

The question about eating of blood stated and examin'd; in answer to two dissertations in a book entitled, Revelation examin'd with candour [by Patrick Delany] / [John Averill].

Contributors

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THE
QUESTION

ABOUT

Eating of Blood

Stated and Examin'd;

IN ANSWER TO TWO

DISSERTATIONS

In a BOOK entitled,

*Revelation Examin'd with
Candour.*



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Blood Eating

4 pamphlets

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THE
QUESTION

ABOUT

Eating of Blood, &c.



It is with great concern, that I find myself engaged in writing against an advocate for revealed religion. But, as there cannot be a greater advantage given to the enemies of revelation, than to endeavour to vindicate it upon wrong principles: And, as the placing of ceremonials upon an equal foot with fundamentals, may give offence to many well-meaning minds: it is for this reason, that I give myself and the world the trouble of this paper; in considering the true meaning, and true extent of the several precepts in the Old and New Testament, referring to the eating or not eating of blood.

The book which gives occasion to this paper, is entitled, *Revelation examin'd with Candour*, in the second volume of which performance, there are two entire dissertations upon this subject. And as the argument is therein laid in its full strength, and pursued in a regular method; I shall therefore go step by step along with that author, shall make use of his own positions, as frequently as I can, and to prevent unnecessary altercations, shall differ from him as seldom as possible.

The first argument which this author makes use of, is the grant given to *Noah* in the 9th chapter of *Genesis*; where, he says, that the charter of dominion over the animal world given to *Adam*, was enlarged to *Noah*. Here I differ from him at his first setting out. And apprehend, that if this precept given to *Noah* made any alteration in the charter of dominion given to *Adam*, it rather was to restrain it, than enlarge it.

I desire to know what sort of dominion it was, that God gave *Adam* over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth, if it was not a dominion which he was to make use of? And since we find in *Gen. iii. 21.* that upon the expulsion of *Adam* and *Eve* out of paradise, God was pleased to make coats of skins for them, and cloath them; is there not as much reason to apprehend, that the dominion given to *Adam* did extend to the taking away the life of any of the creatures, as well to supply him with food, as with raiment? Besides, if we suppose the stomachs of the *Antideluvians* were formed in the same manner with our stomachs, and find by experience that the stomach of man is at present formed, as well to be carnivorous as graminivorous; I say, that their having stomachs partly formed after the same manner with the stomachs of creatures that lived entirely upon flesh, is as strong a proof to me that they were intended and did feed upon flesh, as their having had feet is a proof of their walking.

And in the 4th chapter of *Genesis* we read accordingly, that *Abel* was a keeper of cattle; and that *Jabal* was the father of such as kept sheep. I would ask, for what use did *Abel* and *Jabal* give themselves the trouble of feeding and guarding sheep and cattle? Was it only for the sake of having their skins to cloath themselves withal? Are not the skins of, those called, wild beasts, remarkably better for that use? And since it is manifest, that the blood and fat

fat were the principal parts consumed in sacrifice; is it to be conceived, that the carcasses of creatures, when they were once killed, were to rot and putrify on the face of the earth, or to be left as a prey for the beasts of the fields, and the fowls of the air; while man, who had a dominion given him over the whole creation, and a stomach formed for the digestion of flesh with ease, and with pleasure, was the only creature that was denied the liberty of using it for food?

Since therefore it appears, that the more probable opinion was, that the charter of dominion given to *Adam* extended to the power of destroying creatures, for the use of man, that is, for food, as well as for raiment; and that we do not find there was any restriction then mentioned, we shall proceed to enquire how far the grant given to *Noah* made any alteration in the original grant. And herein I shall content myself with the words of the author, p. 2. who is before me. ‘ Now one obvious apparent reason of this restriction, is, to prevent unnecessary cruelty in the use of the creatures. Though God in his goodness allowed us to eat them, yet the same goodness wou’d not allow us to be wondrously cruel, or brutal in their destruction: wou’d not allow us to devour them peace-meal, or to eat them alive, like wolves and tygers; but requires, that we should first dispatch them, by draining the blood from them: And this seems to be the sense of the *Jews*, upon this text, when they tell us, that it prohibits the limb of the living creature; for if prohibiting the limb of a living creature, be not a prohibition of cruelty to the creature, it is certainly a prohibition of no sense or significancy.

And was not all this prohibited in the original grant given to *Adam*, though not expressly, yet implicitly, and as fully as if it had been expressed? When the great creator gave a *reasonable creature* dominion over some of the works of his hands, did he

he not give it him to make a *reasonable* use of them? Was not mankind obliged to make use of their reason then, as much as they are now? And was not cruelty to the creature, or luxury in the use of them, &c. as much a crime before the flood, as it has been since.

And that this precept, of not eating flesh with the blood thereof, which was given to *Noah*, was intended only to prevent cruelty to the creatures, while they were alive, is further evinced from the permission in the 14th of *Deut.* given to the *Jews*, to sell creatures, which died of themselves, and of consequence had the blood in them, to an alien or a stranger. For although the alien or stranger were not of the stock of *Abraham*, yet they must be allowed to be of the sons of *Noah*, to whom this prohibition was given. So that, it is putting the scriptures in too ludicrous a light, to suppose God Almighty permitting the *Jews* to sell meat to an alien, which he had before hand prohibited the alien from eating.

But to go on along with our author, who proceeds to enquire, whether the eating of blood, is not also forbidden by this prohibition of eating the flesh with the blood? And to prove this, he first begins with the original text. *But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall you not eat.*

And concludes from thence, that as a reservation of mines and minerals in a lease, gives the lessee no right to the mines or minerals, though he has a grant of the lands: So no reasonable man can infer from thence, that he has a right to the blood. ‘ At least, I think, says he, no man can fairly infer, that there is an express grant made of the blood, and without such a grant, ’tis certain we may not eat it.

But in answer to this, I hope I have already shewed, that there was an express grant given of dominion over the creatures to *Adam*; and, of consequence, of the use of those creatures, as well for food, as for raiment; and, that therein there was

no exception of the blood, is manifest to every one, who has but the least knowledge of the scriptures. And therefore I shall beg leave to make use of this author's words, p. 58. which he lays down as a plain rule of interpretation. ' That general expressions ought not to be extended beyond the reason of them, and the occasion of their being delivered.' And that if he had contented himself with, having explained, p. 8. the grant to *Noah*, and shewing, ' That cruelty to the creatures is plainly prohibited in the words subsequent to it; and that this prohibition was a very proper introduction to the prohibition of murder,' which immediately follows it; he had done well, and wou'd have agreed with all the most learned, and best commentators upon this text, both antient and modern, *Jewish* and Christian.

But our author goes on to enforce his argument, from the agreement between the prohibition given to *Noah*, and the subsequent prohibition given in *Leviticus* and *Deut.* to the *Jews*: wherein the eating of blood is plainly and manifestly forbidden, not only while the creature is alive, but even when the creature is dead, and the blood separated from it.

As to the precepts in *Leviticus* and *Deut.* which mention the eating of blood, the prohibition is there manifest and undoubted. And had the prohibition to the sons of *Noah*, been as plain and explicit in forbidding them the use of blood, I should have acknowledged the sons of *Noah* to be equally obliged to abstain from it. But positive institutions, which are not to be found in the moral law of nature and of reason, should be fully and expressly delivered; and ought to be attended with clear and manifest proofs, not only of their divine origin, but also of the plain intention and will of the law-giver, before they can be declared obligatory on the whole race of mankind; and are not to be stretched, beyond the plain meaning of the letter, by any comments deduced from a set of laws, given

en to a private and peculiar set of people, who were loaded with an insupportable number of ceremonial laws, suited and adapted to their particular temper, climate and situation. And this is what our author himself acknowledges, when he is endeavouring to solve the objection made against his scheme, out of the 14th chap. of *Deut.* where the *Jews*, though they are prohibited to eat any creature that died of itself, and consequently had the blood in it, yet are allowed to give it to an household profelyte, or sell it to a stranger. In answer to which he says, p. 16. ‘ from whence it appears, that this prohibition, was, what men call merely ceremonial, even with regard to them, (*i. e.* the *Jews*) and calculated more to keep up their separation, from other nations, than to guard against any crying guilt in the action itself.

As to the *Jews*, I will not deny that, while they hold the law of *Moses* to be obligatory, they are obliged to abstain from blood: but I do not apprehend, that the rest of the sons of *Noah*, who are not *Jews*, are under any obligation to observe any of the precepts in the bible, except those, which are plainly and fully declared to belong to all mankind; or are contained in the moral law of nature and of reason; or are declared by *Christ* or his apostles to be obligatory on all such as are willing to be made partakers of the benefits of the Christian dispensation.

But our author now proceeds, p. 29. to ‘ shew in the third place, that this prohibition of eating blood lyes upon all mankind to this day, and upon Christians in a peculiar manner.’ This indeed is coming to the point, and here we shall endeavour to attend him in his reasonings.

‘ And the proof of this, says he, lies within the compass of one plain argument. If the eating of blood never was permitted either before the flood, or under the law, or under the gospel, then surely no man in his senses, will say ’tis now lawful to eat it.

But

But how quickly does this boasted argument fall to the ground, when its imaginary prop is taken away; by shewing, that the charter of dominion given by God to *Adam*, did include a grant of the use of flesh for food, without any restriction concerning the eating of blood? which, I hope, I have already shewn to be the more probable opinion, and more than probability cannot be produced on either side. But he goes on, and says, ‘Nay the argument is yet stronger; for it was not only not permitted in any of these periods, but, in truth it is plainly enough prohibited in the first of them, &c. in that part of the curse denounced upon man after the fall; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread; till thou return to the ground.

This argument is so exceedingly forced to make it serve a turn, that I need only quote the grant given to *Adam* to shew the weakness, and the fallacy of it. In the first chap. of *Genesis*, after the charter of dominion given to *Adam* in the 28th verse, *over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing, that moveth upon the earth*, it is added in the verse following, *and God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every TREE, in the which is the FRUIT OF A TREE yielding seed; to you it shall be for MEAT.*

Now if *Adam* and his sons in him, ‘were precluded from all other food but *bread* and *herbs*, by that express peremptory prescription mentioned, ‘*Gen. iii. 17, 18, 19.*’ I desire to know by what authority, either *Adam*, after he was driven out of paradise, or any of his sons, cou’d presume to feed upon the fruit of any tree? since the grant of feeding upon the fruit of any tree yielding seed, is as different a grant from that of feeding upon herbs,

as the charter of dominion given to *Adam* over all cattle, and fish, and fowls of the air. And in the supposed new grant given to *Noah*, there is no mention made of the fruit of the tree; so that if this argument has any force in it at all, it is as strong against eating of *fruit*, as eating of *blood*, which I do not apprehend our author will insist upon.

But he proceeds to shew, that the prohibition, which was given to the *Jews* against eating of blood, was renewed to the Christians, by a general decree of the apostles. And if he can do this, I think he sufficiently attains his end; since it avails nothing to us, who profess ourselves Christians, whether *Adam* or *Noah*, or even the *Jews* were, or were not forbid eating of blood; provided it can be shewed to be obligatory on all Christians in any part of the new testament.

For my own part, I freely acknowledge myself to be a Christian; and that I should be obliged to obey any precept which came from God, provided I had rational assurances of its divine origin, though I cou'd not thoroughly penetrate into all the reasons which might be assigned for it. When providence is pleased to give his reasons, I think we ought to be content therewith; better, I dare venture to say, cannot be given: And since he has been pleased to assign this, as the reason, why he prohibited the *Jews* from eating of blood, because he had reserved it to himself in sacrifice, we need not torture our imagination to search for others of less force and significancy; *For the life of the flesh is in the blood*, says he, *and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an attonement for your souls. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood.*

As to the rest of the reasons assign'd by this author for this prohibition, wherein he mentions the fierceness of carnivorous animals, the fastidiousness of a flesh diet, and that blood is apt to breed *choler*, and therefore make men *choleric*, I do not think they have weight enough in them to require an answer.

And

And shall only beg leave to remind him of one thing which he seems to forget, when he says, p. 37. that ‘ we have as much reason to abstain ‘ from blood, now, in commemoration of the at- ‘ tonement made by the blood of *Christ*, for the ‘ sins of the whole world, as it was to abstain from ‘ it in view of that attonement, &c.

I freely acknowledge that gratitude and thanksgiving are the noblest parts of the duty of a reasonable creature ; but hope he recollects, that the receiving of bread and wine, in the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, was instituted by *Christ* himself in commemoration of the innumerable benefits, which by his precious blood shedding he hath obtained to us ; and as a continual remembrance of his death to our great and endless comfort.

And the appointment of this institution by our Saviour *Jesus Christ*, for this very end and purpose, in commemoration of that oblation of himself once offered, wherein he made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world ; is a strong proof to me, that although the precept to *Noah* had been conceived in as full and ample terms, as that which was given afterwards to the *Jews*, yet its obligation wou’d have ceased, when the sacrifice and the oblation ceased. *Cessante ratione cessat lex.*

All the other types, either of our Saviour’s coming, or of his death, vanished in their accomplishment ; and the obligation of observing them was disannulled in their being fulfilled ; how much more then ought this type to cease, on the ceasing of the oblation and sacrifice ; especially when we consider, that *Christ* was pleased to appoint a new, and particular institution in remembrance of that sacrifice, which he offered for the sins of mankind in his own person on the cross ?

But to come to the point ; whether there is any part of the scriptures of the new testament, which obliges all Christians in a peculiar manner to abstain

from eating of blood? And this our author apprehends to be sufficiently manifest from the decree made by the apostles in the 15th chap. of the *Acts*; where we read, that after a long and solemn debate upon the question, whether the *Gentile* converts to christianity were obliged to observe the law of *Moses*? it was at last determined, that they were not; and that no more should be required of them than to abstain from pollution of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

Here let us join issue. And first, I will acknowledge, that I do allow this part of the scriptures to be genuine; I do likewise allow that the practice of abstaining from blood had a long continuance in a great part of the Christian church, and especially among the *Greeks*: that this prohibition hath crept in also among the canons called apostolical; but not among the first fifty, which are undoubtedly of better authority than the remaining ones.

But the question between us is not, whether it was customary in the primitive times of christianity to abstain from blood? but whether the continuance of that custom has any foundation to support it in the scriptures of the new testament? So that the true state of the question will be this, whether the decree made by the apostles, in the 15th chap. of the *Acts*, is to be understood, as a *general* precept to *all* Christians, to continue for *ever*? or only, as a *particular* direction to some *particular* christians; the observance of which, was to continue no longer than the *Jewish* temple, and *Jewish* government subsisted?

This is the state of the case, which I apprehend will best be determined by consulting the scriptures of the New Testament, and enquiring to whom this decree was directed.

However, it may be necessary first to premise, that in the *Jewish* religion there were two sorts of profelytes, those which were called profelytes of righteousness, and those who were called profelytes of the gate. The profelytes of righteousness differed from

from the *Jew* in nothing but his birth, being circumcised, and obliged to conform himself to all the ceremonials of the *Jewish* law, and of consequence admitted into the full possession of all the benefits and advantages of the *Jewish* religion. The profelyte of the gate, who, in the language of the Old Testament, is called *the stranger that sojourneth within thy gates*, was only admitted into some of the privileges of the *Jewish* church, and only obliged to conform to some of the ceremonies of the *Jewish* religion: They were admitted into the *Synagogues*, and into the outward court of the temple, which was therefore called the court of the *Gentiles*; and in the 17th chap. of *Leviticus*, are peremptorily prohibited from eating of things offered unto idols, from things strangled, and from blood.

These profelytes of the gate are, in the language of the New Testament, sometimes called *Gentiles*, sometimes *Greeks*, sometimes *worshippers*, sometimes *devout*, *pious*, or *prudent men*, and sometimes they are denoted by the appellation of those *who fear God*. This decree is plainly directed to those, *who from among the Gentiles are turned unto God*.

The question therefore is, whether this was an universal decree to all *Gentiles*, or only intended for those who were profelytes of the gate in the *Jewish* religion? In order to determine which, it will be necessary to look a little into the life of *St. Paul*, and see what sort of *Gentiles* they were, whether *idolatrous Gentiles*, or *Gentile profelytes of the gate* which he had hitherto converted; and of consequence, who they were that gave occasion to this decree, *both* being indifferently styled by the common appellation of *Gentiles*.

In the 13th chap. of the *Acts* is the first mention of *St. Paul's* mission to the *Gentiles*, where it is said, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, *That there were in the church, that was at Antioch, (in Cœle-Syria) certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had*

had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministred unto the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted, and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed into Seleucia, and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word in the synagogue of the Jews. And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they there converted Sergius Paulus, who was a Gentile profelyte of the gate, as appears from his intimacy with Barjesus the Jew, and his calling for Barnabas and Saul, and desiring to hear the word of God; since it is plain, that he must believe in God, before he would desire to hear the word of God, the word of God and the gospel of Christ being always used in the New Testament as synonymous terms.

Ver. 13, 14, 15, 16. Now when Paul and his companions loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia. But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. Then Paul stood up, and beckening with his hand, said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience; and ver. 26. he says, Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God. Where, by the words, ye that fear God, and whosoever among you feareth God, it is manifest he directs his discourse to the Gentile profelytes of the gate, who were not men of Israel, nor children of the stock of Abraham, and yet were admitted into the synagogue.

I have been somewhat particular in the quotations which I have made out of this 13th chapter of the Acts, because our author seems to triumph mightily

mightily upon this subject, when he says, ‘ Now
 ‘ this transaction at *Antioch* happen’d seven years
 ‘ before the decree against blood and things strang-
 ‘ led was pass’d by the apostles at *Jerusalem*. Can
 ‘ any man in his senses doubt, after this, whether
 ‘ the apostles preach’d to the *Gentiles* before the
 ‘ passing of that decree? If by the *Gentiles* our au-
 ‘ thor means *idolatrous Gentiles*, I must inform him, that
 there is a person who imagines himself in his senses,
 that not only doubts, whether the apostles preach-
 ed to the *idolatrous Gentiles* before the passing of the
 decree; but apprehends he has very good reasons
 to believe, that St. *Paul* never made any converts
 from among the *idolatrous Gentiles*, till a year, at
 least, after the decree was pass’d, in his next apo-
 stolical journey at *Thessalonica*. And it is to the
Gentile converts from idolatry in this city, that the
 first epistle which St. *Paul* ever wrote as an apostle,
 is directed above two years after the passing of the
 decree at *Jerusalem*.

I desire this author further to consider, that it
 was *ten* years after St. *Paul*’s conversion, before he
 received his mission to the *Gentiles*. And where is
 the absurdity of supposing, that his first apostolical
 journey was directed to those *Gentiles* who were
 profelytes of the gate, especially since we find that
 those *Gentiles* to whom St. *Paul* preach’d at *Antioch*
 in *Pisidia*, and every where else in this journey,
 were *Gentile profelytes of the gate*. For first of all it
 may be observed, that it was in the *synagogue* of the
Jews, on a *sabbath-day*, that he preach’d to them.
 And, secondly, he address’d himself to them by the
 particular denomination of those *who fear God*,
 and *whosoever among you feareth God*; characteristicks
 that would not be applicable to *idolatrous Gentiles*.

It is moreover said, ver. 43. that *when the Jews*
were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought
that these words might be preach’d to them the next sab-
bath. If these were *idolatrous Gentiles*, why should
 they confine the preaching of *Paul* to the next *sab-*
bath?

bath? every day was equal to them, and every place fitter than the synagogue. *And the next sabbath-day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God,* ver. 44. By the expression of *almost the whole city* is meant no more than a great multitude, as is manifest to any one who is the least versed in the scripture phrase, and the eastern method of writing. And if we consider the sermon which *St. Paul* preach'd, and which the *Gentiles* desired to hear over again, we shall find it far from being such an one as is proper to be preached for the conversion of *idolatrous Gentiles*. It is an abstract of the history of the Old Testament, and concludes with shewing the superiour benefits that will attend mankind by believing in *Christ*, than by conforming to the law of *Moses*. I should only desire my reader will peruse the sermon, which *St. Paul* makes to the *idolatrous Gentiles* at *Athens*, *Acts* xvii. 22. and to say whether he thinks it consistent with the wisdom and abilities of that great orator to attempt converting *idolatrous Gentiles* by the sermon preach'd in the 13th chapter of the *Acts* to the *Gentiles* at *Antioch*.

But to proceed, ver. 45. *when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.* Here it is manifest, that the *Jews* knew nothing of the request which the *Gentile* profelytes had made the last sabbath to *Paul*, to preach the same words the next sabbath-day: for it is observed, ver. 42. that the *Gentiles* did not make this request till the *Jews* were gone out of the synagogue. The profelyte *Gentiles* therefore were gathered in a great body together the next sabbath to hear the word of God according to appointment. And this was it that raised the envy of the *Jews*, when they saw such a multitude.

Ver. 46, 48. *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoke to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life,*
lo,

to, we turn to the Gentiles. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed; and the word of the Lord was PUBLISHED throughout all the region.

Here our author observes, p. 47. ‘ Does any one know the Jews so little, as to imagine, that when the apostles turned to the Gentiles from them, the Jews would after this suffer those apostles to preach to the Gentiles in their synagogues?’ But if this author had allowed himself patience to read one Verse further in this chapter, ver. 50. he would have found it said, that the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. Besides it is not said that the word of the Lord was preached by Paul and Barnabas throughout all the region; but that it was published, that is, that an account of it was spread abroad, or carried by the profelyte Gentiles throughout all the region. For the original word which is here translated published is the same with that made use of by St. Mark, where he says, ch. xi. ver. 6. that Jesus would not suffer that any man should carry a vessel through the temple.

Being then driven out of Antioch, the apostles came to Iconium, Acts xiv. 1, 6, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27. And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of Jews, and also of the Greeks (profelytes of the gate, as appears from their being in the synagogue) believed. From thence they were forced to flie unto Lystra, and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia. And when they had preached the gospel to those cities, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch. And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia. And thence they sailed to
C Antioch,

Antioch, (in *Cæle-Syria*) from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

Here is a full account of St. Paul's first apostolical journey, from his first mission to the *Gentiles*, to his return to *Antioch*, from whence he had been sent. And from the whole I apprehend it plainly appears, that the *Gentiles* to whom the door of faith had been opened in this journey, were not idolatrous *Gentiles*, but *Gentiles* who had been profelytes of the gate in the *Jewish* religion. In this journey there is not the least notice taken of the conversion of one idolatrous *Gentile*, nor of St. Paul's preaching to them, except at *Lystra* in *Lycaonia*, where the inhabitants would willingly have sacrificed to them; and the speech which he makes to them there upon that account, is so different from that which he made to the *Gentiles* at *Antioch*, that it is impossible to conceive the persons he speaks to in both places, to be persons of the same religion. In this speech at *Lystra* he only finds fault with them for their idolatry; and recommends the belief of one true God, creator of heaven and earth, and all things that are therein: And the success that he met with is also different; for it is observed, that *with these sayings scarce restrained he the people, that they had not done sacrifice*; but does not say the least word to them either of the law of *Moses*, or the gospel of *Christ*. Whereas in other places it is said, that *he preached the gospel, and preached the word*; that he frequented the *synagogues*, and directed his discourse not only to the *Jews*, but also to the *Gentiles*, and that *as many as were ordained to eternal life believed*.

These are the *Gentiles* who were the occasion of that apostolical decree which is the subject of the present dispute; for here it was at *Antioch* that this question

question was started, which gave occasion to the decree, *Acts xv. 1, 2, 4, 5.* *When certain men who came down from Judea, taught the brethren, and said, except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem, unto the apostles and elders, about this question. And when they were come to Jerusalem, there arose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which believed, saying, that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. Upon which the apostles enter into debate, and St. James concludes the whole with saying, ver. 19, 20. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned unto God. But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. And then he adds the reason; for Moses of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day.*

I must here appeal again to the judgment of my reader, whether this reason assigned here by St. James be a proof that this decree was directed to the *idolatrous* or the *profelyted Gentiles*? If it be supposed to refer to the *idolatrous Gentiles*, the force of it will run thus, as our author explains it, p. 41. ‘ There is no necessity of writing to any *Jewish* convert, or to any profelyte convert to christianity, to abstain from these things; because all that are admitted into the synagogues (as the profelytes were) know all these things sufficiently already’. What did they know? Did they know that they were not to be circumcised, and were not to observe any of the law of *Moses*, except the prohibitions herein specify’d? Was not this the very question, about which the debate arose, and the decree was made?

But, if this decree be supposed to be directed to the *profelyted* Gentiles, the reason assigned at the end of it will bear an easy, and a natural interpretation. For, says St. *James*, the profelytes of the gate, who have of old time been admitted in the synagogues and have heard the law of *Moses* read to them, know that they are thereby obliged to forbear from these things: Therefore let us inform them, that if they continue to observe them still, they will do well: But that we do not require them to conform to any more of the ceremonies of the law of *Moses*.

And therefore in the penning of the decree, *Acts* xv. 28, it is said, *It seemed good unto the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burthen, than these necessary things.* That is, these things which you were necessarily obliged to abstain from as *profelytes of the gate*, according to the law of *Moses*. Which exposition agrees perfectly well with the observation, which the learned *Grotius* makes upon this text, who says, *Est ἑπὶ ἀναγκῆς vox pure Græca, diciturque de iis rebus quæ lege fieri oportet.* Dr. *Hammond* likewise observes upon the following verse, 29. *That ye abstain from meat offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication, from which keeping your selves, ye shall do well.* That *διατηροῦντες ἑαυτὸς* keeping your selves, is an expression in the present tense, as if this was no new direction to be observed for the future only, but a direction for them to continue the forbearance of those meats, which they had hitherto abstained from, as *profelytes of the gate*.

And here it may not be improper to remark, that this decree which was made for the *Gentile* profelytes of the gate, was entirely consistent with the practice of the apostles, with regard to themselves; for though they were Christians, yet as long as the *Jewish* government and temple subsisted, they went to the temple to pray, they kept the passover; and attended at *Jerusalem* at the great feasts of the year. And not only conformed themselves, but encouraged

ed all the *Jewish* Christians likewise to conform to the ceremonial parts of the *Jewish* law.

But although they thought this was expedient for them who were *Jews*, yet it was far from being their opinion, that those, who were not *Jews*, ought to put that yoke on their neck, which neither their fathers nor they were able to bear. Hence it was, that *Timothy*, whose mother was a *Jewess*, was circumcised; because *partus sequitur ventrem*. But *Titus*, whose parents were *Greeks*, was not circumcised: For as *St. Paul* says to the *Corinthians*; *Is any man called being circumcised, let him not become uncircumcised: Is any called in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised: And in the 9th chap. he says, unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews: To them that are under the law, (or to the Gentile profelytes of the gate) as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law: To them that are without law, (or to the idolatrous Gentiles) as without law, that I might gain them, that are without law.*

When therefore the question was started, what part of the *Jewish* ceremonial law the *Gentile* profelytes of the gate should be obliged to conform to on their becoming Christians? The answer is plain. Let them not be obliged to any others than they were before they became Christians; but while they are *under the law*, that is, during the continuance of the *Jewish* temple and *Sanedrim*, let them behave themselves as persons *under the law*.

And that these were *Gentile profelytes of the gate*, about whom this question was moved, is further manifest from the argument which *St. Peter* makes use of in the debate, *Acts xv. 7.* where he says, that *God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should bear the word of the gospel, and believe.* And it is remarkable, that *St. James* makes use of this speech of *St. Peter's*, as the preface, and introduction to the decree. Now that the persons herein alluded to, were *Gentile profelytes of the gate*, plainly appears from the description given of them

in the 10th chap. of the *Acts*. That *there was a certain man in Cæsarea, called Cornelius, a Centurion, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house: which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway; which description will hardly agree with an idolatrous Gentile, but is very suitable to a profelyte of the gate.*

And indeed, unless this interpretation be allowed of, I know not how to reconcile the account which St. Paul gives of himself in the 2d chap. to the *Galatians*, with the account which St. Luke gives of him in the 15th chap. of the *Acts*. St. Luke says, when *Barnabas and Paul* were sent up to *Jerusalem*, about the determination of this question, that they passed through *Phœnice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles*. And, that when they were come to *Jerusalem*, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders; and that all the multitude kept silence and gave audience to *Barnabas and Paul*, declaring the wonders God had wrought among the *Gentiles*: Whereas when St. Paul gives an account of the conversion of the *Gentiles*, in his letter to the *Galatians*, he says, that when he went up to *Jerusalem* and communicated unto them that gospel which he preached among the *Gentiles*, he did it *privately* or severally one by one, as the original word denotes, to those who were of reputation. Now since it is impossible, that the time mentioned in the 2d chap. of the *Galatians*, of St. Paul's being at *Jerusalem*, could be before that mentioned *Acts 15*, as will manifestly appear to any one who will but consult the history of St. Paul's life; there is but one way of reconciling these accounts, and that is by supposing, that the conversion of the *Gentiles* which he *publicly declared* was the conversion of the *Gentiles*, who beforehand had been profelytes of the gate. Whereas that gospel, which he preached to the *Gentiles*, but communicated *privately to those who were of reputation*, was the gospel, which he preached some time after to the idolatrous *Gentiles*. And

And indeed, if we were to consult only our reason, and had no further light from the history of the Bible, wou'd it not be reasonable to believe, that when the gospel of *Christ* had been published to the *Jews*, and confined to them; that the first *Gentile* converts should be those, who were half *Jews*, who believed in the same God, and were admitted to the synagogues, where the apostles always took an opportunity of preaching to the *Jews*? Is it not, I say, more reasonable to believe, that these should be the first *Gentile* converts, than idolatrous *Gentiles*, who had no opportunity of hearing the gospel of *Christ* preached, till some apostles were particularly commissioned to go among them, and who had an infinitely greater number of prejudices to be removed?

I shall trouble my reader but with one argument more upon this head, which, I apprehend will sufficiently confirm the truth of what I have hitherto asserted; that if this decree had been intended, as a rule for the idolatrous *Gentiles*, St. Paul, when he wrote to them afterwards upon any of these heads, would certainly have taken notice of this decree; whereas he, on the contrary, permits them not only to eat all sorts of meat, without any exception either of things strangled, or of blood, but also things offered to idols. Thus in his epistle to the *Romans*, he says, *That nothing is unclean of itself, but to him that esteemeth it unclean, it is unclean.* He therefore warneth them to forbear eating any particular meats, when it may give offence to any one, whom he calleth weak. And when he is talking of meats offered to idols, he is so far from forbidding them to eat it, that he allows them to do it even in the temple of an idol; provided it be not done, so as to give offence to any weak brethren, or by way of devotion paid to the idol. His words upon this head to the *Corinthians* are very remarkable. *As concerning the eating those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world; howbeit there is not in every man that know-*
ledge;

ledge; for some, with conscience of the idol unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled: But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither if we eat are we better; neither if we eat not are we worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hath knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him, which is weak, be emboldened to eat those things, which are offered to idols; that is, to eat them by way of offering to an idol; where we may take notice, that St. Paul allows, that a man who hath knowledge, may sit at meat in the idol's temple; and only prohibits their eating meat offered to idols, when it may give offence to weak brethren. And in the 10th chap. he says, *whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake; for the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. If any of them that believe not, bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you eat, asking no question for conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, this is offered in sacrifice to idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake; conscience I say, not thine own, but of the others.* Here is no mention made of the decree; on the contrary, here is a positive command, when a Heathen bids you to a feast, that you eat, whatsoever is set before you, asking no question; and only prohibits them from eating of meats offered to idols, when it may offend the conscience of other people: and puts it on a level with eating any kind of meat even the most innocent. For, says he, in the conclusion of the 8th chapter, *Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will not eat flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.* And in the conclusion of the 10th chap. he says, *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory God. Give no offence, neither to the Jew, nor to the Gentile, nor to the church of God. Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.* This

This is as strong and plain a proof, as any argument can be, that the decree, mentioned in the *Acts*, was not intended for the direction of the idolatrous *Gentiles*. *St. Paul* was the person sent to *Jerusalem* from *Antioch* to consult the apostles. *St. Paul* was the person sent back with the decree to *Antioch*. *St. Paul* writes afterwards to the idolatrous *Gentiles* about abstaining from particular meats, and especially meats offered to idols; he takes no notice of the decree, but gives them leave to eat all sorts of meat without exception, even in a heathen temple; and only requires them not to abuse this liberty by giving offence to weak brethren.

I shall therefore take it for granted, that this decree was directed to those *Gentiles*, who were *proselytes of the gate*, and who were, by the law of *Moses* obliged to abstain from meat offered to idols, from things strangled, and from blood. And then I shall only ask this plain question, how does this prohibition affect us?

As to the reason, why *fornication*, which is an offence against the law of nature, shou'd be added in and joined along with things in their own nature indifferent, but as they were forbidden by the *Jewish* ceremonial law: The reason for this is, I own, conjectural.

That tho' *fornication* is an offence against the law of nature, when strictly and impartially considered, yet the *Gentiles* did not acknowledge it such, as may plainly appear to any one, who either reads *Terence*, or *Horace*, or *Cicero*; where though adultery is allowed to be a crime, yet *fornication* is not esteemed to be one. I am not certain, whether it was not as lightly thought of by the *Jews*. I don't find the word *fornication* used in the old testament but in one chap. of *Ezekiel*, and then it rather seems to allude to idolatry, which is often in the old testament denoted by the words whoredom and adultery. And that which makes this reasoning the stronger, is, that there is no other offence against the law of

nature mentioned in this decree. Because that although both *Jews* and *Gentiles* might frequently offend against them, yet they knew them to be crimes. Whereas this was a crime, which was often committed, perhaps without their imagining it to be one. The adding therefore of fornication in the decree, seems to be entirely prudential in the apostles. And what adds to the force of the former reasoning, and shews that this decree was intended only for those *Gentiles*, who were profelytes of the gate, is, that *St. Paul*, when he is writing to the *Gentiles*, converted from idolatry, and warning them against fornication, never once takes notice of this decree; but mentions it as an offence against the law of nature. And writing to the *Galatians*, he joins it with *adultery, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.*

I have now done with this subject; and if this paper does contribute to quiet the minds of any of those who were doubtful about the lawfulness of eating of blood, I attain the end, which I proposed in writing it. All that I attempted was to put this argument, which *Dr. Hammond* has but slightly touched upon, in an easy and full light; and have designedly been as short, as I possibly could. And shall add no more, but join with the author before me, in quoting the words of *St. Paul*, *Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not: and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth.* I am very sensible, that men of great abilities, learning, and integrity may differ in opinion from me; and perhaps the more on account of all those qualifications, save only their integrity: but I hope they will allow that men of integrity at least, may differ also in opinion from them.

P O S T S C R I P T.

THE author of the two dissertations about blood, in that part of his dissertation, where he says, p. 46. ‘ Now this transaction at *Antioch* happened seven years before the decree against blood and things strangled was passed by the apostles at *Jerusalem*;’ is so unfortunate, in my apprehension, as to labour under two mistakes. The first of which is indeed rather an inadvertency than a mistake, in not distinguishing between this *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, where *St. Paul* is said to preach to the *Gentiles* in the synagogue of the *Jews*, mentioned *Acts* xiii, and *Antioch* in *Cæle-Syria*, from whence he had been sent by the Holy Ghost to the conversion of the *Gentiles*; for by not attending to this necessary distinction between two cities of the same name, he calls *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, where this transaction happened, that ample city, p. 45. and says, that ‘ the *Jews* themselves were but an handful, compared to the rest of the inhabitants of that great city;’ for which I cannot find that he has any authority in history; but these descriptions may very well be applied to *Antioch* in *Cæle-Syria*, which indeed may be called a great and an ample city, and its inhabitants allowed to be very numerous. The second mistake is of greater consequence, where he says, that this transaction at *Antioch* happened seven years before the decree against blood. He is led into this mistake by supposing that the time of *St. Paul*’s being at *Jerusalem*, mentioned *Acts* xv. is the same with his being at *Jerusalem*, mentioned *Galatians* ii. In this error I must, however, acknowledge, that he is supported by very great authority; by the authority of Archbishop *Usher*, Bishop *Pearson*, *Grotius*, and almost every body, that has hitherto wrote upon the subject. I declined taking notice of this mistake in the body of my answer to his dissertations; because I had no mind to interrupt the thread of my reasoning, by a critical dissertation in vindication of my own opinion; for which, I apprehended, it wou’d be necessary

fary to assign my reasons, when I presumed to differ from such a number of very learned writers.

The reasons which have misled so many great men into this mistake, were probably these. First, that St. *Paul* mentions in the 2d of *Galatians*, that he *then* communicated to the apostles that doctrine, which he preached among the *Gentiles*. Whereas this was manifestly his errand, when he was sent up from *Antioch* to *Jerusalem*, to consult the apostles, whether the *Gentile* converts shou'd be circumcised, as is fully related in the 15th chap. of the *Acts*.

Secondly, that in the 2d chap. of the epistle to the *Galatians*, St. *Paul* declares he went up to *Jerusalem* in company with *Barnabas* and *Titus*. Now it appears, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* parted soon after their return from *Jerusalem* to *Antioch*, on a dispute about *Mark*, who was *Barnabas's* sister's son. And therefore it is concluded that this journey, mentioned *Galatians* the 2d, must be some time before the disension, which happened between them. And since the chronology of St. *Paul's* life, will not allow it to be before the time of the transaction mentioned *Acts* the 15th, they have therefore unanimously agreed to fix them both to the same period of time.

As to the first of these arguments, I apprehend that there are proofs to be drawn from the very circumstances of these facts, as they are related in the 15th chap. of the *Acts*, and the 2d of the *Gal.* sufficient to convince any person, that these transactions cou'd not possibly be at the same time. For first it is said in the 15th chap. of the *Acts*, That as *Paul* and *Barnabas* went to *Jerusalem* through *Phenice* and *Samaria*, they declared the conversion of the *Gentiles*, and that when they were come to *Jerusalem*, they were received of the church, and of the apostles, and elders. And that all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to *Barnabas* and *Paul*, declaring what miracles and wonders *God* had wrought among the *Gentiles*. Whereas in that account, which St. *Paul* gives of himself in the 2d chap. of the *Galatians*,
he

he says, that when he came to *Jerusalem*, he communicated unto them that gospel which he preached among the *Gentiles*, but *privately* and only to them that were of reputation; he likewise says, that he went up this time *by revelation*; whereas it is manifest, when he went up from *Antioch*, as mentioned *Acts* the 15th, that he was *sent up* by the church at *Antioch*, on purpose to consult the apostles at *Jerusalem*. Which accounts are so exceeding different, that one cannot well imagine the transactions referred to by them could happen at the same time of *St. Paul's* being at *Jerusalem*.

As to the other reason, which is assigned to prove these transactions to be the same, because it is said in *Gal.* the 2d, that *Barnabas* went up along with *Paul* to *Jerusalem*: This indeed, has some weight in it, and wou'd be of great force, if it could not be shewed from other circumstances, that these two transactions could not possibly have happened at the same time. For then we must suppose, that although these two apostles separated from each other at *Antioch*, and took different routs in their progress to the *Gentiles*; yet as they made frequent returns to *Jerusalem*, at the great feasts of the year, it is not improbable, that they might afterwards meet upon the road, and so go to *Jerusalem* in company together.

I shall now therefore proceed to shew, from the history and chronology of *St. Paul's* life, that these two transactions could not possibly have happened at the same time.

And this I propose to do by shewing, that one of them was before *St. Paul's* journey to *Corinth*; and that the other could not be till near two years afterwards; from whence it will appear, that there could not have intervened above *three* years, from the time of *St. Paul's* preaching at *Antioch*, to the time of the making the *decree* against eating of blood, &c.

In the first chap. of *St. Paul's* epistle to the *Galatians*, he says, that upon his conversion he *confer'd not with flesh and blood*; neither went up to *Jerusalem*,

to them that were apostles before him; but went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after THREE years, says he, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. And in the 2d chap. of the Galatians, he says, then FOURTEEN years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus along with me also. From whence it is manifest, that this journey to Jerusalem could not be till upwards of seventeen years after the conversion of St. Paul.

St. Paul is allowed on all hands, to have been converted in the year of our Lord 35, that is, about two years after the death of our Saviour; to which if you add upwards of three years, which St. Paul spent before he went to Jerusalem, where he went, says bishop Pearson, towards the latter end of the year, this will bring us to the latter end of the year 38; to which if you add 14 years more, which he reckons before the time of this transaction, this will carry us on to the beginning of the year 53.

Having thus fixed the period of time, in which St. Paul went up to Jerusalem, as mentioned in the second chap. of the Galatians, let us now see, if we can also fix the time of the transaction mentioned in the 15th chap. of the Acts. And this we shall be best able to perform, by looking a little into the life of St. Paul; and enquiring into some of the remarkable transactions of his life; which may furnish us with some certain æra, whereby we shall be able to determine this affair.

In the 15th chap. of the Acts, it is said, that Paul and Barnabas returned from Jerusalem to Antioch; and that upon a contention, which happened between them about MARK, they departed asunder one from the other: And so BARNABAS took MARK, and sailed unto CYPRUS: And PAUL chose SILAS, and departed, and went through SYRIA, and CILICIA. Then came to * DERBE and LYSTRA. And when he had gone through PHRYGIA, and the region of GALA-

TIA,

* Acts xvi. v. 1, 6, 8, 11, 12.

TIA, passing by MYSIA, they came down to TROAS. And from TROAS they came with a streight course to SAMOTHRACIA, and the next day to NEAPOLIS; and from thence to PHILLIPPI. † And when they departed, and had passed through AMPHIPOLIS, and APOLLONIA, they came to THESSALONICA. And the brethren sent away PAUL and SILAS by night to BEROEA, from whence the brethren conducted PAUL, and brought him unto ATHENS. And from ATHENS PAUL went to CORINTH; and found a certain Jew named AQUILA, lately come from Italy with his wife PRISCILLA; because that CLAUDIUS had commanded all Jews to depart from ROME*.

Here we may stop; because this is a period of time, which if we can fix, it will greatly help to determine this question.

Helvicus in his chronology says, that *Paul* came to *Athens* in the 9th year of *Claudius*; which is correspondent to the 50th year of the Christian *Æra*. And *Orosius* says that it was in the 9th year of *Claudius Cæsar* that the *Jews* were banished out of *Rome*; and for this he quotes *Josephus* and *Suetonius*: Though I do not find from his quotation out of them, that he had sufficient grounds for his assertion. *Suetonius* indeed does mention, that the *Jews* were banished out of *Rome* in the reign of *Claudius Cæsar*, but does not mention the time, nor is it possible to fix it from his account of it, who only barely mentions the matter of fact: As to *Josephus*, he does not mention the banishing of the *Jews* at all in the time of *Claudius*. Nor does *Dion Cassius* or *Tacitus* take any notice of it; from whence it may be concluded, that it was not by order of the *Senate*, but only of *Claudius Cæsar*, that the *Jews* were banished. We must therefore try if we can by any circumstances in the history of those times fix the precise period of this transaction.

Now if we look into the history of the *Jews* we shall find, that when *Cumanus* was governor of *Judæa*, there happened several disturbances in that country,

† Chap. xvii, v. 1, 10, 15. * *Acts* xviii. 1, 2.

country, which might have given occasion to *Claudius's* indignation against them: One of which was this, † that at the time of the passover several of the *Jews*, at a small distance from the city, set upon one *Steven*, who was *Claudius Caesar's* servant, and robb'd him: Soon after this there likewise happened a dispute between the *Samaritans* and some of the *Jews* of *Galilee*, as they were going up to the passover at *Jerusalem*, in which fray a great number of the *Galileans* were murdered; in revenge of which the *Galileans* afterwards burnt several of the villages of the *Samaritans*; upon which *Cumanus* took a company of the soldiers of *Sebaste*, with four bands of footmen, and having armed the *Samaritans* likewise, he marched against the *Jews*, many of whom he slew, and led more away prisoners. In this contest *Tacitus* takes notice, that several of the *Roman* soldiers were killed. His words are † CUMANUS & FELIX, gliscente pernicie, cum arma militum interjecissent, caesi milites; arsissetque bello provincia, ni Quadratus Syriae rector subvenisset. It is therefore probable, upon *Cumanus's* representation of this affair, in his letter to *Cesar*, which the governors of provinces always sent to give an account of every thing that happened extraordinary in their governments, that *Claudius* in revenge for the injury done the *Romans* by killing the soldiers, and the affront passed upon himself by the robbery of his servant, might at that time banish the *Jews* out of the city of *Rome*. Where we may remark, that it was for a less criminal fact than this, with regard to the *Romans* that the *Jews* were banished the city of *Rome* in the time of *Tiberius*; * only because four *Jews* had conspired to cheat *Fulvia*, a lady of distinction in *Rome*, of some purple and gold, that she was sending a present to the temple of *Jerusalem*.

Agrippa the Great died in the 4th year of *Claudius*; and he was so great a favourite to the time of his death,

‡ *Jos. Ant.* l. 20, c. 4, 5. † *Tacit An.* l. 12, c. 34.

* *Jos. Ant.* lib. 18, c. 4.

about this affair, we shall find that *Cumanus* succeeded *Alexander* before the death of *Herod*. For there he says, * after *Tiberius Alexander* succeeded *Cumanus*, and *Herod*, who was brother to king *Agrippa* the great, died in the 8th year of the reign of *Claudius Cæsar*. From whence it appears, that *Cumanus* was made governor of *Judæa* before the death of *Herod* king of *Chalcis*, rather than after it; and although this passage in *Josephus* does not absolutely prove, but that *Cumanus* might be made governor of *Judæa*, in the beginning of the same year in which *Herod* died; yet I chuse to place it in the 7th year of *Claudius*; because *Orosius* in the life of *Claudius*, and *Eusebius* in his *Chronicon*, and *Helvicus* in his *Chronology* agree with me therein, and I find no reason from *Josephus*, or any other author to differ from them.

Now though we suppose that *Cumanus* was made governor of *Judæa* in the 7th year of *Claudius Cæsar*, yet this disturbance which happened in *Jewry*, being at the time of the passover, cou'd not well be till the year following at the soonest, which wou'd be in the 8th year of the reign of *Claudius*; but I will defer it a year further, and suppose it to happen at the passover, which was in the 9th year of *Claudius*: And the reason why I defer it is this, because it is both mentioned by *Josephus* and *Tacitus*, that *Numidius Quadratus* was concerned in making up the dissension between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*; and that in order to quiet them, he was forced to put several on both sides to death. Now *Quadratus* was made governor of *Syria* † in the 9th year of *Claudius Cæsar*. I suppose, therefore, that the foundation of this particular disturbance, between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, happened at the time of the passover in the beginning of the 9th year of *Claudius Cæsar*. Some time must have passed before the *Jews* and *Samaritans* cou'd have armed themselves; and more time must have passed before the account, which *Cumanus* sent of this affair cou'd reach to *Claudius Cæsar*. I will therefore suppose it to be the latter end of the year, before *Claudius* made the edict for banishing the *Jews* out of *Rome*. It must likewise be some time after the order, before *Aquila* and *Priscilla* could reach *Corinth*. I suppose, therefore, it was in the beginning of the 10th year of *Claudius Cæsar*, that *St. Paul* met with *Aquila* and *Priscilla* at his coming to *Corinth*, mentioned *Acts xviii*, where they were but lately arrived.

* Τιβερίω δὲ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ Κέμανος ἀφίκετο διάδοχος, καὶ τελευτήσῃ τὸν βίον Ἡράδης, ὁ τῷ μεγάλῳ Βασιλέως Ἀγρίππᾳ ἀδελφός, ὡς δὲ τῷ Κλαυδίῳ Καίσαρος ἀρχῆς ἔτει. *Jos. Ant.* l. xx. c. 4.

† *Helvicus*.

Now the 10th year of *Claudius Cæsar* is correspondent to and coincident with the 51st year of our Saviour *Christ*, from which if you deduct the 2 years, which both archbishop *Usher* and bishop *Pearson* allow *St. Paul* to have spent in his peregrination from *Ferusalem* to his arrival at *Corinth*, this will bring us back to the beginning of the year 49, as the year to be assigned for the making of the decree about blood at *Ferusalem*, mentioned *Acts* the 15th, and which is four years sooner than the transaction mentioned in the 2d of *Galatians* could possibly have happened.

Archbishop *Usher* in his *Annals* says, that the mission of *St. Paul* to the *Gentiles*, which was at *Antioch* in *Cæle-Syria*, mentioned *Acts* the 13th, happened in the year of our Lord 45. Bishop *Pearson* says it was in the year 44, but allows him two years afterwards for making his apostolical journey through *Seleucia*, and *Cyprus*, and *Pamphilia*, &c. in his way to *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, where this transaction happened, of *St. Paul's* preaching to the *Gentiles*, taken notice of by our author; which brings us to the year 46, which being deducted from the year 49, leaves us but three years at the most for the space of time which passed between the preaching of *St. Paul* to the *Gentiles* at *Antioch*, and the making of the apostolical decree at *Ferusalem*; most of which time *St. Paul* spent at *Antioch* in *Cæle-Syria*, for on his return thither, it is observed, *Acts* xii. 28, that *he abode there long time with the disciples*.

But to proceed. It has been already proved, that *St. Paul* came to *Corinth* in the beginning of the year 51. It is said in the 18th chap. of the *Acts*, That he abode at *Corinth* a year and six months, which will bring us at least to the middle of the year of our Lord 52. From thence he sailed towards *SYRIA*, with *AQUILA* and *PRISCILLA*. *And he came to EPHEBUS, and left them there. And when they desired him to tarry long time with them, he consented not. But had them farewell, saying, I must, by all means, keep this FEAST that cometh in JERUSALEM. So he sailed from EPHEBUS, and landed at CÆSAREA, and went up and saluted the Church.*

Now this *feast*, which *St. Paul* says he must by all means keep at *Ferusalem*, must be the passover in the beginning of the year following or the 53d year of *Jesus Christ*, which is the time assigned for his being at *Ferusalem*, according to the computation made from his epistle to the *Galatians*. Thus I have reduced the time of these two transactions to a kind of *equation*, from whence it is not only manifest, that the

time of *St. Paul's* going up to *Ferusalem*, mentioned *Gal.* the 2d, must be the time that he went thither from *Corinth*; but also, that the 14 years mentioned in *Gal.* the 2d must be reckoned from the first time of his being at *Ferusalem* after his conversion, and not from the time of his conversion, as bishop *Pearson* supposes. And to this accord all the circumstances which are mentioned of this journey, except that one, that he went up with *Banabas*; which I can only account for by supposing, when he landed at *Casarea*, that he there met with *Barnabas*, who was also going up to *Ferusalem* to attend at the feast of the passover; and I am the more inclined to be of this opinion, when I consider, that on *Paul* and *Barnabas's* separating from each other, *Barnabas* went to *Cyprus*, from whence, in his return to *Ferusalem*, *Casarea* is the most convenient place for his landing at. But all the other circumstances of this transaction, correspond in fixing this journey of his from *Corinth*, to be the time of his going to *Ferusalem*, mentioned *Gal.* ii: For when he was pressed by the *Ephesians* to stay longer time with them, he gives them no other reason for his hasty departure, but that he must by all means keep this feast that cometh at *Ferusalem*. We may therefore, very well suppose, that it was by revelation that he went up; since the twice, that he went up to *Ferusalem* with *Barnabas* from *Antioch*, as mentioned in the *Acts* of the apostles, it is plainly said that he was sent up the first time with the contributions of the people of *Antioch*, and the second time about the determination of the question whether the *Gentile* converts should be circumcised.

It is likewise mentioned in the 2d of the *Gal.* that when he left *Ferusalem*, he went down to *Antioch*; and it is likewise said, in *Acts* xviii. 22. when he came from *Corinth*, that after he had gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to *Antioch*.

There is another circumstance in this transaction, which is of no small moment. And that is, that when the apostles * *James*, *Cephas*, and *John* had given to *Paul*, and *Barnabas*, the right hand of fellowship, that they shou'd go to the heathen: *St. Paul* takes notice, and adds only they wou'd, that we shou'd remember the poor, *the same which I also was forward to do*. Now if this be supposed to be the time of their being at *Ferusalem*, mentioned *Acts* the 15th one wou'd think, that there was no need of putting them in mind of remembering the poor; since the very last time before this, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were at *Ferusalem*, the principal part of their business was to bring the contributions

* Galatians ii. 9, 10.

of the disciples at *Antioch* to the church of *Jerusalem*. And then it is likewise not very probable, that the next time they came to *Jerusalem*, after this charge given them by the apostles, they shou'd come empty handed; as they did when *Paul* came from *Corinth* to *Jerusalem*: But if this time of *Paul's* being at *Jerusalem*, mentioned *Gal.* the 2d, be supposed to be the time, when he came thither from *Corinth*; then it will be nine years since the time of his bringing the contributions of the brethren at *Antioch*; and this will be the 2d time of his coming to *Jerusalem* without bringing any relief to the poor. So that it is natural to suppose, the apostles might then give it in charge to them to remember the poor. And of consequence the very next time after this, that *St. Paul* returns to *Jerusalem*, he carries along with him the contributions of the *Corinthians*, *Thessalonians*, &c. as appears from his epistle to the *Romans*, chap. xv. 25, 26. *But now I go to Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia, to make a certain contribution for the poor saints, which are at Jerusalem.* I apprehend, therefore, we may very fairly conclude, that the time of *St. Paul's* being at *Jerusalem*, mentioned in the second chap. of the *Gal.* was the time that he went thither from *Corinth*: And therefore cou'd not possibly be the time, that he was sent up from *Antioch* to *Jerusalem*, mentioned *Acts* 15.

The use which I shall make, at present, of what I have here asserted, is only to remind my reader, that if *St. Paul* *A. D.* 49, declared the conversion of the *Gentiles* to the people of *Phœnice*, and *Samaria*, in his way to *Jerusalem*; and that when he came to *Jerusalem*, he there likewise declared to the apostles and elders, and the whole multitude, the miracles and wonders *God* had wrought among the *Gentiles*: If these had been *Gentiles* which were converted immediately from idolatry; what need was there for him four years afterwards, when he returned to *Jerusalem*, *A. D.* 53, to communicate that doctrine, which he preached to the *Gentiles*, but privately to those who were of reputation?

St. Paul declares of himself, that unto the *Jews* he became as a *Jew*, that he might gain the *Jews*; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that he might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, that he might gain those that are without law. And those sermons of his, that we find recorded in the *Acts*, are suitable to this declaration. For when he is preaching in the synagogues to the *Jews*, and *profelyted Gentiles*, he there endeavours to convince them out of the law,
and

and the prophets, that *Jesus* is the promised *Messiah*: But when he is preaching to those who were without law, that is to the *idolatrous Gentiles*, he then never mentions one word of the law of *Moses*, nor of prophecies relating to the *Messiah*. And if we look into the two speeches which he makes to those people at *Lystra* and at *Athens*; which are the only speeches of his, that we find recorded, as made to *idolatrous Gentiles*; we shall find, that he only endeavours to persuade them into a belief of the one, true *God*, creator of heaven and earth; from the nature and reasonableness of the thing, and in the conclusion of his speech to the *Athenians*, he says, that *God winked at the times of their ignorance, but now commandeth men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world of righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained. Whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* Here *St. Paul* makes no mention of the law of *Moses* or the prophets; but only recommends to them a belief in the true *God*, and of a resurrection from the dead, where *Jesus Christ* shall judge the world at the last day. And endeavours to convince his audience of the truth of what he asserts, by appealing to a matter of fact; to a miracle, to the resurrection of this same *Jesus* from the dead.

Whoever therefore considers the perverseness of the *Jews*; their attachment to their own religion, and the obstinacy with which they persisted on having even the profelyted *Gentiles* to be circumcised, before they would allow them to become *Christians*; need not wonder that *St. Paul*, when he came to *Jerusalem* into the very centre of *Judaism*, should there communicate to the apostles this doctrine, which he preached to the *idolatrous Gentiles*, but privately or severally one by one, and only to *those who were of reputation*.

I cannot precisely fix the time of *St. Paul's* first making any converts immediately from *Heathenism* to *Christianity*; but find, that he had some success at *Athens*; because it is said *Acts xvii. 34.* *Howbeit certain men clave unto him and believed; among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.*

But however he had been at *Theffalonica* before he arrived at *Athens*, and we find, that he there made some converts from idolatry; as appears from his first letter to them, which he wrote when he was at *Corinth*, soon after he left *Athens*. Where speaking of the brethren in *Macedonia* and *Achaia*, he says, *For they themselves shew of us what man-*

ner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. And here I must desire that my reader will take notice, that these words of St. Paul to the *Theſſalonians* contain the very purport of his speech to the *Athenians*.

This is the first letter which is come to our hands, that ever St. Paul wrote as an apostle to the *Gentiles*. So that we may probably fix this as the place, where he made the first converts from Heathenism to Christianity. And if we consider that this epistle of St. Paul to the *Theſſalonians*, was written from *Corinth* A. D. 51, and that his second epistle to them was written soon after to explain the first, and that these were the only epistles which St. Paul wrote before his return to *Jerusalem* from *Corinth*, A. D. 53, it is very natural to imagine, that the gospel which he communicated to the apostles at *Jerusalem*, as preached to the *Gentiles* mentioned *Gal.* the 2d was that gospel which he had preached and written in this journey to the idolatrous *Gentiles*.

But although I will allow this argument not to be strictly conclusive, as to the place where the first converts from idolatry to Christianity were made; yet I apprehend there has been sufficient proof given in the general, that St. Paul never made any converts immediately from idolatry, till this his second apostolical journey; which commenced after the decree of the apostles was made at *Jerusalem*; and which is all that I am concerned in proof of at present.

I shall, therefore, trouble my reader no further than to give my reasons why I have not, in this dissertation, taken any notice of the opinion of *Ludovicus Capellus*, who is an author of note and credit, on that side of the question, against which I have been writing, but he is so exceedingly unaccurate in his chronology, that I purposely avoided mentioning his name, lest the refuting of him should lead me into too long a digression. He has perfix'd two chronological tables to his *Historia Apostolica illustrata* which differ from each other sometimes two, three, four, or five years; and in fixing the time of St. Paul's writing to the *Galatians*, they differ 10 years from each other: And in the body of his book he frequently differs from both of them. He supposes the conversion of St. Paul to have happened at the soonest A. D. 38, and yet says, there were four years interval between the time of passing the decree at *Jerusalem*,
and

and St. Paul's arrival there afterwards, when he came from *Corinth*. Which he says, was in the eleventh year of *Claudius*, or in the 50th year of *Christ*. So that he allows but eight years at most, from the time of St. Paul's conversion to his going to *Jerusalem* from *Antioch*, about the apostolick decree; and yet he supposes this was the time mentioned in the second chapter of the *Galatians*, which St. Paul expressly asserts to be upwards of seventeen, or fourteen years at least, after his conversion. These are so many contradictions to himself, and to truth, that I have for this reason declined taking any notice of him, or laying any stress upon his authority; though in the general setting aside his chronological mistakes, he is a learned and judicious writer.

A TABLE representing the date of St. Paul's travels according to the foregoing account.

A.D.		
35	Acts ix.	SAUL's conversion. From <i>Damascus</i> goes into <i>Arabia</i> . Returns; then after three years (Gal. i. 18.)
38	ix. 30. Gal. i. 21.	Goes up to <i>Jerusalem</i> to see <i>Peter</i> . Preaches about <i>Syria</i> and <i>Cilicia</i> .
42	Acts xi. 26.	Brought to <i>Antioch</i> in <i>Syria</i> by <i>Barnabas</i> . Where they stay a whole year.
44	xi. 30	Sent up from thence to <i>Jerusalem</i> with contributions, and at their return receive their mission to the <i>Gentiles</i> .
46	xiii. 14	After various travels come to <i>Antioch</i> in <i>Pisidia</i> , where St. Paul preach'd to the <i>Gentiles</i> [profelytes of the gate] in the synagogue. Proceed to <i>Iconium</i> , &c. and return to <i>Antioch</i> in <i>Syria</i> , from whence they set out.
49	xiv. 26. xv. 3.	Being sent up a second time from thence, to the council at <i>Jerusalem</i> about observing the Mosaic law, they declare the conversion of the <i>Gentiles</i> [profelytes of the gate] as they pass thro' <i>Phenice</i> and <i>Samaria</i> . After their return to <i>Antioch</i> with the decree, they part.
51	xviii. 1.	In St. Paul's 2d apostolical journey thro' <i>Syria</i> , &c. <i>Thessalonica</i> and <i>Athens</i> , he comes to <i>Corinth</i> , where he meets <i>Aquila</i> banished from <i>Rome</i> by the decree of <i>Claudius</i> . Stays here a year and half, and writes his two epistles to the <i>Thessalonians</i> .
53	xviii. 21, 22. Gal. ii. 1, 2.	Goes to the passover at <i>Jerusalem</i> , by revelation, with <i>Barnabas</i> and <i>Titus</i> , whom he had probably met with in his way thither. Here he communicates privately and to them of reputation, that gospel he had now successfully preach'd among the [idolatrour] <i>Gentiles</i> in <i>Thessalonica</i> and <i>Athens</i> .

F I N I S.