

A
CONTEMPLATION
ON THE
PRINCIPAL RULES
FOR
UNDERSTANDING
THE WHOLE
BOOK OF THE REVELATIONS.

A C O N T E M P L A T I O N

O N T H E

P R I N C I P A L R U L E S

F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G

T H E W H O L E

B O O K O F T H E R E V E L A T I O N S .

THERE never was a time in which the revelation of John was so well understood, as in the present day: but this knowledge is confined to a very few learned and wise men. The bulk of young christians know very little of the genuine sense of this wonderful book; and the reason is, they want a fit and easy key of interpretation to lead them into these astonishing and delightful prospects. Were they furnished with some clear principles and definitions, and did they once come to view the general structure and œconomy of the whole, they would then enter into the spirit and design of the book, and proceed to contemplate, with admiration and pleasure, the wisdom, power, and greatness of Christ at every step. I shall be glad to be an instrument to lead them by the hand into these delightful prospects. I write not for scholars: I pretend not to teach them. I write for young christians
and

and pious students of divinity. If I can but make this glorious book better understood, and more relished, I shall exceedingly rejoice, and Christ our Lord shall have all the glory.

I hope, my young friends, I shall not appear arrogant or vain-glorious, when I tell you, that this book has been the object of my attention thirty-one years. In the summer, 1748, I began to study the Revelations in good earnest. I found great difficulty in my first attempts, for want of some preliminary explanations, and a clear short scheme of the whole in all its parts and distinct periods; consequently I understood many things very imperfectly, and I felt severely the need of a wise, condescending, and familiar tutor; and this excites me to pity many pious and inquisitive young persons, who feel the same terrifying discouragement *now* which I did *then*. If I shall be so happy as to remove some of the principal obstacles out of the way, and assist you to read greater authors with understanding and pleasure, my satisfaction and joy will be unspeakable. I will resolutely avoid all tedious and perplexing language. I will lay no briars and thorns in your way. At the same time do not expect that I should remove every difficulty, or unfold every thing that is involved in obscurity. I hope I shall avoid the imputation of such vanity and pride.---In a word, my dear reader, I pretend
to

to no more than to give you what I believe to be the grand outlines of this blessed and admirable book ; and if any of you shall be allured to contemplate and relish these discoveries, and pray more ardently for the accomplishment of those amazing events, which were hid in the purposes of God from eternity, and which will in due time open upon the moral world ; give our Lord and saviour all the praise.

As we shall proceed, in the most easy and familiar manner, to lead you into a just knowledge of these last wonderful discoveries of God to the church ; I shall first of all observe, that the whole book of the Revelation must be considered as divided into two parts.

P A R T I.

The first part includes the seven churches, which ought to be considered in a prophetic view, as pointing out, and being emblems of the state of the church, in the several periods of time, to the end of the world. The opening of the seven seals relate to the Roman empire as pagan. These seals begin with the primitive age of christianity, and end with Dioclesian, the last pagan tyrant and persecutor of the church of God. The seven trumpets begin with Constantine the Great, and foretel the state of the empire after christianity was professed in it. These trumpets are not yet all sounded. We are under

the sixth trumpet now : the seventh trumpet will bring on the spiritual reign of Christ over all the nations of the earth ; and the end of this trumpet will be, as it were, the end of the world. And thus the first part of the Revelations ends at the conclusion of the xiith chapter.

P A R T II.

The second part begins at the xiiith chapter, and resumes the consideration of the first grand subjects of the former part, and leads us back to the primitive ages, and the reign of Constantine. The great red dragon signifies the heathen Roman empire. The man-child signifies Constantine the Great, who began his reign in 313, and died in 337. The woman's flight into the wilderness is here anticipated; for it did not happen till 300 years after Constantine.

Chap. xiii. The ten-horned beast is the successor to the great red dragon, and is no other than antichrist, or the man of sin, who succeeded the Roman emperors.

Chap. xiv. exhibits the state of the true church in contrast to the ten-horned beast. We have here three visions :---1. Of the lamb at the head of 144,000. 2. Three angels, i. e. gospel ministers preaching against popery. 3. Of the harvest and vintage.

Chap. xv. contains a preparatory vision before
the

the pouring out of the seven vials, or bowls full of the wrath of God.

Chap. xvi. exhibits the pouring out of seven vials---on earth---sea---rivers and fountains---the sun---the seat of the beast---the river Euphrates---the air, or the vast expanse of the whole kingdom and empire of the devil in our world.

Chap. xvii. is a display of the pope and popery, under the image of a great whore, sitting on a scarlet beast. The beast is the Roman popish empire---the woman is the great city of Rome. See ver. 18.

Chap. xviii. exhibits the eternal ruin of popery, or the utter downfall and destruction of Babylon; with the violent lamentation of the papists on that occasion.

Chap. xix. displays the triumph of the church of Christ on the utter destruction of popery.

Chap. xx. exhibits the binding of Satan for one thousand years---the personal reign of Christ during that period---with a striking view of the terrors of the resurrection and the last judgment.

Chap. xxi. A most beautiful view of the city of God, or the holiness and happiness of the new Jerusalem on earth after the resurrection of the righteous.

Chap. xxii.

Chap. xxii. A continuation of the description of the new Jerusalem state of holiness and happiness, which is the grand point and the utmost period to which this God-breathed book leads, and in which it finally terminates.

Thus, my dear inquisitive lover of truth, I have given you the shortest and the clearest picture of the book of the Revelations in miniature that was in my power to exhibit. I hope you have easily understood it; and if this hath been the case, you will be prepared for a further view of the structure and œconomy of this astonishing book of God on a larger scale; and by this means, you will understand the greatest and best of writers on this book.

I shall therefore begin with the seven churches ---go on to the seven seals---proceed to the seven trumpets---and then begin the second part of the Revelations, at the xiith chapter, and trace out the rise, reign, triumph, and utter ruin of popery, with the absolute victory of Christ and his church over all the powers of earth and hell in a boundless eternity.

I. E P H E S U S,

Was a city of Ionia, in the lesser Asia. It was famous for the temple of Diana, but more so for having a church of Christ in it. The apostle Paul wrote an excellent epistle to the Ephesians.

---This

---This church represented the church in the apostolic age, which was in a state of great light, purity, and love.

2. S M Y R N A,

Is another city of Ionia. It lies about forty-six miles from Ephesus; and is still a famous place for riches and commerce, and the number of its inhabitants.---This church and its pastor represent the state of the church under the ten persecutions of the Roman emperors, from Nero, in 68, to the end of Dioclesian's reign, in the year 313; being a space of 245 years. This was the glorious period of the martyrs.

3. P E R G A M O S,

A city of Mysia, situated by the river Caicus, sixty-four miles from Smyrna.---This church represents the state of the church of Christ, from the time of Constantine and onward; rising up to, and enjoying great power, riches, and honour.

4. T H Y A T I R A,

A city of Lydia, near the river Lycus, distant from Pergamos about forty-eight miles.---This church represents that horrid period which takes in the darkest and most superstitious times of popery, until the REFORMATION, i. e. from Phocas, 606, to Martin Luther, in 1517.

5. S A R D I S,

5. SARDIS,

Another city of Lydia, situated at the side of mount Tmolus. It was the seat of the rich king Cræsus, and is thirty-three miles from Thyatira. ---This church represents the state of the church of Christ, from the time of the reformation by Luther, Calvin, and others, until a more glorious state of the church appears, i. e. till the spiritual reign of Christ in the Philadelphian period. Under the Sardian church state we now are in England, Europe, and America. That this church is an emblem of the reformed churches from popery, is evident from its following the Thyatirian state, which expresses the darkness of popery, and the depths of Satan in that state.

6. PHILADELPHIA,

Another city of Lydia, situated at the foot of mount Tmolus, distant from Thyatira about twenty-seven miles. It had its name from Attalus Philadelphus, the builder of it.---This church is an emblem of, and represents the church in that period of time in which will be the spiritual reign of Christ. Its name signifies brotherly love, which in this interval will be very remarkable. Love, which is now so cold, and so much wanting in our present Sardian church-state, will be exceeding warm and fervent, and in its highest pitch in the Philadelphian state. The characters Christ here assumes
point

point at the holiness of life, truth of doctrine, and purity of discipline, for which this church-state will be distinguished. In this period of time, an open door for the gospel will be set: it will be preached in its power and purity, and will be greatly succeeded. The fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in, and the Jews will be converted,* and all the twelve tribes will be gathered into the land of Judea. Hypocrites and formal professors will be discerned and detected: great honour and respect will be shewn the church by all men: and this state will be an emblem and pledge of the new Jerusalem state, of which mention is made in this epistle, or the thousand years personal reign of Christ with all his saints.

7. L A O D I C E A,

Another city of Lydia, near the river Lycus. It is now, by the Turks, called the *old Camp*, and is inhabited by none, unless by wolves and foxes. See Dr. Smith's account of the Seven Churches, 12mo. This is a curious and instructive book.---This church represents the state of the church from the end of the spiritual reign of Christ till the time of his personal appearing and kingdom to judge the quick and dead: for after
the

* I have attempted to select all the texts of Scripture which speak of the conversion of the Jews and the fulness of the Gentiles in this glorious spiritual state of the church, and have found them to amount to more than four hundred verses.

the spiritual reign is over, professors of religion will sink into a formality, and a lukewarm frame of spirit, and great spiritual sloth and security.

S E V E N S E A L S

Discover the state of the church of Christ under the Roman emperors, pagan.

I. S E A L

Opens the triumph of christianity over the pagan religion, and represents Christ upon a white horse, with a bow and a crown, going forth conquering and to conquer. Rev. vi. 1, 2.

2. S E A L

Represents the reign of the emperors Trajan and Adrian. Trajan is represented on a red horse, to denote the horrid wars and slaughters of the Jews in his reign, anno 100--138. Rev. vi. 3, 4.----Note, In his time John the apostle died.

3. S E A L.

This period commences with Septimius Severus. He is represented on a black horse, denoting famine and death. vi. 5, 6. Anno 138--193.

4. S E A L.

The opening of this seal begins with Maximinus, the Roman emperor, anno 193--270. Death is exhibited as riding on a pale horse, to denote

a concurrence of evils in this reign---of war, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts. This period includes Valerian's reign, and reaches down to Dioclesian, anno 270--286.

5. S E A L

Opens with the reign of Dioclesian, and was dreadfully remarkable for the severest and longest of all the ten pagan persecutions. This is the tenth and last persecution begun by Dioclesian. From hence a memorable æra, called the æra of Dioclesian, or æra of martyrs, anno 284--312. Here we have a vision of the souls under the altar, to denote that they were as sacrifices newly slain and offered to God.

6. S E A L

Opens with the reign of Constantine the Great, anno 313--337. This sixth seal or period is remarkable for great changes and revolutions, expressed by great commotions in the earth and heavens. No change could be greater than the overthrow of the pagan religion, and the establishment of christianity.---See this admirably represented by the great Mr. Robert Millar, in his History of the Propagation of the Christian Religion, 2 vols. 8vo. and in Dr. Gilt, Mr. Lowman, and Dr. Newton, on the vith chapter of the revelations.

REVELATIONS,

R E V E L A T I O N S, chap. vii.

Is a continuation of the sixth seal or period, and is a description of the peace of the church, from the reign of Constantine the Great to the reign of Theodosius the Great; a space of time about seventy years.

7. S E A L

Includes the preparation of the seven angels to take their trumpets. The chief use of this seal was to introduce the seven trumpets.

S E V E N T R U M P E T S.

As the seals foretold the state of the Roman empire before and till it became christian, so the trumpets foreshew the fate of it afterwards.

The design of the trumpets is to rouse the nations against the Roman empire.

I. T R U M P E T

Is a period which begins at the death of Theodosius the Great, in the year 395. This trumpet brings in the famous Alaric with his army of Goths, who began his ravages in the same year that Theodosius died. He invaded the Roman empire, and twice besieged Rome, and set fire to it in several places; but was stopped by Stilicho, the general of the Roman army.

2. T R U M P E T.

On the sounding of this trumpet, a great mountain

mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, and a third part of the sea became blood. Rev. viii. 8. This dreadful image, as it respects the Roman empire, sets before us *ATTILA* and his army of *HUNS*, who wasted the Roman provinces, and compelled the eastern emperor *Theodosius* the second, and the western emperor *Valentinian* the third, to submit to shameful terms, about the year 450.---As it respects the church of Christ, it refers to the error of *Macedonius*, sometime bishop of Constantinople, who attempted to destroy the Godhead of the Holy Spirit, as *Arius* had levelled his artillery against the Godhead of the Son, in the reign of *Constantine* the Great, anno 325.

3. T R U M P E T.

There fell a great star from heaven, burning like a lamp; and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, Rev. viii. 10. This describes *Genseric* and his army of *Vandals*, who came from Africa and plundered Rome, and returned back with immense wealth, anno 455.---As this respects the church, it describes *PELAGIUS* the great Star, called *Wormwood*, who embittered the sweet doctrines of the grace of God. He died in the year 430.---He had a companion yet more dangerous and abler than himself, called *Celestius*. He met with *Pelagius* at Rome, entered into his sentiments,

sentiments, and maintained them with much more subtilty and art.

4. T R U M P E T.

And the third part of the sun was smitten, and a third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars. Rev. viii. 12. This trumpet has respect to that darkness and ignorance which the barbarous nations, the Goths, Huns, and Vandals spread and left throughout the empire. All kind of useful learning and evangelical knowledge declined, and blindness and barbarity took place.---This fourth trumpet began in the year 476, when *Odoacer*, king of the Heruli, came to Rome with an army of Barbarians: he stripped *Momyllus** of the imperial robes, put an end to the very name of the western empire, and caused himself to be proclaimed king of Italy: but he was sixteen years after overcome and slain, in the year 493, by *THEODORIC*, king of the Ostrogoths, who founded the kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy, which continued about sixty years under his successors. From the founding of the fourth trumpet, to the founding of the fifth, was a space of an hundred and thirty-five years; that is, from the deposition of *Augustulus*, in the year 476, to the public preaching of Mahommed, in the year 612.

5. T R U M P E T.

* *Momyllus* was named, in derision, *Augustulus*, being a diminutive *Augustus*

5. T R U M P E T.

I saw a star fall from heaven to the earth, and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit : and there arose a smoke out of the pit, and the sun and air were darkened by the smoke of the pit ; and there came out of the smoke locusts.--- This describes the rise of MAHOMMED, with his eastern locusts, the Saracens ; and the rise of the pope of Rome, with his western locusts, the cardinals, monks, friars, popish bishops, and clergy of that church.---PHOCAS, the villain, murdered his master the emperor MAURITIUS, with his children, and took the imperial crown to himself. He gave to pope BONIFACE the IIIId. the title of Universal Bishop, in 606 ; and from that very time the popes of Rome grasped at spiritual and civil power to come fully up to their title.---MAHOMMED rose at the same time in the east : and as the eastern and western anti-christs rose together, so they will be destroyed together at the end of 1260 years.

Note, Mahommed held that Christ was a meer man, and nothing more ; and exalted himself above our Lord Jesus, and represented himself as a superior prophet.---Mahommed, therefore, was a Socinian, almost a thousand years before Socinus was born. Christ, the glorious sun, was darkened, and the holy Scriptures most grievously beclouded, and most wretchedly perverted, both
by

by the horrid decrees of the popes, and by the filthy Alcoran of Mahommed, the father of all the Socinians in the world.---N. B. He died in the year 631.

6 T R U M P E T.

And the sixth angel sounded; and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, loose the four angels which are bound at the great river Euphrates.---These angels are the Ottoman Turks; and they may be called angels, or messengers, because they were the messengers and executioners of God's wrath upon the eastern empire. These four angels were loosed. They had four princes at the head of the Turks. As soon as the providence of Christ had suffered them to pass the river Euphrates, they were let loose like so many furies, and in a little time over-ran and destroyed the whole eastern empire, and settled their own, now called the Turkish or Ottoman empire; and which was done about the year 1301.*---The empire of the Saracens being intirely demolished by Togrul Beg, or Tangrolipix; and in the year 1453, the Turks took Constantinople, and put an end to the eastern Roman empire. Then it was that the learned Greeks fled from the Turks, and brought their
books

* The Turkish empire begun in Asia, in the year 1057, before they came into Europe above 240 years.

books and learning into Italy and other parts of Europe. Learning revived, and the way was paved for the glorious reformation from popery, in 1517, by Martin Luther. I firmly believe this sixth trumpet began sounding about the year 1300, and under this trumpet we now are, and shall continue to be till the seventh trumpet shall bring on the ruin of popery, the conversion of the Jews, and the fulness of the Gentiles.

Note, In Revelations ix. 16, 17, there is a most astonishing description of the vast armies of the Turks, and of the use of guns and gunpowder in their wars, especially at the siege of Constantinople, in 1453. And as John, in vision, saw the vast armies of horsemen, firing their guns on horseback, it naturally enough appeared to him like fire and brimstone, i. e. gunpowder coming out of the horses mouths. And we are told, that the third part of men, i. e. great multitudes were killed by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone.

Chapter x. is a preparatory vision to the prophecies relating to the western church. The angel with the little book is properly disposed under the sixth trumpet, to describe the state of the western church, after the description of the state of the eastern, which is now totally dismissed from all farther consideration in this book of the Revelations.---The seven thunders are totally

totally unknown.---Tho' the little book describes the calamities of the western church, yet it is declared that they shall all have a happy period under the seventh trumpet. The apostle John was ordered to publish the contents of this little book, as well as the larger book of the Revelations.

Chapter xi. The contents of the little book. The measuring of the temple, to shew, that, during all this period, there were some true christians, who conformed to the rule and measure of God's word. The church to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles, i. e. the papists, in worship and practice, forty and two months, or 1260 years. There have been in all ages true witnesses, who have protested against the corruptions of religion.

Dr. Newton, Bp. of Bristol, gives us a striking and beautiful demonstration, that Christ has had holy and faithful witnesses for the truth, and against popery, in every century since the rise of antichrist. I would, with the utmost ardour and friendship, recommend to every sincere lover of truth and knowledge, that famous part of the third volume of his Dissertations, page 134 to 186, which he stiles, AN HISTORICAL DEDUCTION, to shew that there have been some true WITNESSES, who have professed doctrines contrary to those of the church of Rome, from the seventh century

century down to the REFORMATION. He describes the witnesses in the eighth century, p. 135. Witnesses in the ninth century, p. 137. Witnesses in the tenth century, p. 142. Witnesses in the eleventh century, p. 148. Witnesses in the twelfth century, p. 152. Witnesses in the thirteenth century, p. 163. Witnesses in the fourteenth century, p. 168---the glorious Wickliffe, in 1360. See his life, by the Rev. Erasmus Middleton, in the first volume of his Evangelical Biography, 8vo. 1779. Witnesses in the fifteenth century---John Hus, Jerome of Prague, p. 175. Witnesses in the sixteenth century---Martin Luther, Calvin, with thousands more. Hence an answer to the popish question, Where was your religion before Luther? Our religion, we see, was in the hearts and lives of many faithful witnesses: but it is sufficient, if it was nowhere else, that it was always in the BIBLE, where POPERY never was. The BIBLE, as Chillingworth says, the BIBLE only is the religion of protestants.

7. T R U M P E T.

And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, i. e. the christian church; saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever, Rev. xi. 15--19.

This glorious period is yet to come ; and will commence at the end of our present Sardian state of the church. It will be, indeed, the time of brotherly love, or the Philadelphian state ; in which popery and mahomedism will be utterly destroyed---the Jews will be all converted, and brought into their own land with great honour and prosperity---the fulness of the Gentiles will take place, and the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God in Christ---vital holiness will abound in all parts of the world---great glory and beauty will be put upon the church of Christ---the members of it will intensely love each other---the most tender and pure friendship will prevail every where---kings and queens shall love, and honour, and cherish all the people of God---the enemies of the church will be all crushed and driven out of the earth---great temporal prosperity of all kinds will every where abound and be no snare to the servants of God, but all temporal blessings will be consecrated to God---holiness to the Lord will be written on the bells of the horses, Zech. xiv. 20, ---every thing will be used in a holy manner---God our favour will be seen by every eye, in all his various works of creation, providence, and redemption---there will be no more a canaanite, i. e. a socinian, in the earth, Zech. xiv. 21.---the true and proper Godhead and satisfaction of
Christ

Christ will be acknowledged by eight or nine hundred millions of christians at the same time, all over the earth---and this state of peace, honour, and happiness, will have a duration, a stability, a perpetuity, longer than any prosperous period of the church in former ages---it will only have a short interruption in the Laodicean state, and then shine brighter than ever at the first resurrection, and be, as it were, swallowed up in the boundless glory of the personal reign of the Lord Jesus for a thousand years; while the wicked shall be thrown as ashes under the soles of their feet. Malachi iv. 3.

In this xith chapter of the Revelations, we have, in ver. 15--18, only a summary account of the circumstances and occurrences of the seventh trumpet, but the particulars are dilated and enlarged upon in the following chapters.

And thus are we arrived at the CONSUMMATION of all things, through a series of prophecies, extending from the apostles days to the END of the WORLD.

It is this series (says Dr. Newton) which has been our clue and guide to conduct us in our interpretation of these prophecies; and though some of them may be difficult and hard to be understood, considered in themselves, yet they receive light and illustration from others preceding and following. All together they are a

CHAIN of prophecies, whereof one link depends on, and supports another. If any parts remain yet difficult, they may be cleared up by what the apostle himself hath added by way of explanation.

R E C O L L E C T I O N.

Great and wonderful God, what scenes have passed before our eyes in these few pages: what amazing things have we seen foretold and fulfilled for near seventeen hundred years past. We have seen the primitive apostolic church of Christ represented by the church at Ephesus---we have seen the church enduring ten terrible persecutions for above two hundred and fifty years, represented by the church of Smyrna---we have seen the triumphs of christianity and its professors over the pagan idolatry in the reign of Constantine, represented by the church of Pergamos---we have seen the dark and dismal state of the church, for near a thousand years, in the times of the reign of popery, represented by the church of Thyatira ---we have seen the reformation from popery, begun by Wickliffe, Hus, Jerome of Prague, and Martin Luther, represented by the church of Sardis. Now all this hath been fulfilled, and, therefore, let us be confident, that the glorious Philadelphian state will come next: let us ardently pray for it, and do every thing we are able, to the utmost, to bring it forwards, if possible,

possible, in our day. And what is the best method to be pursued in order to anticipate this glorious state? I answer, fervent prayer; incessant, united, unfainting, resolute, persevering prayer; with a constant study of the Scriptures of GOD, and an honest zeal to know the whole meaning of the revealed truth of GOD.

THE SEVEN SEALS.

With respect to the SEALS---we have seen the first open the triumphs of Christ in the primitive church---the second seal, or period, is noted for war and slaughter, in the reign of Trajan---the third seal, or period, foretels famine and death ---the fourth seal denounces war, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts, and reaches down to the year 270---the fifth seal, or period, declares the tenth and the most severe persecution, which was begun by Dioclesian, and lasted ten years ---the sixth seal displays the triumphs of christianity over paganism, under Constantine the Great, from 313 to 337---and the seventh seal prepares the way for the founding of the seven trumpets.

THE SEVEN TRUMPETS.

We have seen the first trumpet bring on ALARIC, with his GOTHs or *Gothic* barbarians, into the Roman empire---the second trumpet rouses up that terrible monster, who called himself the
scourge

scourge of God and the terror of men, **ATTILA**, with his army of **HUNS**, who plagued the Roman empire for fourteen years---the third trumpet brought in **GENSERIC**, with his **VANDALS**: he was a most bigotted arian, and, during his whole reign, most cruelly persecuted the true christians ---the fourth trumpet brought on the ruin of the Roman empire under *Augustulus*, by **ODOACER**, king of the Heruli---the fifth trumpet brings on the rise of **MAHOMMED** in the east, and the **POPE** in the west---the sixth trumpet prepares the way for the reformation---and the seventh trumpet brings on the utter ruin of Pope and Turk, and issues in the spread of the gospel through the whole world.

Now, my dear reader, are you not astonished and delighted with these views. I protest I am beyond all expression; and I do not repent of all the severe attention I have given to this wonderful book, in order to understand the true structure and œconomy of this grand prophetic system of God. I adore him from my heart that I do understand it: and the whole scheme is so clear, so harmonious in all its parts, so full of consistency, beauty, and good order, that it appears most worthy of God to contrive and reveal, and most worthy of the wisdom of true christians to understand and revere. This is the grand reason which excites me to make it easy and familiar

familiar to young people of a pious and inquisitive taste. It will give me unspeakable pleasure in life and in death, to find that I have been the happy instrument of diffusing through the churches of Christ, the just knowledge of these glorious truths and events, which will open to the whole world of devils, men, and angels: for the wonder of angels, the terror of devils and bad men, and the delight of millions of saints in heaven and earth.

To thee, great God our Saviour, we address ourselves for light and wisdom to understand this book in all its parts, connexions, and ultimate views. To the blessed spirit of Christ we apply for assistance to understand all the sacred canons or rules which have been laid down for the investigation of the true sense of the Scriptures in general, and the genuine meaning of the prophets, of the law, and the gospel in particular: O! give us clear perceptions, and a refined and vivid taste; a just relish for all the grand discoveries of the Bible, and pure devotional passions to make a practical use of all the parts of divine revelation. Let our whole heart and spirit be in the Scriptures: let our utmost delight be in the law of the Lord; and in his gospel let us meditate day and night. May the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom: may we, like Apollos, be mighty in the Scriptures; mighty
in