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### ARTICLE I.

#### OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY FROM THE UNITY OF GOD, AS TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE, ANSWERED.

The chief difficulty in the way of a candid examination and acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity, arises from the prejudices with which the mind comes to the investigation,—its unwillingness to submit itself to the truth of God without being able to comprehend the nature of the truth believed,—and above all the enmity and aversion with which this doctrine is associated, because it is so humbling to the pride and self-righteous vanity of man.

The irrelevancy of the objections made against the doctrine of the Trinity on the ground of its alleged unreasonableness, contradictoriness, incomprehensibility, obscurity, and merely speculative and abstract character, we have, we think, satisfactorily proved to be untenable. The objections which arise from “an evil heart of unbelief” against the doctrine itself, and against the system of grace which it involves,—and which after all is the real hindrance to the more universal reception of this doctrine,—these can be removed only when “the natural heart” is transformed by the renewing and enlightening influences of the Holy Ghost, through whose teaching alone any man can call Jesus Lord, and worship Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as one God, “in spirit and in truth.” Of ALL the objections which can arise against the doctrine of the Trinity, it may be truly said that they are based upon the impious and absurd presumption that the Divine Being is more clearly and ful-

ly known to those who are so wise in their conceit, as to imagine they have "by searching found out the Almighty to perfection," than he is to himself. Such persons therefore, imagine that they are better able to describe what God is, and what God is not, than God has thought fit to make known as the truth on these subjects in the sacred Scriptures, which "are all given by inspiration through Holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The only rational inquiry on this subject undoubtedly is, who or what God is, as he himself has been pleased to inform us, in his own selected language; and whether this God is only one simple, absolute, personal, uncompounded and solitary being; or whether in the Unity of the Divine Being there is a Trinity, composed of three persons who are spoken of in Scripture as the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. The former of these opinions we affirm not to be the doctrine of Scripture; such a metaphysical unity can be held only by declaring God to be, what he himself has nowhere affirmed that he is, and by peremptorily denying God to be what he has led us to believe he is, from the whole tenor, and from many express declarations, of the sacred Scriptures. The Scriptures, we affirm, plainly teach that God is one,—that nevertheless, there are three persons bearing distinct names and offices who are called Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—that to each of these three is attributed everything that is most peculiar and appropriate to the Divine nature without any difference;—that those things, which most clearly distinguish God from every created and derived being, do not distinguish these three persons from one another;—that all that is most distinctive of God is not appropriated to THE FATHER alone, nor to THE SON alone, nor to THE SPIRIT alone, but to each and every one of them;—and, therefore, that the only living and true God is a Tri-unity consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and not any one, or any two of these, alone. The Father alone, therefore, exclusive of the Son, and Holy Ghost, is not the one God, the only God, the one supreme cause of all things, or the sole origin of all being, power, wisdom and authority.

But it will be here vehemently urged that inasmuch

as all believers in the Bible admit the unity of God to be clearly, and frequently, taught in the Holy Scriptures, all other passages which seem to teach an opposite doctrine must be interpreted in accordance with this.

Undoubtedly we admit, as fully as our opponents in this controversy do, that the Scriptures teach, as a fundamental truth, that there is but one living and true God, besides whom there is none else. About this point there is no dispute. But the question is, who is this one God, and what is the Unity of this one God.

It is, as we before remarked, commonly imagined, that the Bible is full of texts in which the absolute and personal unity of the Father, as alone the true God, is taught. The truth, however, is, that such a unity of God is nowhere taught in Scripture,—that there are very few passages either in the Old or the New Testaments, which bear directly and dogmatically upon the unity of God,—and that they are by no means as numerous as those in which the plurality of God, and the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Ghost, are taught. The frequent assertions with regard to this subject are very erroneous,—and are made at hazard, and without diligent and faithful comparison.\* There are, indeed, many passages which speak of God as “the true God,” and as one God in opposition to all other Gods. But the passages which *even seem* to teach that the Godhead is not a trinity but a simple uncompounded unity, are very few.

Let us turn to two of these passages, and these the strongest in the whole Bible; one from the Old, and the other from the New Testament.

In the book of Deuteronomy, Chap. vi: 4 and 5, we read these words, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, with all thy might.”

This sentence was proclaimed as a kind of oracular *afflatum*, a solemn and authoritative principle, to the Israelites. By an express command in the oral law, the Jews believe that they are required twice a day to repeat this verse, which they call *Shemah*. The Talmud

\* See Stuart's Letters to Channing, p. 47.

contains also a great many directions about the manner in which it should be pronounced, and its virtue when uttered in a dying hour. This was also one of the four passages which the Jews wrote upon their phylacteries and upon their door posts. And, as it is one form of what our Saviour calls the first and great commandment, it deserves very careful consideration.

In this passage we have a declaration, and an inference from it. The declaration, as it is in the original, is that "Jehovah, our Elohim, is one Jehovah," and the inference from it is, that we ought to love this "Jehovah our Elohim," with all our heart.

From this passage it is inferred, by modern Jews and Unitarians, that Jehovah, the God of Israel, is numerically and metaphysically one; and that he exists a solitary person, and not a trinity of persons. But the text makes no such affirmation. It does not say that Jehovah is one numerically, one metaphysically, or one in person. Had this been the design of the inspired penman, he would have said "Our Jehovah is only one," or "Jehovah, our Elohim, is one Elohim," and therefore, thou shalt love him with all thy heart," &c.

Had God meant to teach that he was *only* one, and in no sense three in one, he would have used also the term *yahid*, which is now employed by the Jews in stating this doctrine of the divine unity in their creed. This term *yahid*, means *only one*; as when God required Abraham to slay HIS ONLY son Isaac, where the term is *yahid*.—(See also, Gen. xii: 16, Jud. xi: 34.) God might thus have said that he was *Eloah yahid, only one God*. But he does not say this. He does not use *Eloah* in the singular, but *Elohim* in the plural; and he does not use *yahid, only one*, but the very indefinite word *ahad, one*; which concludes nothing as to his trinity of persons in one Godhead, nor as to the numerical or personal unity of God. The language of the text, as God has given it, therefore, affirms merely, "that Jehovah the God of Israel is one." And if the adjunct *one* is made to refer to number, then the passage would teach that the Jehovah of Israel was one Jehovah, but not necessarily that he was the only one. The inference would then be entirely inappropriate, and the duty it enjoins

contrary to what would be the duty of every man if there were other Jehovahs equally divine; unless indeed, we adopt the opinion of some German scholars at the present time, that the God of Israel was only regarded and worshipped by them as a tutelar or national God, and not as the only God.\* Their love would in this case, be required merely on the ground of national obedience, an idea however, totally inconsistent with every portion of the Bible.

But the term *one*, cannot refer to number, so as to mean that God is numerically one; because further, a plural term is added, and interposed between the two Jehovahs, in order to qualify their import. The declaration which God here makes of himself is, that "Jehovah, Elohim, is one Jehovah," that is, in English, "JEHOVAH, OUR GODS, IS ONE JEHOVAH." "OUR GODS," who has been pleased to call himself by the name Jehovah, from the consideration that he is self-existent, he is the only Jehovah, that is, the only God that exists,—the only God who is Jehovah,—the self-existent and ever blessed God. The passage, therefore, plainly does not refer to unity of number, but to unity of essence, or of nature; and teaches, as the Jews in their books of prayers express it, that God is UNUS, ONE, not UNICUS,† ONLY ONE. On this account therefore, because Jehovah Elohim is the only living and true God, he alone, is to be loved with all our heart and soul, and strength, and mind. And hence it is added, in the 14th verse, "ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people, which are round about you."

In like manner, the prophet Zachariah, in speaking of the times of Messiah says: "In that day, there shall be Jehovah one, and his name "one." And that this command was so understood by the Jews in our Saviour's time, is evident; for when he quoted this passage in reply to the inquiry, "which was the first and great commandment," the Scribe answered, "Well master thou hast said the truth, for there is one God, and there is none other but he."—(Mark xii: 28-34.) And thus also, the apostle Paul, the learned converted Jewish Rabbi,

\* De Wette, Bauer, Wegscheider. † See *Allix*. pp. 121 and 268.

says, "There is none other God but one."—(1 Cor. viii: 4.) Such also, is the interpretation given by ancient Jewish writers. This has been proved by many both converted Jews and learned Christians. Thus, in explaining the passage quoted from Zachariah, Rabbi David Kimchi interprets it as teaching that "the heathen will acknowledge that Jehovah is alone, that there is no God besides him, consequently there will be his name alone; as they will not make mention by name of any other God in the world; but will make mention of his name only." Indeed, so great is the sameness of this text, and that in Deut. vi: 4, that Rabbi Solomon has explained the one by the other, and has made the former, instead of a solemn attestation of the numerical unity of God, to be a prediction of the universal worship of Jehovah in the reign of Messiah. "He who is our God now, and not the God of the Gentiles, will hereafter be one common Jehovah." So also, Rabbi Abraham, another eminent Jewish Commentator, interprets Deut. vi: 4. "In other words," says he, "he, our God, is the foundation of our faith; and is likewise doubled, on being called one; meaning by himself, or alone; for that Jehovah is in this sense one, there are proofs without end." To the same effect might be quoted Rabbi Bechai Lipman and Rabbi Isaac Abarbinel.\* It is, therefore, very plain, both from the passage itself, from other similar passages, and from Jewish authorities themselves, that the term *one* in Deut. vi: 4, does not refer to a numerical, or metaphysical unity of person in the Deity, but to a unity of Godhead.

The term *Jehovah* in Hebrew, like the term *God* in English, refers to the Divine nature, form, or essence, and is thus equivalent to our word *Deity* or *Godhead*, which is undoubtedly and invariably in Scripture, declared to be one. And thus this passage, in a most definite and expressive manner, conveys the idea that notwithstanding the real plurality which is intimated in the term *Elohim*, *Jehovah* is still one in his incomprehensible essence. Unity and plurality are, therefore, evidently united in the one God, who is alone *Jehovah*.

\* See given in the original in Oxlee's "Christian Doctrine of the Trinity maintained on the principles of Judaism."—Lon. 1816, 3 vols., vol. i, p. 334.

The propriety of the emphatic *one* is lost in the Greek (which employs the term *Lord* for *Elohim*;) and in the English also, which renders the passage, "the Lord our God is one Lord." To say that our Lord, or God, is *one*, is an unmeaning tautology in comparison with "our Elohim is one." The plurality of that term shows the necessity of the restriction, and is equivalent to saying, "Jehovah our Elohim, though three persons, is one Jehovah. As there is only one God, there can be only one true God; and therefore, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are the only true God." For why else, we ask, does God in this passage, written "by holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," employ these three terms,—Jehovah, Elohim, Jehovah, in apposition to each other and one of them plural? The term *Elohim*, in Hebrew, has a singular form *Eloah* or *Eloh*, which is found as we have seen, above seventy times in the Old Testament, (as in Deut. xxxii: 15, 17.) Why then, is this word *most frequently* introduced in the plural form, signifying Gods; and that too, when the Deity himself is exclusively the subject, and authoritatively the speaker?\*

To this enquiry the Jews themselves admit the necessity of some reply, since Rabbi Huna remarks that had not God himself used this word, it would have been unlawful for man to do so.† The common people among the Jews, have also been prohibited from reading the history of the creation, lest they should be led into heresy,‡ and the Hebrew doctors have regarded this portion of Scripture as containing some latent mystery,—a mystery not to be revealed till the coming of the Messiah,§ and according to the Cabbala, the term Elohim is composed of the two words *El* and *Him*, that is, *they are God*.||

The only reply attempted to be given to this inquiry is an assumed idiom of the Hebrew language, by which

\* The term Elohim is used by Moses alone, *thirty* times in the history of the creation; and *five hundred* times, in one form or other, in the five Books of the Pentateuch.

† See in Martini Pugeo Fidei, p. 488.

‡ Allix. p. 182.

§ This the Rabbi Ibba expressly affirms.

|| Rabbi Bachai in Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, pt. 3, p. 81.

it is said to be merely an honorary, or complimentary form of speech. But this is a complete begging of the question. The Hebrew is a sacred language—the language of that people whom God chose out of all others, to be the depository of his truth,—and the language in which for ages, that truth was revealed. It was imparted by God, as many have thought, as the original language, or when he gave the laws at Sinai. At any rate, God had the choosing of the language in which to reveal his truth, and the particular form in which his truth should be revealed. The Hebrew language which God has employed, has singular forms, not only of the name Elohim, but also for the other names by which God is designated. And if God, in his person, had been numerically and only one, he would *always*, as he has *sometimes*, employed the singular title; and thus have avoided a plural form, which, he must have foreknown, would be regarded as an evidence of plurality and not of Unity, in the one Divine nature. Why then, did God, by holy men, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, employ these plural titles of God? Why did this so-called idiom originate with the sacred Scriptures, and with God's revelation of himself in his own word? Either the language of the Scriptures is the language of polytheism and idolatry, as some have blasphemously supposed, or else this appellation of the Deity in the plural number is employed to express a plurality of persons in that Godhead to which it is appropriated.\*

In order to meet this argument, modern Jews and Unitarians have instituted two general modes of interpretation; the first of which is, that this is the regal form of speaking, in which the plural is used for the singular; the other, that it refers to the Deity in conference with his angels in council. The former opinion has been maintained on the ground of a number of Scriptural texts, all which Rabbi Abraham, one of their own doctors, is pleased to call false allegations; and has not only shown their irrelevancy, but demonstrated, that the opinion itself, has no manner of foundation. Indeed, there is not the smallest authority for it in the compositions of

\* See Oxlee, vol. i., pp. 68-94.



the Old Testament; which, being penned with that simplicity peculiar to the early ages of the world, introduce all princely characters expressing themselves invariably in their own proper number, and with the strictest grammatical propriety; nor does it distinguish, in that respect, between the most potent of sovereigns and the very lowest of the human species.\*

And as it regards the second opinion: That angels should act as coadvisers and coadjutors in the administration of the affairs of the world, is not only repugnant to the very meaning of the term angel, itself; which denotes a being deputed on a mission from God; but is wholly unsanctioned by any declaration to that effect, either in Moses or in the Prophets. It is, indeed, difficult to determine, whether the absurdity or the impiety with which the Creator is thus supposed to consult with created beings on such highly important matters, deserves the greater execration, for, says Scripture, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor."

John Xeres, a Jew, converted in England some years ago, published a sensible and affectionate address to his unbelieving brethren, in which he lays before them his reasons for leaving the Jewish religion and embracing the Christian. "The Christians" says he, "confess Jesus to be God; and it is this that makes us look upon the gospels as books that overturn the very principles of religion." Then, he undertakes to prove that the unity of God is not such as he once understood it to be, an unity of persons, but of essence, under which more persons than one are comprehended; and the first proof he offers is that of the name Elohim. "Why else," says he, "is that frequent mention of God by nouns of the plural number? as in Gen. i: 1, where the word Elohim, which is rendered God, is of the plural number, though annexed to a verb of the singular number; which demonstrates as evidently as may be, that there are several persons partaking of the same Divine nature and essence."

To what has been said, we will add the testimony of the

\* See also, the exposure of this objection in Smith's *Messiah*, vol. 1., pp. 486-488.

celebrated Jewish work called Zohar,\* a work esteemed by the orthodox Jews, and by all former Jews, as scarcely second in authority to the Bible, and believed by *them* to have been written before the Talmud, if not before the time of Christ.† The author of this work renders Deut. vi: 4, in this manner: "The Lord, (or Jehovah,) and our God, and the Lord, are one." In his exposition of the passage beginning with *Jehovah*, he says: "He is the beginning of all things, the ancient of ancients, the Garden of Roots, and the perfection of all things." The other, or *our God*, is the depth, and the Fountain of Sciences, which proceed from that Father. The other (or Lord,) is called the measure of the Voice. He is one; so that one concludes with the other, and unites them together. Neither can one be divided from the other. And, therefore, he saith, Hear, O Israel, that is, join these together and make him one substance. For whatsoever is in the one, is in the other. He hath been the whole, he is the whole, and he will be the whole.‡

To the above exposition we would add the following,

\* See quoted in Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, pt. iii., p. 88, and Jameson's Reply to Priestly, vol. 1., pp. 75, 76.

† It certainly dates from the first to the eighth Century.

‡ These words are also given by Rabbi Markante, which undoubtedly implies his approbation of them. Such is the remarkable exposition of this passage, as given by Dr. Jameson, in his reply to Dr. Priestly. (1) From other portions of this work these expressions are quoted, (2) *Jehovah*, *Elohenu*, *Jehovah*, (i. e. *Jehovah*, our God, *Jehovah*.) These are the three degrees with respect to this sublime mystery; "in the beginning God (*Elohim*), created the heavens and the earth," and again, "*Jehovah*, *Elohenu*, *Jehovah*, they are one; the three forms (modes or things) which are one." Elsewhere it is observed, "there are two and one is joined to them, and they are three, and when the three are one, he says to (or of) them these are the two names that Israel heard, *Jehovah*, *Jehovah*, and *Elohenu* (our God) is joined to them; and it is the seal of the ring of truth, and when they are joined, they are one in unity. This is illustrated by the three names the soul of man is called by, the soul, spirit and breath. The great Phillippe de Marnay, (3) among other ancient authors, quotes the exposition of Rabbi Ibba of this text, to this purport, that the first *Jehovah*, which is the incommunicable name of God, is the Father; by *Elohim* is meant the Son, who is the fountain of all knowledge; and by the second, *Jehovah*, is meant the Holy Ghost proceeding from them, and he is called *Achad*, one, because God is one. Ibba adds, that this mystery was not to be revealed till the coming of the

[1] See vol. i., p. 75, and the references.

[2] See Gill's Comment. in loco, and Univ. Hist. vol. iii., p. 11.

[3] Avertissement aux Juifs, see in Anct. Hist. vol. i., p. 11.

taken from the work itself. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: Israel unites the three hypostases, the Lord, our God, one Lord, to make all, to be but one."—(Zohar, vol. ii., fol. 160, col. 2.) The following passage is also found on the same page, viz: "The Lord, our God, Lord: this is the mystery of the unity in three hypostases.

But it is not merely to the use of the plural term as that by which the Old Testament Scriptures usually designate the Deity, that we refer as a proof, that according to God's own revelation of what his nature is, it unites a plurality of persons in a unity of essence. Written at a time when polytheism abounded, and to a people ever prone to fall into idolatry, the use of this term by God in reference to himself, and that even when announcing his Unity, is, indeed, most powerful evidence. This conclusion is, however, confirmed by another remarkable anomaly in the language used by the Old Testament writers when speaking of God, viz: the combination of these plural appellatives with singular verbs, pronouns and adjectives. To this usage only a few exceptions are found in the Hebrew Scriptures, from among hundreds of cases in which the plural appellation is used,—a circumstance which, whilst it shows that this was the regular usage of the sacred writers, at the same time proves that it would have been equally consistent with the idiom of the language, to have followed the ordinary rule of grammar applying to such cases. "For this anomaly, the Trinitarian hypothesis suggests a natural and easy solution. Apart from this hypothesis, however, no explanation of this usage can be furnished; and it must remain as one of the most unaccountable and capricious departures from one of the fundamental laws of human speech, of which we have an instance in the literature of any nation."\*

We are thus brought to the conclusion, that in this

**Messiah.** The author of the Zohar applies the word holy, which is thrice repeated in the vision of Isaiah, (4) to the three persons in the Deity, whom he elsewhere calls three suns, or lights, three sovereigns,—without beginning and without end.

[4] Chapter vi., 3.

\* Smith's Messiah.

first and great commandment, God makes known the unity of his Godhead, and yet, at the same time, the trinity of his persons, and that such was the interpretation given of it by the most ancient, the wisest, and the most authoritative Jewish Rabbis. And it is no small confirmation of this that when the Jews, long before the Christian era,\* ceased to use the word Jehovah which they never utter, they employed instead of it, the word *Adonai*, which is another plural title for the Deity.

When, therefore, in this, and some four or five other passages in the Old Testament, God declares that "he is one God and there is none else,"† the question arises, who is the being who is thus expressly declared to be the only true God? He is called the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But who, we again ask, is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Jacob and the prophet Hosea concur in declaring that he is a certain angel or messenger before whom they walked; who fed Jacob all his life long, who redeemed him from all evil, with whom he had power and prevailed, and who yet is Jehovah the God of hosts.‡ But to be an angel or messenger he must be sent. Who then, is the SENDER of this MESSENGER? This question is resolved by the prophets Zechariah and Malachi. They teach us that the messenger of the covenant, though himself Jehovah and the God of Israel, is nevertheless, SENT, in his quality of a messenger, by Jehovah.§ Here, most unequivocally, we have two distinct persons, a SENDER and a SENT; each of whom is declared to be Jehovah; and the latter of whom, or Jehovah the messenger, is declared by Jacob and Hosea to be the God of Israel. But further, according to Malachi and Haggai, he is a being who is characterized, as the desire of all nations, who is announced as about to come suddenly to his temple; and whose act of coming to his temple is

\* Our evidences are found in the Septuagint.

† *Exod.* xx: 2, 3, *Isa.* xliv: 8, and xlv: 9, and xlv: 21, 22.

These remarks apply to the first and second commandment, in which, the same combination of Jehovah and Elohim takes place, and we are required to have no other Gods but this one, who unites in his one Godhead three persons.

‡ *Exod.* iii: 15, *Gen.* xlviii: 15, 16, and xxxii: 24, 30, *Hos.* xii: 2, 15.

§ *Zechariah* ii: 6, 11, *Malachi* iii: 1.

chronologically limited to the days of the second temple, which is thence to exceed the first temple in glory, and which was finally destroyed by Titus and the Romans. But to such characteristics Christ alone will be found to answer. Whence, Christians have, in all ages, most logically and Scripturally concluded that Christ, or the second person of the blessed Trinity, or in other words, that God the Son is that messenger Jehovah, who is declared to have been sent by Jehovah, and who is yet Jehovah, and who is also, equally declared to be the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.

But still further. In many passages of the Old Testament the phrase "The Spirit of God," or "Jehovah," occurs in conjunction with certain attributes, qualities and acts, which lead to the conclusion that by that phrase is designated a Divine person. These would seem to conduct to the inference, that by this "Spirit of Jehovah" was intended as by the phrase already examined, "Angel of Jehovah," a Divine person, in some sense distinct from, and yet in another sense, one with the invisible Jehovah.

In other passages again, these three persons are introduced together. Thus, in Isaiah, lxiii: 9, 10, it is said, "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, but the Angel of his presence saved them; in his love and grace he redeemed them, and bare them, and carried them from the beginning. But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit, so that he was turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them."

Another passage to the same effect occurs in Isaiah xlviii: 16. "Approach unto me, hear this; from the beginning have I not spoken occultly, from the time when it was I was there, and now THE LORD hath sent ME and his SPIRIT." The speaker here is the same who, in verse 12, calls himself "The First and the Last," and who, in verse 13, claims to himself the work of creation. The speaker therefore, must be regarded as Divine. But in the verse before us, this divine being speaks of HIMSELF as distinct from THE LORD GOD, and as sent by HIM. He describes himself also, as the author of communications to men from the first. Now, such a being can be none other than the second person in the Trinity, the revealer

of God to man, at once the equal and the messenger of the Father; and so the passage has been viewed by the great body of interpreters, ancient and modern.

What then, was the design of God in all these revelations of himself, of which, we have only given an illustration? To use the language of Bishop Hinds, "It surely must have been designed to suggest to the minds of his people, and to habituate their minds to contemplate God as Three. Three different divine Persons appear as the agents and rulers, in a threefold dispensation; so different indeed, that if left to form our conjectures of the divine nature from the facts of this progressive economy, all view of *one* God must have been discarded. The facts of Revelation represent God as a Trinity; and it is only by express and perpetual qualifications of a view so suggested, that we are assured of his Unity.

The doctrine of the Trinity in short, rests primarily on historical facts; the doctrine of the Unity on a series of declarations and other provisions made in reference to those facts. If we suppose the Bible strip of all those provisions which it contains for qualifying its historical representations of the Divine nature, it would exhibit three Gods; but with those provisions, that representation becomes a Trinity in Unity.\*

Having thus disposed of the fundamental proof-text for the unity of God in contradistinction to all other pretended deities, as found in the Old Testament, let us now take one of the most striking declarations respecting the Unity of God in the New Testament. This is found in John xvii: 1-3. "These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to Heaven and said, Father; the hour is come, glorify the Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

The argument drawn from this passage by Unitarians is, that since **THE FATHER** is declared to be **THE ONLY** true

\* See *The Three Temples of the One True God Contrasted*.—Oxf. 1850.

God, our Saviour, and the Holy Ghost are not truly God. But, in this argument, there is a gross fallacy. The very precise, and cautiously chosen, words of Christ are misstated. What Christ does say is, that his Father is the only true God, but he does not say that his Father **ONLY** is the true God. He affirms that his Father, in contrast with all the other so-called Gods, is the only true God, but he does not say that the Father **ONLY**, to the exclusion of the Son and the Holy Ghost, is alone this true God. Between these declarations there is a radical and essential difference. Christ affirms that there is an only true God, and that his Father is this only true God, both of which propositions we believe to be true. But this leaves the question still to be answered, as in the case of the Jehovah of the Old Testament,—who, and what, is this **ONE ONLY TRUE GOD**? According to his own representation of himself, God we have seen, is not an absolute, and uncompounded person, but is a triplicity of persons in one Godhead. God is a necessary, self-existent, spiritual being, in whom Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, do necessarily co-exist, so as to constitute that one being. The Father is the only true God, not excluding the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is the only true God, not excluding the Father and the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit is God, the only true, not excluding the Father and the Son. When, therefore, it is said the Father is the only true God, since each of them participates in that one essence or Godhead which is the only true and real God, each and all unite to constitute this one Godhead. And as this Godhead is common to each and all, it may be attributed to each; and each, therefore, may be called the only true God. Such is, as we believe, the teaching of Scripture as to the natural, necessary, and eternal union, in one Godhead, of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And against this our Saviour affirms nothing; since he does not say thou Father **ONLY**, art the true God, but that the Father is **THE ONLY** true God, a declaration which is equally true of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

The term Father, when applied to God, does not always in Scripture, refer to the person of the Father, as distinct from the Son, but is employed as a general title

of the divine nature, and thus includes the three persons.\* When the term Father is applied to God personally, and not as to his Godhead or essence, it is either in reference to his paternal relation to his creatures, and especially to believers, or to Christ as his only begotten Son, "whose goings forth," or, as the words mean, "whose generation is from of old, from everlasting."†

Now, what our Saviour says, he says of "MY Father," i. e. of God as that eternal Godhead with whom he was "in the beginning as God, the Son." Christ, therefore, says, that God as his Father, that is God in that infinite essence and Godhead in which as he elsewhere declares "he and the Father are one," is the only true God. The very selection, out of all possible titles of God, of the term Father necessarily implies, and has reference to, the Son of whom Scripture is full. We everywhere read also, of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, who is God. Now, the term Father implies that the person so described, in the order of internal relation between the persons of the trinity, is the source or fountain of the trinity and the first in authority and office. Of him, therefore, it may emphatically be said, that he is the true God, since he includes and implies in his own nature, the Son and Holy Ghost.

Besides, whatever of divine honour is here ascribed to the Father is also ascribed to the Son. For, it is not only necessary to eternal life to know the Father to be the only true God, but also, as our Saviour's words certainly imply, to know the Son also, as being also, the only true God as well as the Father. We are to know that and all that of the Son, which we are to know of the Father; that is, that he also, is the true God, and therefore, as elsewhere, God teaches us "we are to honour THE SON, EVEN AS we honour THE FATHER."

Both the Son and the Father, therefore, and not the Father alone, or the Son alone, are represented as being unitedly and equally the grand objects of spiritual, saving knowledge, a statement which never would have been made without infinite presumption and impiety

\* Deut. xxxii: 6; Is. lxiii: 16, and lxiv: 3; Matt. v: 16, 48, and vi: 4, and 7, 11; John viii: 41.

† Micah vi: 4. See Jonathan Edward's Works, vol. 9.



by Christ were he not himself "God, blessed for ever."

The knowledge here made requisite is, it must be remembered, a spiritual and heartfelt reliance on the united object presented to our faith. It includes love to him, adoration of him, and obedience to his commands. And as this knowledge is to be directed to the Son as well as to the Father, in order to obtain eternal life, the Son is to be regarded as the only true God equally with the Father. And this is what we are elsewhere taught, when we are told that "God is IN CHRIST reconciling the world unto himself," Christ being "GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH."

But further, the Father is here said to be the only true God, because he only can give eternal life. But this eternal life is here and elsewhere, more frequently and emphatically, associated absolutely and entirely with the Son, who must, therefore, also be the only true God. And hence Christ is denominated frequently "the life." He is frequently said to give "everlasting life" and "eternal life."\* And the apostle John, as if in allusion to this passage, declares, "and we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is TRUE, and we are IN HIM that is TRUE, even IN HIS SON JESUS CHRIST. THIS IS THE TRUE GOD AND ETERNAL LIFE."

And that the Son is elsewhere called the true God in Scripture, is admitted by Socinus himself, the father of modern Socinians.† "It is very false," says Socinus, "that we should openly declare Jesus Christ is not true God. We profess to say the contrary, and declare that he is true God, in several of our writings, as well in the Latin as in the Polish language." "Jesus Christ," says Smalcins, another father of the Unitarians, "also may be called with a sovereign right our God, and the true God, and so he really is." Our Saviour therefore, in attributing to HIMSELF as well as to THE FATHER the title "only true God," speaks, as our opponents admit, in conformity with the other portions of Scripture; as when, in the Old Testament, that being, whom we have

\* John vi: 27, and x: 28; Matt. xix: 16, 21.

† See Ad. Wick., p. 49, in Abaddie, p. 275.

identified with Christ, is made to declare "I am Jehovah thy God; thou shalt have no other Gods before me." "Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any;" and again: "There is no God else besides one, a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides me; for I am God, and there is none else:" and again, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like unto me."

The expressions in this text manifestly allude to the multitude of Pagan divinities who falsely bare the name of Gods. The adjective *true* is opposed to false, and the adverb *only* is opposed to many. Christ was, evidently, speaking in opposition to the corrupt theology of the heathen, as if he had said, "The Gentiles perish, because they have no knowledge of any but false Gods; but it is life eternal to know thee, the only true God, in opposition to idols, including his co-equal and co-essential Son, who is Jesus the Christ."

Of exactly similar import is the declaration of the apostle in 1 Cor. viii: 4-6. "As concerning therefore, the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many and lords many; but to us there is but one God,—THE FATHER, of whom are all things, and we in him; AND ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, by whom are all things, and we by him." Here also God,—that is, the Godhead, or God considered in his essence, and as implying the Father and the Son, is said to be ONE in opposition to idols as in 1 Thess. i: 9. If we compare this with the expression of St. Thomas, "My Lord and my God," we have the following argument: "To us there is but one God the Father—but to us Jesus Christ is also Lord and God. The Gospel has, therefore, either preached two Gods, one distinct from the other, or that the "one God the Father" is here the name of a nature, under which Christ himself, as God, is also comprehended. The same conclusion may be also deduced from several other passages. Thus, in Matt. xxiii: v. 9, it is said, "Call no man your Father upon earth, for ONE IS YOUR FATHER, which is in hea-

ven." But in verse 10, it is said, "Neither be ye called MASTERS, for ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVEN CHRIST, (vide John iii: 13,) which is in Heaven. Now, if from the words, ONE IS YOUR FATHER, an argument is drawn for the exclusive divinity of the Father, the same argument would prove, *that one person only is our master*, and that this person is Christ, which excludes the persons of the Father and the Spirit from the honour of that title, and therefore, reduces the argument to an absurdity. We are to conclude then, that as the phrase, "one master," cannot be meant to exclude the Father, so neither do other similar expressions applied to the Father, as "one good," or "one is your Father," exclude the person of Christ. The title of Father is, itself, ascribed to the second person of the Trinity; for Christ, the Alpha and the Omega, says of himself, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I WILL BE HIS GOD, and he shall be MY SON."\* Isaiah expressly calls him the EVERLASTING FATHER. Again, it is written, "They are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection:" "but," says Christ, "I am the resurrection." Christ therefore, is God, and the believers are his children. The word Father, therefore, cannot always be a name that distinguishes the first person in the Godhead from the other persons of the Godhead, but is often to be understood as a term merely of relation, and as in this sense, applicable to the second person also.†

But Whitby so fairly meets, and so fully confutes the argument which Dr. Carpenter, and Unitarians generally, derive from this passage, that I shall here transcribe his comment. The passage is this: "To us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in (or for) him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." Hence, (says Whitby,) the Arians and Socinians argue against the Deity of Christ, as he who saith there is one Emperor, to wit, Cæsar, saith in effect, there is no other Emperor but Cæsar. So he that saith there is one God the Father, saith in effect, there is no other God besides the Father. Again, he who, having separately spoken of one God,

\* Revel. xxi: 7, Isaiah ix: 6, Luke xx: 36, John ii: 45.

† See Jones on Trinity.

proceeds distinctly to speak of one Lord, to wit: Jesus Christ doth, by that distinct title, sufficiently show Christ is not that God. Such is the argument of Unitarians. To this Whitby replies: "To the second argument the reply is obvious, by retorting the argument, as to the ancient Commentators, against this Arian objection, thus: That, as the apostle, by saying there is one Lord Jesus Christ, cannot be reasonably supposed to exclude the Father from being the Lord of Christians, as he is often styled in the New Testament; so neither by saying, there is one God the Father, ought he to be supposed to exclude Jesus Christ from being also, the God of Christians. So argue Origen and Novatian; especially if we consider, first, that he is here styled *that one Lord, by whom are all things, i. e.* "by whom all things are created."—Ephes. iii: 9. "All things which are in heaven or in earth."—Coloss. i: 16. For "he that made all things is God."—Heb. iii: 5. And "by the works of the Creation is the Godhead known."—Rom. iii: 20. And this is elsewhere made the very description of God the Father, that it is he, by whom are all things.—Rom. xi: 35, and Heb. xi: 10. And next, that all things were created not only by this Lord, but (*εἰς αὐτὸν*) "for him" also.—Col. i: 16. Now, this is the very thing which the apostle here ascribes to God the Father.

"Secondly, to the other argument I answer, that we and all the ancients assert, as truly as our opponents can do, the unity of the Godhead, and that Christ Jesus is not another God, but only another person from the Father; and that the application of the word God here to the Father, doth not necessarily exclude the Son from being God also, but only from being the fountain of the Deity, as the Father is. Thus, when these words, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, (Revel. i: 17; ii: 8, and xxii: 13,) are by St. John, applied to Christ, it cannot be concluded hence, that the Father is not also Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, as he is often called in the Old Testament; and though our Saviour be the proper title of our Lord Jesus, as his very name informs us, yet is the Father in Scripture styled our Saviour, (1 Tim. i: 1, and ii: 3,) and the Saviour of all men, iv: 10. The primitive fathers considering God

the Father as the fountain of the Deity, and Jesus Christ as God of God, frequently assert two things, which may illustrate this passage:

First, That Christians acknowledge one God only, even the Father, and yet that Jesus Christ was truly God, of the substance of the Father.

Secondly, That God the Father was the Creator of all things, and yet that all things were created by the Word."

And here, also, in describing this God, as he exists tri-personally, the Son is associated with the Father by the term Lord, which is equivalent to Jehovah or Supreme Divinity, and by the attribution to him of the same universal, infinite and divine dominion. And so also, in the only other very distinct allusion to the unity of God in the New Testament in 1 Tim. ii: 3, 5. The apostle in verse 3, speaks of God our Saviour, and attributes to our Saviour as God sovereign power and dominion, and then adds: "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," where with God, who in his essence is called one, Christ is again associated in the statement of the object of Christian worship and adoration. The Apostle, in effect says, pray for all men; because all, without exception, are accountable to one supreme moral authority, and have only one way of hope and salvation. To all men, there is no other than one Saviour, the only Deliverer from the guilt of sin and the wrath to come.

Thus, it appears that even in affirming the unity of God, the New Testament, as well as the Old, never teaches the absolute and personal unity of God, but only the unity of his essence in contrast with all false Gods. So far from doing so, we have seen that even in declaring the unity of God the New Testament holds forth Christ as associated in the one Godhead, as "the true God and eternal life;" and in another passage, as "the blessed and only potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who "ONLY hath immortality." Such is the union between the Father and the Son, that in respect of their essential glories, what is asserted of the one, is to be understood of the other. Jesus, therefore, not only says, "I and the Father are one;" but also affirms

that "he who honours the Son, honours the Father also." And again, he says, "ALL that the Father hath, is mine,—his nature, essence, or Godhead. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also."

It will afterwards be shown that Scripture attributes to the Holy Spirit, as well as to the Son, everything which is ascribed to the Father, and that he therefore, is also, "the only true God." But, at present, it is enough to have proved this of the Son, and that too, from the very passages adduced to establish the absolute, personal, and metaphysical unity of God.

We thus perceive that, on the one hand, we are taught in Scripture, that there is one only true God. On the other hand, we are equally taught in Scripture, that the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are alike this one only true God. Hence, devoutly receiving the Bible as the divine word of inspiration, and presuming not to be wise either above what is written, or contrary to what is written, we conclude from these several declarations of Scripture, that there is one only true God, the maker of heaven and earth, but that this one only true God, mysteriously exists in three persons, or hypostases, as he himself terms it, and that the Supreme Being is one, in regard to his substance or his proper divine nature; but that he is three, in regard to his component persons or hypostases.

A Christian is bound therefore, to believe, that there is one only true God, and that the Almighty Father of heaven and earth is that God.

This tenet, at once separates him from those who worship the multifarious rabble of Pagan divinities; for, if he admit as the very foundation of his creed, the existence of one only true God, he must of necessity, reject from his creed a plurality of false gods.

But, as a Christian is bound to believe, that there is one only true God; so is he likewise bound to believe, that the one only true God hath sent Jesus of Nazareth in the character of the promised Messiah; and that as such, ~~he~~ is God manifest in the flesh, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace,—the co-equal person, with the Father and the Holy Ghost in the ever-blessed

triune Jehovah. This is the God to whom as a Christian, every believer is dedicated, into whose name (or nature and glory,) he is baptized, in whom he is to believe, and whom he is to love, honour, worship and obey with all his heart, and soul, and strength, and mind.

The former article of his belief separates the Christian from polytheistic Gentiles. The latter article of his belief separates him from the Jews; for though they have ever firmly expected the promised Messiah, they have generally, as pertinaciously denied that the Messiah has come in the person of Jesus of Nazareth,—that he is God,—that the Holy Ghost is God,—and that God is a triune Jehovah, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in one essential nature.

We must never forget, however, that mere doctrinal knowledge, however essential, will stand us in little avail, unless it is manifested in our practice. That same Divine person, who declared the knowledge of God the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be eternal life, declared also, no less unequivocally, “Not every one, that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which in Heaven.\*

Unitarians may say, that to know Jesus Christ, is to know the will of God, as delivered by Jesus Christ. But it is not knowing the will of God, but God himself as a Saviour, that will secure us eternal life. To know Jesus Christ is, therefore, to know him as he is represented in the Gospel, as God and man; and as having become such for our redemption; and to believe in, love, and obey him as such, and thus we perceive the plain, practical, and fundamental character of the doctrine of the trinity.

This does God's book declare in obvious phrase,  
In most sincere and honest words, by God  
Himself selected and arranged, so clear,  
So plain, so perfectly distinct, that none  
Who read with humble wish to understand,  
And ask the Spirit given to all who ask,  
Can miss their meaning, blazed in heavenly light.

\* 1 Peter, i: 5-7, and ix: 11.

The true One God, in Persons Three,  
Great Father of eternity,  
Swift with the sun departs the day,  
Oh, shed on us a heavenly ray.

At morn and even to Thee we raise  
The sigh of prayer, the song of praise,  
Though poor the strain, its aim is high,—  
God over all to glorify!

Father, for ever be adored  
And Thou,—the Son,—our only Lord,  
And Thou, true Consolation Giver,  
Now, henceforth, and for ever!

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God the Father! with us be,  
Shield us Thou from danger nigh,  
From sin's bondage set us free,  
Help us happily to die!

God the Saviour! with us be,  
Shield us Thou from danger nigh,  
From sin's bondage set us free,  
Help us happily to die!

God the Spirit! with us be,  
Shield us Thou from danger nigh,  
From sin's bondage set us free,  
Help us happily to die!

Keep us in the heavenly faith,  
From Satan us deliver;  
Thine in life and thine in death,  
Thine only and for ever!

God! with thy weapons arm us,  
With all true Christians, shall we,—  
Nor earth, nor hell, to harm us,—  
Hallelujah sing to thee!

*Hymns of Ancient Church.*

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## ARTICLE II.

### THE PSALTER OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

The essential element of the Romish apostasy is *creature-worship*. Popery, like heathenism, has “changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served