

Of DIALOGUES.

two Prophecies, or antecedent Events; and they may be both consistently explained by the Key of Knowledge, which these signal Transactions put into our Hands.

Philoponus. I find then I am plunged deep into Mysteries at once: I am to be entertained with *Esoteric* and *Exoteric* as in the Schools of *Pythagoras* and *Plato*; with the *double* Sense of Prophecies, and with the *popular* and *philosophical* Religion.

Myst. Be patient for a few Minutes. It is a Play of Wit, and easily swallowed by the Enemies of Revelation, that where *Mystery* begins, *Religion* ends. It may, on the contrary, be affirmed, that where Mysteries, that is, the Riches of Grace hid under the veil of Types, and of *dark Sayings*, are treated with Contempt by any Person, there never was any true Sense of Religion in that Breast, nor ever will be: All Prophecies are *Mysteries*, or Blessings concealed under Words or Characters for a Time, which when truly understood, discover the Grace and Love of God, as in the terrifying Description of *Joel*, ch. ii. v. 30, 31. when unfolded by *St. Peter*, in an evangelical Sense, for the Descent of the *Holy Spirit* at *Pentecoste*.

Philop. Even *Toland* would not have objected to Mysteries in such a Sense; nor even, if such a dark Veil was put over them, that no profane, or sensual Person should be able to penetrate it, who would abuse the divine Goodness from knowing it more.

Myst. All Mysteries of the Kingdom of *Christ* will conclude in Blessings. But I wave this now—The Birth of this Son, and his immediate Assumption to the Throne of God, from his Mother's Womb, must be again illustrated by the Prophet *Daniel*. He was favoured with the Knowledge of one whom he calls like the Son of Man;

and whom he saw conveyed in the *Clouds of Heaven* to the *Ancient of Days*. *John* reveals the *Woman*, from whom he was taken, where we find the *Seed* of the *Woman* in the first Promise after the *Fall*. He knew too, that this * *Son* was immediately on his Exaltation to the *Throne of God* called *Michael*, that is, who is as *God*, and was placed over the Head of the *Angels* and ministering *Spirits* before the *Throne* of the *Ancient of Days*, as is shewn by *Daniel*.—Do not your Forefathers confess the *Fall* of *Lucifer*, and the *Reseryation* of one *chosen Seed*, or *Son*; and that the *Ancient of Days* is the *most high God*, called the *Elder* of the *Elders*, who sits on the *Throne of Glory* as described by that *Prophet*?

Men. All these *Points* are confessed. We allow too, that *Michael* is the true † *High Priest* who ministers at the *Altar* above: that he is the *High Priest* in *Heaven* who abounds in *Mercy*: and as there is an *High Priest* below, so there is *Michael* the great *Prince* above, answering to all that he below executes in his *Office*. Even the *Talmud* grant as much, as may be seen by this *Passage* in *Chagiga*: In that ‡ *Habitation*, where *Jerusalem* and the *House* of the *Sanctuary*, and the *Altar* are built, *Michael* the great *Prince* stands, and offers the *Oblation* continually.—It is also expressed thus

* *Grotius* calls him the *Strong Man*: The *Reduplication* appears emphatic; but the *Male* seems to refer to the *Lamb* of the *Law*, a *Male* of the first *Year*, and points him out to us, as the *Type* and *Antitype* going together.—Some are stupid enough to ascribe this *Son*, and his exalted *State* to the *Throne*, to *Constantine the Great*: Such is the *Spirit* of *Prophecy*, of interpreting *Scripture* by *Scripture*, adopted by mere *natural Men*, depending only on *Mythology* and *critical Sagacity*.

† *R. Menechem* *Rek. in Legem.* fol. 131.

‡ *Schœtgi* *Hor. Heb.* Vol. ii. 223, 1151. & *Antiq. Jud.* ab *Ugolino*, Vol. x. 764—7.

thus in our Book *Sohar* on the Words of *Daniel*. He cometh with the Clouds of Heaven as the Son of man: The King Messiah is here understood. And in another noted Place in the *Talmud*, Sanhedrim, fol. 98. speaking of the Prophecy of *Zachariah*, Ch. ix. 9. and of *Daniel* Ch. vii. 13. it is said: "If the Israelites behave well or righteously, Messiah will come in the Clouds of Heaven; but if they make themselves unworthy, he will come in a humbler Form, and sitting on an Ass.

Myth. Why is the Messiah called the Son of Man, as the Word *Enosh* signifies a miserable Man, and is derived from the Root *Anash*, to grieve and to be sick. This Word never occurs, (as *Gusset* has observed in his Comments on the Hebrew Tongue) in Sacred History 'till after the Fall, in Gen. vi. 7. And is this Son of Man miserable by the Fall and Expulsion from Paradise, that Son whom the Lord visits, and made the Lord of all his Works? Is it to be understood of any Man, but of that taken from the *Woman*, of whom God was the *Father*, who took him from the Womb to his own Throne, and Power and Glory? And who was to bring him forth in the Fulness of Times in the Form of Man, under Sin and Death, to destroy both these great Evils by his own death and Sufferings?—Is that great Dominion only to be understood of Power over Beasts, Birds, and Fishes, which is so pompously described in the Eighth Psalm? All of which Adam had never wanted, but from the Loss of Paradise, nor any of his Posterity.

Philo. Man is now too wretched a Being to lay Claim to Honour and Glory, I see clearly, therefore the Psalmist cannot intend Man at this Day, whatever else may be intended. I am neuter in the Point, yet I would enquire why this
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