

THE ROCK OF AGES

Scripture Testimony to the One Eternal Godhead
of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost

by

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CHAPTER SEVEN

That Scripture, in the Old and the New Testament alike, assures us that in the trustful knowledge of One God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is the spiritual life of man now and for ever:

- On the mysteries of faith.
- On the revealed evidences of faith.
- On creeds or definitions of faith.
- On the obedience of faith.
- On the full satisfaction of faith.

AND now I must seek to draw this treatise, which has extended far beyond the limits I designed, to a conclusion.

The Lord grant that we may continue to bring to the study of His Word, that humble spirit which prays - **“That which I see not teach thou me”** (Job 34:32).

I would therefore state my last proposition in these words:-

(1) To one who receives with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save our souls, the Scriptures already adduced prove beyond contradiction that as the Father is God, so is Jesus Christ God, and so the Holy Spirit is God.

This truth, however, must be combined with another, which is revealed with equal clearness and enforced with equal solemnity: - **“I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me”** (Isaiah 65:5).

The combination of these truths establishes the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, for “these Three must together subsist in one infinite Divine essence, called or God; and as this essence must be indivisible, each of them must possess not a part or portion of it, but the whole fulness or perfection of the essential Godhead forming, in an unity of nature, One Eternal God, and therefore revealed by a plural noun * as *Elohim*, which comprehends these Three; but with this solemn qualification, that this *Elohim* is in truth but one God a Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost” (Adapted from Sellon, pp. 46, 47).

* The reader will observe, throughout this treatise, that I have given no prominence to the argument derivable from the plural form of Elohim, and to the yet more suggestive language used by God, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26), again, "Who will go for us?" (Isaiah 6:8). But I should be doing injustice to my own convictions if I did not state, that I believe this language was intended to foster when kindled, and to awaken when dormant, the persuasion that there subsisted a plurality in the essential unity of God. Thus far, I think, the following extracts from Dr. P. Smith's essay abundantly bear me out:-

"The most usual appellation of the Deity in the Scriptures of the Old Testament is Elohim, which is constantly translated "God;" but it is the regular plural of Ewah, which also occurs, though much less frequently than in the plural form, and is always translated in the same manner.

"This plural appellative is generally put in agreement with singular verbs, pronouns, and adjectives, as in Genesis 1:1, "Elohim created: creavit. Dii;- les Dieux crea. This is the ordinary construction through the whole Hebrew Bible.

"But sometimes the apposition is made with verbs, pronouns, and adjectives, in the plural number likewise, and sometimes singulars and plurals are put together in the same agreement: as Genesis 20:13, "God (plural) caused me to wander" - vagari me feerunt Dii;- les Dieux m'ont fait egarer. Deuteronomy 5:26, "heard the voice of the living God" (plural) - audivit vocem Decorum vivimtum;- Des Dieux vivans, etc.

"To these may be added the similar expressions, though without the word Elohim:- Psalm 149:2, "Israel shall rejoice in his Maker" (plural) - in Creatoribus suis -; de ses Createurs.

Isaiah 54:5, "For thy Maker (plural) is thy husband" (plural). Ecclesiastes 12:1, "Remember thy Creator" (plural).

"The fact which principally requires our attention, is the constant use of Elohim, to designate the one and only God. It is not a little remarkable that, in the sacred books of a people who were separated from all other nations for this express object, viz. that they should bear a public and continual protest against polytheism - the ordinary name and style of the only living and true God should be in a plural form. Did some strange and insuperable necessity lie in the way? Was the language so poor that it could furnish no other term? Or, if so, could not the wisdom of inspiration have suggested a new appellative, and forever abolish the hazardous word? None of these reasons existed. The language was rich and copious. Besides "that glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD," the appropriated and unique style of the true God, there was the singular form "Eloah" of the very word in question.

"Hear, O Israel, the LORD, our God [Elohim], one LORD!" (Deuteronomy 6:4). This sentence was proclaimed as a kind of oracular effatum, - a solemn and authoritative principle to the Israelites. Had it been intended to assert such a unity in the Divine nature, as is absolutely solitary, and exclusive of every modification of plurality, would not the expression of necessity have been this, 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD, our God, one Eloah?' But as the words actually stand, they appear to be in the most definite and expressive manner designed to convey the idea, that, notwithstanding a real plurality intimated in the form Elohim, God is still ONE."

This supreme mystery must transcend all the powers of human thought; and the question must recur again and again, **“What saith the Scripture?”**

Our imaginations must be counted as the small dust of the balance. Thus do you conceive that the very names “the Father, the Son” imply a certain point in duration beyond which the Father inhabited eternity alone? Your conception cannot countervail the assertion of Scripture, that the goings-forth of the Saviour have been from everlasting (Micah 5:2); or the words of Christ Himself, adopting the formula which declares the Divine self-existence from eternity to eternity, **“I am the first and the last”** (Revelation 1:11).

The illustration, before adduced, of the sun, its beams of light, and its vital heat, may offer some faint resemblance of this great mystery; for the beams of light are generated by the central orb; and yet the sun could not have existed, so far as we know, for a moment without emitting its radiance, nor the radiance have existed without diffusing its warmth: so that “one is not before another, but only in order and relation to one another.” But no creature can adequately image forth the Creator, who asks, **“To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?”** (Isaiah 40:18).

Again, do you imagine that the name of Him who is alone God, cannot comprehend a Trinity in Unity? Your imagination is as nothing in contradiction of the words of Christ revealing the one Divine name, as **“the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”**

Do you asseverate the impossibility of three subsistences in one eternal essence? Remember, I pray you, the words, **“Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?”** (Job 11:7).

What do we know of the essence of created things? The pure white light seems indissolubly one; an unscientific man would, without hesitation, pronounce it uniform, and would utterly deny any plurality subsisting in its transparent simplicity. The colours of the rainbow seem evidently manifold; and the same man might refuse to credit their unity. Science stoops to analyze light; and we are told that -

“The prismatic spectrum consists in reality of three spectra of nearly equal length, each of uniform colour; superposed one upon another; and that the colours which the actual spectrum exhibits, arise from the mixture of the uniform colours of these three spectra superposed. The colours of these three elementary spectra, according to Sir David Brewster, are red, yellow, and blue. He shows that by a combination of these three, not only all the colours exhibited in the prismatic spectrum may be reproduced, but their combination also produces white light. He contends, therefore, that the white light of the sun consists, not of seven, but of three constituent lights.” (Lardner’s *Museum*, vol. vii. p. 78).

The unlearned man then, in his incredulity, would have denied an established fact.

The unity of that pure white light was not so simple as he affirmed. More constituents than one subsist in its ethereal essence. But has science now fathomed the mysteries of light? So far from it., we read:

*“Light is now proved to consist in the waves of a subtle and elastic ether, which pervades all space, and serves to communicate every impulse, from one part of the universe to another, with a speed almost inconceivable. In this luminous ether, matter seems to emulate the subtlety of thought. Invisible, and yet the only means by which all things are made visible; impalpable, and yet nourishing all material objects into life and beauty; so elastic, that when touched at one point, swift glances of light tremble through the universe; and still so subtle that the celestial bodies traverse its depths freely, and even the most vaporous comet scarcely exhibits a sensible retardation in its course: there is something in the very nature of this medium which seems to baffle the powers of human science, and to say to the pride of human intellect, **“Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.”** Here, indeed, the most brilliant and profound analysts have continually to guess their way, when they would trace out a few of the simplest laws resulting from the existence of such an ether, and tenfold their application to the various phenomena of reflected and refracted light. It is a great deep of mystery. Science grows dizzy on its verge when it strives to explore the nature of this subtle, immense, Imponderable ocean, which bathes all worlds in light, and itself remains, by its own nature, invisible forever.”* - (Birks’ Treasures of Wisdom, pp. 99-106)

Is such the modest confession of truth after all the triumphs of human wisdom? Is man only wading, with tremulous footstep, into the shallow waters of that unfathomable sea called into existence by the fiat of God, when He said, **“Let there be light, and there was light?”**

Are we so soon out of our depth in seeking to understand one of His works? How much rather may we expect to be humbled as we meditate, and to be baffled if we think we can comprehend, the glorious Creator Himself? Is light a mystery? How much rather He Who dwells in the light that no man can approach unto! We know Him only as He reveals Himself.

This self-revelation involves a yet greater self-concealment. There will be the manifestation of God in the voluntary condescension of His love: and there will be the necessary seclusion within the clouds of His unapproachable glory. When a finite being seeks to understand anything of the Infinite, it must always be so.

There will be the fragment of truth which the student has made and is making his own, and the illimitable expanse beneath, above, and beyond Him. Thus in the field of nature we read, **“The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein”** (Psalm 111:2). Here is our knowledge. But **“No man,”** says Solomon, **“can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.”** (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

There is the limit of our knowledge.

We are invited to consider His heavens, to trace His footprints, and to regard the operations of His hands. And yet after all, **“Lo! these are parts of his ways; how faint a whisper is heard of him! the thunder of his power who can understand?”** (Job 26:14).

So, in the majestic course of His patient providence we adoringly acknowledge, **“Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints”** (Revelation 15:3): and yet we must confess, **“Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known”** (Psalm 77:19).

Humble students are treading an upland path. Their horizon widens every step they take. The angels of light, standing on a higher eminence, see further than they. Still there must be a boundary line which limits angelic intuition: and whatever lies beyond that line must be a mystery to them, or, if made known to them, made known by revelation. We rebuke the want of modesty in the unlearned peasant who argues from his ignorance against the declarations of science: surely those blessed spirits would rebuke us, if we, through preconceived notions of our own, refused to credit the simple revelations of God regarding His own mysterious Being.

He reveals Himself by His names, His attributes, and His acts. And, therefore, if, combined with assertions that God is one, we find three revealed in Scripture to whom the same names, attributes, and acts are ascribed, the same so far as a personal distinction allows; if we look vainly for any fourth Divine one, or any intimation of more than three; if we connect with this the intimate and necessary union affirmed to exist betwixt the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit, as when the Lord Jesus says, "**I and my Father are one,**" and when Paul says, "**The Spirit searches the depths of God;**" if, then, we find that every Christian is baptized into one Name, - the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, - we are led swiftly and irresistibly up to the doctrine (call it by what name you will) of the Trinity in Unity.

(2) Hence, at the risk of apparent repetition, I shall bring together again some few Bible testimonies to the Deity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; combining them in one view; and adding a further declaration from Scripture of our sole dependence on the alone Lord; so that you may see at a glance, that we are compelled by the Christian verity, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity.

I

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are eternal.

1. **I am the first, and I am the last** - (Isaiah 44:6) **The everlasting God** - (Romans 16:26).
2. **I am the first and the last** - (Revelation 1:17). **Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting** - (Micah 5:2).
3. **The eternal Spirit** - (Hebrews 9:14).

The One Eternal is our trust. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms - (Deuteronomy 33:27).

II

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost created all things.

1. **One God, the Father, of whom are all things** - (I Corinthians 8:6). **The Lord . . . it is he that hath made us** - (Psalm 100:3).
2. **All things were made by him** - the Word, etc.(John 1:3). **By him were all things created, etc.** - (Colossians 1:16).
3. **Who hath measured, etc - who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord?** - (Isaiah 40:12, 13). **God hath made me** - (Job 33:4).

The One Almighty is our trust. Commit the keeping of their souls to him, . . . as unto a faithful Creator - (I Peter 4:19).

III

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are omnipresent.

1. **Do not I fill the heaven and earth? saith the Lord** - (Jeremiah 23:24).
2. **Lo, I am with you alway** - (Matthew 28:20).
3. **Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?** - (Psalm 139:7).

The One omnipresent God is our trust. He is not far from everyone of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being - (Acts 17:27, 28).

IV

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are incomprehensible and omniscient.

1. **No one knoweth the Father, Save the Son** - (Matthew 11:27). **Known unto God are all his works**, etc - (Acts 15:18).
2. **No one knoweth the Son, save the Father** - (Matthew 11:27). **Lord, thou knowest all things** - (John 21:17).
3. **Who being his counsellor hath taught him?** - (Isaiah 40:15). **The Spirit searcheth all things** - (I Corinthians 2:10).

We worship the One all-seeing God. All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do - (Hebrews 4:15).

V

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are true, holy, and good.

1. **He that sent me is true** - (John 7:28). **Holy Father. Righteous Father** - (John 17:11, 25) **The Lord is good** - (Psalm 34:8).
2. **I am . . . the truth** - (John 14:6). **The Holy One and the just** - (Acts 3:14). **The good Shepherd** - (John 10:11).
3. **The Spirit is truth** - (I John 5:6). **The Spirit, the holy One** - (John 14:26). **Thy Spirit is good** - (Psalm 143:10).

We adore the One Lord of Infinite goodness. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy - (Revelation 15:4).

VI

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost have each a self-regulating will.

1. **Him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will** - Ephesians 1:11).
2. **The Son wills to reveal him** - (Matthew 11:27). **Father, I will** - (John 17:24).
3. **Dividing to everyone severally as he wills** - (I Corinthians 12:11).

We rest on the will of Him who alone is God. The will of the Lord be done - (Acts 21:14).

VII

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are the fountain of life.

1. **With thee is the fountain of life** - (Psalm 36:9). **God hath quickened us** - (Ephesians 2:4, 5).
2. **In him (the Word) was life** - (John. 1:4). **The Son quickeneth whom he will** - (John 5:21).
3. **The Spirit is life** - (Romans 8:10). **Born of the Spirit** - (John 3:8).

We depend on one life-giving God. Love the Lord thy God . . . cleave unto him . . . for he is thy life - (Deuteronomy 30:20).

VIII

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost strengthen, comfort, and sanctify us.

1. **Thou strengthenedst me with strength in my soul** - (Psalm 138:3). **I will comfort you** (Isaiah 66:15) **Sanctified by God the Father** - (Jude 1).
2. **I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me** - (Philippians 4:13). **If any consolation in Christ** - (Philippians 2:1). **Sanctified in Christ Jesus** - (I Corinthians 1:2).
3. **Strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man** - (Ephesians 3:16). **The Comforter, the Holy Ghost** - (John 14:26). **Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost** - (Romans 15:16).

We trust in One God for spiritual power. My God, my strength, in whom I will trust - (Psalm 18:2).

IX

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost fill the soul with Divine love.

1. **Everyone that loveth him that begat** - (I John 5:1). **If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him** - (I John 2:15).
2. **The love of Christ constraineth us** - (II Corinthians 5:14). **If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ** - (I Corinthians 16:22).
3. **I beseech you for the love of the Spirit** - (Romans 15:30). **Your love in the Spirit** - (Colossians 1:8).

The love of the One living and true God characterizes the saint. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart - (Deuteronomy 6:5).

X

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost gave the Divine law.

1. **The law of the Lord is perfect** - (Psalm 19:7). **The word of our God** - (Isaiah 40:8). **Thus saith the Lord God** - (Ezekiel 2:4).
2. **The law of Christ** - (Galatians 6:2). **The word of Christ** - (Colossians 3:16). **These things saith the Son of God** - (Revelation 2:18).
3. **The law of the Spirit of life** - (Romans 8:2). **Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost** - (II Peter 1:21). **The Holy Ghost said** - (Acts 13:2).

The word of One Legislator is the believer's rule. There is one Lawgiver who is able to save - (James 4:12).

XI

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost dwell in the hearts of believers.

1. **I will dwell in them** - (II Corinthians 6:16). **God is in you of a truth** - (I Corinthians 14:25). **Our fellowship is with the Father** - (I John 1:3).
2. **Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith** - Ephesians 3:17). **Christ in you, the hope of glory** - (Colossians 1:27). **Our fellowship . . . with his Son Jesus Christ** - (I John 1:3).
3. **The Spirit dwelleth with you, and shall be in you** - (John 14:17). **The communion of the Holy Ghost** - (II Corinthians 13:14).

The contrite heart receives One Divine guest. Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, I, dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble heart - (Isaiah 57:15).

XII

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are, each by Himself, the supreme Lord and God.

1. **I am the LORD thy God** - (Exodus 20:2). **Thou, Lord, art most High for evermore** - (Psalm 92:8).
2. **The LORD our God** - (Isaiah 40:3, with Matthew 3:3). **The Highest** - (Luke 1:76, with Matthew 11:10).
3. **The LORD God** - (Ezekiel 8:1, 3). **The Highest** - (Luke 1:35).

The One supreme Lord God is our God for ever and ever. The LORD, our God, is one LORD - (Deuteronomy 6:4).

From this brief comparison, which might be elaborated at far greater length, (if the reader asks for further proof of any statement, I earnestly entreat him to refer back to the more detailed exposition), Scripture assures us that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, have the same Divine attributes, concur with a mind and will and heart, personally independent but unitedly harmonious, in the same Divine acts, and are addressed by the same Divine names. And further, we learn that our trust is not dispersed or confused by this co-equal Godhood of the Sacred Three: but that (a way of access being opened in the Gospel through the revelation of the Father in Christ by the Spirit) we rest on, we worship, and we love One God. Thus, these Three are One: "There is but One living and true God, everlasting; without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in Unity of this Godhead, there be Three persons of one substance, power and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

(3) Are you tempted to say, "such a brief article as this enunciated by Christ Himself, and recorded by the apostles, would have settled every controversy for ever: why, oh why, was it not contained in Scripture?"

Haply, Elihu might quell the rising suspicion, "**Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man. Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters. For God speaketh once, yea twice, but man perceiveth it not**" (Job 33:12-14).

But it is by no means certain that such an article would have settled every doubt. It would have been handed down from age to age: many manuscripts must needs be collated: possibly some obscure variation might be discovered. But even if the text were as impregnable as the opening of John's Gospel, I doubt whether it would have convinced such minds as remain unconvinced of the Deity of Christ, after weighing those transparent declarations. Granting, however, that it had materially shortened the path by which sincere inquirers attain the true faith, (for Scripture assures us that none, who heartily seek the Lord, stop short of Jesus Christ), what would have been its effect on the church at large? Permit me here to quote some admirable remarks from "*Cautions for the Times.*"

"There is another reason against the providing in Scripture of a regular systematic statement of Christian doctrines. Supposing such a summary of Gospel truths had been drawn up, and could have been contrived with such exquisite skill as to be sufficient and well adapted for all, of every age and country, what would have been the probable result? It would have commanded the unhesitating assent of all Christians, who would, with deep veneration, have stored up the very words of it in their memory, without any need of laboriously searching the rest of the Scriptures, to ascertain its agreement with them; which is what we do (at least, are evidently called on to do) with a human exposition of the faith; and the absence of this labour, together with the tranquil security as to the correctness of their belief, which would have been thus generated, would have ended in a careless and contented apathy.

There would have been . . . no call for vigilant attention in the investigation of truth - none of that effort of mind which is now requisite, in comparing one passage with another, and collecting instruction from the scattered, oblique, and incidental references to various doctrines in the existing Scriptures; and in consequence none of that excitement of the best feelings, and that improvement of the heart, which are the natural and, doubtless, the designed result of an humble, diligent, and sincere study of the Christian Scriptures.

In fact all study, properly so called, of the rest of Scripture - all lively interest in its perusal - would have nearly been superseded by such an inspired compendium of doctrine; to which alone, as by far the most convenient for that purpose, habitual reference would have been made in any question that might arise. Both would have been regarded indeed as of Divine authority; but the compendium as the fused and purified metal: the other as the mine containing the crude ore. And the compendium itself being not, like the existing Scriptures, that from which the faith is to be learned, but the very thing to be learned, would have come to be regarded by most with an indolent, unthinking veneration, which would have exercised little or no influence on the character. Their orthodoxy would have been as it were petrified; like the bodies of those animals we read of incrustated in the ice of the polar regions - firm fixed, indeed, and preserved unchangeable; but cold, motionless, lifeless. It is only when our energies are roused, and faculties exercised, and our attention kept awake by an ardent pursuit of truth, and anxious watchfulness against error - when, in short, we feel ourselves to be doing something towards acquiring, or retaining, or improving our knowledge - it is then only that that knowledge makes the requisite practical impression on the heart and on the conduct.

To the church, then, has her all-wise Founder left the office of teaching - to the Scriptures, that of proving the Christian doctrine: to the Scriptures, he has left the delineation of Christian principles - to each church, the application of those principles, in their symbols or articles of religion - in their forms of worship - and in their ecclesiastical regulations.” (pp. 443, 444).

How beautiful is the analogy here between the Word of God and the natural creation! Had we been told that the earth was to be so arranged that eight hundred millions of human beings could live thereon, should we not, in thought, have done away with the vast unproductive forests, the superfluous mountains, the exorbitant ocean, and have divided it into so many plots for agriculture, like the veriest pauper field? This was not God’s way. The woods, and hills, and seas minister to the clouds, and the clouds drop fatness on the fertile fields and the luxurious plain; and thus He opens His hand and supplies all things living with plenteousness.

So is it with the Scriptures of truth. We should, perhaps, have expected definitions, and articles, and formularies, and canons, and creeds. This was not God’s method. There is the incident of touching simplicity, the solemn majesty of law, the flame of patriotic zeal, the heart-experience which speaks to our heart, the grandest poetry, the most magnificent songs of praise, the rapid changes on the prophetic harp, the inimitable story of redeeming love, the calm deductions of logical argument, the echo of angelic joy, the unbarring of the gates of glory, and the reflection of the light of eternity. And yet, amid all these manifold combinations, the simple rule of our faith in the One living and true God - Father, Son, and Spirit, the source of creation, redemption and sanctification, - is marked out with a precision that **“he may run that readeth”** (Hebrews 2:2).

But, do you ask, is it needful for every believer to pass through such a long process of proof as even this little treatise sets forth? Assuredly not. The Bible is eminently the poor man's book. These things are hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes (Matthew 11:25, 26). And to such a childlike mind a very few; simple truths generally carry conviction, and with conviction life and peace. **"I am God, and beside me there is no Saviour."** **"Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."** **"I will send the Comforter to you."**

His Father, his Redeemer, his Sanctifier, are equally indispensable to him: and he knows that he was baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. He needs no more. Without any laboured syllogisms, he believes these Three are One. The truths find him. He does not expect to fathom the mystery; but his whole heart embraces that which satisfied his whole necessity.

If, however, doubts and suspicions assail these first principles when implanted, or keep back an inquirer from believing them, then the Word of God, reverently consulted, affords a complete answer to every, what I may call, rational objection. The armoury supplies a weapon for every encounter. We are ready to give every man a reason of the hope that is in us (I Peter 3:15). Therefore, if held back by these doubts from faith in Christ, you must give yourself, heart and soul, to this momentous inquiry; you must shake off that deadly indifference which would leave this question undecided; you must watch and pray; and then be assured the promise shall never fail - **"I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart"** (Jeremiah 29:11-13).

Mortal life, stretching forth into immortality, is to each man like a precious cabinet stored with priceless jewels. But the cabinet is locked, and to those without Christ the key is wanting. The Gospel is that key. It is proffered to all. How many, alas, carelessly thrust it aside! But some, you may think with a modest caution, refuse to make the trial, lest haply they should hamper the lock, until they have been assured by a careful sifting of documents, by a comparing of outlines of the hidden words with the key, and by other infallible proofs, that the key in question was the one made and designed for the cabinet.

This investigation they pursue with untiring assiduity until, satisfied of the credibility of the evidence adduced, they try the bolt with a trembling hand; it yields to the touch and the cabinet is their own: they are rich for ever.

Many others, however, have more trustfulness, and less fearfulness. They feel their poverty; they believe the offer is to be relied on; they know that many of their neighbours have found it so; and without further delay they also try the lock: it yields, and the cabinet is theirs. You can never argue them out of their persuasion that the key they hold in their hands is the key of the cabinet. No other unlocks it; and this does. That is enough for them. They may not have so intelligent a knowledge of the way in which that elaborate key turns back one secret spring after another: that knowledge, whenever acquired, belongs to the patient, painstaking investigator: but both alike possess the jewels.

So is it with the Gospel of Jesus Christ: it exactly fits the intricate words of the human heart. It unlocks the inestimable treasures of human life. He that uses it is rich indeed; rich towards God; rich for eternity. Whether he has been led to faith in Christ through long and painful inquiries, as may be the case especially with those who have much time for thought, and keen intellectual powers; or whether with a more confiding alacrity, which is the experience of most Christians, (for **“God hath chosen the poor of this world rich in faith”** - James 2:5), he has obeyed the Gospel at once, the life-giving efficacy is the same. **“As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God”** (John 1:12). The question is one of obedience or of disobedience. **“The mystery [of the Gospel of Jesus Christ] is now according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to all nations, for THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH”** (Romans 16:25), 26).

Obedience is life; **“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life:”** and disobedience is death; for the same Scripture continues, **“He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him”** (John 3:36).

(4) *Do you say, Is not a trustful knowledge of God the Father sufficient? Scripture answers, There is no true knowledge of God the Father, except in God the Son: for Jesus Christ says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”* (John 14:6).

And John writes, **“Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father”** (I John 2:23). And again, **“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son”** (II John 9).

Now Scripture has proved to us the coessential Godhood of the Son with the Father: and, if once the Holy Spirit convince you of this, you will be the first to ask, what can denial of the Son be, if to deny His Deity be not this negation? With your keen sense of honour, you will then be the first to acknowledge that such denial destroys the glory of His person; tears the crown from His brow; empties the atonement of its virtue; and, however undesignedly, charges the church of Christ with idolatry, and the Word of God with equivocation and untruthfulness. For he who denies the Deity of our Lord **“believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son”** (I John 5:10).

There are indeed many, who, professedly believing the Deity of the Son of God, by their works deny Him: theirs, perhaps, is an aggravated guilt:- but those who professedly disbelieve His Deity, seeing that such unbelief extracts all saving efficacy from His work, are rejecting the only **“name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved”** (Acts 4:12).

Further, do you say, God is love, and will not visit with eternal condemnation the creatures of His hand? My friends, you are making to yourselves a God of your own imagination, a God of mercy and compassion only, but without holy jealousy and righteousness. Such a one is not the God of creation, or of providence, or of the Bible. He is not the God of creation; for even there, amid the abounding evidence of His goodness, there are things which tell of His severity; there is not only the sunshine, and the summer, and the dew, and the calm, - but also the terrible darkness, and the wintry blast, and the storm, and the volcano.

Such a one is not the God of permissive providence; for there is not only the happy home, and prattling childhood, and the mart of peaceful merchandise, and the honourable senate, - but also the chamber of suffering, and the creeping infirmities of age, and the wail of oppression, and the battle-field strewn with corpses.

Nor is such a one the God of the Bible:

God is love indeed - but love embraces all His attributes, not mercy only, but righteousness likewise: **“for love is strong as death, jealousy is hard as the grave, the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame”** (Song of Solomon 8:6).

- Oh, surely not in vain was the cry of the Gospel herald, **“Flee from the wrath to come”** (Matthew 3:7).

- Not in vain the warning of Jesus Christ, **“If ye believe not, that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.”** (John 8:24).

- Not in vain the awakening question of Peter, **“What shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?”** (I Peter 4:17).

It is so often asserted that the inflexible righteousness manifested under the old dispensation, as in the deluge, in the destruction of the cities of the plain, in the plagues on Egypt, or in the chastisements on Israel, has been modified by the “milder genius of the Gospel” (Luke 17:36-38; Romans 9:17) - though they who make the assertion forget, that these cases are adduced as examples in the New Testament (I Corinthians 10:6-11), - that I bring before you in the note below * some portion of the witness of the New Testament to the immutable justice of God. I fully grant you that now God is withholding His judgments: it is the day of grace, it is the time of love, the goodness of God leadeth us to repentance: but the season is limited, and **“when once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door”** (Luke 13:25), then the last hour of pardoning mercy will have passed away, and He whose name is love declares, **“Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me”** (Proverbs 1:28). But if Jesus wept, when foretelling the judgments on Jerusalem, well may the heart of a poor pardoned sinner bleed, to gather such cumulative proof of His holy indignation. So terrible is the evidence that, like Moses at Sinai, **“I exceedingly fear and quake”** (Hebrews 12:21).

* **Testimony under the new covenant to the righteous severity of God. Matthew 3:7-12, John the Baptist warns to flee from the wrath to come.**

Matthew 5:26-29, Jesus speaks of the eternal prison, and of the unholy being cast into hell.

- 7:13, of the broad way leading to destruction; and ver. 23, of the hour when He will say, Depart from me. [These last are taken from the sermon on the mount, in which the Fatherly character of God shines as a golden thread interwoven throughout].

- 8:12, the children of the kingdom cast out into outer darkness.

- 10:15, more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment; and Ver. 25, “Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” [This last in closest connection with filial trust towards God].

- 11:20-24, the woes on Chorazin.
- 12:32, the unpardonable sin.
- 13:41, 42, 49, 50, the judgment of the wicked.
- 18:6-9, the end of those who cause offences.
- 21:44, the stone falling on the disobedient.
- 22:13, the guest expelled into outer darkness.
- 23. The woes on the Pharisees.
- 24. the foretold destruction of Jerusalem, typical of the last judgment.
- 25:12, the foolish virgins disowned; ver. 30 the unprofitable servant cast out; ver. 41, the sentence upon those on the left hand - "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Mark 16:16, after the resurrection, the same inflexible law - "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Luke 12:46, the unfaithful servant's end.

- 13:28, a scene of future remorse sketched, which the prescient Christ alone could sketch.
- 16:22, 23, "the rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments."
- 17:26-30, the deluge and the destruction of Sodom, types of the end of the wicked at the second Advent.

John 3:15, the unbeliever condemned already; and ver. 36, "the wrath of God abideth on him."

- 5:29, the resurrection of damnation.
- 8:24, ye shall die in your sins.

Acts 3:23, the disobedient soul destroyed.

5:4-11, the judgment on Ananias and Sapphira.

- 13:40, 41, see the peroration of Paul's sermon at Antioch:
- 28:25-27, and of His address to the Jews.

Romans 1:15, the wrath of God revealed against all ungodliness.

2:4-11, wrath treasured up against the day of wrath; . . . indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, rendered to every evil doer.

6:23, The wages of sin is death.

12:19, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

I Corinthians 3:17, if any man, etc., Him shall God destroy.

6:9, "the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

16:22, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha."

II Corinthians 2:16, to them that perish we are the savour of death unto death.

4:3, the Gospel hid in them that are lost.

Galatians 1:8; the solemn anathema on those who pervert the Gospel.

- 6:8, he that soweth to his flesh reaping corruption.

Ephesians 2:3, we were children of wrath.

Philippians 3:15, 19, "I tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction."

II Thessalonians 1:7-9, the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with an everlasting destruction . . . "

2:12, "that they all might be damned who believed not the truth."

Hebrews 2:3, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?”

- 10:27-31, “a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

- 12:29, “for our God is a consuming fire.”

James 2:10, “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”

I Peter 2:8, [Jesus Christ] “a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.”

I Peter 4:17, 18, “what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? . . . where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”

II Peter 2:17, “to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.”

- 3:7, the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

I John 5:19, the whole world lieth in wickedness.

Jude 14, 15, the Lord cometh . . . to execute judgment.

Revelation 6:16, hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

- 19:3, her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

- 19:15, “and out of his mouth goeth forth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”

- 20:15, “and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

- 21:8, “but the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

- 22:11, “he that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.”

If it were only one isolated passage, you might urge it was figurative language; but here it is written in history, prophecy, sermon, Epistle, vision,-all alike proving that our God is a consuming fire, and that of the enemies of the cross the end is destruction. I repeat, you may conceive a God of compassion only, and fall down and worship Him, but such a one is not the righteous Judge of all the earth: and you may beautify the name of the Father, whom you adore, with every trait of benevolence, and tenderness, and grace; but it is not the name of the one living and true God, for that is the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

God forbid that I should write with anything of bitterness or pride. I feel far too deeply for that. You will not accuse me of it. Shipwrecked in one common fall with us, you have adopted principles of your own, and staked your immortality of weal or woe upon them. We have embarked upon that we know to be the only true life-boat: and with all the importunity of affection, those kindlings of common humanity which bind us together, we cry to you - “Friends, that raft of your own construction cannot survive the tempest. Come with us. Yet there is room. Yet there is time. Our life-boat cannot sink. Our pilot knows the port.”

Let us recur to our position before God, as sketched from Scripture in the opening of this treatise.

The Bible represented us as guilty, strengthless, and in darkness.

Whatever moral excellences may adorn us in the sight of man; philanthropy, generosity, tenderness, integrity - still the penetrating law, the law of perfect love, reveals innumerable violations of our nearest and noblest duties. We are sinners; and as sinners, exposed to all this righteous wrath in the day of wrath.

Once realize this, and our false peace is broken up for ever. Our earthly gaiety is gone. Life, without our Father's smile, is not worth the living. It is to flit through a mazy labyrinth of pain and pleasure, to foster affections which must wither to their roots, and to cherish hopes which must expire one by one. The irrepressible question rises again to our lips, What must I do to be saved? Where shall we find a hiding place? "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10).

What is His name? - the same that Moses heard in the cleft of the rock - **"The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation"** (Exodus 34:6, 7).

How then can He clear us, the guilty? For **"we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away"** (Isaiah 64:6).

May the Lord of His sovereign mercy impress His own reply on my heart and on yours, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of . Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference; For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I .say, at this time, his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" - (Romans 3:19-26).

How blessed, how Divine a salvation!

Another has offered an atoning sacrifice for our sins; another imparts His righteousness to all who believe. The claims of the law are satisfied; for a Victim of infinite worth has satisfied them. Emmanuel, God with us, is surety for us (Romans 5:6). Christ died for the ungodly, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God (I Peter 3:18).

“It is the blood which maketh an atonement for the soul” (Leviticus 17:11), not the blood of bulls and of goats, but the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin (Hebrews 10:4). And now God in Christ reconciles the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them (I John 1:7). And **“we are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ’s stead be ye reconciled to God; for he hath made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”** (II Corinthians 5:19-21).

O unexampled love! The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world (I John 4:14). God the Father loving us with everlasting love: God the Son incarnate, crucified, risen, glorified, interceding. Here **“Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other”** (Psalm 85:10).

But once more: Jesus says, **“No one can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him”** (John 6:44). And yet again: **“No one cometh unto the Father, but by me”** (John 14:6). It is a circle of light and love. We go round about it. How are we to enter it? Jesus answers, **“When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, he shall testify of me. . . . he will guide you into all truth . . . he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you”** (John 15:26).

Here is the power of entrance. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Oh, blessed new-born soul! Washed in the blood of Christ, clothed in His spotless goodness, drawn by His quickening Spirit, it is brought to the footstool of the throne of paternal love. It lives. It loves. All the affections gush forth from a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The Trinity in Unity is no longer an abstract doctrine alone, but it interpenetrates our spiritual being. The Father and the Son have come unto us, and in the communion of the Spirit make their abode with us: and thus dwelling in love we dwell in God, for God is LOVE. See John 14:23.

(5) *God is love.*

Many, from these words alone, have argued the necessity of a co-eternal and a coequal plurality in unity, as a deduction from that absolute perfection of the Divine nature which requires every possible excellence: co-eternal; - for love implies, at least, that there be One who loves, and One who being loved reciprocates that love; and, therefore, if the Son were not from everlasting (as the Father Himself), the first and the last, the beginning and the ending; then before the creation of our world, or of any worlds, through the receding cycles of a past eternity, they have contended that “the Divine mind would have stood in an immense solitariness,” without reciprocity of affection, and without communion of intellectual enjoyment; and co-equal; - for love in its perfection requires similarity and indeed equality of nature, (as God records of Adam in Paradise, **“there was not found a help meet for him”** - Genesis 2:20.) and, therefore, whatever you take away from either the one who loves or the one who is loved, however you disparage either in comparison of the other, you so far destroy the propriety and completeness of the definition **“God is Love.”** *

* See Alford's Sermons on Divine Love: and P. Smith's Testimony, Appendix III., from which some of the clauses in the above paragraph are taken.

The following beautiful extracts from a German treatise, by Sartorius, have been translated and sent me by a friend.

“That which is asserted in theological compendiums with abstract and often negative precision of the Being and attributes of God, is gathered together in a living, comprehensive, and fertile idea, in that great dictum of the apostle, God IS LOVE. This saying of the Holy Spirit comes from the depths of the Godhead. It is the Divine axiom beyond which we cannot fathom, and from which all flows; the first principle of our science, as well as the basis of our life. The first article of our creed expresses this: God the Father is equal to ‘God is love.’ [He then contrasts the two opposites I and thou, with the false opposites of some modern philosophy, I and not I.]

“Love presupposes consciousness-personality: in the true sense we cannot love a thing; only persons can love or truly be loved. In the Higher Divine sense, love is the unity or union of two distinct personalities. And this in the Highest sense the Triune God is, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit of Love. . . . ‘God is love:’ - whatever we may say of God’s spiritual, infinite, eternal Being; of His all-might and all-wisdom; of His holiness, justice, and truth; of His glory and blessedness; is it not all gathered up in the idea of absolute love? How little is said in asserting that God is a Spirit, if His mere negative immateriality and invisibility are meant: or when thinking and willing are ascribed to Him, without any character to determine the quality of this thinking and willing. Love is spirit, is light, and life; is conscious, personal life, not merely subjectively absorbed in itself, but expanding, and manifesting, and objectively communicating itself; filling all with itself, and gathering all unto itself. Infinite and eternal are mere negative abstractions, if they are not contemplated as filled with love, whose nature it is to have no limits, and ‘never to fail.’

“Holiness, what is it but Holy love, which only wills the holy and the good (the God-like), and abhors the evil (ungodly) because it brings ruin? And righteousness, what is it but the order, the law of love and its execution? God is love, not only as Creator and Preserver of the world, but in Himself, from eternity, eternal love in person, and surely in more than One person; for love consists in the unity of [at least] two persons. The subject of love is not conceivable without the object, nor personal love without a personal “object; without which it would be but self-seeking. The I must have a Thou: the eternal I an eternal Thou: eternal love an eternal object.”

I give the above fragments for their intrinsic worth, without pledging myself to all the sentiments of an essay which I have not read.

But leaving this most profound mystery, and taking with you those living truths which are necessary to our salvation, I pray you now to return to the study of the sacred volume. You will look in vain for any formal creed: but what is infinitely more valuable to the earnest student and the docile believer, you will find the threefold and yet united work of the ever blessed God, - Father, Son, and Spirit, - on our behalf.

If we ask, Whence came I, and to whom do I belong? the Bible answers we are the creatures of God the Father, of whom are all things; of God the Son, by whom all things were made; of God the Spirit, who gave us life: of these Three who are One in essence, and who in unity of counsel determined, **“Let us make man in our image”** (Genesis 1:26).

If, feeling our low and lost estate, we cry, **“What must I do to be saved?”** Jesus answers, **“Ye must be born again. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit . . . for God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life”** (John 3:6-16).

If now craving that new birth we begin to long for that Spirit with indescribable desire, our Lord assures us, **“I will pray the Father; and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever”** (John 14:16).

If we ask how this, so great a salvation, was accomplished, the apostle replies, **“Christ, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself, without spot, to God;”** and thus **“his blood purges our conscience from dead works to serve the living and true God.”** (Hebrews 9:14).

If we draw nigh to that great High Priest, crying, Lord, save me or I perish; He answers, **“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord”** (Isaiah 61:1, 2).

If we turn to the pages of the Gospel histories, and humbly ask for some manifestation of this stupendous mystery, we read - **“Jesus being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son: in thee I am well pleased”** (Luke 3:21, 22).

If, as we ponder the threefold benediction pronounced on the worshipping Israelites, - **“The LORD bless thee and keep thee: the LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace:”** - and observe how this threefold blessing mysteriously coalesced in one covenant name, for it is added, **“They shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them”** (Numbers 6:23-27).

If, pondering these things, we cry, Bless me, even me also, O my Father; we shall hear a still small voice saying to us, The blessings of that name into which you were baptized be yours in deed and in truth, and in the power of spiritual life, **“the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”**

If emboldened, we would now interpret this more plainly, the doctrine drops as the rain, and distils as the dew, in the benediction of the new covenant. **“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you. Amen”** (II Corinthians 13:14).

We betake ourselves to prayer; how easy the new and living way! **“Through Jesus we have access by one Spirit unto the Father”** (Ephesians 2:18).

And while kneeling at the throne of grace how deep the fellowship: **“The Spirit itself beareth**

witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:16).

If we are ever tempted to draw back from the hope of the Gospel, how awful does the provocation of the Triune Lord appear when Scripture, warning us of the wrath to come, demands - **“Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord” (Hebrews 10:29, 30).**

We are established in the faith: but we long to see this great mystery in living connection with the communion of saints, with the better covenant of promise, and with all the framework of human society:- this too is vouchsafed: for we read, **“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Ephesians 4:4-6).**

Now we see that all things are ours, who are **“elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (I Peter 1:2);** for what, in the confidence of faith we ask, shall separate us from the love of God, who **“hath from the beginning chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ?” (II Thessalonians 2:13, 14).**

This assurance of faith is no idle self-confidence, for we hear the apostle’s earnest entreaty: **“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (Jude 20, 21).**

And is now the need of our soul irrepressible for suitable language in which to express the adoring gratitude of our hearts, let us fall low on our faces with the veiled seraphim, and cry, **“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts” (Isaiah 6:2,3). “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” (Revelation 4:8).**

Yes, the pure white light which fills the firmament of Heaven, and imbues the clouds with brightness, and paints the inimitable beauty of every colour which delights us, is only a faint emblem of that glorious name - the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost - which alone can penetrate the depths of the human heart; which alone irradiates the mysteries of time and the darkness of the shadow of death (Ezekiel 1:28); and which has spanned the throne of the Eternal with the emerald rainbow of everlasting peace. (Revelation 4:3).

And here I must close. At the beginning of this essay I ventured to allude to past personal conflicts. My faith was sorely tried; and I often thought, as many others have done, that Satan exhausted his quiver on my battered shield. But unutterably painful as those days of struggle were to me.

I should number them among the most golden of my life, if they taught me to remove one obstacle from the path of those who are feeling after Jesus, my Saviour and my God. I was at times constrained to cry in bitterness of soul, "**All thy billows are gone over me,**" though an unseen hand kept me clinging to Him who was my life, like the limpet to the rock, buffeted by every wave of the fretting sea.

But gladly shall I have suffered the tempest, if God may enable me thereby to stretch forth a helping hand to those who are sinking in the deep waters, until their feet are planted on the Rock of Ages.

Then shall we shortly stand together in His presence, where is fulness of joy, and cast our crowns before Him on whose head are many crowns, and sing the everlasting song, "**Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.**"

The Lord, of His infinite mercy, grant this by the power of the Holy Ghost, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen and Amen.

~ end of book ~

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