. I grant that to be impossible. But how do you apply it?

Chr. It is evident as to the books of Moses, which are not only a history of the Jews, but their very statute-book, wherein their municipal law, as well civil as ecclesiastical, was contained.

Dr. This is so indeed as to the books of Moses, to which they always appealed; "To the Law and to the testimony." And they had no other statute-book. But this will not agree to your Gospel, which is no municipal law, nor any civil law at all, and no civil causes were tried by it.

Chr. The Law was given to the Jews, as a distinct and separate people from all other nations upon the earth; and therefore was a municipal law particularly for that nation only of the Jews. But Christianity was to extend to all the nations of the earth; and Christians were to be gathered out of all nations; and therefore the Gospel could not be a municipal Law as to civil rights to all nations.
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nations, who had each their own municipal Laws. This could not be without destroying all the municipal Laws in the world, of every nation whatsoever, and then none could be a Christian, without at the same time becoming a rebel to the government where he lived. This would have been for Christ to have immediately set up for universal and temporal King of all the world, as the Jews expected of their Messiah, and therefore would have made Christ a King. But he instructed them in the spiritual nature of his kingdom, that it was not "of this world," nor did respect their temporal or civil matters; which therefore he left in the same state he found them, and commanded their obedience to their civil governors, though Heathen, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. And as to the Law of Moses, he left the Jews still under it, as to their civil concerns, so far as the Romans under whose subjection they then were, would permit them. As Pilate said to them, "Ye have "a Law;"
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"a Law; and judge ye him according to your Law."

But the Gospel was given as the spiritual and ecclesiastical Law to the Church whithersoever dispersed through all nations; for that did not interfere with their temporal Laws, as to civil government. And in this the fifth mark is made stronger to the Gospel than even to the Law; for it is easier to suppose, that any forgery might creep into the municipal Law of a particular nation, than that all the nations whither Christianity is spread should conspire in the corruption of the Gospel, which to all Christians is of infinitely greater concern than their temporal Laws. And without such a concert of all Christian nations and people supposed, no such forgery could pass undiscovered in the Gospel, which is spread as far as Christianity, and read daily in their publick offices.

Dr. But I say it is discovered, as appears by the multitude of your various Lections.

Chr. That cannot be called a forgery; it is nothing but such mistakes as may very easily
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easily happen, and are almost unavoidable, in so many copies as have been made of the Gospel, before printing was known. And considering the many translations of it into several languages, where the idioms are different, and phrases may be mistaken, together with the natural slips of amanuenses, it is much more wonderful that there are no more various lections, than that there are so many.

But in this appears the great providence of God in the care the Christians took of this, that they have marked every the least various lection, even syllabical: and that among all these there is not found one which makes any alteration either in the facts, or in the doctrines. So that instead of an objection, this becomes a strong confirmation of the truth and certainty of the Gospel, which stands thus perfectly clear of so much as any doubt concerning the facts or the doctrines therein related.

But I will now proceed to a stronger evidence than even this, and all that has been said before; which I have made the sixth
(VI.) The great fact of Christ’s coming into the world was prophesied of in the Old Testament from the beginning to the end, as it is said, Luke i. 70. “By all the holy prophets which have been since the world began.”

This evidence no other fact ever had; for there was no prophecy of Moses, but Moses himself did prophecy of Christ, Deut. xviii. 15. (applied Acts iii. 22, 23, 24.) and sets down the several promises given of him. The first was to Adam, immediately after the fall, Gen. iii. 15. where he is called the seed of the woman, but not of the man, because he was to have no man for his father, though he had a woman to his mother. And of none other can this be said, nor that he should “bruise the serpent’s head,” that is, overcome the devil and all his power.
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He was again promised to Abraham, as you may see Gen. xii. 3. xviii. 18. See this applied Gal. iii. 16.

Jacob did expressly prophesy of him, with a mark of the time when he should come, and calls him "Shiloh," or "He that was to be sent." Gen. xlix. 10.

Balaam prophesied of him by the name of the Star of Jacob, and Scepter of Israel. Num. xxiv. 17.

Daniel calls him the Messiah, the Prince; and tells the time of his coming, and of his death, Dan. ix. 25, 26.

It was foretold that he should be born of a virgin, Isa. vii. 14. In the city of Bethlehem, Micah v. 2. Of the seed of Jesse, Isai. xi. 1, 10. His low estate and sufferings are particularly described, Psal. xcvii. and Isai. liii. And his resurrection, Psal. xcvi. 10. That he should sit upon the throne of David for ever, and be called "Wonderful," the "mighty God," the "Prince of Peace," Isai. ix. 6, 7. "The Lord our righteousness," Jer. xxxiii. 16. Jehovah Tsidkenu, (an incommunicable name given
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given to none but the great God alone.)

And Immanuel, that is, "God with us."
Isai. vii. 14. And David, whose son he was, according to the flesh, called him his Lord, Psal. cx. 1.

The cause of his sufferings is said to be for the sins of the people, and not for himself, Isai. liii. 4, 5, 6. Dan. ix. 26.

And as to the time of his coming, it is expressly said, (to the confusion of the Jews now) that it was to be before the scepter should depart from Judah, Gen. xlix. 10. In the second temple, Hag. ii. 7, 9. Within seventy weeks of the building of it, Dan. ix. 24. that is, (according to the prophetical known style of a day for a year) within four hundred and ninety years after.

(1.) From these and many more prophecies of the Messiah or Christ, his coming was the general expectation of the Jews from the beginning, but more especially about the time in which it was foretold he should come, when several false Messiahs did appear among them. And this expectation
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tation still remains with them, though they confess that the time foretold by all the Prophets for his coming, is past.

But what I have next to offer will be more strange to you. You may say it was natural for the Jews to expect their Messiah, who was prophesied of in their book of the Law, and was to be a Jew, and King of all the earth. But what had the Gentiles to do with this? There were no prophecies to them.

Therefore what I have to shew you is, that these prophecies of the Messiah were likewise to the Gentiles. For it is said that he should be the expectation of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews. And Gen. xlix. 10. That the gathering of the people (or nations) should be to him. In the vulgar it is rendered expectation of the Gentiles. "The expectation of the Gentiles." He is called "the desire of all nations," Hag. ii. 7. And I will shew you the general expectation the Gentiles had of his coming, about the time that he did come.
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They knew him by the name of the East. Their tradition was, that the East should prevail, ut valsceret oriens, as I will shew you presently. But first let me tell you, that the Holy Scripture often alludes to him under this denomination. The blood of the great expiatory sacrifice was to be sprinkled towards the East, Lev. xvi. 14., to shew whence the true expiatory sacrifice should come. And he is thus frequently stiled in the Prophets. Zech. iii. 8. it is said, according to the vulgar, "I will bring forth my servant the East." And chap. vi. 12. "Behold the man whose name is the East." Our English renders it in both places the Branch, for the Hebrew word bears both senses. But the Greek renders it ἀναξία, which we translate the "day spring," Luke i. 78. and put on the margin Sun-rising or Branch. The vulgar has it orien ex alto, the East or Sun-rising from on high. He is called the "Sun of righteousness," Mal. iv. 2. And it is said Isai. lx. 3. "The Gentiles shall come..."
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"to thy light; and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

(2.) Now, Sir, how literally was this fulfilled in the Magi (generally supposed to be Kings) coming from the East, led by a star which appeared to them in the East, to worship Christ when he was born, and to bring presents unto him as unto a King? As it is told in the second of St. Matthew.

De. Why do you quote St. Matthew to me? You know we make no more of him than of some of your Legend-writers, and believe this story no more than that these three Kings are now buried at Cologne.

(3.) Chr. You make great use of the Legends, and answer every thing by them; and I confess they are the greatest affront to Christianity, and (if possible) a disproof of it, as it must be to those who will place them upon the same foot with the Holy Bible, as too many do in the Church of Rome, and cry, we have the authority of
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the Church for both. And they are taught to receive the Holy Scriptures upon the authority of the Church only. But my business is not with them now; I shall only say, that when they can bring such evidences for the truth of their Legends, or for any particular fact in them, as I do for the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and in particular for the fact of Christ, then I will believe them.

Dr. Will you believe nothing that has not all these evidences you produce?

(4.) Chr. Far from it; for then I must believe nothing but this single fact of Christ: because no other fact in the world, no, not of all those recorded in Holy Scriptures, has all these evidences which the fact of Christ has. And so God has thought fitting, that this great fact above all other facts, of the greatest glory to God, and importance to mankind, should appear with greater and more undeniable evidence than any other fact ever was in the world.

Dr. We are now upon the particular fact of the Magi or wise men coming to Christ. Have you any more to say as to that?

(5.) Chr.
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(5.) Chr. It has those same evidences that the truth of the Bible in general has, which are more than can be produced for any other book in the world. But now as to this fact in particular, St. Matthew was the first who wrote the Gospel, and it was in the same age when this fact was said to be done. And can you think it possible that such a fact as this could have passed without contradiction and a publick expositing of Christianity, then so desirable and so much esteemed by the unbelieving Jews, their High-priests, Elders, &c. as the only means for their own preservation, if the fact had not been notorious and fresh in the memory of all the people then at Jerusalem, viz. that these wise men came thither, and that Herod and the whole city were troubled at the news they brought of the birth of the King of the Jews; that Herod thereupon gathered all the chief Priests and Scribes of the people together, that they might search out of the Prophets, and know the place where Christ should be born; and then the slaughter of the infants in and about Bethlehem, and in
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all the coasts thereof, which followed—I say could such a fact as this have passed at that very time, if it had not been true? Could St. Matthew have hoped to have palmed this upon all the people, and upon those very same chief Priests and Scribes who he said were so far concerned in it? Would none of them have contradicted it, if it had been a forgery? Especially when the detecting it would have strangled Christianity in its birth. Would not they have done it who suborned false witnesses against Christ, and gave large money to the soldiers to conceal (if possible) his resurrection? Would not they have done it, who persecuted Christianity with all spite and fury, and invented all imaginable false stories and calumnies against it? Whereas here was one at hand this of the Magi, which, if false, could have been so easily detected, by appealing to every man, woman, and child, I may say, in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and even in all Judea; who no doubt had heard of the terrible massacre of so many infants, and the cause of it.

Dr.
De. I can give no account why the writers against Christianity did not offer to contradict this fact of the star and the Magi, which is put in the very front of this Gospel of St. Matthew. And there it is called his (Christ's) star. "We have seen his star in the East."—As if God had created a new and extraordinary star on purpose, as the signal of Christ hung out in the heavens, to give the world notice of his birth. But did none of the heathen Philosophers take notice of this star, or of this relation given of it by your St. Matthew?

(6.) Chr. Yes. For Chalcidius in his comment upon Plato's Timæus, speaking of the presages of stars mentioned by Plato, adds as a further proof, Est quoque alia venerabilior & sanctior historia—There is likewise another more venerable and holy history, by which I doubt not he means this of St. Matthew; for what he tells seems to be taken out of it, "That by the rising of a certain unusual star, not plagues and diseases, but the descent of the venerable God,
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"for the salvation and benefit of mortals, " was observed by the Chaldeans, who worshipped this God newly born, by offering " gifts unto him."

Dr. This makes those Magi or wise men to have been Chaldeans, who I know were the most noted then in the world for the most curious learning, particularly in astronomy. And they were likewise east of Jerusalem, so that it might be well said they came from the East, and had seen his star in the East. But I cannot imagine how they should read the birth of a God in the face of a new star; and how that star should send them particularly to Jerusalem, though I may suppose it pointed them westward.

(7.) Chr. This will be easier to you, when you know, that all over the East there was a tradition, or fixed opinion, that about that time a King of the Jews would be born, who should rule the whole earth. And the appearance of this extraordinary star in the East was taken by them as a sign that he was then born. And whither should they go
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go to look for the King of the Jews, but to Jerusalem? And when they came thither they enquired, saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him." This made Herod gather the Priests and Scribes together. And they by searching the Prophets found that Bethlehem was the place; whereupon the wise men went to Bethlehem; and to convince them that they were right, the star which they had seen in the East appeared to them again, and went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was. This made them rejoice with such an exceeding great joy.

Dr. This would go down in some measure with me, if you could make good your first posulatum, of such a current tradition or opinion in the East; but for this you have given no sort of proof. And all the rest which you have inferred from thence must come to the ground with it, if it be not supported. I confess it would seem as strange to me as the star to the wise men,
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if God had (we know not how, it is unaccountable to us) sent such a notion into the minds of men, and at that time only, of such a King to be born, and that he should be a Jew, (the then most contemptible people in the world, subdued and conquered by the Romans) and that he was to be King of the Jews, and thence to become King of all the earth, and conquer his conquerors. The Romans would have looked with disdain upon such a notion or prophecy as this; it would have made some stir among them, if they had heard of it, or given any credit to it.

(8.) Chr. You argue right; and I will shew you what stir it made among them, and I hope you will take their word, as well for this Eastern tradition, as for the effects it had among themselves. Nay, they wanted not the same tradition among themselves, and express prophecies of it in their Sibyls, and otherwise. So that the same expectation of the Messiah was then current over all
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all the earth, with the Gentiles as well as with the Jews.

Tacitus in his History, l. v. c. 13. speaking of the great prodigies that preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, says that many understood these as the forerunners of that extraordinary Person whom the ancient books of the Priests did foretel should come about that time from Judea, and obtain the universal dominion; his words are, "Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum litteris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valeset ceret Oriens, profetique Judæa rerum potirentur;" i.e. "Many were persuaded that it was contained in the old writings of the Priests, that at that very time the East should prevail, and the Jews should have the dominion." And Suetonius in the Life of Vespasian, c. 1. n. 4. says, "Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus & constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore, Judæa profeti rerum potiren tur;" i.e. "That it was an ancient and constant opinion (or tradition) throughout the whole East, that at that time those who came from Judea should obtain the dominion;"
that is, that some Jew should be universal king. Therefore Cicero, who was a commonwealths-man, in his second book of Divination, speaking of the books of the Sibyls, who likewise foretold this great King to come, says, "Cum antifibus agamus, & quidvis potius ex illis libris, quam regem proferant: quem Romae post hae nec Dii, nec homines esse patientur;" i.e. "Let us deal with these Priests, and let them bring any thing out of their books, rather than a king: whom neither the Gods nor men will suffer after this at Rome."

But he was mistaken, and had his head cut off for writing against kingly government. And others more considerable than he laid greater stress upon these prophecies, even the whole Senate of Rome, as I come to shew you.

Whether these Sibyls gathered their prophecies out of the Old Testament, is needless here to examine. I am now only upon that general expectation which was then in the world of this great and universal King to come about that time:

(9.)
The same year that Pompey took Jerusalem, one of these oracles of the Sibyls made a great noise; which was, "That nature was about to bring forth a King to the Romans." Which, as Suetonius relates in the Life of Augustus, c. 94. did so terrify the Senate, that they made a decree to expose, that is, destroy all the children born that year. Senatum ex territum cenfusisse, ne quis illo anno genitus educaretur. That none born that year should be brought up, but exposed, that is, left in some wood or desart place to perish. But he tells how this dreadful sentence was prevented. Eos qui gravidas uxorēs haberent, quod ad se quisque speraret, venisse ne Senatus consultum ad aerarium deferretur. That those Senators whose wives were with child, because each was in hopes of having this great King, took care that the decree of the Senate should not be put into the aerarium or treasury, without which, by their constitution, the decree could not be put in execution. And Appian, Plutarch, Sallust, and Cicero, do all say, that it was this prophecy of the Sibyls which
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raised the ambition of Corn. Lentulus at that time, hoping that he should be this King of the Romans. Virgil, a few years before the birth of Christ, in his 4th Eclogue quotes a prophecy of one of these Sibyls speaking of an extraordinary person to be born about that time, who should introduce a golden age into the world, and restore all things, and should blot out our sins.

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*Si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri.*

And calls him,

*Chara Deum foboles, magnum Jovis incrementum.*

Dear offspring of the Gods, and great son of Jove.

He describes a new state of things like the "new heavens" and "new earth," Isaiah lxv. 17.

*Magnus ab integro seclorum nascitur ordo.*

A great order of ages does begin, wholly new.

And
And as Isaiah describes the happy state in the "new earth," that the lion and the lamb should feed together, the serpent eat dust, and that they should not hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain," Isai. lxv. 25. Virgil does almost repeat his words:

\[
\text{Nec magnos metuent armenta leones. Occidet & serpens, & fallax herba venent Occidet.}
\]

And as God introduces the Messiah with saying, "I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea." Hag. ii. 7. Virgil does in a manner translate it in this Eclogue, introducing the great person then to be born, and the joy which should be in the whole creation.

\[
\text{Aspice convexo nutantem pondere mundum,}
\text{Terrasq; tellusq; maris, caelumq; profundum.}
\text{Aspice venturo lentionur ut omnia seculo.}
\]

Lo! teeming nature bending with its load, The earth, the ocean, and the heavens high. Behold how all rejoice to greet the coming age.

C 6 Here
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Here the poet describes nature as in labour to bring forth this great King, as the other Prophecy of the Sibyls before-mentioned speaks. And he says, *Ademit jam tempus.* That the time was then at hand.

*Jam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.*

Now a new progeny from heaven descends.

And he applies it to Saloninus the son of Pollio the consul, then newly born, as if it was to be fulfilled in him. But as there was nothing like it in the event; so these words are too great to be applied to any mortal, or the reign of any King that ever was in the world; or to any other but to the Messiah the Lord of heaven and earth.

(10.) De. But you know the authority of these Sibyls is disputed. Some say the Christians did interpolate them, and added to them in about a hundred years after Christ.

Chr. It is true, the Christians did often quote them against the Heathens, as St. Paul quoted the Heathen Poets to the Athenians.
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Acts xvii. 28. And Clem. Alexandrinus in his Strom. 1. 6. says, that St. Paul quoted the Sibyls likewise in his Disputations with the Gentiles: And the Christians were called Sibyllianists, from their quoting the Sibyls so often. But Origen in his answer to Celsus, 1. 7. challenges him to shew any interpolation made by the Christians, and appeals to the Heathen copies which were in their own possession, and kept with great care.

But what I have quoted to you out of Virgil was before Christ was born, and therefore clear of all these objections.

DE. Then the Jews must have had some hand in them. As likewise in that Eastern tradition you have spoken of.

CHR. If so, you must suppose that the Jews had it from their own Prophets. And this will be a strong confirmation that the time of the Messiah's coming was plainly told in the prophets.

(11.) DE. What say the Jews to this? For I cannot imagine how they can get off of it.
CHR. Some of them say, That the Messiah put off his coming at the appointed time, because of their sins. Others say, he did come at the time, but has concealed himself ever since.

DE. These are mere excuses. Do they pretend any prophecy for this? But to what purpose? For these excuses shew, That prophecies are no proofs, because if they may be thus put off, they can never be known. And they may be put off and put off to the end of the world.

(12.) CHR. But now, Sir, as to your point. If this general expectation, both east and west, of the great King of the Jews to be born about that very time that he did come, was occasioned by the Jewish tradition of it, strengthens the truth of the Holy Scriptures, whence the Jews had it. But otherwise, if God we know not how, did send such a notion into the minds of men, all over the world, at that particular time, and never the like, either before or since, then the miracle will be greater, and the attestation
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attestation to the coming of Christ stronger, and as you said, it will be more wonderful and more convincing to you, than the star was to the wise men in the east.

Dr. I must take time to answer this. I made nothing at all of this of the Magi, and the star, and of Herod's slaying the infants upon it. I thought it a ridiculous story, and to have no foundation in the world. But when I see Suetonius telling us of the decree of the Senate of Rome to destroy all the children born that year, and for the same reason, for fear of this great King that was then to be born; I must think there was a strange chiming in of things here, one to answer the other. I know not how it happened. By chance, or how!

(13.) Chr. You cannot imagine there could be any concert in this matter. That the Chaldeans, and Romans, and Jews, should all agree upon the point, and hit it so exactly, without any one of them discovering the contrivance! especially when it was
was so terrible to both the Romans and the Jews, that they took such desperate methods to prevent it as to destroy their own children!

Dr. It is ridiculous to talk of a concert. I will not put my cause upon that. Would they concert what they thought their own destruction? Besides, the Jews and Romans were then enemies; and the Chaldeans were far off, and had little correspondence with either of them. And such an universal notion could not be concerted. Whole nations could not be trusted with a secret. And if they all kept it, and against their own interest too, it would be as great a miracle as any in your Bible.

(14.) Chr. How much more impossible is it to suppose, That there should be a concert between different ages, between all the ages from Adam downwards, in all those prophecies of the coming of the Messiah? How should they know it but by revelation? And would they have all agreed so exactly as to the time, place, manner, and other circum-
circumstances, if it had been a forgery contrived by different persons and in different ages?

(15.) This is an argument which St. Peter thought stronger than the conviction even of our outward senses, for having set down what he and the other two Apostles had both seen and heard upon the holy Mount, he adds, "We have yet a more sure word (that is, a stronger proof) of prophecy, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." 2 Pet. i. 19. And he enforces it thus, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

De. I will grant his argument so far, that it is easier to suppose the senses of three men, or of all the men in the world to be imposed upon, than that Adam, Abraham, and I had concerted together. But I will
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will not give you my answer yet. Have you any more to say upon this head of prophecy?

CHR. I need say no more till your answer comes. For you have granted that this proof is stronger than what we see with our eyes.

(16.) But that your answer may take in all together, I will give you something further. I have set down already some of the great prophecies of the coming of Christ, his sufferings, death, and resurrection. But there are others which reach to several minute circumstances, such as cannot be applied to any other fact that ever yet happened, and which could not have been foreseen by any but God; nor were known by the actors who did them, else they had not done them. For they would not have fulfilled the Prophecies that went before of Christ, in applying them to him whom they crucified as a false Christ.

See then how literally several of these Prophecies were fulfilled. As Psal. lxix. 21. "They gave me gall to eat and vinegar

...
"to drink." Then read Matt. xxvii. 34. "They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall." It is said, Psal. xxii. 16, 17, 18. "They pierced my hands and my feet—They stand staring and looking upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." As if it had been wrote after John xix. 23, 24. It was merely accidental in the soldiers, they would not tear his coat, because it was woven and without seam, therefore they cast lots for it: thus fulfilling this Scripture, without any knowledge of theirs, for they were Roman soldiers, and knew nothing of the Scripture. Again it is said, Psal. xxii. 7, 8. "All they that see me, laugh me to scorn; they shoot out their lips and shake their heads, saying, "He trusted in God that he would deliver him; let him deliver him if he will have him." Compare this with Matt. xxvii. 39, 41, 42, 43. "And they that passed by, reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying—Come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders,
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"said—He trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him; for he said, "I am the Son of God." It is said again, Zech. xi. 10. "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced." His very price was foretold, and how the money should be disposed of, Zech. xi. 13. fulfilled Matt. xxvii. 6, 7. And his riding into Jerusalem upon an ass, Zech. ix. 9. which the learned Rabbi Saadia expounds of the Messiah. That he should suffer with malefactors, Isai. liii. 12. That his body should not lie so long in the grave as to see corruption. Psal. xvi. 10.

Many other circumstances are told which cannot be applied to any but to Christ. I have set down these few, that you may take them into consideration when you think fit to give your answer as to this head of Prophecies.

And you are to take care to find some other fact guarded with Prophecies like this. Or else you must confess that there is no other fact that has such evidence as this.

(17.) But
(17.) But before I leave this head, I must mention the Prophecies in our Bible of things yet to come to the end of the world, and of the new heavens and new earth that shall succeed.

De. These can be no proofs here, because we cannot see the fulfilling of them.

CHR. You may believe what is to come, by the fulfilling you have seen of what is past. But I bring this now to shew you, that there is no other law or history in the world that so much as pretends to this, or to know what is to come. This is peculiar to the Holy Bible, as being written from the mouth of God.

You have seen how the current of the Prophecies of the Old Testament did point at and center in that great event the coming of the Messiah.

When he was come, then he told us more plainly of what was to come after him, even to the consummation of all things. And by what we have seen exactly fulfilled of all he told us to this time, we must believe what remains yet to come.

(18.) How
How particularly did he foretell the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple; Matt. xxiv. And that that age should not pass till it should be fulfilled? And his very expression was literally fulfilled, That there should not be left one stone upon another in the temple, for the very foundations of it were ploughed up by Turnus Rufus. See Scaliger's Canon. Isagog. p. 304.

When Jerusalem was first besieged it was full of Christians. But the siege was raised unaccountably and for no reason that history gives. In which time the Christians seeing those signs come to pass which Christ had foretold would precede its destruction, and particularly laying hold of that caution he gave, "Then let them that are in Judea "flee to the mountains," and that in such haste, as that he that was in the field was not to return (to Jerusalem) to fetch his garment, or he on the house top there to stay to take his goods with him; accordingly all the Christians left Jerusalem, and fled to Pella, a city in the Mountains. And as soon as they were all gone, the Romans re-
turned and renewed the siege. And so it came to pass, that when Titus sacked the city there was not one Christian found there, and the destruction fell only upon the unbelieving Jews. The others escaped, as Lot out of Sodom, by believing the prediction of that ruin.

(19.) Another very remarkable prediction of our blessed Lord in that same chapter was of the many false Christs that should come after him; and he warned the Jews not to follow them, for that it would be to their destruction. "Behold, (says he, ver. 25.) "I have told you before." But they would not believe him; and accordingly it came to pass. Josephus in his Antiquities of the Jews, l. xviii. c. 12. l. xx. c. 6. And De Bell. Jud. l. vii. c. 31. tells of abundance of these false Messiahs who appeared before the destruction of Jerusalem, and led the people into the wilderness, where they were miserably destroyed. The very thing of which our Saviour cautioned them, ver. 26. If they say unto you, "Behold, he (that is, "Christ)
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"Christ is in the desert, go not forth."

And De Bell. Jud. i. vii. c. 12. Josephus says, that the chief cause of their obstinacy in that war with the Romans, was their expectation of a Messiah to come and deliver them, which brought on their ruin, and made them deaf to the offers of Titus, who courted them to peace.

And since the destruction of Jerusalem there have been so many false Messiahs, that Johannes à Lent has wrote a history of them, printed Herbonæ, 1697. Which brings them down as far as the year 1682. And tells the lamentable destruction of the Jews in following them.

(20.) But the next Prophecy of our blessed Lord which I produce is more remarkable than these; and of which you see the fulfilling in a great measure, viz. That his Gospel should prevail over all the world, and that the gates of hell should not prevail against it: and this told when he was low and despised, and had but twelve poor fishermen for his followers: and that his religion should
The Truth of Christianity demonstrated. should conquer, not by the sword, like Mahomet's, but by patient suffering, as lambs among wolves. And in this state the church endured most terrible persecutions, when all the rage of hell was let loose against her, for the first three hundred years, without any help but from heaven only; till at last, by the Divine Providence, the great Emperor of Rome, and other mighty Kings and Princes, without any force or compulsion, did voluntarily and freely submit their scepters to Christ.

No religion that ever was in the world was so begun, so propagated, and did so prevail: and hence we assuredly trust, that what remains will be fulfilled, of the promise of Christ to his church in the latter days.

But I speak now only of this Prophecy so long beforehand, and when there was so little appearance of its coming to pass so far as we have seen already.

Let me here remember one particular passage foretold by Christ concerning the woman, who anointed his body to the burying, That "wheresoever this Gospel shall
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"be preached throughout the whole world, "this also that she hath done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her." Mark xiv. 8, 9. And we see how it is spoken of to this day.

Dr. If this book had been lost, we had not heard of this Prophecy.

Chr. So you may say of all the Bible, or of any other book; but Providence has fulfilled this Prophecy by preserving the book: and it is a prophecy that this book, at least this fact of the woman, should be preserved for ever, and it may be preserved though that book were lost.

(21.) Dr. When prophecies are fulfilled, and the events come to pass, they are plain to every body: but why might they not have been as plain from the beginning? And then there could have been no dispute about them, as if it had been said, that such a one by name, at such a time, and in such a place, should do such things, &c.

Chr. Because God having given man free will, he does not force men to do any wicked thing:
thing: and it would be in the power of wicked men to defeat a Prophecy against themselves, as to the circumstance of time, place, or the manner of doing the thing.

For example, if the Jews had known that Christ had told his Apostles he was to be crucified, they would not have done it; they would have stoned him as they did St. Stephen; for that was the death appointed by the law for blasphemy: and they several times attempted to have stoned Christ for this, because he said I am the Son of God. John viii. 59. x. 31, 32, 33. But crucifixion was a death by the Roman law. Therefore the Jews, to fulfil this Prophecy (but not knowing it) delivered Christ to the Romans to be put to death. Yet he told them so much of it, that after he was crucified they might know it, as he said to them, John viii. 28. "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he." And chap. x. 32, 33. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."
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But they understood it not till they had done it; then they knew what the lifting up meant. And chap. xviii. 31, 32. When Pilate would have had them judge him according to their law, which was stoning, they were cautious at this time only, and said, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." Because they were then under the government of the Romans. But the next words shew the design of Providence in it, "that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die." They had no such caution upon them when they stoned St. Stephen after this, nor the many times before when they took up stones to have stoned the same Jesus.

Then again, the piercing his side with the spear was no part of the Roman sentence of execution, but happened seemingly by mere accident; for the sentence of the law was to hang upon the cross till they were dead: but that being the day of preparation for the Sabbath, which began that evening soon after Christ and the thieves were fastened
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fastened to the cross, before it could be supposed they were dead, therefore, "that the " bodies might not remain upon the cross " on the sabbath-day," the Jews besought Pilate that their legs might be broken (which was no part of the sentence neither, but done) lest they should escape when taken down. Accordingly the legs of the thieves were broken, for they were yet alive, and the reason why they brake not the legs of Christ was, because "they saw that he was dead already:" but to make sure, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear: little knowing that they were then fulfilling Prophecies, as that "a bone of him should not " be broken." And again, "They shall " look on him whom they pierced." As little did the soldiers think of it when they were casting lots upon his vesture: and the chief Priests (if they had known it, or reflected upon it) would not have upbraided him in the very words that were foretold in xxii: Psalm, which I have before quoted. And they would have contrived the money they gave to Judas to have been one piece more

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or less than just thirty: they would not have come so punctually in the way of that Prophecy, Zech. xi. 12, 13. "They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver." And they would have bought any other field with it, but especially not that of the Potter, which Zechariah there likewise mentions.

And as the enemies of Christ did not know they were fulfilling these Prophecies of him, so neither did his disciples at the time when they were so doing. And it is said, John xii. 16. "These things understood not his disciples at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him." This makes the fulfilling these Prophecies yet more remarkable.

Where Providence sees that Prophecies will not be minded, they are more express and plain: as likewise where the passions and interests of men will hurry them on towards fulfilling them. Thus Alexander the Great is described as plainly almost as if he had been
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been named, Dan. viii. 20, 21, 22. And it is said, that this Prophecy, which was shewed him by the High-Priest at Jerusalem, did encourage him in his expedition against the Persians. But it is not so when a man is to do foolish and wicked things, and things hurtful to himself; for if these were told plainly and literally, it would be in his power to do otherwise; unless God should force his will, and then he would not be a free agent.

(22.) De. I must have recourse to the Jews in answer to these Prophecies of the Messiah which you have brought; for they owning these Scriptures as Revelations given them by God, must have some solution or other for them, or else give themselves up as self-condemned.

Chr. The answers the Jews give will convince you the more, and render them indeed self-condemned.

Before the coming of Christ the Jews understood these texts as we do, to be certainly meant of the Messiah, and of none other.
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But since that time they have forced themselves to put the most strained and contradictory meanings upon them; for they agree not in their expositions, and the one does manifestly destroy the other.

Thus that text I before quoted, Gen. xlix. 10. was understood by the Chaldee and ancient Jewish interpreters to be meant of the Messiah.

Yet of their modern Rabbies some say, that it was meant of Moses; but others reject that, First, Because it is plain that the gathering of the nations or Gentiles was not to Moses. Secondly, Because the scepter was not given to Judah till long after Moses. The first of it that appears was Judg. xx. 18. when Judah was commanded by God to "go up first," and lead the rest of the tribes; and David was the first King of the tribe of Judah. Thirdly, Because Moses did prophecy of a greater than himself to come, to whom the people should hearken. Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19.

For these reasons, other Rabbies say it could not be meant of Moses, but they apply it
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it to the tabernacle at Shiloh. This was only for the sake of the word Shiloh, for otherwise it bears no resemblance either to the gathering of the Gentiles, or the scepter of Judah: and though the house of God was first set up at Shiloh, yet it was removed from thence and established at Jerusalem, which was the place of which Moses spoke that God would place his name there, as I shall shew you presently.

This interpretation therefore being rejected, other Rabbies say, that this Prophecy must be meant of the Messiah, but that by the word scepter is not to be understood a scepter of rule or government, but of correction and punishment, and that this should not depart from Judah till Shiloh came. But the text explaining scepter by the word law-giver, that the scepter should not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet until Shiloh came, overthrows this interpretation, and shews the scepter here mentioned to be meant of a scepter of rule and government. Again, Joshua gave them rest from their enemies round.
round about; and the land had rest many
years under their Judges; and David de-
ivered them out of the hands of their
enemies; and under Solomon they were the
richest and happiest people upon earth;
and frequently after they were in good con-
dition and at ease: so that the scepter of
correction did often depart from them be-
fore Shiloh came.

This is so evident, that others of them:
allow this scepter to be a scepter of govern-
ment, but they say the meaning is, that
the scepter shall not finally or for ever
depart from Judah, because the Messiah
will come and restore it to Judah again.
But this is adding to the text, and making
a new text of it, and quite different from
the former, nay directly opposite to it; for
the text speaks only of the departing of
the scepter, but nothing of the restoring
it; and it cannot be restored till once it is
departed: therefore this exposition saying
it "shall depart," and the text saying it
"shall not depart," are directly contrary.

Lastly,
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Lastly, there are others who throw aside all these excuses, and say, that the scepter or dominion is not yet departed from Judah, for that some Jew or other may have some sort of rule or government, in some part or other of the world, though we know it not.

Dr. As if the Jews (who hold the best correspondence with one another of any people) could not tell this place, if there were any such where they were governed by their own laws, and by governments of their own nation, though in subjection to the government of the country where they lived.

These falsos of the Jews are contradictory to each other, they are poor excuses, and shew their cause to be perfectly destitute.

But I have an objection against this Prophecy, which affects both Jews and Christians: that the regal scepter did depart from the tribe of Judah long before your Shiloh came.
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CHR. First, This Prophecy does not call the scepter a regal scepter, and therefore denotes only government in the general.

Secondly, The whole land and the nation took their name from Judah. It was called the land of Judah, and the nation took the name of Jews from Judah, as before that of Hebrews from Heber their progenitor, Gen. x. 25. And this Prophecy spoke of those times when Judah should be the father of his country, and the whole nation should be comprehended under the name of Judah: and therefore Judah holds the scepter wherever a Jew governs. Besides the words scepter and throne are used in relation to inferior governors, to tributary kings, and kings in captivity; thus it is said that thirty-seven years after the captivity of Judah, the king of Babylon set the throne of Jehoiachin king of Judah above the thrones of the kings that were with him in Babylon. 2 Kings xxv. 27, 28. This was more than half the time of the captivity; and this was continued to Jehoiachin all the "days of his life," (ver. 29.)
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29, 30.) which might last till the end or near the end of the captivity. But besides the king, the Jews had governors of their own nation allowed them, who were their archontes or rulers; and they enjoyed their own laws, though in subjection to the king of Babylon. The elders of Judah (which was a name of government) are mentioned in the captivity. Ezek. viii. 1. And the chief of the Fathers of Judah, and the Priests and the Levites. Ezra i. 5. And after the captivity, they had a trišahta or governor of their own nation. Ezra ii. 63. Neh. viii. 9. And the throne or the governor is named, Neh. iii. 7. So that here was still the throne, or scepter of Judah.

And from the time of the Maccabees to their conquest by the Romans, the supreme authority was in their High Priests. As it was afterwards, but in subjection to the Romans; and they enjoyed their own laws. "Pilate said unto them, take ye him, and judge him according to your law." Joh. xviii. 31. And though they answered, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death;"
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"death;" the reason is given in the next verse, "That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which he spake, signifying what death he should die." For crucifixion was a Roman death, but stoning by the Law of Moses was the death for blasphemy, of which they accused him. And they afterwards stoned St. Stephen for the same (alleged) crime, according to their own law. Their High-Priests and Council had full liberty to meet when they pleased, and to act according to their law. And Christ himself owns they "sat in Moses's seat." Matth. xxiii. 2. The High-Priest sat to judge St. Paul, who applied to him that text, Exod. xxii. 28. "Thou shalt not re-vile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people, or speak evil of him," as the Apostle renders it, Acts xxiii. 5. So that here the government was still in the Jews, though in subjection to the Romans; and thus it continued till the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Romans. But since that time they are dispersed in all countries, and have no governor or ruler of
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of their own in any. The scepter is entirely departed from them.

Dr. It is impossible but the Jews must see the difference of their state before the destruction of Jerusalem, and since, and of their condition as to government in their several captivities, and now in their dispersion. In the former, they had still a face of government left among themselves: but now, none at all. And their excuses which you have mentioned, render them indeed self-condemned.

What do they say to that text you have quoted, Jer. xxiii. 17, &c. that David should never want a son to sit upon his throne, &c. You Christians apply it to Christ, who was called the Son of David; but to whom do the Jews apply it?

Chr. Some of them say, that David will be raised from the dead, and made immortal, to fulfil this prophecy. Others say, that after the Messiah, who is to be of the seed of David, he shall thenceforward no more want a son, &c.

Dr.
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De. Both these interpretations are in flat contradiction to the text. The text says, shall never want; these say, shall want for a long time; they must confess now for near seventeen hundred years together, and how much longer they cannot tell. They have had none to sit in Moses's seat, or on the throne of David, though in subjection to their enemies, as they had in the worst of their captivities; but have not now in their dispersion.

But is there any difference betwixt what you call the cathedra, or seat of Moses, and the throne of David?

 Chr. None as to government; for Moses was king in Jeshurun, Deut. xxiii. 5. but David was the first king of the tribe of Judah, which was to be the name of the whole nation; and Christ was called the King of the Jews. It was the title set upon his cross. But after him none ever had that title to this day.

De. This is not to be answered by the Jews. But pray what person is it do they say
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say was meant in the liiid. of Isaiah which you have quoted?

Chr. They will not have it to be any person at all; for they can find none, except our Christ, to whom these prophecies can any way be applied. Therefore they say it must be meant of the nation of the Jews, whose sufferings, &c. are there described in the name of a person, by which the people are to be understood.

De. But the people and the person there described as suffering, &c. are plainly contradiistinguished. It is said ver. 8. "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." And ver. 3, 4, &c. "We" (the people) "like sheep have gone astray."

And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," that is, of the people: who are here called wicked. But he is called "My righteous servant, who did no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Therefore this people and the person he spoke of could not be the same. They are opposed to each other. The one called righteous, the other wicked.

The
The one to die for the other, and to justify the other. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, &c."

CHR. The Jews before Christ came understood this prophecy of the Messiah, as indeed it can be applied to none other: but the Jews since Christ, to avoid the force of this and other prophecies which speak of the sufferings and death of the Messiah, have invented two Messiahs, one Ben-Joseph of the tribe of Ephraim, who is to be the suffering Messiah, the other Ben-David, of the tribe of Judah, who is to triumph gloriously, and shall raise from the dead all the Israelites, and among them the first Messiah, Ben-Joseph.

DR. Does the Scripture speak of two Messiahs, and the one raising the other?

CHR. No; not a word: but only of the Messiah, which shews it spoke only of one. But it mentions the twofold state of this Messiah, the first suffering, the second triumphing. Whence the modern Jews have framed to themselves these two Messiahs.
Dr. This is shameful! And plainly to avoid the prophecies against them.

Chr. This of Isaiah is fully explained, Dan. ix. 24, &c. where it is said, that the Messiah the Prince should be cut off, but not for himself, but for the transgressions of the people, "To make an end of sins, "and to make reconciliation for iniquity." And that this was to be within four hundred and ninety years after the building of the second temple, which I have mentioned before.

Dr. I cannot imagine how the Jews get clear of this.

Chr. They cannot. But in spite to it, they seek now to undervalue the whole book of Daniel, though they dare not totally reject it, because it was received by their forefathers, who preceded Christ. But about a hundred years after Christ they made a new distribution of the books of the Old Testament, different from their fathers, and took the book of Daniel out of the middle of the Prophets, where it was placed before, and put it last of all.
But more than this, to lessen the credit of this book, they ventured to shake the authority of their whole Scriptures; for they took upon them to make a distinction of the books of the Scripture, and made them not all inspired or canonical, but some of them they called Ἀγίογραφα, that is, holy or pious books, though in a lower class than those called inspired or canonical Scriptures. And they put the book of Daniel into the inferior class; but in that book Daniel speaks of himself as having received these prophecies immediately from an angel of God. Wherein if he told us the truth, it must be put in the highest class of canonical Scripture; but if he told us false, then this book is quite through all a lie, and blasphemous too, in fathering it all upon God! So that the distinction of our modern Jews confounds themselves. And since they allow this book of Daniel a place among the Ἀγίογραφα, or holy writings, they cannot deny it to be truly canonical, as all their fathers owned it before the coming of Christ. And if they throw off Daniel,
Daniel, they must discard Ezekiel too; for he gives the highest attestation to Daniel that can be given to mortal man; he makes him one of the three most righteous men to be found in all ages, and the very standard of wisdom to the world. Ezek. xiv. 14, 20. xxviii. 3.

De. What do they say to Hag. ii. 7, 9. where it is said, that Christ was to come into the second Temple?

Chr. Some of them say, that this must be meant of a temple yet to be built.

De. This is denying the prophecy; for it is said, ver. 7. "I will fill this house with glory, &c." And ver. 9. "The glory of this latter house—and in this place will I give peace, &c.;" but I am not to defend the cause of the Jews. It seems to me very desperate. I own you Christians have the advantage of them in this.

Chr. And I hope it will have so much effect with you, as to make you consider seriously of the weight of this argument of prophecy we have discoursed.
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De. Let us at present leave this head of prophecy. Have you any further evidence to produce for your Christ?

(VII.) Chr. I have one more, which is yet more peculiar to him than even that of prophecy. For whatever weak pretence may be made of some prophecies among the Heathen, as to some particular events, of little consequence to the world, yet they never offered at that sort of evidence I am next to produce; which is not only prophecies of the fact, and that from the beginning of the world, but also types, resemblances, and exhibitions of the fact, in outward sensible institutions, ordained as law from the beginning, and to continue till the fact they prefigured should come to pass.

(1.) Such were the sacrifices instituted by God immediately upon the fall, (and upon his promise of the life-giving seed, Gen. iii. 15.) as types of that great and only propitiatory sacrifice for sin which was to
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to come. Whose blood they saw continually shed (in type) in their daily sacrifices.

These were continued in the Heathen posterities of Adam by immemorial tradition from the beginning, though they had forgot the beginning of them, as they had of the world, or of mankind; yet they retained so much of the reason of them, as that they had universally the notion of a vicarious atonement, and that our sins were to be purged by the blood of others suffering in our stead. As likewise, that the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin, but that a more noble blood was necessary. Hence they came to human sacrifices, and at last to sacrifice the greatest, most noble, and most virtuous; and such offered themselves to be sacrificed for the safety of the people. As Codrus, King of the Athenians, who sacrificed himself on this account. The like did Curtius for the Romans, as supposing himself the bravest and most valuable of them all. So the Decii, the Fabii, &c. Agamemnon sacrificed his daughter Iphigenia for the Greek army;
army; and the King of Moab sacrificed his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, 2 Kings iii. 27. Thus the sacrificing (not their servants or slaves, but) their children to Moloch, is frequently mentioned of the Jews, which they did in imitation of the Heathen, as it is said, Psal. cvi. 35, 36, 37, 38. "They were mingled among the Heathen, and learned their works; and they served their idols —Yea they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto the idols of Canaan, &c." Pursuant to which notion, the Prophet introduceth them arguing thus: "Where with shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Micah vi. 6, 7. They were plainly searching after a complete and adequate
adequate satisfaction for sin; and they thought it necessary.

De. No doubt they thought so; but that did not make it necessary.

Chr. The doctrine of satisfaction is a subject by itself; which I have treated elsewhere, in my answer to the examination of my last dialogue against the Socinians. But I am not come so far with you yet; I am now only speaking of sacrifices as types of the sacrifice of Christ.

(2.) And besides sacrifice in general, there were afterwards some particular sacrifices appointed more nearly expressive of our redemption by Christ. As the passover, which was instituted in memory of the redemption of the children of Israel (that is, the church) out of Egypt, (the house of bondage of this world, where we are in servitude to sin and misery) in the night when God slew all the first-born of the Egyptians: but the destroyer was to pass over those houses where he saw the blood of the Paschal Lamb upon the door-posts.

E And
And it was to be eaten with unleavened bread, expressing the sincerity of the heart, without any mixture or taint of wickedness. And thus it is applied, 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

(3.) There was a double exhibition of Christ on the great day of expiation, which was but once a year; on which day only the High Priest entered into the holy of holies (which represented heaven, Exod. xxv. 40. Wisd. ix. 8. Heb. ix. 24.) with the blood of the sacrifice, whose body was burnt without the camp; to shew God's detestation of sin, and that it was to be removed far from us; and that we must go out of the camp, that is, out of this world, bearing our reproach for sin, before we can be quite freed from it. See how exactly this was
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was fulfilled in Christ, Heb. xiii. 11, 12, 13, 14. "For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the High-Priest for sin, are burnt without the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his approach; for here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

The other lively representation of Christ's bearing our sins, and taking them away from us, which was made on the same day of expiation, was the scape goat, Lev. xvi. 21, 22. "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities, into a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat.
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"goat in the wilderness." This is so plain, that it needs no application.

(4). Another express representation of Christ was the brazen serpent in the wilderness, by looking upon which the people were cured of the stings of the fiery serpents. So in looking upon Christ by faith, the sting of the old serpent the devil is taken away. And the lifting up the serpent did represent Christ's being lifted up upon the cross. Christ himself makes the allusion, John iii. 14. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

(5.) He was likewise represented by the manna; for he was the true bread that came down from heaven to nourish us unto eternal life. John 31 to 36.

(6.) As also by the rock whence the waters flowed out to give them drink in the wilderness.
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derness. "And that rock was Christ."
1 Cor. x. 4.

(7.) And he was not only their meat and drink, but he was also their constant guide, and led them in a pillar of fire by night, and of a cloud by day. And the cloud of glory in the Temple, in which God appeared, was by the Jews understood as a type of the Messiah, who is the true Shechina, or habitation of God.

(8.) The sabbath is called a shadow of Christ, Col. ii. 17. It was a figure of that eternal rest procured to us by Christ; therefore it is called a sign of the perpetual covenant, Exod. xxxi. 16, 17. Ezek. xx. 12.

(9.) And such a sign was the Temple at Jerusalem; at which place, and none other, the sacrifices of the Jews were to be offered, Deut. xii. 11, 13, 14. Because Christ was to be sacrificed there, and as a token of it, those sacrifices which were types of him were to be offered only there.

E 3 And
And so great stress was laid upon this, that no sin of the Jews is oftener remembered than their breach of this command. It was a blot set upon their several reformatons, otherwise good and commendable in the sight of God, that the high places (where they used to sacrifice) were not taken away. This is marked as the great defect in the reformation of Asa, 1 Kings xv. 14. of Jehoshaphat, 1 Kings xxii. 43. of Jehoash, 2 Kings xii. 3. of Amaziah, 2 Kings xv. 4. of Jotham, ver. 35. But they were taken away by Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 4. and the people instructed to sacrifice and burn incense at Jerusalem only. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12. Isai. xxxvi. 7.

There was likewise a further design of Providence in limiting their sacrifices to Jerusalem, which was, that after the great propitiatory sacrifices of Christ had been once offered there, God was to remove the Jews from Jerusalem, that they might have no sacrifice at all (as, for that reason, they have not had in any part of the world near these seventeen hundred years past) to in-
struct them. That (as the Apostle speaks to them, Heb. x. 26.) "there remaineth no "more" (or other) "sacrifice for sins." And since by the Law their sins were to be purged by sacrifice, they have now no way to purge their sins; to force them (as it were) to look back upon that only sacrifice which can purge their sins. And till they return to that, they must have no sacrifice at all, but die in their sins. As Jesus said unto them, "I go my way and ye shall die "in your sins.—For if ye believe not that I "am he, ye shall die in your sins." John viii. 21, 24.

And Daniel prophesied expressly, that soon after the death of the Messiah, the city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary should be destroyed, and that the sacrifice should cease, "Even until the consummation, and that "determined, shall be poured upon the de-
"solate." Dan. ix. 26, 27.

And this desolation of theirs, and what was determined upon them, was told them likewise by Hosea, chap. iii. 4. "For the "children of Israel shall abide many days

E. 4 "without
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"without a sacrifice." But he says in the next verse, That in the latter days they shall "return, and seek the Lord their God, and "David their king." That is, the Son of David, their Prince and Messiah. As he is called Messiah the Prince. Dan. ix. 25.

Thus as salvation was of the Jews, because Christ was to come of them, so this salvation was only to be had at Jerusalem, where he was to suffer, and by which only salvation was to be had.

(10.) De. This argument is to the Jews; and if I were a Jew it would move me, because they never were so long before without king, temple, or sacrifice.

Chr. But the prophecies of it, and these fulfilled as you have seen; and Christ being so plainly pointed at, and the place of his passion, by limiting the sacrifices to Jerusalem only; and by causing the legal sacrifices to cease throughout the world, to shew that they were fulfilled; all this is a strong evidence to you of the truth of these things, and
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and of our Jesus being the Messiah, or Christ, who was prophesied of.

De. I cannot deny but there is something remarkable in this, which I will take time to consider; but I do not see how the Jews can stand out against this, because this mark given by Daniel of the Messiah, that soon after his death the sacrifice should cease, cannot agree to any after-Messiah who should now come so many ages after the sacrifice has ceased.

Chrs. Since we have fallen into the subject of the Jews, I will give you another prophecy which cannot be fulfilled in any after-Messiah whom the Jews expect. And it will be also a confirmation to you of the truth of the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures.

Thus God speaks, Jer. xxiii. 20, 21, 22.

"Thus saith the Lord, if you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season: then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son."
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If son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites, the Priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me."

Now let the Jews tell in which Son of David this is fulfilled, except only in our Christ.

And how this is made good to the Priests and Levites, otherwise than as Isaiah prophesied, "chap. lxvi. 21. "And I will also take of them" (the Gentiles) "for Priests and for Levites, faith the Lord." And as it is thus applied, 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9. and Rev. i. 6. And this evangelical priesthood is multiplied as the stars of heaven, (which they are frequently called) not like the tribe of Levi, which could not afford Priests to all the earth.

And as I said before of Jerusalem and the sacrifices there, that they are ceased, to shew they are fulfilled, so here, after this Son of David was come, all his other sons ceased, and
and the very genealogy of their tribes, and so of Judah, is lost, as also of the tribe of Levi; so that the Jews can never tell, if any after Messiah should appear, whether he were of the tribe of Judah, far less, whether he were of the lineage of David; nor can they shew the genealogy of any they call Levites now among them.

This is occasioned by their being dispersed among all nations, and yet preserved a distinct people from all the earth, though without any country of their own, or King, or Priest, or temple, or sacrifice. And they are thus preserved by the providence of God, (so as never any nation was since the foundation of the world) to shew the fulfilling of the prophecies concerning them, and the judgments pronounced against them for their crucifying their Messiah; and that their conversion may be more apparent to the world, and their being gathered out of all nations, and restored to Jerusalem (as is promised them) when they shall come to acknowledge their Messiah.

E 6 And
And God not permitting them to have any king or governor upon earth, ever since their last dispersion by the Romans, (lest they might say, that the scepter was not departed from Judah) is to convince them (when God shall take the veil off their heart) that no other Messiah who can come hereafter can answer this prophecy of Jeremiah, or that of Jacob, that the scepter should not depart from Judah till Shiloh came.

(34.) And it is wonderful to consider, how expressly their present state is prophesied of, that it could not be more literal, if it were to be worded now by us who see it. As that they should be scattered into all countries, sifted as with a sieve among all nations, yet preserved a people; and that God would make an utter end of those nations who had oppressed them, and blot out their names from under heaven. (As we have seen it fulfilled upon the great empires of the Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Romans, who one after the other had miserably wasted the Jews) but that the name of the Jews (the fewest
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fewest and pooreft of all nations) should reman for ever, and they a people distinct from all the nations in the world, though scattered among them all. Read the prophecies express upon this point. Jer. xxx. xxi. 36, 37. xxxiii. 24, 25, 26. xlv. 28. Isai. xxvii. 7. xxix. 7, 8. liv. 9, 10. lxv. 8. Ezek. vi. 8. xi. 16, 17. xii. 15, 16. Amos ix. 8, 9. Zech. x. 9. And it was foretold them long before, that thus it would be, Lev. xxvi. 44. and this "in the latter " days." Deut. iv. 27, 30, 31. Thus Moses told them of it so long before, as the afterprophets frequently; and you see all these prophecies literally fulfilled and fulfilling.

The like cannot be said of any other nation that ever was upon the earth! So destroyed, and so preserved! And for so long a time! Having worn out all the great empires of the world, and still surviving them! To fulfil what was further prophesied of them to the end of the world.

De. I cannot say but there is something very surprizing in this: I never thought of it before. It is a living prophecy, which we
we see fulfilled and still fulfilling at this day before our eyes. For we are sure these prophecies were not coined yesterday; and they are as express and particular, as if they were to be wrote now, after the events are so far come to pass.

(12.) CHR. As the door was kept open to Christ before he came, by the many and flagrant prophecies of him, and by the types representing him, so was the door for ever shut after him, by those prophecies being all fulfilled and completed in him, and applicable to none who should come after him; and by all the types ceasing, the shadows vanishing when the substance was come. No Messiah can come now, before the scepter depart from Judah, and the sacrifice from Jerusalem. Before the sons of David (all except Christ) shall cease to sit upon his throne, none can come now, within four hundred and ninety years of the building of the second Temple; nor come into that very Temple, as I have before shewed was expressly prophesied by Daniel and Haggai. De.
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De. I know not what the Jews can say, who own these prophecies.

Chr. They say, that the coming of the Messiah at the time spoke of in the Prophets, has been delayed because of their sins.

De. Then it may be delayed for ever, unless, they can tell us when they will grow better. But, however, these prophecies have failed which spoke of the time of the Messiah's coming; and they can never be a proof hereafter, because the time is past. So that, according to this, they were made for no purpose, unless to shew that they were false; that is, no prophecies at all!

But were these prophecies upon condition? Or was it said that the coming of the Messiah should be delayed if the Jews were sinful?

Chr. No: so far from it, that it was expressly prophesied that the coming of the Messiah should be in the most sinful state of the Jews, and to purge their sins. Dan. ix. 24. Zech. xiii. 1. And the ancient tradition of the Jews was pursuant to this, that at the coming of the Messiah the Temple should
should be a den of thieves. Rabbi Juda in Masoreta. And a time of great corruption. Talmud. tit. de Synedrio, and de Ponderibus, &c.

But more than this, the very case is put of their being most sinful, and it is expressly said, that this should not hinder the fulfilling of the prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah, spoke of as the Son of David, 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15, 16. Psal. lxxxix. 30, 33—37.

But it was prophesied that they should not know their Messiah, and should reject him when he came; that he should be a "stone of stumbling," and a "rock of offence" to them. Isai viii. 14, 15. And that "their eyes should be closed," that they should not understand their own Prophets; chap. xxix. 9, 10, 11. That their builders should reject the head stone of their corner, Psal. cxviii. 22. And the like in several other places of their own Prophets. And thus they mistook the prophecy concerning the coming of Elias, whom it is said they knew not, "but did to him what they lifted."
"lifted," and so the same of Christ. Matt. xvii. 12. And it is said, 1 Cor. ii. 8. that "had they known it, they would not have "crucified the Lord of glory."

Dr. This indeed solves the prophecies, both those of the coming of the Messiah, and of the Jews not knowing him, and therefore rejecting him; and likewise obviates this excuse of theirs; for if they were very sinful at that time, it was a greater punishment of their sin not to know, and to reject their Messiah, than his not coming at that time would have been.

Chr. The great sin mentioned for which they were punished by several captivities, was their idolatry, the last and longest of which captivities was that of seventy years in Babylon; since which time they have forsaken their idolatry, and have never been nationally guilty of it since, but always had it in the utmost abhorrence. But since their rejecting their Messiah, they have been now near seventeen hundred years not in a captivity, where they might be all together, and enjoying their own law, government, and
and worship, in some manner, but dispersed over all the world, without country of their own, or King, or Priest, or Temple, or sacrifice, or any Prophet to comfort them, or give them hopes of a restoration; and all this come upon them, not for their old sin of idolatry, but from that curse they imprecated upon themselves, when they crucified their Messiah, saying, 'His blood be on us, and on our children.' Which cleave unto them from that day to this, and is visible to all the world but to themselves! And what other sin can they think greater than idolatry, for which they have been punished so much more terribly than for all their idolatries; what other sin can this be, but their crucifying the Messiah! And here they may see their sinful state, which they allege as an excuse for their Messiah's not coming at the time foretold by the Prophets, rendered ten fold more sinful, by their rejecting him when he came.

Dr. This is a full answer, and convincing as to the Jews. But have you any more to say to me?

(13.) Chr.
(13.) Ch'. I have one thing more to offer, which may come under this head of types, and that is, persons who represented Christ in several particulars, and so might be called personal types.

And I will not apply these out of my own head, but as they are applied in the New Testament, which having all the marks of the Old Testament, and stronger evidence than these, in those marks we are now upon, their authority is indisputable.

(1.) I begin with Adam, who gave us life and death too; and Christ came by his death to restore us to life again, even life eternal. Hence Christ is called the second Adam, and Adam is called the figure of Christ. The parallel betwixt them is insisted on, Rom. v. 12. to the end. and 1 Cor. xv. 45, to 50. Eve received her life from Adam, as the church from Christ. She was taken out of the side of Adam when he was in a dead sleep; and after Christ was dead, the sacraments of water and blood flowed out of his side, that is, baptism whereby we are born into Christ, and the sacrament of
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of his blood, whereby we are nourished into eternal life.

(2.) Enoch was carried up bodily into heaven: as Elijah. One under the patriarchal, the other under the legal dispensation. In both, the ascension of Christ was prefigured.

(3.) Noah, a preacher of righteousness to the old world, and father of the new. Who saved the church by water, the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.

(4.) Melchisedec, that is, King of Righteousness, and King of Peace, and Priest of the most High God; who was made like unto the Son of God, a priest continually. Heb. vii. 1, 2, 3.

(5.) Abraham, the friend of God, and Father of the Faithful, the heir of the world, Rom. iv. 13. In whom all the nations of the earth are blessed. Gen. xviii. 18.

(6.) Isaac, the heir of this promise, was born after his father and mother were both past the age of generation in the course of nature, Gen. xvii. 17, 38; Rom. iv. 19. Heb. xi. 11, 12. The nearest type that could
The Truth of Christianity demonstrated. could be to the generation of Christ wholly without a man.

And his sacrifice had a very near resemblance to the sacrifice and death of Christ, who lay three days in the grave, and Isaac was three days a dead man (as we say in the Law) under the sentence of death, Gen. xxii. 4. whence Abraham received him in a figure, Heb. xi. 19. that is, of the resurrection of Christ. And Abraham was commanded to go three days journey to sacrifice Isaac upon the same mountain (according to the ancients) where Christ was crucified, and where Adam was buried. Again, the common epithet of Christ, i.e. "The only begotten of the Father, and his beloved Son," were both given to Isaac, Gen. xxii. 2. Heb. xi. 17. For he was the only son that was begotten in that miraculous manner, after both his parents were decayed by nature. And he was the only son of the promise, which was not made to the seed of Abraham in general, but "in Isaac shall thy seed be called," Gen. xxii. 12. "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many,
And as Isaac, which signifies rejoicing, or laughing for joy, was thus the only begotten of his parents, so Abram signifies the glorious father, and Abraham (into which his name was changed on the promise of Isaac; Gen. xvii. 5, 16.) signifies the father of a multitude, to express the coming in of the Gentiles to Christ, and the increase of the Gospel; whence it is there said to Abraham, "A father of many nations have I made thee, and in thy seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed."

Isaac who was born by promise of a free-woman, represented the Christian church, in opposition to Ishmael who was born after the flesh, of a bond-maid, and signified the Jewish church under the Law. See this allegory carried on, Gal. iv. 22, to the end.

(7.) Jacob his Vision of the Ladder (Gen. xxviii. 12.) shews the intercourse which was opened by Christ betwixt heaven and earth, by his making peace: and to this he alludes when he says, "Hereafter you shall see heaven"
"heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." John i. 15.

And Jacob's wrestling with the angel, (Gen. xxxii. 24, &c. Hos. xii. 4.) and as it were prevailing over him by force to bless him, shews the strong and powerful intercession of Christ; whereby (as he words it, Matt. xi. 12.) "heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force," Whence the name of Jacob was then turned to Israel, that is, one who prevails upon God, or has power over him; God representing himself here as overcome by us: and the name of Israel was ever after given to the church. But much more so when Christ came, as he said, Matt. xi. 12. "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," &c. that is, from the first promulgation of Christ being come. Thenceforward the Gentiles began to press into the Gospel, and as by force to take it from the Jews. This was signified in the name Jacob, that is, a supplanter, for the Gentiles here supplanted their elder brother.
brother the Jews, and stole the blessing and heirship from them.

(8.) Joseph was sold by his brethren out of envy; but it proved the preservation of them and all their families: and Christ was sold by his brethren out of envy. Mark xv. 10. which proved the means of their redemption: and Christ, as Joseph, became Lord over his brethren.

(9.) Moses calls Christ a Prophet like unto himself. Deut. xviii. 18. He represented Christ the great Lawgiver; and his delivering Israel out of Egypt, was a type of Christ's delivering his church from the bondage of sin and hell.

(10.) Joshua, called also Jesus, Heb. iv. 8. overcame all the enemies of Israel, and gave them possession of the Holy Land, which was a type of heaven: and Christ appeared to Joshua, as Captain of the Host of the Lord. Jos. v. 14. So that Joshua was his Lieutenant representing him.

(11.) Sampson, who by his single valour and his own strength overcame the Philistines, and slew more at his death than in all
all his life, was a representation of Christ, who " trod the wine-press alone, and of the " people there was none with him, but his " own arm brought him salvation." Isa. " lxiii. 3, 5. But his death completed his " victory, whereby he overcame all the power " of the enemy, " and having spoiled prin- " cipalities and powers, he made a shew of " them openly, triumphing over them in " his cross." Col. ii. 15.

(12.) David, whose Son Christ is called, " speaks frequently of him in his own person, " and in events which cannot be applied to " David, as Psal. xvi. 10. " Thou wilt not " leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine " holy one to see corruption;" for David " has seen corruption. Christ is said to sit " upon the throne of David. Isai. ix. 7. And " Christ is called by the name of David, Hos. " 15. and frequently in the Prophets.

David from a shepherd became a King " and a Prophet, denoting the threefold office " of Christ, pastoral, regal, and prophetical. " (13.) Solomon, the wisest of men, his " peaceable and magnificent reign, repre- " sented
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fented the triumphal state of Christ's kingdom, which is described, Psal. lxxii. inscribed for Solomon, (there called the king's son) but far exceeding the glory of his reign; or what can possibly be applied to him, as ver. 5, 8, 11, 17. But his reign came the nearest to any to that universal and glorious reign there described, particularly in his being chosen to build the temple, because he was a man of peace, and had shed no blood, like David his father, who conquered the enemies of Israel, but Solomon built the Church in full peace; and as it is particularly set down, 1 Kings, vi. 7. and no doubt he was ordered by God so to do, "That the house when it was building, was "built of stone made ready before it was "brought thither: so that there was nei-"ther hammer nor ax, nor any tool of iron "heard in the house while it was in build-"ing." Which did denote that the Church of Christ was to be built, not only in peace, but without noise or confusion, as Isaiah prophesied of him, chap. xlii. 2. "He "shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his "voice
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"voice to be heard in the streets: a bruised "reed shall he not break," &c. He was not to conquer with the sword, as the Israelites subdued Canaan, but to overcome by meekness, and doing good to his enemies, and patiently suffering all injuries from them. And so he taught his followers, as St. Paul says, 2 Tim. ii. 24. "The servant of the "Lord must not strive, but be gentle "unto all men.—In meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves," &c.

And I cannot think but there was some imitation of this peaceable temple of Solomon, in the temple of Janus among the Romans; for that was never to be shut but in time of peace; which happened rarely among them, but three times in all their history. The last was in the reign of Augustus, in which time Christ came into the world, when there was a profound and universal peace: and so it became the Prince of Peace, whose birth was thus proclaimed by the Angels, Luke ii. 14. "Glory to God "on high, and on earth peace, good-will "towards men." But to go on:

F 2 (14.)
(14.) Jonah's being three days and nights in the belly of the whale, was a sign of Christ's being so long in the heart of the earth. Christ himself makes the allusion. Matt. xii. 40.

(15.) But as there were several persons, at several times, representing and prefiguring several particulars of the life and death of Christ: so there was one standing and continual representation of him appointed in the Person of the High-Priest under the Law; who, entering into the holy of holies once a year, with the blood of the great expiatory sacrifice, and he only, to make atonement for sin, did lively represent our great High-Priest entering into heaven, once for all, with all his own blood, to expiate the sins of the whole world. This is largely insisted upon in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. vii. viii. ix. x.

And our deliverance by the death of Christ is represented, as in a picture, in that ordinance of the Law, that the man-slayer, who fled to one of the cities of refuge, (which were all of the cities of the Levites) should not come
come out thence till the death of the High-Priest, and no satisfaction be taken till then, and then he should be acquitted and "re-turn into the land of his possession."

Num. xxxv. 6, 25, 26, 27, 28.

And I doubt not but the Gentiles had from hence their asylæ or temples of refuge for criminals.

(1.) De. There is a resemblance in these things; but I would not have admitted them as a proof, if you had not supported them, at least most of them, with the authority of the New Testament. And it was not necessary that every one should be named in it; for those that are named are only occasionally; and I must take time to consider of the evidences you have brought for the authority of the New Testament, which you have made full as great, if not greater, than the evidences for the Old Testament.

CHR. I may say greater upon this head of Prophecies and Types, because these are no proofs till they are fulfilled; though then they prove the truth of these Prophecies and Types; and so the one confirms the other:
other: but the whole evidence of the Law is not made apparent till we see it fulfilled in the Gospel. For which reason I call the Gospel the strongest proof, not only as to itself, but likewise as to the Law; and the Jews, as much as in them lies, have invalidated this strongest proof for the Old Testament, which is the fulfilling of it in the New. Nay, they have rendered these Prophecies false, which, they say, were not fulfilled at the time they spake of, and never now can be fulfilled. And as no fact but that of our Christ alone ever had this evidence of Prophecies and Types from the beginning, so never can any other fact have it now while the world lasts.

(2.) De. Why do you say, Never can have it? For may not God make what fact he pleases, and give it what evidence he pleases?

Chr. But it cannot have the evidence that the fact of Christ has, unless at that distance of time hereafter, as from the beginning of the world to this day. Because God took care that the evidence of Christ should
The Truth of Christianity demonstrated. What should commence from the very beginning, in the Promise of him made to Adam, and to be renewed by the Prophets in all the after-ages till he should come: and the evidence of him after his coming (in which I have instanced) and which continues to this day, before it can belong to any other, must have the same compass of time that has gone to confirm this evidence, else it has not the same evidence.

(3.) Dr. By this argument the evidence grows stronger the longer it continues, since you say, that the Prophecies of the Scriptures reach to the end of the world, and so will be further and further fulfilling every day.

This is contrary to what one of your doctors has lately advanced, who pretends to calculate the age of evidences*, That in such a time they decay, and in such a time must die. And that the evidence of Christianity having lasted so long, is upon the decay, and must wear out soon, if not supplied by some fresh and new evidence.

* Craig. Theologiae Christianæ Principia Mathematica. 1699.
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CHR. This may be true as to fables which have no foundation: but is that Prophecy I mentioned to you of the dispersion and yet wonderful preservation of the Jews, less evident to you, because it was made so long ago?

DE. No. It is much more evident for that. If I had lived at the time when those Prophecies were made, I fancy I should not have believed one word of them; but wondered at the assurance of those who ventured to foretell such improbable and almost impossible things.

And I should have thought the same of what you have told me of your Christ, foretelling the progress of his Gospel, at the first so very slender appearance of it, and by such weak and improbable means, as only suffering and dying for it, which to me would have seemed perfect despair, and a giving up the cause.

I should have thought of them (as of others) who prophesy of things after their time, that they might not be contradicted while they lived.

But
But my seeing so much of these Prophecies concerning the Jews, and the progress of the Gospel, come to pass so long time after, is the only thing that makes me lay stress upon them, and which makes them seem wonderful to me.

CHR. When the Prophecies shall all be fully compleated at the end of the world, they will then seem strongest of all; they will then be undeniable; when Christ shall visibly descend from heaven (in the same manner as he ascended) to execute both what he has promised and threatened. And in the mean time, the Prophecies lose none of their force, but their evidence increaseth, as "the light shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

(VIII.) Dr. I observe you have made no use of that common topic of the truth and sincerity of the pen-men of the Scriptures, and what interest they could have in setting up these things if they had been false; for this can amount, at most, but to a probability: and you having produced those evi-
dences which you think infallible, it might seem a lessening of your proof to insist upon bare probabilities; so that I suppose you give that up.

(1.) No, Sir, I give it not up, though I have not made it the chief foundation of my argument; and if it were but a probability, it wants not its force, for it is thought unreasonable to deny a flagrant probability, where there is not as strong a probability on the other side, for then that makes a doubt: but otherwise, men generally are satisfied with probabilities, for that is the greatest part of our knowledge. If we will believe nothing but what carries an infallible demonstration along with it, we must be sceptics in most things in the world; and such were never thought the wisest men.

But besides, a probability may be sooner discerned by some than the infallibility of a demonstration; therefore we must not lay aside probabilities.

But in this case, I think there is an infallible assurance, as infallible as the senses of all
all mankind; and I suppose you will not ask a greater.

(2.) De. How can you say that? When the suffering of afflictions, and death itself, is but a probability of the truth of what is told us: because some have suffered death for errors.

Chr. But then they thought them true; and men may be deceived in their judgments, we see many examples of it. But if the facts related be such, as that it is impossible for those who tell them to be imposed upon themselves, or for those to whom they are told to believe them, if not true, without supposing an universal deception of the senses of mankind, then I hope I have brought the case up to that infallible demonstration I promised: and this is the case of the facts related in Holy Scripture. They were told by those who saw them, and did them, and they were told to those who saw them likewise themselves: and the relators appealed to this: so that here could be no deceit.

3 De.
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Dr. I grant there is a great difference between errors in opinion, and in fact; and that such facts as are told of Moses and of Christ, could not have passed upon the people then alive, and who were said to have seen them. And I find that both Moses, Christ, and the Apostles, did appeal to what the people they spoke to had seen themselves.

CHR. With this consideration, their patient suffering, even unto death, for the truth of what they taught, will be a full demonstration of the truth of it.

(3.) Add to this, that their enemies who persecuted them, the Romans, as well as Jews, to whom they appealed as witnesses of the facts, did not offer to deny them.

That none of the apostates from Christianity did attempt to detect any falsehood in the facts; though they might have had great rewards if they could have done it; the Roman emperors being then persecutors of Christianity, and for three hundred years after Christ. And Julian the emperor, afterwards turned apostate, who had been initiated
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...iated in the sacra of Christianity, yet could not he detect any of the facts.

(4.) And it was a particular Providence for the further evidence of Christianity, that all the civil governments in the world were against it for the first three hundred years, lest it might be said, (as it is ridiculously in your Amintor) that the awe of the civil government might hinder those who could make the detection.

Now, Sir, to apply all that we have said, I desire you would compare these evidences I have brought for Christianity, with those that are pleaded for any other religion.

There are but four in the world, viz. Christianity, Judaism, Heathenism, and Mahometanism.

(1.) Christianity was the first; for from the first promise of Christ made to Adam during the patriarchal and legal dispensations, all was Christianity in type, as I have shewed.

And as to Moses and the Law, the Jews can give no evidence for that, which will not equally establish the truth of Christ and
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the Gospel. Nor can they disprove the facts of Christ by any topic, which will not likewise disprove all those of Moses and the Prophets. So that they are hedged in on every side: they must either renounce Moses, or acknowledge Christ.

Moses and the Law have the first five evidences, but they have not the sixth and the seventh, which are the strongest.

This is as to Judaism before Christ came; but since, as it now stands in opposition to Christianity, in favour of any future Messiah, it has none of the evidences at all. On the contrary, their own prophecies and types make against them, for their prophecies are fulfilled, and their types are ceased, and cannot belong to any other Messiah who should come hereafter. They stand now more naked than the Heathens or the Mahometans.

(2.) Next for Heathenism, some of the facts recorded of their gods have the first and second evidences, and some the third, but not one of them the fourth, or any of the other evidences.

But
But truly and properly speaking, and if we will take the opinion of the heathens themselves, they were no facts at all, but mythological fables, invented to express some moral virtues or vices, or the history of nature, and power of the elements, &c. As likewise to turn great part of the History of the Old Testament into fable, and make it their own, for they disdained to borrow from the Jews. They made gods of men, and the most vicious too: insomuch that some of their wise men thought it a corruption of youth, to read the history of their gods, whom they represented as notorious liars, thieves, adulterers, &c. though they had some mythology hid under all that.

And as men were their gods, so they made the first man to be father of the gods, and called him Saturn, not begot by any man, but the son of Coelus and Vesta, that is, of heaven and earth. And his maiming his father with a steel scythe, was to shew how heaven itself is impaired by time, whom they painted with wings and a scythe mowing down all things. And Saturn eating up his own children, was only
to express how time devours all its own productions; and his being deposed by Jupiter his son, shews, that time which wears away all other things, is worn away itself at last.

Several of the heathen authors have given us the mythology of their gods, with which I will not detain you.

They expressed every thing, and worshipped every thing under the name of a god, as the god of sleep, of music, of eloquence, of hunting, drinking, love, war, &c. They had above thirty thousand of them; and in what they told of them, and as they described them, they often traced the sacred story.

Ovid begins his Metamorphoses with a perfect poetical version of the beginning of Genesis: Ante Mare & Tellus.—Then goes on with the history of the creation; the formation of man out of the dust of the earth, and his being made after the image of God, and to have dominion over the inferior creatures. Then he tells of the general corruption, and the giants before the flood, when the earth was filled with violence; for which all
all mankind, with the beasts and the fowl, were destroyed by the universal deluge, except only Deucalion and Pyrrha his wife, who were saved in a boat, which landed them on the top of Mount Parnassus; and that from these two the whole earth was re-peopled. I think it will be needless to detain the reader with an application of this to the history of the creation set down by Moses, of the flood, and the ark wherein Noah was saved, and the earth re-peopled by him, &c.

And Noah was plainly intended likewise in their God Janus, with his two faces, one old, looking backward to the old world that was destroyed; the other young, looking forward to the new world that was to spring from him.

So that even their turning the sacred history into fable, is a confirmation of it. And there can be no comparison betwixt the truths of the facts so attested, as I have shewed, and the fables that were made from them.
(3.) Lastly, as to the Mahometan religion, it wants all the evidences we have mentioned, for there was no miracle said to be done by Mahomet, publicly and in the face of the world, but that only of conquering with the sword. Who saw his Meſra, or Journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, and thence to heaven in one night, and back in bed with his wife in the morning? Who was present and heard the conversation the moon had with him in his cave? It is not said there was any witness. And the Alcoran, c. vi. excuses his not working any miracles to prove his mission. They say that Moses and Christ came to shew the clemency and goodness of God, to which miracles were necessary; but that Mahomet came to shew the power of God, to which no miracle was needful but that of the sword.

(1.) And his Alcoran is a rhapsody of stuff, without head or tail, one would think wrote by a mad man, with ridiculous titles, as the chapter of the Cow, of the Spider, &c.

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And their legends are much more senseless than those of the Papists; as of an angel, the distance betwixt whose two hands is seventy thousand days journey. Of a cow's head with horns which have forty thousand knots, and forty days journey betwixt each knot: and others which have seventy mouths, and every mouth seventy tongues, and each tongue praises God seventy times a day, in seventy different idioms. And of wax candles before the throne of God, which are fifty years journey from one end to the other. The Alcoran says, the earth was created in two days, and is supported by an ox which stands under it, upon a white stone, with his head to the east, and his tail to the west, having forty horns, and as great a distance betwixt every horn as a man could walk in a thousand years time.

Then their description of heaven, in a full enjoyment of wine, women, and other like gross sensual pleasures.

(2.) When you compare this with our Holy Scriptures, you will need no argument to make you see the difference. The Hea-
Heathen orators have admired the sublime of the style of our Scriptures; no writing in the world comes near it, even with all the disadvantage of our translation, which, being obliged to be literal, must lose much of the beauty of it. The plainness and succinctness of the historical part, the melody of the Psalms, the instruction of the Proverbs, the majesty of the Prophets, and, above all, that easy sweetness in the New Testament, where the glory of heaven is set forth in a grave and moving expression, which yet reaches not the height of the subject; not like the flights of rhetoric, which set out small matters in great words. But the Holy Scriptures touch the heart, raise expectation, confirm our hope, strengthen our faith, give peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost, which is inexpressible. All which you will experience when you once come to believe; you will then bring forth these fruits of the Spirit, when you receive the word with pure affection, as we pray in our Litany.
(3.) But, Sir, if there is truth in the Alcoran, then the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, for the Alcoran says so, and that it was sent to confirm them, even the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testament; and it expressly owns our Jesus to be the Messiah. At the end of the fourth chapter it has these words: “The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, is a prophet, and an angel of God, his Word and his Spirit, which he sent to Mary.” But it gives him not the name of Son of God, for this wise reason, chap. vi. “How shall God have a son, who hath no wives?” Yet it owns Jesus to be born of a pure virgin, without a man, by the operation of the Spirit of God. And in the same chapter this Mahomet acknowledges his own ignorance, and says, “I told you not that I had in my power all the treasures of God, neither that I had knowledge of the future and past, nor do affirm that I am an angel, I only act what hath been inspired into me; is the blind like him that seeth clearly?” And after says, “I am
I am not your tutor, every thing hath its time, you shall hereafter understand the truth."

This is putting off, and bidding them expect some other after Mahomet. But our Jesus said, He was our Tutor and Teacher, and that there was none to come after him. Mahomet said he was no angel, but that Jesus was an angel of God. But when God bringeth Jesus into the world, he faith, "Let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. i. 6. And he made him Lord of all the angels. Mahomet knew not what was past or to come; but our Jesus knew all things, and what was in the heart of every man, John ii. 24, 25. which none can do, but God only, 1 Kings viii. 39. and foretold things to come to the end of the world. Mahomet had not all the treasures of God; but in Jesus are hid "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col. ii. 3, 9.

Again, Mahomet never called himself the Messiah, or the Word, or Spirit of God, yet all these appellations he gives to our Jesus.

There
There were prophecies of Jesus which we have seen: Were there any of Mahomet? None; except of the "false Christs and false Prophets," which Jesus told should come after him, and bid us beware of them, for that they should deceive many.

(4.) De. But if Mahomet gave thus the preference to Christ in every thing, and said that his Alcoran was only a confirmation of the Gospel; how came he to set it up against the Gospel, and to reckon the Christians among the unbelievers?

Chr. No otherwise than as other heretics did, who called themselves the only true Christians, and invented new interpretations of the Scriptures. The Socinians now charge whole Christianity with apostacy, idolatry, and polytheism: and the Alcoran is but a system of the old Arianism, ill digested and worse put together, with a mixture of some Heathenism and Judaism; for Mahomet's father was a Heathen, his mother a Jewess, and his tutor was Sergius the Monk, a Nestorian; which sect was a branch of Arianism: these crudely mixed made up the
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the farrago of the Alcoran; but the prevailing part was Arianism; and where that spread itself in the east, there Mahometanism succeeded, and sprung out of it, to let all Christians see the horror of that, whereby And our Socinians now among us, who call themselves Unitarians, are much more Mahometans than Christians. For except some personal things as to Mahomet, they agree almost wholly in his doctrine; and as such addressed themselves to the Morocco ambassador here in the reign of King Charles II: as you may see in the Preface to my Dialogues against the Socinians, printed in the year 1708. Nor do they speak more honourably of Christ and the Holy Scriptures than the Alcoran does: and there is no error concerning Christ in the Alcoran but what was broached before by the heretics of Christianity; as that Christ did not suffer really but in appearance only, or that some other was crucified in his stead, but he taken up into heaven, as the Alcoran speaks.

So that in strictness, I should not have reckoned Mahometanism as one of the four reli-
religions in the world, but as one of the heresies of Christianity. But because of its great name, and its having spread so far in the world, by the conquests of Mahomet and his followers, and that it is vulgarly understood to be a distinct religion by itself, therefore I have considered it as such.

And as to your concern in the matter, you see plainly, that the Alcoran comes in attestation and confirmation of the facts of Christ, and of the Holy Scriptures.

DE. I am not come yet so far as to enter into the disputes of the several sects of Christianity, but as to the fact of Christ and of the Scriptures in general, Mahometanism I see does rather confirm than oppose it.

CHR. What then do you think of Judaism, as it now stands in opposition to Christianity?

DE. Not only as without any evidence, the time prophesied of for the coming of the Messiah being long since past: but all their former evidences turn directly against them, and against any Messiah who ever hereafter should come. As that the scepter should
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should not depart from Judah; that he should come into the second temple; that the sacrifices should cease soon after his death; that David should never want a son to sit upon his throne; that they should be many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, &c. which they do not suppose ever will be the case after their Messiah is come. So that they are witnesses against themselves.

Chr. And what do you think of the stories of the Heathen gods?

De. I believe them no more than all the stories in Ovid's Metamorphoses. Nor did the wiser Heathens believe them, only such silly people as suck in all the Popish legends without examining.

And to tell you the truth, I thought the same of all your stories in the Bible; but I will take time to examine those proofs you have given me.

For we Deists do not dispute against Christianity, in behalf of any other religion of the Jews, or Heathens, or Mahometans, all which pretend to revelation; but we are against all revelation; and go only upon bare
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bare nature, and what our own reason dictates to us.

(1.) Chr. What nature dictates, it dictates to all, at least to the most and the generality of mankind; and if we measure by this, then it will appear a natural notion, that there is necessity of revelation in religion: and herein you have all the world against you from the very beginning. And will you plead nature against all these?

Dr. The notion came down from one to another, from the beginning, we know not how.

Chr. Then it was either nature from the beginning, or else, it was from revelation at the beginning; whence the notion has descended through all posterities to this day.

(2.) And there wants no reason for this: for when man had fallen and his reason was corrupted (as we feel it upon us to this day, as sensibly as the diseases and infirmities of the body) was it not highly reasonable that God should give us a law and directions how to serve and worship him? Sacrifices do not seem to be any natural invention: for why should taking away the life of my fellow-
fellow-creature be acceptable to God, or a worship of him? It would rather seem an offence against him. But as Types of the great and only propitiatory sacrifice of Christ to come, and to keep up our faith in that, the institution given with the revelation of it appears most rational. And that it was necessary, the great defection shews, not only of the Heathens, but of the Jews themselves, who, though they retained the institution, yet, in a great measure, lost the true meaning and signification of it; and are now to be brought back to it, by reminding them of the institution and the reason of it.

Plato in his Alcibiad. ii. de Precat. has the same reasoning, and concludes, that we cannot know of ourselves what petitions will be pleasing to God, or what worship to give him: but that it is necessary a Law-giver should be sent from heaven to instruct us; and such a one he did expect; and "O how greatly do I desire to see that man?" says he, and "who he is?" The primitive tradition of the expected Messiah had no doubt come to him, as to many others of the Heathens, from the Jews, and likely from the perusal of their Scriptures.

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For Plato goes further, and says (de Leg. l. 4.) That this Lawgiver must be more than man; for he observes, that every nature is governed by another nature that is superior to it, as birds and beasts by man, who is of a distinct and superior nature. So he infers, that this Lawgiver who was to teach man what man could not know by his own nature, must be of a nature that is superior to man, that is, of a divine nature.

Nay, he gives as lively a description of the person, qualifications, life, and death of this divine man, as if he had copied the liiid. of Isaiah: for he says, (de Repub. i. 2.) That this just person must be poor and void of all recommendations but that of virtue alone; that a wicked world would not bear his instructions and reproof, and therefore, within three or four years after he began to preach, he should be persecuted, imprisoned, scourged, and at last put to death; his word is Ἀνακινδυναὶ θήσεται, that is, cut in pieces, as they cut their sacrifices.

De. These are remarkable passages as you apply them; and Plato was three hundred years before Christ.

G 3 But
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But I incline to think that these notions came rather from such tradition as you speak of, than from nature; and I can see nothing of nature in sacrifices, they look more like institution, come that how it will.

(3.) Chr. It is strange that all the nations in the world should be carried away from what you call nature; unless you will take refuge among the Hottentots at the Cape of Good Hope, hardly distinguishable from beasts, to shew us what nature left to itself would do! and leave us all the wise and polite world on the side of revelation, either real or pretended; and of opinion that mankind could not be without it: and my business now with you has been to distinguish the real from the pretended.

(4.) De. By the account you have given, there is but one religion in the world, nor ever was: for the Jewish was but Christianity in type, though in time greatly corrupted: and the Heathen was a greater corruption, and founded the fables of their gods upon the facts of Scripture: and the Mahometan you say is but a heresy of Christianity. So that all is Christianity still.

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CHR. It is true God gave but one revelation to the world, which was that of Christ: and as that was corrupted, new revelations were pretended. But God has guarded his revelations with such evidences, as it was not in the power of men or devils to counterfeit or contrive any thing like them. Some bear resemblance in one or two features, in the first two or three evidences that I have produced; but as none reach the fourth, so they are all quite destitute of the least pretence to the remaining four. So that when you look upon the face of divine revelation, and take it altogether, it is impossible to mistake it for any of those delusions which the devil has set up in imitation of it. And they are made to confirm it, because all the resemblance they have to truth, is that wherein they are any ways like it, but when compared with it, they shew as an ill drawn picture, half man half beast, in presence of the beautiful original.

(5.) DE. It is strange, that if the case be thus plain as you have made it, the whole world is not immediately convinced.

CHR. If the seed be never so good, yet if it be sown upon stones or among thorns, it will
will bring forth nothing. There are hearts of stone, and others so filled with the love of riches, with the cares and pleasures of this life, that they will not see, they have not a mind to know any thing which they think would disturb them in their enjoyments, or lessen their opinion of them, for that would be taking away so much of their pleasure; therefore it is no easy matter to persuade men to place their happiness in future expectations, which is the import of the Gospel. And in pressing this, and bidding the worldly-minded abandon their beloved vices, and telling the fatal consequences of them, we must expect to meet not only with their scorn and contempt, but their utmost rage and impatience, to get rid of us, as so many enemies of their lusts and pleasures. This is the cross which our Saviour prepared all his disciples to bear, who were to fight against flesh and blood, and all the allurements of the world: and it is a greater miracle that they have had so many followers in this, than that they have gained to themselves so many enemies. The world is a strong man, and till a stronger than he come (that is, the full persuasion of the
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The future state he will keep possession. And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. But we are told also that this faith is the gift of God; for all the evidence in the world will not reach the heart, unless it be prepared (like the good ground) to receive the doctrine that is taught. Till then prejudice will create obstinacy, which will harden the heart like a rock; and cry, Non persuadebis, etiam si persuaseris! "I will not be persuaded, though I should be persuaded!"

You must consider under this head, too, the many that have not yet heard of the Gospel; and of those that have, the far greater number who have not the capacity or opportunity to examine all the evidences of Christianity, but take things upon trust, just as they are taught. And how many others are careless, and will not be at the pains, though they want not capacity to enquire into the truth? All these classes will include the greatest part of mankind. The ignorant, the careless, the vicious, and so the obstinate, the ambitious, and the covet-
ous, whose minds the god of this world hath blinded.

But yet in the midst of all this darkness, God hath not left himself without witness, which will be apparent to every diligent and sober enquirer that is willing and prepared to receive the truth.

(6.) Good Sir, let me ask you, though you are of no religion, as you say, but what you call natural; yet would you not think me very brutal, if I should deny that ever there was such a man as Alexander, or Cæsar, or that they did such things? If I should deny all history, or that Homer, or Virgil, Demosthenes, or Cicero, ever wrote such books? Would you not think me perfectly obstinate, seized with a spirit of contradiction, and not fit for human conversation?

And yet these things are of no consequence to me, it is not a farthing as to my interest, whether they are true or false.

Will you then think yourself a reasonable man, if, in matters of the greatest importance, even your eternal state, you will not believe those facts which have a thousand times
times more certain and indisputable evidence? Were there any prophecies of Cæsar or Pompey? Were there any types of them, or public institutions appointed by a Law, to prefigure the great things that they should do? Any persons who went before them, to bear a resemblance of these things, and bid us expect that great event? Was there a general expectation in the world of their coming, before or at the time when they came? And of what consequence was their coming to the world, or to after ages? No more than a robbery committed a thousand years ago!

Were the Greek and Roman histories wrote by the persons who did the facts, or by eye-witnesses? And for the greater certainty were those histories made the standing law of the country? Or were they any more than our Holinshed and Stow, &c.?

Must we believe these, on pain of not being thought reasonable men? And are we then unreasonable and credulous, if we believe the facts of the Holy Bible? which was the standing Law of the people to whom it was given, and wrote or dictated by those
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who did the facts, with public institutions appointed by them as a perpetual law to all their generations; and which, if the facts had been false, could never have passed at the time when the facts were said to be done: nor for the same reason, if that book had been wrote afterwards; because these institutions (as circumcision, the passover, baptism, &c.) were as notorious facts as any; and that book saying they commenced from the time that the facts were done, must be found to be false, whenever it was trumped up in after ages, by no such institutions being then known. Not like the feasts, games, &c. in memory of the Heathen gods, which were appointed long after those facts were said to be done; and the like institutions may be appointed to-morrow in memory of any falsehood said to be done a thousand years ago; and so is no proof at all. And though a legend, or book of stories of things said to be done many years past, may be palmed upon people, yet a book of statutes cannot, by which their causes are tried every day.

Are there such prophecies extant in any profane history so long before the facts there recorded,
recorded, as there are in the Holy Scriptures of the coming of the Messiah?

Were there any types or forerunners of the Heathen Gods, or Mahomet?

Is there the like evidence of the truth and sincerity of the Greek and Roman historians, as of the penmen of the Holy Scriptures?

Would these historians have given their lives for the truth of all they wrote?

Did they tell such facts only, wherein it was impossible for themselves to be imposed upon, or that they should impose upon others? Nothing but what themselves had seen and heard, and they also to whom they spoke?

Did they expect nothing but persecution and death for what they related? And were they bidden to bear it patiently without resistance? Was this the case of the disciples of Mahomet, who were required to fight and conquer with the sword?

Did any religion ever overcome by suffering, but the Christian only?

And did any exhibit the future state, and preach the contempt of this world like the Christian?
Dr. That is the reason it has prevailed so little. And yet, considering this, it is strange it has prevailed so much.

(7.) But there is one thing yet behind, wherein I would be glad to have your opinion, because I find your, Divines differ about it; and that is, how we shall know to distinguish betwixt true and false miracles.

And this is necessary to the subject we are upon. For the force of the facts you allege ends all in this, that such miraculous facts are a sufficient attestation of such persons being sent of God; and consequently, that we are to believe the doctrine which they taught.

You know we Deists deny any such thing as miracles, but reduce all to nature; yet I confess, if I had seen such miracles as are recorded of Moses and of Christ, it would have convinced me. And for the truth of them we must refer to the evidences you have given. But in the mean time, if there is no rule whereby to distinguish betwixt true and false miracles, there is an end of all the pains you have taken. For if the devil can work such things, as appear mir-
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racles to me; I am as much persuaded as if they were true miracles, and wrought by God. And so men may be deceived in trusting to miracles.

The common notion of a miracle is what exceeds the power of nature. To which we say, that we know not the utmost of the power of nature, and consequently cannot tell what exceeds it. Nor do you pretend to know the utmost of the power of spirits, whether good or evil, and how then can you tell what exceeds their power?

I doubt not but you would have thought those to be true miracles which the magicians are said to have wrought in Egypt, but that Moses is said to have wrought miracles that were superior to them.

CHR. Therefore if two powers contend for the superiority, as here God and the Devil did, the best issue can be is to see them wrestle together, and then we shall soon know which is strongest. This was the case of Moses and the magicians, of Christ and the Devil: There was a struggle, and Satan was plainly overcome.

I confess I know not the power of spirits, nor
nor how they work upon bodies. And by the same reason that a spirit can lift a straw, he may a mountain, and the whole earth, for ought I know; and may do many things which would appear true miracles to me, and so might deceive me. And all I have to trust to in this case, is, the restraining power of God, that he will not permit the devil so to do. And were it not for this, I doubt not but the devil could take away my life in an instant, or inflict terrible diseases upon me, as upon Job.

And I think this consideration is the strongest motive in the world to keep us in a constant dependance upon God, that we may live in the midst of such powerful enemies as we can by no means resist of ourselves, and are in their power every minute, when God shall withdraw his protection from us.

And it is in their power likewise to work signs and wonders to deceive us, if God permit. And herein the great power and goodness of God is manifest, that he has never yet permitted the devil to work miracles in opposition to any whom he sent, except
where the remedy was at hand, and to shew his power the more, as in the case of Moses and the magicians, &c.

And this is further evident, because God has, at other times, and upon other occasions, suffered the devil to exert his power, as to make fire descend upon Job's cattle, &c. But here was no cause of religion concerned, nor any truth of God in debate.

De. But your Christ has foretold, Matt. xxiv. 24. that false Christs and false prophets shall arise, who shall shew great signs and wonders, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. And it is said, 2 Thess. ii. 9. that there shall be a wicked one, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders; and it is supposed, Deut. xiii. 1, &c., that a false prophet may give a sign or a wonder, to draw men after false gods. Here then is sign against sign, and wonder against wonder, and which of these shall we believe?

Chr. The first no doubt. For God cannot contradict himself, nor will shew signs and wonders in opposition to that Law which he has established by so many signs and
and wonders. Therefore, in such a case, we must conclude, that God has permitted the Devil to exert his power, as against Moses and Christ, for the trial of our faith, and to shew the superior power of God more eminently, in overcoming all the power of the enemy.

But, as I said before, we have a more sure word, that is, proof, than even these miracles exhibited to our outward senses, which is the word of prophecy. Let then, any false Christ who shall pretend to come hereafter, shew such a book as our Bible, which has been so long in the world (the most ancient book now extant) testifying of him, foretelling the time, and all other circumstances of his coming, with his sufferings and death, and all these prophecies exactly fulfilled in him. And till he can do this, he cannot have that evidence which our Christ has, and he must be a false Christ to me, and all the signs that he can shew, will be but lying wonders to any that is truly established in the Christian faith.

But it may be a trial too strong for those careless ones who will not be at the pains to enquire
enquire into the grounds of their religion, but take it upon trust, as they do the fashions, and mind not to frame their lives according to it, but are immersed in the world, and the pleasures of it.

(8.) And it will be a just judgment upon these, that they who shut their eyes against all the clear evidences of the gospel, should be given up to believe a lye. And the reason is given 2 Thess. ii. 12. because they "had pleasure in unrighteousness." They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

So that I must repeat what I said before, that there is a preparation of the heart (as of the ground) to receive the truth. And where the doctrine does not please, no evidence, how clear soever, will be received. God cannot enter, till mammon be dispossessed. We cannot serve these two masters. He who has a clear sight of heaven, cannot value the dull pleasures of this life; and it is impossible that he who is drowned in sense can relish spiritual things. The love of this world is enmity against God. The first sin was a temptation of sense; and the reparation is to open our eyes to the enjoyment of God,
God. Vice clouds this eye, and makes it blind
to the only true and eternal pleasure. It is
foolishness to such a one.

This, this, Sir, is the *remora* that keeps
men from Christianity. It is not want of
evidence, but it is want of consideration. I
would not say this to you till I had first gone
through all the topics of reason with you,
that you might not call it cant. But this is
the truth. As David says, “To him that
“ordereth his conversation aright, will I
“shew the salvation of God.” And our
Saviour says, “If any man do the will
“of God, he shall know of the doctrine,
“whether it be of God, or whether I speak
“of myself.” And “No man can come
“unto me, except the Father draw him.”

This was the reason why St. John the
Baptist was sent as a forerunner to prepare
the way for Christ, by preaching of repent-
ance, to fit men for receiving the Gospel.

And they who repented of their sins upon
his preaching, did gladly embrace the doc-
trine of Christ. But they, who would not
forfake their sins remained obdurate, though
otherwise men of sense and learning. As
our Saviour told the Priests and Elders,
Matt.
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Matt. xxi. 31. "John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him. And ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterwards, that ye might believe him."

And when Christ sought to prepare them for his doctrine, by telling them, that they could not serve God and mammon, it is said, Luke xvi. 14. "That when the Pharisees, who were covetous, heard these things, they derided him." But he instructed them in the next verse, (if they would have received it) that "what is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God." And enforced this with the example of the rich man and Lazarus. And said, ch. xviii. 25. "That it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." And chap. xiv. 33. that "whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Now take this in the largest sense, that he who is not ready and willing to forsake all, as if he hated them, as Christ said, verse 26. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father
"father and mother," &c. (that is, when they come in competition with any command of Christ) and "take not his cross and follow me, he cannot be my disciple." How few disciples would he have had in this age! Would all his miracles persuade some to this! The world is too hard for heaven with most men!

Here is the cause of infidelity. The love of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, darken the heart, and, like shutters, keep out the light of heaven; till they are removed, the light cannot enter. The spirit of purity and holiness will not descend into an heart full of all uncleanness. If we would invite this guest, we must sweep the house and make it clean.

But this, too, is of God; for he only can make a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us. But he has promised to give this wisdom to those who ask it, and lead a godly life. Therefore ask and you shall have, seek, and you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you. But do it ardently and incessantly, as he that striveth for his soul. For God is gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and of great goodness:
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and those who come to him in sincerity, he
will in no wise cast out. Therefore pray in
faith, nothing doubting; and what you pray
for, (according to his will) believe that you
receive it, and you shall receive it.

To his grace I commend you.

(9.) And with the fulness of the Gentiles,
O! that it would please God to take the veil
off the heart of the Jews, and let them see
that they have been deceived by many false
Messiahs, since Christ came; so none whom
they expect hereafter, can answer the prop-
hecies of the Messiah (some of which I
have named) and therefore no such can be
the Messiah who is prophesied of in their
own Scriptures.

And let them see and consider how that
fatal curse they imprecated upon themselves,
"His blood be upon us and on our children,"
has cleaved unto them, beyond all their for-
mer sins, and even repeated idolatry, from
which (to shew that this not the cause
of their present dispersion) they have kept
themselves free ever since; and for which
their longest captivity was but seventy years,
and then prophets were sent to them to com-
fort
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fort them, and assure them of a restoration: but now they have been about seventeen hundred years dispersed over all the earth, without any prophet, or prospect of their deliverance; that the whole world might take notice of this before unparalleled judgment, not known to any nation that ever yet was upon the face of the earth! So punished, and so preserved for judgment, and I hope, at last, for a more wonderful mercy! "For, if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For God hath con-

cluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unspeakable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. To whom be glory for ever. Amen."

FINIS.