

Dr. Hawker knew the Christ of God was the *meritorious cause* of the resurrection of the *saints*, and the *efficient cause* of the resurrection of the *non-elect*: which truth is evidently implied by the *Greek* words which are translated in our Bibles, "*who is the beginning, the first born from the dead!*" But Mr. Stevens appears to be *better* acquainted with the depraved arguments of free-thinkers *than* with our *revered* Bible; for he has recourse

mean by it the same as in Exod. iii. 14? Were Mr. Romaine, Toplady, Dr. Gill, Dr. Abbdie, and Dr. Hawker, so *imaginary* as not to know when our blessed Lord did so use the phrase, and when he did not?—But Mr. Stevens never allows our blessed Lord to have used the phrase *I am* as in Exod. iii. 14!! His *apparent* regard for Christ's *sinlessness* was such, that he admitted Christ did *trespass wilfully with his lips*, by *saying one thing and meaning another*: the difference therefore, between Mr. Irving and Mr. Stevens upon the *sinlessness of Jesus*, according to their written statement, is as follows:

Mr. Stevens says,

That if Christ's soul had not pre-existed Adam, it could not have escaped the guilt and defilement of original sin any more than others. (2 Let. 43.) That his human spirit at his first union to a body of flesh lost all its *ideas* and *faculties*, (S. D. 200.) namely, his *understanding*, *will*, and *affection*, (S. D. 16.) so that he lost his knowledge of God, his will to do the will of God, and his affection for God and man—and the Holy Spirit withdrew his influence from him. (S. D. 201.) That Christ did not speak the truth, when he declared his *sonship* to be *incomprehensible*, or when he testified of his *procession*, and of the *procession* of the Spirit, from the Father; &c. (C. F. i. 63. 64.)

Mr. Irving says,

That the eternal Son of God did take upon him *man's nature* with all the *essential properties* and *common infirmities thereof*, "yet without sin" by the anointing of the Holy "Ghost." But, by the term "*common infirmities*," he means *sinful propensities*, and *inherent inclinations to evil*. That, this human nature the *Son of man* was clothed upon withal, was *bristling thick and strong with sin*, like the hairs upon the *Porcupine*. That in such flesh loving the *temptation*, and ever conversing with the *tempter*, Christ *subsisted*. That his human nature differed nothing from ours, in its *alienation and guiltiness*: but his humanity was *not* chargeable with any sin, with any moral corruption, &c., *for he did not commit sin!*

The difference between the *sinlessness* of Mr. Stevens' Jesus, and the *sinful flesh* of Mr. Irving's Christ, appears to be, that Mr. Stevens' Christ was degenerated in a state of sin when he became incarnate, that he was without the Spirit's influence, and *trespassed with his lips*: whereas Mr. Irving declares, *his Christ's* flesh was *sinful flesh*, yet he was without sin by the anointing of the Holy Ghost, and therefore, he did *not* trespass with his lips. Reader, such characters are mentioned in Holy Writ, as *creeping into* the professing Church of God.

to their *arguments* to oppose the *previous eternity of the Christ of God!* He objects to Christ being the *efficient cause of the resurrection of the bodies of the non-elect*, because he is called the beginning, the *first begotten from the dead*, &c. he says, “If Christ be the efficient cause of the resurrection, is the reason why he is called the *first-begotten*, “and the first-fruits from the dead, or of them that slept: “then God the Father may be called the *first-begotten too*, “for he is the *efficient cause of the resurrection;*” &c.” (C. F. i. 37.) This *freethinking* argument or reason, why Christ cannot be the *efficient cause of the resurrection of the bodies of the non-elect*, is completely answered by a parity of reasoning; for Mr. Stevens might say with as much propriety, “if Christ be called *our Redeemer*, “is the reason why he is said to have redeemed us “*by his blood*: then God the Father may be said to have “*blood too*, for he is called *our Redeemer.*” And if Christ be called *our sanctifier*, is the reason why he is said to have sanctified us by his blood, when he suffered without the gate; then the Holy Ghost may be said to have *blood too*, for he is called *our sanctifier.* This *mode* of reasoning upon divine revelation is one of the evil things in the writings of all *freethinkers*: and to which Mr. Stevens is obliged to resort in support of his *absurd tradition.* Whilst the *Socinian* heresy forms in the minds of natural men a *schism* in the very essence of the Godhead; the *human pre-existerian heresy* makes void the divine revelation, the *distinction* of persons in the Godhead: for three *nondescript samenesses* are without *distinction.* The leading feature in Mr. John Stevens’ writings is to prove that, before time there was *no Father, no Son, no Holy Ghost*, and that these *characters* are assumed by the *three in Deity*, and will be hereafter laid aside when God will be again *three nondescript samenesses.* (Rhy., 3rd Let. 39, S. D. 28, 252.) But the testimony from God is, that

* If the Reader wishes to see *similar depraved reasonings* on the part of *freethinking christians*, he will find them exposed in Dr. Owen’s work, entitled, “*The Mystery of the Gospel vindicated, and Socinianism examined.*” If Mr. John Stevens revered God’s Bible as much as he does the *biblical writings of freethinkers*, to whom, he admits, he shews due respect, (3 Let. 53,) he would have known the *Christ of God* is a *Quickening Spirit*, and not a *began to be Christ!*

“*Jehovah* is our father, our Redeemer, from everlasting is his name;” (Isaiah lxiii. 19.) And therefore, his names are persons, not assumed, and will never be laid aside. Surely, that professor of the gospel must be in a *Laodicean state*, who dares to call the human pre-existerian lying doctrines, *harmless things*. Such characters should remember, that lying doctrines have shipwrecked thousands!^a

But *Mr. Stevens’* *subtile* arguments recoil upon the reasonable *Perverter of I Am* with double vengeance: his argument completely overthrows his plain reason creed; for his last *subtile* argument proves that, *Mr. Stevens* doth reasonably believe there are two Fathers and one first-begotten Son in Deity, as will evidently appear by *Mr. Stevens’* two arguments being placed in juxta-position with each other.

Mr. Stevens’ argument that the Father may be called first-begotten, if Christ be the efficient cause of the resurrection of the non-elect.

If Christ be the efficient cause of the resurrection, is the reason why he is called the first-begotten, and the first-fruits from the dead, or of them that slept: then God the Father may be called the first-begotten too, for he is the efficient cause of the resurrection. (C. F. i. 37.)

Mr. Stevens’ argument that there are two Fathers in the Godhead, and one first-begotten Son.

As One of the Three was called Father by name, because he begat the human soul of Christ, (*Rhy.*) then the Holy Ghost may be called the Father too, for he begat the human body of Christ, for Abraham is called the Father of Isaac, because he begat Isaac’s body ONLY. (1 Let. 33.)

Such is the nature of *Mr. Stevens’* *sophistical* arguments in support of his *Nondescript Triune God*; and of his plain reason for the names *Father and Son in Deity*. (S. D. 28. 30.) His argument, which is in favour of two

^a *Mr. Stevens* has endeavoured to stifle the convictions of his own conscience, and to lull the consciences of others into a false peace, by stating his doctrine to be harmless, if compared with other heresies. But will the harlot churches escape the wrath of God, because they are harmless, if compared with *Babylon, the Great Whore, the Mother of Harlots*? Is it possible there can be any godly baptist ministers deceived by such a serpentine comparison? If there be, then this Scripture is fulfilled, “because iniquity shall abound, THE LOVE OF MANY SHALL WAX COLD.” Matt. xxiv. 12.

*fathers, and one first-begotten son in deity, is a proof of his opposition to divine revelation, whenever that revelation makes his reason fail him. Mr. Stevens declares all mysteries in the Bible are reasonable, or to use his own words, that they are not absurd, but absurd signifies what is unreasonable! and if this be true, he must reject a great part of God's Bible; he must reject amongst other mysteries, the mystery of the brazen serpent, for unless his reason fails him, he cannot believe in such an unreasonable method of cure for the bite of a fiery serpent!**

Mr. Stevens' reasonable arguments are awfully depraved, and more dangerous than the arguments of Socinians, because he professes to believe that, the faith of God's elect is only founded on Divine Revelation, whilst his writings make void the word of God.

By reasonable arguments all free-thinkers, as well as Mr. Stevens, make shipwreck of faith! And to utter destruction would all mockers of believer's baptism conduct us, where we so reckless as to commit ourselves to their guidance. (C. F. i. 37.) Mr. Stevens has been above thirty years exercising his depraved reason, to establish his plain reason creed in opposition to the Divine revelation of the mystery of God! For, such is the nature of sin, that as one unregenerate sinner would, if he could, damn another, so one deceived would, if he could, deceive another. How far Mr. Stevens expected to succeed in deluding others, and to triumph for a season over the children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, may be gathered from his opinion of human soul pre-existerians, for he compares them to young rooks receiving food from their dams. (S. D. 208.) There is however a solemn truth, which he may hereafter experience, namely, "Whoso causeth

* It is a grand master-piece of that wisdom which is earthly, sensual or soul, and devilish, to call in question the truth of God's word; or to insinuate a doubt about it. Does Mr. Stevens believe the serpent spake to Eve? or that Balaam's ass spake to the prophet? Surely not, because such mysteries are unreasonable: and therefore, as he considers that when God is said to speak, it was by a human voice; the voice of a human soul; (S. D. 174.) he must believe, unless his reason fails him, that the serpent and Balaam's ass were human souls! And if he be true to his principles he must also believe, that God the Father and the Holy Ghost had each a human soul, and that when they spake, as they did at times, it was with a human voice.

“ *the righteous to go astray in an evil way, HE SHALL FALL
“ HIMSELF INTO HIS OWN PIT. (PROV. XXVIII. 10.)*

Reader, *time is short, and the day is approaching* when Mr. *Stevens* will know, that *intellectuality* is not *spirituality*; that the judge of all *the* earth will pronounce them blessed, who believed those *mysteriſ* in God’s word through faith, which *reasoners laboured to destroy.* (1 Tim. ii. 9.) *The doves acknowledge the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, to be true and incomprehensible. And they know that wisdom which descendeth not from above, is earthly, intellectual, and devilish.*

But, after Mr. *Stevens’* scriptural display of *sophistry* and *depraved reasoning*, can we wonder that such *serpentine subtilty* should *deceive persons who receive sentiments as young rooks receive food from their dams?* (S. D. 208.) Is it not recorded in the Holy Scriptures, “*There shall arise FALSE CHRISTS, and FALSE PROPHETS, and shall shew great signs and wonders, and deceive many, insomuch, that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*” And are not false prophets spoken of, who will profess to believe in the doctrine of the *atonement*, and *deny the previous eternity of our Lord, as the human pre-existerians do*, whom they profess hath bought them? (2 Pet. ii. 1) The Reader should not overlook the truth of this last Scripture, for *all human pre-existerians deny the previous eternity of our Lord, and yet they profess he hath bought them.*

The Serpent is the *first reasoner*, or the *first* that used arguments, questioning the truth of God’s word; then is it from his suggestion, or from *ignorance*, or *unbelief*, that men reason upon the *Mystery of Faith* which God hath *revealed?* Our Lord did not *judge after the sight of his eyes, nor after the hearing of his ears in spiritual things*: and shall we not do well to follow his example? *Faith*, and not reason, is *the evidence of things not seen.* (Heb. xi. 1.) By reason Mr. *Stevens* believes this world was formed of *pre-existing matter*, which *did appear* before the *first day*: and in support of his *vile* opinion, he must *pervert* the word *created* in Gen. i. 1, into *formed*: but by *faith* we believe *the worlds* were framed *by the (remati) word of God, so that things*

which are seen were not made of things which do appear. (Heb. xi. 3.) But Mr. *Stevens* is deceived by his own heart, or he would not have been *deluded* by *philosophers*!

Having exposed the *human* pre-existerians' *sophistry*, and their enmity to Christ the *resurrection and the life*; I shall now lay before the Reader the comment of *spiritual* men upon the words, "*who is the archē prōtotoskos from the dead*:" and so far as they speak according to the oracles of God, may the Holy Spirit bear testimony to the same.

The beginning and the first-born! Dr. *Davenport* observes, "Col. i. 18, is variously read and expounded. "The Greek reads thus, *archē prōtotokos ek tōn nekrōn*. "Some, therefore supply the copulative *kai*, and read, "*The beginning AND the first born from the dead.*"

"*Calvin, Chrysostom, and Athanasius*, all differ, but "this is of little importance to the main point. For, "according to all of them, the Apostle signalizes Christ "with these titles, to shew that he is to his Church, *i. e.* "to all his members, the beginning and fountain of salva- "tion and of grace in this life: of glory and of blessed- "ness in that which is to come. For the Church hath a "twofold state: of grace and of a spiritual resurrec- "tion *in this life*; of glory and of a beatified resurrec- "tion *in the other*: The Apostle, therefore, in this place, "declares Christ to be the *author* of both!"

Dr. *Davenant* then says, "Christ is called *the begin- "ning and the first-born from the dead*: FOR HE PERSONALLY "raised his body BY THE POWER OF HIS GODHEAD." His words are these. "As to the first point; Christ is rightly "called *the beginning and the first-born from the dead*; "for he alone hath risen as the author, or beginning of "the resurrection, *raising his body by the power of his "Godhead*. That he rose by his own power, not *merely* by "that of another, is clear: John ii. 19. *Destroy this temple, "and in three days I will raise it up. I have power to lay "down my life; and I have power to take it again.* John "x. 18. Although, therefore, we read both in the Old "and in the New Testament, *that some rose from the "dead before Christ*, this does not strip Christ of these "titles: *for no one hath risen as the beginning of HIS re- "surrection, but all were quickened BY THE EFFICACY OF*

“CHRIST’S.” Thus, this godly man spake of Christ; he knew *Christ* was either the *meritorious*, or the efficient cause of the resurrection of the *three* which were raised from the dead before his incarnation, and of the *three* which were raised from the dead after his incarnation, and before his death, but Christ rose by his OWN POWER, and thereby he was declared *to be the Son of God with power!* Rom. i. 3, 4.

Dr. *Davenant* also says, “Now let us come to the second point, why he is called *the beginning and the first-born from the dead*; viz., because *he is the effective beginning and cause* of the rising again of all his members; whether we regard the resurrection to grace from the death of sin, or the resurrection to glory from the death of nature. I join them together, because, Christ never rose from the death of sin, inasmuch as he was never subject to sin, nevertheless Christ is the cause of both in us; for these *two* resurrections are so intimately united, that whoever does not rise by the power of Christ from the death of sin, will never rise to the life of glory. Let us, therefore, first shew that Christ rising again is the cause of our *spiritual* resurrection.”

“Christ is the beginning of our spiritual resurrection, for by the same power wherewith he raised himself from the dead, he both raises all that are his from the death of sin, and quickens them to the new life of grace. So says the Apostle, Rom. vi. 11. *Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Like as Christ was also raised up from the dead, so we also should walk in newness of life.* Rom. vi. 4. If Christ were not the *beginning* of this *spiritual* resurrection, there would be no hope of the blessed and glorious resurrection, as it is written in Rev. xx. 6. *Blessed is he who hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power.*” To which I may add, that the *children* of God are called *the children of the resurrection*; Luke xx. 36.

Dr. *Davenant* also observes, “Now as to that **CORPOREAL** resurrection which we expect; of this also Christ

is the beginning: for by his passion and victory, and by virtue of our union to him by one Spirit, the *glorious resurrection* of Christ the HEAD, holds out to us an example of our resurrection and future glory: HE shall change our VILE BODY, that he may make it like to HIS GLORIOUS BODY.^a Phil. iii. 21. For the resurrection, *spiritual, glorious, BODY* of the saint is expressly declared to be the *image of the Heavenly*. It is therefore evident that Christ is most deservedly distinguished with these titles by the Apostle, viz., the *archē prōtotokos from the dead*, as he is the cause of the resurrection; and as he is also the life of all his people; for he quickens all that are his, both from *spiritual* and *corporeal* death.^b

Dr. *Guysel* observes upon *this text* as follows, “HE (Christ) accordingly is the HEAD and *Original* (archē) as of their spiritual life, so of the resurrection of their bodies to eternal life; being himself *the first that arose from the dead to immortal life* BY HIS OWN POWER, as the pledge and pattern, *quickening cause, and first fruits of the resurrection of all those that sleep in him*: and he is thus the Lord of the dead and living.”

Dr. *Gill*, upon *this important text*, amongst other things, observes, “He is called *the beginning*; which either denotes *the eternity of Christ*, who was not only in the beginning, and was set up from the beginning, from everlasting, but *is also the beginning and the end*; and who is indeed without beginning of days or end of life: or his dominion; he is THE PRINCIPALITY as the

^a Dr. Hawker observes, that “the manifestation of the Glory of Christ in the Mount of Transfiguration, is a sample of what shall be the glorified BODIES of all the Saints of God. If in Jesus dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead *bodily*, surely, we may safely conclude, that our *bodies*, which are now the temple of the Holy Ghost, shall become glorious in Jesus! for it is said, *that he will change our vile BODIES, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious BODY, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.*” Philip. iii. 20, 21. See the Poor Man’s Commentary, Mark ix. 2—13.

^b Christ is the Resurrection and the Life. Christ was raised from the dead by his own power, as well as by the power of God the Father and the Holy Ghost, for he said to the Jews, “*destroy this temple, and in three days I WILL RAISE IT UP.* All the dead will be raised by Christ: but *as his brethren died in HIM* (the Lord), *therefore, they will be raised in union to HIM!*

“ word may be rendered, &c., THE FIRST-BORN *from the dead*; the *first that rose from the dead by HIS OWN POWER*, “and to an immortal life,” &c.

The learned Mr. Robert Fleming reads *prōtotokos* with the accent upon the *third* syllable, and renders this text, “THE EFFICIENT OF PRINCE, who is the *first raiser of the dead*,” which Christ is, for he is the *archē*, the Prince, or Lord, of the dead, as well as of the living!

FIFTHLY. That Christ is the *chief or first-born* AMONG *many brethren*, regard being had to the prophecies and to the types respecting Christ; for Christ declared all things must be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning him!

The human pre-existerians admit their doctrine “*is not a matter of FAITH, because NOT expressly revealed.*”^a (S. J. 33.) Here, again, Mr. Stevens mixes a lie with truth. That his human soul pre-existerian doctrine is not a matter of FAITH *is unquestionably true*; but it is *expressly revealed to be the leaven of the Pharisees*, and a lie of Satan’s invention! Indeed, unless this doctrine had been *revealed to be the leaven of the Pharisees*, some portions of Holy Writ would be inexplicable, such as Matt. xvi. 13, 14. John ix. 2, 3, &c.^b

^a Mr. Stevens has so little regard for the law of God, which he pretends to be the rule of his life, that for more than thirty years he has been speaking a word in the name of the Lord, which the Lord hath not commanded him to speak. See Dent. xviii. 20. And it is also to be observed, that he is a wilful trespasser, for he acknowledges his doctrine is not a matter of faith.

^b The Pharisees understood the word *first-born* meant *brought forth first*, and as all Israel are called the Lord’s *first-born*, (Exod. iv. 22,) they considered *all the souls of the Jews, including the soul of Christ*, were created at one time, and *brought forth* before the Gentiles. Mr. Stevens, in his religious catechism, admits his Christ was a Jew! The Pharisees also held that, according as their souls behaved *well* or *ill* before they had bodies, so their bodies were either *well* or *ill formed*. It was from this tradition, the disciples made the enquiry recorded in John ix. 2. “Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?” They also believed the *soul of Christ* behaved better than any of the rest; and for that reason, he was made the Messiah; and amongst their *fabulous writings*, they quote a Scripture in proof thereof, namely, “*I have exalted one chosen out of the people.*” (Psalm lxxxix. 19.) They also believed in Mr. Stevens’ Christ, for they said, he was a man *come from God, and that God was with him*: (John iii. 2,) and they also denied his *essential sonship*,

But, admitting, for the sake of argument, that their doctrine *was* NOT revealed, then, by what authority are we to receive a testimony from man *which is* NOT from God? Mr. Stevens admits his doctrine is not expressly revealed in the Scriptures, but he *demands of us, who form a judgment of his writings* by the testimony from God, to be attentive to HIS REASONS! (S. D. viii.) In plain words, he asks us, to allow his *depraved reasons to be our light*, INSTEAD OF THE WORD OF GOD, which word

as do all human pre-existerians, for they *crucified him as a deceiver and blasphemer*. Now, as Mr. Stevens says, *if the preceding language does not shew, as plainly as language can shew any thing, that the human soul pre-existerian doctrine is expressly revealed to be the leaven of the Pharisees; it must be useless to appeal to language for proof of any thing.* (C. F. i. 52.) Again, The children of Israel are called Jehovah's *first-born*, and Christ is never said to be the *first-born before*, but *among* many brethren, I shall therefore prove, from Mr. Stevens' writings, by a parity of reasoning, that *his Christ did not pre-exist any one of the children of Israel!*

Mr. Stevens' argument, in proof that the human soul of his Christ pre-existed.

“Our adversary here tells us, “that our Lord is the *first-born in God's eternal purpose*. Delightful truth! *This is proof secure for his pre-existence!* This is not like *silver*, this is sterling gold! This, Sirs, will maintain our Lord's *antiquity* against the *authors of more than ordinary critical acumen*, and all the *superior little books* there can be produced by them to the final day of doom: when the Tri-une God will judge the world in righteousness through **THAT MAN** whom he hath ordained. Acts xvii. 31. *First-born* means *one born first*, and for Christ to be, as our *more than ordinary author* says, *the first-born in Jehovah's eternal purpose*, can mean no less than that he was decreed to be born or enter into being first, and while no other creature existed.” (C. F. i. 34.)

Now Mr. Stevens must admit, if his doctrine be not the *leaven* of the Pharisees, it must be useless to appeal to language for proof of any thing. (C. F. i. 52.)

Mr. Stevens' argument, applied to the pre-existence of the souls of the Israelites.

“Our adversary here tell us, “that the children of Israel are the *first-born in God's eternal purpose*. Delightful truth! This is proof secure for Israel's pre-existence! This is not like *silver*, this is sterling gold! This, Sirs, will maintain Israel's *antiquity* against *all the authors of more than ordinary critical acumen*, and all the *superior little books* there can be produced by them to the final day of doom: when the Tri-une God will judge the world in righteousness through **THE SAINTS** whom he hath ordained. 1 Cor. vi. 2. *First-born* means *one born first*, and for Israel to be, as our *more than ordinary author* says, *the first-born in Jehovah's eternal purpose*, can mean no less than that Israel was decreed to be born or enter into being first, and while *no other creature existed.*”

is a *lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path.* (Psalm cxix. 105.) Had he not been conscious, that *his tradition was the leaven of the Pharisees, and that his intellectual, or soul interpretation of Christ the first-born was a cunningly devised fable,* he would have demanded our attention *entirely to the testimony from God.*

If he chose to *sport himself with his own deceivings,* common sense, if he had any, would have told him, that *what he admits to be no matter of FAITH, because NOT expressly revealed,* (S. J. 93,) could never profit *the household of faith, the children of promise, who are counted for the seed.*

I therefore hope, the Reader will examine my writings by *what saith the Scripture;* and that he will particularly be on his guard against perverting or wresting of *the testimony from God.* *Truth is my object,* and, therefore, as I have already acknowledged, so I am willing to acknowledge any error, if I have written any thing which is not a *testimony from God;* because Christ receives *not testimony from man.* (John v. 34.)

Allow me, therefore, to observe, “*JEHOVAH spake unto Moses, saying, sanctify unto me ALL THE FIRST-BORN, WHATSOEVER OPENETH THE WOMB among the children of Israel, both of man and beast it is mine.*” (Exod. xiii. 1, 2.) By *all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb,* we are subsequently informed in the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th verses, that the *MALES are expressly meant,* for it is written, “*Thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast, which thou hast, THE MALES shall be the Lord’s. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it; then thou shalt break his neck: and all the first-born of man amongst thy children thou shalt redeem.*”^a And it shall be, when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, what is this? That thou shalt say unto him, *By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage. And it came to pass when PHARAOH would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both*

^a The *first-born* of the children of Israel to be redeemed, were the *first-born of their sons.* (Exod. xxxiv. 19, 20.)

“*the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast;*” there-
 “*fore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix,*
 “**BEING MALES;** *but all the first-born of my children I redeem.*”
 The Reader will observe, that **DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY** excluded
 the *female* born first that opened the matrix, and expressly
 appointed the *male* to be the heir, by the title *first-born!*
 And it will hereafter be shewn, that the *daughters* did
 not succeed, when there was a *son*, to their father’s in-
 heritance! For in all cases when the father left a *son*,
 even if he were *literally* the *last* born, such *son* by divine
 appointment had the title *first-born*.

The *male*, therefore, and *not the female*, was to be
 entitled the *first-born*, and that, because of *his strength*,
 for it is written, “He smote all the **FIRST-BORN** in
 Egypt, **THE CHIEF OF THEIR STRENGTH.**” (Psalm lxxviii.
 51.—cv. 36.) And so *Jacob* entitled *Reuben*, saying,
 thou art my *first-born, my might, and the beginning of my*
strength. (Gen. xlix. 3.) The *son*, therefore, and not
 the *daughter*, was entitled the *first-born*. The true sig-
 nification of the scriptural *title first-born* is of great im-
 portance, for its evident import is, *excellency of dignity,*
and excellency of strength, in which a creature *unstable as*
water, like *Reuben*, *did not excel:* (Gen. xlix. 3, 4,) for
Reuben, unstable as water, defiled his father’s bed, there-
 fore, it is written, *his birth-right was given unto the sons of*
Joseph, (1 Chron. v. 1,) for *Jacob* said unto *Joseph*,
 “*thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born*
 “*unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee*
 “*into Egypt are mine: as REUBEN and SIMEON they shall*
 “*be mine,—and he set Ephraim (the younger,) before*
 “*Manasseh*” (the elder), (Gen. xlviii. 5—20,) *Ephraim*
 had the birth-right and title *first-born* instead of *Reu-*
ben, and *Manasseh* was as *Simeon*. And this appoint-
 ment was of the Lord, for “*God hath spoken in his holi-*
ness,—“Manasseh is mine, EPHRAIM also is the STRENGTH
 “*of mine head*”—(Psalm lx. 7.—cviii. 8.) And as *Eph-*
raim is called the **STRENGTH of his head**, so the Lord
 saith, “*I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-*
born. (Jerem. xxxi. 9.) These Scriptures are very im-

* The *first-born of Egypt* whom the Lord slew were the **CHIEF of all**
their strength. (Psalm lxxviii. 51.—cv. 36.)

portant, for they shew the *folly* of Mr. *Stevens'* notion of creature pre-eminence, namely, that it consists in *priority* of creature existence; as though the *creature pre-existence of the fish* gave them the *pre-eminence!* If Mr. *Stevens* had *revered* God's *Bible* he would have known, that God gave to a *post-existent creature*, namely *Adam*, the pre-eminence and dominion over the *pre-existent fish*, &c., and over every *pre-existent* living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Gen. i. 26—28.)

Again. These Scriptures are very important, for they *expose* the *subtlety*, with which Mr. *Stevens* wickedly perverts the testimony from God concerning *Ephraim*. He says, “*Now, who is meant by Ephraim?* A person or a “people? The latter, no doubt, *either the ten tribes, or the “whole house of Israel!*”—“*This,*” he says, “*is too evident “to be disputed!*” (C. F. i. 27.) Now, neither the ten tribes, nor the whole house of Israel *is* meant; and this is so evident, that we may truly say, the human pre-existerian doctrine *is a lie* of the devil's invention. This is too evident to be disputed!

Again. The Reader will find that, Christ *incarnate*, Mary's *first-born*, *is the chief-born of every creature*; that such he is in God's *eternal* decree, which is the strongest affirmation that *Christ is the wisdom of God, and the power of God*, or he would not be the *chief-born* of every creature; because *Behemoth*, the Great Beast, which *eateth grass* like an ox is the *beginning (archē) of the things formed of God*; for so it reads in Mr. *Stevens'* *revered Bible*, the *Septuagint*. And here allow me to observe, that the *Scriptures being strictly true, and perfectly consistent*, the word *first-born* cannot mean *one brought forth before any other*, because, if we were so absurd as to believe that *Cain*, the *first-born* of *Adam*, was *the first brought forth of, or from Adam*, we should believe a *lie*; because *Eve* was *the first brought forth of and from Adam*, for she was taken out of his side.^a

^a Mr. *Stevens* has given us such an absurd *simile*, by way of illustrating his *first-born pre-existent soul doctrine*, that proves him to be either a *fanatic* or something worse. He says, “*All similes must be too low for a “subject so sublime as is the one of which we speak; but it is easy to conceive, that a man may make and assume to himself a new suit of clothes, “and having so done, may, while clothed therewith, make many more for*

It was therefore *settled* by divine appointment that the *male*, and *not* the *female*, should be *the heir*, although the *male* might be *literally* the *last born*! Men of reason may oppose this important truth, because the mind of a fruitless professor is opposed to the sovereignty of God. And it is from the same principle of evil, that preachers in great power, spreading themselves like a green bay tree, having a name to live, but dead, oppose with all their intellectuality and *subtily* the *Quickening Spirit Head* of the *spiritual Church*, which is his body, *eternally* chosen of God to be *born of the Spirit*, the *spiritual seed* of Christ. They were eternally chosen of God in the eternal Quickening Spirit Head of the Church, who was eternally appointed by divine sovereignty to be *the first-born* among them. They are chosen to be partakers of His Spirit: for he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of *one*: and FOR THAT CAUSE *he is not ashamed to call them BRETHREN!* (Heb. ii. 11.) And they are predestinated to be conformed to the *Image of the Son*, that he might be, for otherwise he would not be, *the first-born among brethren.*

As the *eternal* Quickening Spirit Head of the Church was eternally appointed the *first born* among many *brethren*, so divine sovereignty *eternally* appointed him *the heir of all things*, (Heb. i. 2,) *NOT by succeeding to the inheritance upon the death of his father*, as the first born did under the law; for God the Father, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, *dieth not*, the riches of the glory is *his inheritance in the saints!* (Eph. i. 18.) *But* the Eternal Quickening Spirit Head of the Church *is the appointed heir*, because the Lord's *portion* is his people, and Jacob (THE HEEL) is the *lot* of his *inheritance*, in whom *dwelleth all the FULNESS*

“his relatives and friends, and THUS HIS OWN SUIT WOULD BE THE FIRST-MADE SUIT of the many made by him AFTER FIRST CLOTHING HIMSELF.” (C. F. i. 22.) In plain words, that the Creator of all things in making *first a suit of clothes for himself*, forgot to make himself a coat; to wit, A BODY, so that he looked like a *skeleton*, or a dead man, amongst his *relatives and friends*, whom he clothed with *bodies*, two of whom, Mr. Stevens admits, entered heaven in *glorified bodies* ages before his Christ had one! (S. D. 125.) Reader, which are the most *stupid*, Mr. Stevens, or his *cavillers?* (C. F. i. 32.)

of the Godhead BODILY. And as the Quickening Spirit Head of the Church is the appointed *heir of all things*, so his seed are made partakers of the *divine nature*, the *Spirit of Christ*, and their BODIES are the *temple* of the HOLY GHOST which is in them. (1 Cor vi. 19.) As the Lord's portion or inheritance is his people, so the LORD himself is the *inheritance of his people*: this is plainly revealed in the Holy Scriptures! (Deut. x. 9,) And the Holy Spirit, one of the divine persons, is the *earnest* of his people's *inheritance* until the *redemption* of the *purchased* possession, (Eph. i. 13, 14,) namely, the *redemption* of the BODY, (Rom. viii. 23,) for they are *heirs* of God, and *joint heirs* with Christ; (Rom. viii. 17.) And the resurrection *body* of the saints is the *Image* of the *Heavenly*!

The prophet Daniel was favoured with visions in the night of the *appointed heir* of all things, the *appointed first-born* among many brethren, he "beheld one like unto "the son of man, bar Anash, or Enash, the pure one or son of "an humble weak man, subject to distresses and distempers; "which at length terminate in death,"^a come with the clouds of

^a I have given the above interpretation of *bar Enash* from the writings of learned men. But I prefer rendering it, "the pure one, or the son in the "likeness of sinful flesh;" for it is evident that Daniel saw Christ as David spake of him, namely, as the *son of the handmaid*, (Psalm lxxxvi. 16,—cxvi. 16,) whom the Lord made strong for himself. The *religious* Pharisees understood the Messiah was to be of the seed of David; they had no objection to his being called the *Son of man*, but they crucified him because he said he was the *Son of God*! All the *enmity* of the serpent is directed against the *Son of God* as equal with *God the Father*. The *pride* of *Lucifer* is *enmity* to the *humility* of *God*. And this *deadly enmity* particularly manifests itself in the professing Church, and which Dr. Hawker noticed in his Commentary upon the *unclean Spirit going out of a Man*; for he observes; "If there be no saving change wrought "by the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost: if the devil be gone out "of his own accord, and not driven out by Jesus; this man's heart is "still as much under Satan's government; for he calls it *his house*, and "saith he will return to it. And our Lord saith, that the last state of "this man is worse than the first. For if the man is prompted to put "on the appearance of *an outside sanctity*; and covers over the *unclean-* "ness that is within, *with a seeming zeal for religion without*: these are "like the seven other devils more wicked than himself, because he be- "comes more desperately deceiving, both himself and the world; and of con- "sequence, the end is more dreadful. And who shall calculate the numbers "there are living under this most wretched of all delusions? Who shall "say, the many who go out of life well pleased with this whitening sepul- "chre reform?" If it be asked, how are we to know such awful charac-

“heaven, and came to the ancient of days, (God the Father,) “and they brought him near before him. And there was “given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all “people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his “dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not “pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be des- “troyed.” Dan. vii. 13, 14. The grant of this dominion unto the Messiah, is intimated in the *first* promise of him, namely, the *seed* of the woman, (Gen. iii. 15,) for his *victory* on earth over *Satan* was to be attended with dominion, rule, and power. (Psalm lxxviii. 18.—Isaiah liii. 12. Eph. iv. 8, 9.—Col. ii. 15.) And the grant of dominion was further revealed in that promise to Abraham, (Gen. xxii. 17, 18,) for *in him*, it was that Abraham was to be the *heir of the world*, (Rom. iv. 13,) and *Judah*, to enjoy the Sceptre and law-giver, until *the appointed heir was born*. (Gen. xlix. 10.) His kingdom was fully revealed unto David, and is expressed by him in the *second* Psalm, See also Psalm xlv. 3—8.—lxxxix. 19—24.—lxxii. 6—9.—cx. 1—3, as also in the Prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah. In Christ’s dominion all the *spiritual* seed, the *joint heirs with Christ*, are interested; for Daniel was afterwards informed, that the Saints of the *Most High*, or *HIGH ONES*, shall take or receive the kingdom, and *possess the kingdom for EVER, even for EVER and EVER!* (Dan. vii. 18.)

To the *appointed* heir, who has taken of the seed of Abraham, all things are delivered, or given into his hand, (Matt. xi. 27,) yea, *all power in heaven and earth*. (Matt. xxviii. 18.) For Jesus of Nazareth, the *first-born* of Mary *must reign, until GOD THE FATHER hath put all enemies under his feet*. I Cor. xv. 25.

Without controversy the Mystery of Godliness is very great, for God was manifest in the flesh, the nature of man, whose originality is of the dust! Amongst

ters? I reply, by the *same* enmity as was shewn by the Pharisees to the *Son of God*, when he appeared in the likeness of men, *the likeness of sinful flesh*: for they *crucified* him, because *he said, God was his own Father, making himself EQUAL with God*; and the Socinians, and human pre-existarians, by denying *Christ’s essential sonship*, do thereby justify the Jews, and thereby *crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame*.

other things assigned for this Wonderful Mystery are the following,—*First*, The Glory of God and the manifestation of the love of God: “in this was manifested the “love of God towards us, because that God sent (*ton uion autou*) the Son OF HIMSELF, (*ton monogenē*) the “only one, or only begotten into the world, that we might “live through him: herein is love, not that we loved “God, but that *he* loved us, and sent his Son into the world, “the propitiation for our sins.” (1 John iv. 9, 10.) *Secondly*, The infinite nature of God’s love; FOR GOD so loved the world that he gave the SON OF HIMSELF, *the only one* or *only begotten*, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John iii. 16.) *Thirdly*, That the Son might glorify the Father *manifestly on the earth*, and the Father glorify the Son *manifestly* on the earth. (John xvii. 4.) That he might bear witness unto the truth. (John xviii. 37.) That he might suffer *in the flesh* and enter into his glory. (Luke xxiv. 26, 27.) *Fourthly*, For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil; and take away *our* sins. (1 John iii. 8. 5.) *Fifthly*, That he might redeem *us* that were under the law, (Gal. iv. 4,) and redeem *us* from the curse of the law, that we might receive the *adoption of sons*; and that the blessing of Abraham might come upon us Gentiles, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Gal. iii. 13, 14. *Sixthly*, It was for the children’s sake that HE ALSO HIMSELF took human nature, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage (Heb. ii. 14, 15.) *Unto us* the child was *born*, unto us the Son was given, (Isaiah ix. 6.) He loved *us* and gave himself *for us*, (Eph. v. 2,) and for *our* sins; (Gal. i. 4,) he died *for us*, (2 Cor. v. 14,) he was delivered for *our* offences, and rose again for *our* justification, (Rom. iv. 25.) He descended in the *body of his flesh* into the *lower parts of the earth*, and in the *same body of flesh* he ascended. (Eph. iv. 9.) He entered into heaven, and appears in the presence of God *for us*, (Heb. ix. 24) and maketh intercession *for us*. (Rom. viii. 34.) Christ in His Divine Person could merit every thing, and in his human

nature he could suffer and die: the righteousness he hath brought in is everlasting; it is never called throughout the Holy Scriptures, otherwise than *the righteousness of God*, His name is *Jehovah* our Righteousness. *Seventhly*, That God the Father might bring *many sons unto glory*. (Heb. ii. 10.) For the *soul* bodies of the Saints are to be raised from the dead *spiritual, immortal, incorruptible, and glorious bodies*, the *image of the heavenly*, like unto Christ's *glorious body*! (1 Cor. xv. 43, 44, 49.—Phil. iii. 21.) *Eighthly*, That in the dispensation of the *fulness of times* (plural) God the Father might gather together in *one* all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him. (Eph. i. 10.) That they all may be *one*, as the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father; that they also may be one in the ALMIGHTY US. (John xvii. 21.)

Satan seduced our first parents to sin: in *Adam* all mankind in the order of natural generation sinned. And, from thenceforth, *Satan* hath maintained his kingdom of darkness by the reign of sin: it is *he, which worketh in the children of disobedience*. Hence the several names by which he is known: *the Great Dragon, the Old Serpent, the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; the strong man armed; the prince of the power of the air; the god of this world*. To destroy Satan's kingdom and works, the Son of God was manifested. Hence we find the Lord Jesus spoiled principalities and powers, &c. on the cross: by his death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil: and *Christ* will reign till all things are put under him. When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, from henceforth expecting till God the Father hath made all his enemies his footstool; which is in part fulfilled, and is fulfilling, until all creatures *honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*. And when all things are put under him, then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God *even the Father*, then the Son himself shall be subject unto him, not as an *inferior*, but for the express purpose, that God, *not the Father only*, but God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, MAY BE ALL IN ALL.

The Elect Angels partake of the goodness and grace of God ; but they are not, and never were, the objects of misery ; and if Jehovah *the Son* had taken the nature of angels, it would *not* have been an act of mercy towards the *elect*. But it pleased Jehovah Jah, the Saviour, to display his *great* love and *rich mercy* towards *us*, by taking into personal union with himself the *seed* of Abraham, and *not* the nature of Angels. And this he did after the *fall of man*, for he was made in the likeness of men, and *not* in the likeness of God, as it is written ; God sent forth *his own Son* in the *likeness of sinful flesh*. If he had taken the nature of man before the fall of man, it would have been a wonderful act of love and of grace ; but it would not have been an act of mercy ; he would not have been made *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, neither would it have been so great a manifestation of his great love to man, as that of visiting us in our *low* estate, by taking the nature of man after sin had entered into our world, and death by sin. That the Angelic nature should not be preferred, but that *our* dust should be so wonderfully favoured, is such an act of INFINITE *love*, HUMILITY, *grace*, and *mercy*, on the part of the GREAT GOD *our* Saviour, that the wise and prudent amongst men reject it as *unreasonable*, the scorners *scoff* at it, the mockers *mock* them that believe it, the proud *condemn* it, as degrading the Most High : but the Devils believe, and tremble, and hate it.

To prevent, if possible, *wilful* misrepresentations of what has been written, allow me to add, that in the 17th chapter of the Gospel penned by *John*, our Lord speaks of *his Threefold Glory*. (1) His *underived* glory which he had *with* the Father, and *not from* the Father, before the world was. This I have already noticed, for the Holy Spirit *doth glorify him on the earth*, by his ministering servants, as *over all God blessed for ever*. Amen. Rom. ix. 5. (2) Christ has a personal glory given him, namely, that of HEAD OVER ALL THINGS, which glory his people will behold. (3) He has also a glory which the Father hath given him, and which Christ hath given to his people ; namely, that of being *kings and priests unto God* and his *Father*. (Rev. i. 8.) They are to sit down with Christ

on his Throne, and to judge the world, and angels: (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3,) it is written, “*let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds: let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people: To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron: To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have ALL THE SAINTS! HALLELU-JAH!* (Psalm cxlix. 5—9.

Having premised these things, I shall now present our subject for the Reader’s examination by the word of truth, according to that ability which God hath given me, in the following order. (1) The spirit of Prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. (2) The *natural first-born*. (3) The *legal first-born*, the heir. (4) The *typical first-born!* (5) The *spiritual first-born*.

1. *The spirit of Prophecy is the testimony of Jesus!* Amongst the incomprehensible mysteries expressly recorded in the Holy Scriptures, is the *sending of JEHOVAH by JEHOVAH!* “For, thus saith *Jehovah of Hosts*, after “the glory *hath he sent me* unto the nations which spoiled “you, for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of “his eye. For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon “them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and “ye shall know that *Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me!*” (Zech. ii. 8, 9.) Here Jehovah of Hosts declares that he is sent by Jehovah of Hosts. Again. “Sing and “rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, *I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith JEHOVAH.* And many “nations shall be joined to Jehovah in that day, and shall “be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, “and thou shalt know that JEHOVAH OF HOSTS *hath sent ME* unto thee.” (Zech. ii. 10, 11.) Here, JEHOVAH calls upon the daughter of Zion to sing and rejoice, because he comes and will dwell in the midst of her; and she shall know that Jehovah of Hosts hath sent him (Jehovah) unto her. In the prophecy of *Isaiah* it is written, that *Jehovah the Redeemer and Holy one of Israel* is sent by ADONAI JEHOVAH and *his SPIRIT.* (Isaiah xlvi. 16, 17.) And here allow me to observe, that the