

THE  
**SWORD OF THE SPIRIT,**

PIERCING EVEN

TO THE DIVIDING ASUNDER

OF

**SOUL AND SPIRIT;**

BEING A

SCRIPTURAL TESTIMONY

OF THE

**Pre-existence of Jesus Christ,**

THE SAME

YESTERDAY, AND TO DAY, AND FOR EVER.

---

BY A MINISTER OF CHRIST'S GOSPEL.

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What think you of Christ? is the test,  
To both your state and your scheme;  
You cannot be right in the rest,  
Unless you think rightly of HIM. *Newton.*

*None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for he will receive me. Psalm cxix. 7. 15.*

*The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and your whole [pneuma] spirit, and [psuche,] soul, and [soma,] body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of [the LORD JESUS CHRIST. 1 Thess. v. 23.]*

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### ABBREVIATED REFERENCES

*To the human pre-existerian writings quoted in the following pages.*

- 1st Let.** The first letter from John Stevens to Dr. Hawker.  
**P. 1st Let.** Postscript to the First Letter.  
**2nd Let.** The Second Letter from John Stevens to Dr. Hawker.  
**3rd Let.** John Stevens' Letter to Mr. Rees.  
**C. F. i. ii.** Celestial Filiation, by John Stevens, part i. ii.  
**He.** Help for the True Disciples, &c. by John Stevens, edition, 1803.  
**S. D.** A Scriptural Display of the Triune God, by John Stevens.  
**S. M.** Spiritual Magazine, by John Allen.  
**S. J.** The Sinlessness of Jesus, by John Stevens.  
**Rhy.** Verses on the Sonship of Christ, by John Stevens.  
**E. S.** Early Son, or Christ before all things, by John Stevens.  
**A. F.** Articles of Faith, by John Stevens.

## TO THE CHURCH OF GOD IN GREAT BRITAIN.

AN elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth! grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from GOD, the FATHER, and from the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the SON of the FATHER in truth and love!

JESUS CHRIST is the brightness of glory, and the express Image of the FATHER's *hypostasis*, or person; Heb. i. 3. They who have seen him have seen the FATHER; John xiv. 9. The FATHER is in the SON, and the SON is in the FATHER, John x. 38. And the SPIRIT of truth which proceedeth from the FATHER, he testifies of the SON, John xv. 26.

Take heed what ye hear, (Mark iv. 24,) for in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall come in Christ's name, not only pretending to be the Christ, but, like the Arians, saying, I am Christ, (not saying that CHRIST is I AM,) and shall deceive many. Matt. xxiv. 5. And this is the more necessary at this time, since one awful prophecy seems to be fulfilling, that there shall be false teachers among you, who privily, or deceitfully, shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the LORD (*Despoten*) that they profess bought them with his blood. 2 Peter ii. 1. They will scoff at the spirit of prophecy for testifying, *Jehovah shall send Jehovah*; they will speak loftily, How can God send God? Had they known God, they would not so *mock* him; but ye know Him that is true, for the LORD hath said, "Ye shall sing and rejoice at Jehovah's coming and dwelling in the midst of you, and *ye shall know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me unto you.*" Zech. ii. 10, 11.

These false teachers are pseudo-Trinitarians, they do not openly deny the LORD who they profess hath bought them, but they do it subtilly by questions, such as "how can God send God," how can God enter into covenant with God? If they really believed there are Three which bear record in Heaven, they would never use such language. You may see twenty-four of these subtilties in

a pamphlet entitled "The Early Son, or Christ before all things;" a title by which they intended you should think they believed in Christ before all things, when they really do not *profess* to believe Christ is before *one of the all things, viz. the first human soul!* They pervert *I am* into *I was*, and talk about Christ being *older* than Adam, as if he was growing old, and were not *the same*, Heb. i. 10, 12, which they would never do if they knew "THE CHRIST OF GOD," the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever, They have even gone so far as to assert, that the Holy Spirit has no more used the phrase "The Christ of God," than HE has the word *pre-existence*, and the phrase *human soul*. E. S. p. 18. They *rob God* by perverting *I am* into *I was*; and such persons as consent with them, call *evil, harmless*, whose portion is with adulterers, Mal. iii. 8, Psalm l. 18. Such characters are described, as intruding into those things which they have not seen; or as understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm; *vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind, and hold not the HEAD, which is "The CHRIST OF GOD!"* They meddle with divine things in a spirit which, because it is not of God, can only lead them astray. Their souls are unmortified with the real conviction of sin, or they would know sin was a *positive* thing, *the work of the Devil*, by its *indwelling* and *exceeding sinfulness*; they would never call sin a negative thing, nor support the *Pelagian* heresy.

They neither know the Father nor the Son, or they would not make a mock of believers' baptism, by baptizing into names they consider to be characters assumed by Jehovah, as characters are assumed by stage players, which characters, they blasphemously say, Jehovah will hereafter lay aside as no more needful. Is not this fact evidence of their Antichristian spirit, intruding as they do into those things which they have not seen; or as understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

Whosoever so transgresseth, abideth not in the doctrine of CHRIST, and hath not GOD. He that abideth in the doctrine of CHRIST, he hath both the FATHER, and the SON. If there come any unto you, and bring not this

doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. 2 John 9-11.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world, 1 John iv. 1. If thou shalt try them which say they are apostles, and are not, thou wilt find them liars, and the LORD will commend thee for so doing, Rev. ii. 2.

Carry all you read, and all you hear, whether it be *reasonable* or supposable, to the law, and to the testimony, and if not according to God's word, away with it! For whatsoever is not of faith is sin! But blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. Psalm xl. 4.

Remember that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever, according to the glorious Gospel; therefore, beware of men that would spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the human pre-existerian tradition of the Pharisees, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David is over all God blessed for ever. Amen! And though an Angel from Heaven preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed; and if any one preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, suppositions, reasonings, and *Dagon* or *fishy* pre-eminence, that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. *Dagon* is the Hebrew word for *fishy*! And if priority in the order of God's creation is true *pre-eminence*, as maintained by human pre-existerians; then, the *fish* are entitled to that pre-eminence; for they were created before the birds, the beasts, the cattle, the creeping things, and Adam. And human pre-existerians ought to be called *Dagonites*; for otherwise these *Dagon* worshippers will not be distinguished from us, who believe through grace in the true JESUS CHRIST, and in the true pre-existence of Jesus

Christ, who is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Heb. xiii. 8.

LOVE is the royal law, and *love* is the fulfilling of the law. Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other: and him that taketh away thy cloke, forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. Let love be without dissimulation; abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another. Not slothful in business, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer. Distributing to the necessity of saints, given to hospitality. Bless and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep, Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the LORD. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Love is the fulfilling of the law. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Beloved farewell; I cease not to pray for you! Pray for me, that I may be faithful unto death.

FREDERICK SILVER.

Bethlehem Chapel, Richmond, 1835.

## INTRODUCTION.

FORASMUCH as Mr. John Stevens has raised a question as to the time when he embraced the pre-existerian tradition of the Pharisees, it seemed good to me, having received the following communication, the truth of which can be proved, to publish the same; in order that the disciples of the Christ of God may have a perfect understanding respecting the same—before I proceed with the exposure of the human pre-existerian mystery of iniquity.

It was after Mr. John Stevens left Northamptonshire, that he went out from us, because he was not of us, who believe the revelation which GOD ALMIGHTY hath made of Himself to be essentially true, and no cunningly devised fable. Whilst he resided at St. Neots in Huntingdonshire, he first wrote and published in favour of the human pre-existerian tradition. It was in the year 1803, four years before the year 1807, and ten years before he published his Scriptural Display! This fact, I defy any human pre-existerian at his peril to deny! For the work is entitled, “By John Stevens,” and on the title-page is printed these words, viz. “Sold by M. Jones, 1, Paternoster Row; J. Higham, Chiswell Street; and by the Author, St. Neots, Huntingdonshire, 1803.”

Afterwards he removed to Boston, in Lincolnshire, where Mr. Samuel Barnard lived, a young man, one of his disciples, who penned for the Gospel Magazine those pre-existerian Essays which appeared in the year 1807, under the signature of *Nepios*: of which Essays, Mr. Stevens was stated, in the same year, and in the same magazine, to be the author. And this statement was never questioned, nor was it denied by Mr. Stevens, until the month of December in the year 1834.

Some time after the year 1807, Mr. John Stevens came to London, and preached his pharisaical pre-existerian tradition. He was for a season stationed at

Grafton Street, and afterwards at York Street Chapel, where he continued, until some latent pre-existerian soul humours broke out, and put an end to his pre-existerian soul lectures there.

And if his own words may be applied to himself and his hearers, I may say, he has continued his lectures elsewhere, that *young rooks may receive food from their dam!* Such a comparison, no doubt may be true, when applied to arians, sabellians, and other human pre-existerians, but I never knew any one, except Mr. John Stevens, compare the regenerated children of God to *young rooks*, or the spiritual assembly of the Lord's people to *a rookery!*

In the year 1813, he published his "Scriptural Display," for the satisfaction of his friends, *who* he says, *had long desired him so to do*; and also for the purpose of meeting the accusations of others; an *open avowal* of his human soul pre-existerian sentiment. This sentiment, the open avowal of which he states in 1813 his friends *had long desired*, he now declares he never embraced until years after the year 1807. E. S. 3. But if his friends *had long desired before the year 1813*, the open avowal of his pre-existerian sentiment, or rather pharisaical tradition; what can he now mean by declaring, that *he never embraced that sentiment until years, yea, years after the year 1807?* E. S. 3. There are but *six years* between the years 1807 and 1813! His two statements oppose each other. *Both* cannot be true. I shall therefore endeavour to explain these two contradictory statements: and I defy Mr. Stevens to prove my explanation to be either incorrect with what he has stated, or inconsistent with what he intended should be understood.

First. Mr. Stevens in the year 1813 meant by the expression, *the long desire of his friends*, a period of not less than *ten years*, namely, ever since the year 1803, when he first published part of his human pre-existerian sentiment. For in his "Scriptural Display," which is principally a compilation, he has in page 149, referred to his former work, when speaking of the Image of the Invisible God, in the words following, namely,

"He also calls him the Image of the Invisible God,



“which cannot, I think, be understood of him as merely  
 “a divine person. *But this point I have fully discussed, in a*  
 “*Treatise which I published in 1803, entitled, ‘Help for the*  
 “true disciples of Immanuel. See chapter vi. On the  
 “communicable Image of Elohim, p. 137.” Mr. Stevens  
 not only refers to his former work by name, and the  
 chapter containing his pre-existerian sentiment of the  
 human nature of Christ, therein called “this mysterious  
 “man in God, God’s Master-piece, this Sampler, this  
 “shape of the Father’s choosing,”<sup>a</sup> &c., but he even  
 refers to the very year 1803, when these *nicknames* were  
 published. Surely, then, we must understand by *the*  
*long desire of his friends*, that he meant from his first  
 publication in the year 1803, to the year 1813; unless  
 we are to believe, what is not probable, namely, that  
 all his friends in the year 1803, *died long before the year*  
 1813.

Secondly. By Mr. Stevens’ declaration at the close  
 of the year 1834, that *he did not embrace the pre-exis-*  
*terian sentiment until years after the year 1807, E.S.3.*  
 I understand he meant, *we should believe what he knew to*  
*be false;*<sup>b</sup> because he had *previously* embraced the pha-  
 risaical tradition; had even sold the work containing  
 his sentiment, with his nicknames of Christ, at his own  
 house in the year 1803, *four years* before the year 1807!  
 And this we *must* believe, unless we are to suppose when  
 he wrote his “Early Son” pamphlet, in the year 1835,  
*his faculties were overwhelmed with the importunate and*

<sup>a</sup> See “Help for the true Disciples.” page 138, 139.

<sup>b</sup> Mr. Stevens is a disciple of the human pre-existerian Pharisees,  
 who believed in the pre-existence and transmigration of the soul from one  
 human body to another. It may not be proper for me to say, that every  
 one of these sects are not sincere, or naturally conscientious; but I  
 must say, their sincerity can never make their pre-existerian soul lie to  
 be true; and therefore, let God be true, though all the different sects of  
 human pre-existerians together be proved liars! A *lie*, properly speaking,  
 is the *antithesis* of *truth*. It may be wilfully or unknowingly committed.  
 By the use I have made of that word, I have no intention to charge any  
 individual with doing so wilfully. But *falsehood* is an act of *treachery*;  
 it signifies a false statement made to conceal a lie from discovery;  
*hoodwinking* a person who has been deceived by a *lie*. It also signifies,  
 an act of duplicity, committed by a person under a profession of religion.  
 The reader will therefore decide for himself, in which sense that word  
 so used is to be understood.

*overbearing impressions of infant animal nature*: a disease, which, he says, his pre-existerian human soul of Christ was liable to and laboured under. S. D. 200-2. Was it to that disease? or, to what other cause are we to attribute his bold assertion, that *it is the duty of all men to believe WITH ASSURANCE the testimony of the scriptures*, after contending, as he has done, with all his power, against Mr. Andrew Fuller's opinion, that *it is the duty of all men to believe in Christ*? This is an act so ridiculous, that it is impossible to account for it, without ascribing it either to *his* overwhelming, importunate, and overbearing impressions of infant animal nature, or, to *the deadly disease of sin*.

By comparing the *first* part of Mr. Stevens' "Help for the true Disciples," published in the year 1803, with his "Scriptural Display," published in the year 1813; and the *second* part of his "Help for the true Disciples," published in the year 1814, *one* year after his Scriptural Display, and *thirteen* years after his Help for the true Disciples; I find him asserting and maintaining in his help with all his human power, that *it is not* the duty of all men to believe in Christ, and that Mr. Fuller's book is *miscalled*, the Gospel worthy of all acceptance,—and I find him in the Scriptural Display, in the commencement of his preface, even in the *first sentence*, like a false witness, or one overwhelmed with infant animal nature, asserting that it is the duty of a man to *believe with assurance* the testimony of the Scriptures.

But that I may be free from the charge of misrepresenting his meaning or statement, I shall repeat his own words, as they stand *in the first sentence* of the preface to the Scriptural Display. "It is certain (says he) that a man can know nothing of supernatural truth *beyond the testimony of the Scriptures*: what is plainly declared in these sacred records, we are *bound* to examine with reverence, and *believe with assurance!*" Now if this be true, then it must be the duty of all men to believe in Christ. For what is the testimony of the Scriptures? "Search the Scriptures (saith Jesus) for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me," John v. 39. Therefore, as the

Scriptures *testify of Christ*, and the testimony of the Scriptures, Mr Stevens says, we are bound to believe *with assurance*, it must follow, according to his opinion, that what he has written against Mr. Fuller's duty of all men to believe in Christ, he never believed himself to be true, nor is it, in his opinion, the duty of any one else to believe: therefore, if it be the duty of all men to believe with assurance the testimony of the sacred records; it must be the duty of the true disciples of Immanuel, to burn what Mr. Stevens has written to the contrary.

That Mr. Stevens considers it to be the duty of all men to believe with assurance, may be fairly inferred from his maintaining the *Pelagian* opinion, that *we were not in Adam when he sinned*: that *the soul*, he says, *is sinless, as to formally immoral qualities, and as it comes out of God's hand, yet void of positive holiness, which was lost in the fall of Adam. The body, antecedent to its union with a rational soul, is not the subject of moral obligation, being a mere animal, so not formally sinful.*" 2 Let. 43, 45. There is only a sophisticated difference between Mr. Stevens and Mr. Pelagius: Mr. John Stevens knew his creed would be discovered, unless he cloaked his Pelagian heresy under the idea that Adam represented all the souls of men. It is however very evident, they both agree in this particular, viz. that the natural descendants of Adam are born with sinless souls and sinless bodies; and that we were not in Adam when he transgressed. Indeed, Mr. Stevens says, "if we were, we must not only have been guilty of Adam's first sin, but of all the sins of our progenitors since the first man!" 2 Let. 43. Surely, then, Mr. Stevens must believe it to be the duty of sinless souls and sinless bodies to believe in Christ! The word *sinless* signifies *exempt from sin!* And as *unbelief* is a deadly sin, it must not only be the duty of *sinless* souls and *sinless* bodies, exempt from sin, to believe, but they must be exempt from unbelief! Why did not Mr. Stevens have the candour to acknowledge this part of his plain reason creed, when he attacked Mr. Andrew Fuller's doctrine. Was it from subtilty or from want of integrity? I should not have mentioned this part of Mr. John Stevens' creed, but for

the ignorant folly of his admirers, whom he compares to young rooks, and his immeasurable conceit of his own abilities, which puffed him up with such impudence, that he wrote against Mr. Andrew Fuller and other *godly men* upon whose popularity he hoped to ride into notice.<sup>a</sup>

Having mentioned his name, and taken off his mask, I shall speak of Mr. Stevens in future under his true title, viz. "*The Perverter of I AM.*"

Before I pass on to the subject immediately in view, allow me to say, SALVATION AND REDEMPTION are not synonymous terms. To be saved from falling, and to be redeemed from the curse of the law, are distinct blessings. Elect angels may be said to be saved from falling: but the elect of mankind are not only saved from the commission of the unpardonable sin, and finally from their sins, and their sinful nature, but their

<sup>a</sup>Mr. John Stevens, the *Perverter of I am* is only known to me by his writings. His Person is even unknown to me. And it is from his writings, that I conclude, he wrote from a *carnal motive*, and not from any good principle against *Mr. Andrew Fuller!!* Because it must have been from the same *carnal motive*, he *fought* with the *dust and ashes* of dead *Elliot*, and *embalmed* the *dust and ashes* of dead *Watts*. *Elliot* and *Watts* were, to use the *Perverter's* own words, of the "SABELLIAN STAMP," or rather I should say *Pseudo* or *plain reason Trinitarians*, yet *dead Elliot* he denounces "*an arch and erroneous man, who kept dodging about like a juggler in a crowd, through all his writings*, S. D. 21, 26. His "*sentiments, foolish, stupid, and wicked notions*; S. D. 38, 116, 20. "*sophistical dealings with the word of the ALMIGHTY*, S. D. 21. *wicked ingenuity*, S. D. 86. *manifestly absurd and blasphemous*, S. D. 116. "*specious pretences*, S. D. 97. *only suited to deceive the unwary*, S. D. "79. *to beguile the simple*, S. D. 38, 21. *putting off with words, and teaching us to speak wickedly against the MOST HIGH*, S. D. 38. and "*calculated to ensnare us into blasphemy*," S. D. 42. Now, if the *Perverter of I AM* was sincere in one of these expressions as regards *dead Elliot*, he would have used the same expressions as regards *dead Watts*. But for the purpose of having a name to live amongst men, he says, that *Watts* was a man of *far superior* talents to himself, 1 Let. 17, and *whose piety was above all suspicion*, C. F. ii, 6. Now if the *Perverter* was sincere, when he gave this testimony concerning *Dead Watts*, he could not have withheld the same testimony concerning *Dead Elliott*. One or other of his statements is evidently false! and I must charge him with *falsehood*, because he was *deceiving* his Readers; for *Elliot* when living was superior to *Watts* as a *minister*, was more *sound* in *doctrine*; and in what the *Perverter* calls *piety* was above all suspicion. The few *hymns* he composed are equal to those of *Watts*, but like *Watts* he was a *Pseudo* or *plain reason Trinitarian!* But the faith of God's elect *does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God!* Tit. i, 1. 1 Cor. ii, 5.

lives are *redeemed* from destruction; their persons are redeemed from the curse of the law; and they are redeemed unto God! Christ hath obtained *eternal redemption*, and he is the author of *eternal salvation* unto all them that obey him. Heb. ix. 12, v. 9. Adam, *before he transgressed*, was no Deist, Sabellian, nor Arian; whatever it was his duty to believe *before* he transgressed, is equally the duty of all men to believe now. Adam knew and believed in the ALMIGHTY US who said, Let us make man. But redemption's miracle before the fall was not revealed. And what Adam knew not, he did not believe!—But, let us now consider the effects of

#### ADAM'S FALL.

“It is an awful consideration, (said the late Dr. Hawker,) and may well merit the serious reflection of a retired hour, by way of humiliation to the pride of the human understanding; that the fall of man hath induced an effect of ignorance in the faculties, which *the Angels that kept not their first estate* have not experienced, to their intellectual apprehension, in consequence of their apostacy. They, though fallen, know Christ, and readily confess his divinity and power. But man, with all his boasted knowledge, by nature knows him not, neither can be brought, by all the efforts of mere reason only, to a clear apprehension of his person and character. While *the Devils believe and tremble*, we are solemnly assured, by one who could not be mistaken, that *no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*”

This indeed is a solemn truth. For the devils know and believe the *names* Jesus Christ, are applied sometimes in the holy records to a divine person in the abstract; *which all the human pre-existerians deny!* But the devils believe and tremble! they are not all shut up together in unbelief, *as all mankind are* by nature since the fall; and in which state of unbelief the elect of mankind remain, until quickened by the Holy Ghost. The 32nd verse of the 11th chapter of

the Epistle to the Romans, is therefore a complete refutation of all that Mr. John Stevens or any one else may have written to the contrary. The verse reads thus, in the Greek Testament, and in the old English Version of the New Testament: "*For God hath shut up all in unbelief, &c.*" And in our present version it reads, according to the marginal note, "*For God hath shut them all up together in unbelief, &c.* And as God hath shut them up in unbelief, who can withdraw the bar, and let in the light of faith?"

### FAITH IN THE REDEEMER

Is and must be the gift of God. Eph. ii. 8. And as it is the gift of God, so it is not the work of man, but the work of God: it is both God's gift and God's work. "Jesus said unto them, this is *the work of God*, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John vi. 29. The faith of God's elect in Christ as their Redeemer is not carnal, sensual, or natural, but spiritual and supernatural. *Unto them it is given to believe on Christ*, Phil. i. 29. There is but one faith, Eph. iv. 5, and that of the operation of God, Col. ii. 12; and the sealing of the Spirit, and the exceeding greatness of God's power, is put forth in them that believe. Eph. i. 13 19. Indeed, nothing less than the exceeding greatness of God's power can enable a man, who hates his own life, and is vile in his own eyes, to believe that he is an object of God's everlasting love. And nothing less than the same Almighty power, put forth in them that believe, could enable them to believe what is *so perfectly absurd to all human soul pre-existerians*, namely, that *whosoever shall do the will of the FATHER which is in heaven*, the same is Christ's *mother*, and *sister*, and *brother*. Matt. xii. 50., Mark iii. 35., Luke viii. 21.

To be Christ's *brother*, the human pre-existerians carnally believe, because it is *so reasonable*. But for the elect of mankind to be Christ's *Mother*, is *too absurd a mystery in their eyes to be believed*. For if they, and each of them be Christ's Mother, then he must be their son; a doctrine destructive to the whole of the pharisaical tradition!—therefore *soul pre-existerians* must admit,

it is but reasonable that every mother should pre-exist her son! And then, what becomes of their priority in the order of human pre-existent pre-eminence, which they conceive the fish had over the birds, &c. and Adam?

Plain reason, S. D. 30,—much reason *to suppose*, S. D. 186,—and all the reason in the world, S. D. 16, are very capable of setting up a reasonable Trinity, in opposition to the Three which bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: which Three are One! But, One *what?* The Sabellians, who are all pre-existerians, say, One Person: and the Trinitarian human soul pre-existerians cannot say, they are One Essence or Nature; because they say, the Word with God was a *human soul*, or *man in God*, and so was God; that God's attributes are incommunicable; and therefore, the God-man, the Word is the communicable image of God. But the regenerated child of God saith, that the Three which bear record in heaven are the self-existent, eternal, and immutable Father, the self-existent, eternal, and immutable Word, and the self-existent, eternal, and immutable Holy Spirit; which Three are One nature, essence, yea, JEHOVAH the God of truth that cannot lie! Then we ought to examine the

### HUMAN PRE-EXISTERIAN TRADITION,

And prove it, for it is an awful delusion, received by some professing christians, who have departed from the faith; having given heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, or to men *wise above what is written*; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron, 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. For the *human* pre-existerians are obliged to support their tradition by subtle and deceitful statements, and sophistry, the wiles of the devil.<sup>a</sup> I am therefore not wrestling against flesh and blood, but *against principalities*, for authority; *against powers*, for strength; against the rulers of the darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness, or *wicked spirits*

<sup>a</sup> They admit it is no matter of *faith*, because, they say, it is not expressly revealed, S. J. page 93. Yet they have the impudence to preach it.

*in high places*, even in the professing church of the living God. Eph. vi. 11, 12.

Before the Reader peruses the trial of these human pre-existerian spirits he will allow me to observe, that many of the *assertions, reasons, and arguments*, which Mr. John Stevens has used in favour of his Pharisaical tradition, are borrowed from the writings of *Sabellians* and *psuedo-trinitarians*; consequently those assertions, reasons, and arguments are treated of, and considered as principles generally received, and maintained by all human pre-existerians. But all those *assertions, reasons, and arguments*, which appear to come from Mr. John Stevens' own *imagination*, I have treated as his own, under his *surname*, viz. "The Perverter of I Am:" for unless he is a *Fanatic*; **PERVERTER** must be his *proper* name. Some persons may pity him as a Fanatic, drunk with this pharisaical delusion; for in some parts of his productions, he declares the pre-existent human soul of Christ is *really, truly, actually man, the nature of man, his humanity, &c.* S. D. 152. 168. 242. In other parts, that it is *only part of man.* S. D. 210. 3. Let 25. *Sometimes*, he says this soul is an *invisible* nature, S. D. 16, 36. At another time, a *visible* one. S. D. 175. At one time, he calls it a *mysterious man in God, God's master piece, his first draught and pattern of all things, the first born of every creature, the shape of the Father's choosing, without which nothing was made that is made.* He. 139. At another time this *first-born, begotten of the Father*, is made to appear as such a *rough draught and imperfect pattern* of all things for want of a *body*, that he is obliged to give him a **SECOND BIRTH**, in order to make this imperfect pattern of all things, *like the more perfect pattern of his brethren in all things.* 3 Let 31. And we may gather from his writings, that he considers Enoch and Elijah in their glorified bodies most *perfect patterns* for ages, when compared with this original *rough draught or pattern.* S. D. 125. If these assertions are not the imaginations of a Fanatic,—or of one who has no real regard for the word of God,—then, they must be the inventions of one awfully deluded, who wrests the scriptures to his own destruction. 2. Pet. iii. 16.



Although the *Perverter* of I AM has wantonly attempted to undermine some of the bulwarks of the Christian Faith, nevertheless, towards him and all the persons of such poor deluded creatures, I have only good will and compassion. And I ought not to be censured if I represent their pharisaical tradition in its own colours, in all its ridiculous deformity which necessarily attends a delusion that makes the *fish*, (DAGON) the birds, the beasts, and the creeping things *pre-eminent* to Adam before the fall, who was created in the Image of God. A tradition that makes the God of truth a liar, and the word of God of no effect. When the Lord Jesus Christ was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not; but when the proud Pharisees, who thought themselves to be God's children, despising others, attempted to make void the word of God with their human pre-existerian tradition; our Lord declared, they were of their Father the devil, their profession of religion was *hypocrisy*, and their traditions *leaven*. John the Baptist knew the horrid enmity of the human pre-existerian pharisees to the *seed of the woman*, and although they came to his *baptism*, he nevertheless declared them to be a *generation of vipers*,—the seed of the serpent, full of enmity to the *second Adam*, the seed of the woman. It is surely my duty to follow Christ's example; and not to omit any thing that may be the mean of exposing *Antichrist*, or of saving some of the seduced with fear, pulling them out of the fire. But in so doing, it does not become me to write in the *Ashdod* tongue, by comparing the *Perverter*, or any of the mockers of Believer's baptism to a *dog barking at the moon*, or to a *spider*, &c.; although the dog and the spider *pre-existed* Adam: these animal *pre-existerian* honours have been conferred upon me by the *Perverter of I AM*. C. F. i. But then, he did it in ignorance that these animal pre-existerians stood *higher in the scale of beings* than an *Arian*, a *Sabellian*, or a mocker of Believer's baptism. 1. Let. 32. Isaiah i. 3., Jerem. viii. 7., Prov. xxx. 29. But my anxious desire is to use such Scriptures of God the Holy Ghost as are to the purpose and conclusiye, that *they who have trodden under foot the SON of GOD may be converted from the error of their way*.

May this humble labour be accompanied with the blessing of the God of GLORY, who appeared to Abraham in Mesopotamia; (Acts vii. 3.) that the CHRIST of God (Luke ix. 20) may be exalted, and the LORD'S CHRIST (Luke ii. 26) revealed, and known to be CHRIST the LORD, Luke ii. 11. And may sinners be converted, whilst the words God the Holy Ghost teacheth (1 Cor. ii. 13) in plainness of speech (2 Cor. iii. 12) are exposing, and opposing the subtilty of the serpent: for *seductive sophistry* (the words which man's wisdom teacheth) is one of the weapons used in this warfare by the Pharisaical Traditionists, in support of the

### DOCTRINES OF DEVILS.

The Pre-existence of the human soul, part of the *leaven* of the Pharisees, was a doctrine which they taught: and was introduced into the professing christian church in early ages by well known heretics, such as *Sabellius*, *Arius*, and others. It was a doctrine embraced also by some, improperly denominated amongst the christian Fathers, whose *principles* were a *disgrace* to their profession, but whose moral conduct might be unimpeachable! It appears to have originated with the Jews, from their pride and carnal notions of the Hebrew word *Bekor*, which in Greek is sometimes rendered *prototokos* and *presbetura*; and in our Bibles is translated *first-born*, and sometimes *elder*. For the Jews conceived, because they are called the LORD'S *first-born*, in Exod. iv. 22, that all their souls *pre-existed*, in a place called *Goph*, the souls of all other men; and that *one of their souls* behaved so much better than the rest, that God chose that one to be the *Messiah*, as it is written, "I have exalted one CHOSEN OUT OF THE PEOPLE." Psalm lxxxix. 19.<sup>a</sup> As the words quoted

<sup>a</sup>The 89th and 88th Psalms are considered by some great men as the most *ancient parts* of all the *Holy Scriptures*. The Hebrew word *David* in the 89 Psalm might have been translated. It appears that *Ethan and Heman* the Ezrahites were brethren to *Chalcol and Dara*, men renowned for *wisdom*, only inferior to *Solomon*; 1 Chron. ii. 6. 1 Kings. iv. 31. They are not described as *Levites*, but as *Izrahites*, and *brethren* having the same father, whereas *Heman* the Levite was the son of *Joel*; and *Ethan* the Levite was the Son of *Kushaiah*. 1 Chron. xv. 17. neither of them were *Ezrahites*.

out of this Psalm are in the *past tense* ; and as the human pre-existerians say, *their God* cannot view things as *subsisting* when the things had *no actual existence*, (2 Let. 32) it is impossible for any of the human pre-existerians to *refute* this Jewish notion, viz., the pre-existence of all the souls of the children of Israel,<sup>a</sup> without admitting, what they deny, viz. that God viewed his promise to Abraham as fulfilled, viz. the incarnation and death, &c. of Christ, when his incarnation, &c. the things promised, had no more actual *existence* than the world had from eternity. 2 Let. 32. But our God is I AM, a *proper name*, which reveals his *self-existence*, his *immutability*, and that all things *past, present, and to come*, are within his *immediate and eternal field* of view!

It is not very improbable, but that the human pre-existerian Jews, who translated the Old Testament into Greek, which is now called the Septuagint Version, may have wrested some of the Scriptures, for the purpose of giving colour to their vile traditions, and to support their first-born tradition of their souls pre-existing the creation of their bodies; despising God's testimony, viz. that *man's originality is of the dust*. It is now above 160 years, since the *Septuagint Version* was proved to be *incorrect* by that great and learned man, Dr. Owen. Of which we have a remarkable instance in the 40th Psalm, for the Septuagint reads in the 8th verse, as in our translation, "*to do thy will, O my God;*" but the Holy Spirit hath omitted the word *my*, and shewn that the person speaking is not a *creature*, for in Heb. x. 7, it

<sup>a</sup> It is our mercy, that the Disciples of Christ were moved to enquire concerning the man that was blind from his birth; *whether this man or his parents did sin, that he was born blind?* The disciples knew, that the Lord had said by Moses, the iniquity of the fathers should be visited upon the children, (Exod. xx. 5), but as regards the enquiry whether the man himself had sinned, as the cause that he was born blind; they meant whether his soul, which from tradition they believed pre-existed, had committed sin previous to its having a body. And the Lord Jesus, by his answer, satisfied his disciples of the folly of this tradition. I should not have noticed the wickedness of this doctrine, but with a view to call upon the reader to remark, that the awful blindness and wickedness of men now, under a profession of religion, is much the same as it was then! And that amongst some of the wisest, and of the most prudent of mankind such old wives' fables have prevailed; even amongst the Scribes and Pharisees.

reads, “*to do thy will, O God.*” Here there is no human pre-existerian *my*. And again, at the 9th verse, the words are again repeated, “*to do thy will, O God.*” This Scripture is twice repeated, as Joseph said to Pharaoh, because its truth is established. “O God,” is here applied to the Father, as “O God” is applied to the Son in Heb. i. 8.

The human pre-existerians are therefore anxious to support the Septuagint, because the errors therein favour their vile notions, and they wilfully deceive the ignorant, by telling them, that “*the Greek Version was in use in our Lord’s time, and among his disciples, and from it his Apostles have often quoted.*” C. F. i, 31. Had they said, it was in use among the human pre-existerian Pharisees, they would have been nearer the truth. For as *Jagon* is the standard Hebrew word for *Elder*, it is very evident that *prototokos* ought not to be used for *Bekor*, when *Bekor* does not mean the *male heir*, or the *first son*!

“The Apostles and Evangelists have used *Hebraisms, where the Greek language was unequal to express the knowledge they had to communicate.*” We find, therefore, that the penmen of the New Testament, under the teaching of the HOLY GHOST, do *in many places* render *precisely* their quotations *according to the Original Text, where the Septuagint even differs from it!* Sometimes they express a further revelation of what is implied, as well as *the sense and meaning of the Testimony which they quote, for they use words neither agreeing with the Original Text, nor with the Septuagint!*—And the learned *Dr. Owen* observes, that the Septuagint of old did not read as it now does, viz. “*a body hast thou prepared me,*” in Psalm xl. 6, for some copies have “*mine ears hast thou opened,*” which the *Vulgate* follows.

<sup>a</sup> In a Bible printed at London by the deputies of Christopher Barker, Printer to the Queen’s most excellent Majesty, 1599; there is at the foot of the fourteenth Psalm the following note:—“That of this 14th Psalme, the 5, 6, and 7 verses, which are put into the common translation. and may seeme unto some to be left out in this, are not in the same Psalm in the Hebrew text, but rather are put in more fully to expresse the manners of the wicked, and are gathered out of the 5, 140, and 10, Psalmes, the 59 of the Prophet Isaiah, and the 36 Psalme, and are alleadged by S. Paul, and placed together in the 3 to the Romans.”