

The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, June 11. 1692.

A Continuation of our Answer to the Quakers.

The first thing we charge upon the Quakers, is their speaking contemptibly of the Bible, which we prov'd against 'em in our last Mercury.

1. They deny the Scriptures to be necessary. Thus the greatest mix they ever had, Sam. Fisher, in his *Rusticus et Academicos*, p. 112. "Had the Scripture never been, nor were it more to be, as it must moulder once, tho' I'm free it shou'd stand its time, (that's Civil, but ob- serve the reason) to cast out such men as wou'd cast off the Light and Spirit, yet the Word of God is still as useful as ever, being that by which all is upheld for ever, when the Scripture shall moulder and come to naught. And accordingly Barclay in his 6 Propositions, p. 68. "The Knowledge of Christs Death and Sufferings, as declar'd in the Scriptures, is not absolutely needfull to those from whom God hath withheld it."

2. They equal Apocrypha with the Scriptures, (no great Argument of their hating the Papists.) This we confess we suspected, when we found Sam. Fisher so frequently quoting it in his Works, but were satisfy'd on't, before we had read him half over, at least as to great part, if not all of those Books. Thus he, p. 77. of his Book already quoted, "As for the Books which ye sprinkle with the Name of Apocryphal, is there nothing among 'em that may be judg'd of as Divine Authority as some of those particular Letters to private men, that of Paul to Philemon, &c? And lower, 'Tis indeed the Faith, or rather Infidelity of such as call themselves Reformed Churches, (pretendu Reformers, as the French have it) that all those Books call'd Apocrypha, are in no wise of such Divine Original as those ye call Canonical: And agen, If such Synods, either ancient or modern, as have shouler'd out all those from sharing with the other Writings in what they lay just claim to, had been as spiritually discerning as they were spiritually blind, shallow and undiscerning, they wou'd have seen cause to have joyn'd some at least of those Apocryphal Scriptures to an equal participation of the plea of Divine Original and Inspiration with the rest: And p. 78. This I declare to the whole World as my Faith concerning 'em, That whatever is truly to be predicated of the one, or can be pleaded solidly on the behalf of the one, which you call your Canon, as to the Divinity of their Original, the same may be pleaded on the behalf of not a few of the other. — And in particular he Instances in 2d. Esdras, Epistle of Jeremiah, Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom of Solomon, nay Tobit with his Dog and all, which is, as he says, most precious Doctrinal and Prophetical, after which he pretends to answer all those Arguments which the Protestants use against the Papists to invalidate the Authority of these Writings, and answers 'em in the same vway that the Papists do — whence vve may judge vvhether he travel'd to Rome for nothing.

But 4. They not only equal the Apocrypha, but their own Writings with it, the ready way to make it both Blasphemy and Nonsense. Yet this they must do, because they hold their Ministers infallible, and deny any other Ministry but what is so. G. Fox in his *Great Mystery*, p. 12. "How can ye be Ministers of the Spirit, and not of the Letter, if ye be not infallible? And Foxgill in his *Antichrists Volunteer* defeated, "He hath deny'd the Infallible Spirit, from which all the Ministers ministred, and all the Prophets prophesied, and spoke as they were mov'd by the Holy Ghost. Thus they actually affirm of their own Writings, and

have learnt to be Gods Ape, as well as the Spirit of Delusion, which we wish does not too often act 'em — Their style is the same with the Scriptures, see the already mention'd Geo. Roff, "To thee Oliver Cromwell, thus saith the Lord: And G. Fox Junior, p. 55. "What I have here written, is the words which the Father who is one with the Son, gave me to write. And that branded Blasphemer, Naylor, (whom they to this day imitate, defend and admire) in his *Love to the lost*, "The Word of the Lord to his beloved City. Their own Writings it seems are the Word of God, tho' the H. Scripture must not have that honour. And indeed they more than equal their own writings unto 'em, for they plainly prefer 'em before 'em; since they never give such Titles to the Scripture as to their own Books, or vice versa. — They read their own Epistles publicly in their Churches, but never read Gods Word there that we cou'd hear of; nay, the omission is charg'd home upon 'em by Fran. Bug, who had liv'd long enough among 'em to know 'em. And one of 'em, quoted by Mr. Falso in his proof of their denying the Scriptures, has these words, "Let this be sent to be read in the Fear of the Lord in the Holy Assemblies of the Church of the First-born, where she is scatter'd to the Ends of the Earth.

Lastly, They use the same detraacted expressions concerning it with the Papists and Jesuits, calling it a Nose of Wax, a Lesbian Rule, a Dead Letter, &c. See Fisher, p. 48. in his forementioned Book, even there where he pretends to defend the Scripture, and that the Quakers don't deny it, yet represents it, "As at this day alter'd, and adulterated, wrested and torn, like a Nose of wax twisted and twined — A meer graven Image with Ink and Pen on Paper and Parchment, for 'tis so. A dead Letter, a very Nose of wax, and a Lesbian Rule, and no certain stable standard: Wou'd not any think these were the words of some good Catholick? but they'd be shrowdly mistaken, for the distinction follows, "I know not why, says he, what they (the Papists) wickedly, because tauntingly, we may not honestly, since truly, seriously and soberly, so call the Scriptures, which may be so easily, so endlessly alter'd by the Wills of Men. These are his very words, and let all his Friends look upon 'em, and try if they han't forgot to blush: for with the help of the self-same commodious distinction, why may they not honestly, because truly, seriously and soberly, cheat, lye, rob, plunder, ravish, murder, for which Crimes those who want the Light wou'd very well deserve to be whipt and hang'd; because poor dull Rogues, they wou'd do it wickedly, and must e'ne plead Guilty to the Accusation. And thus we are strangely mistaken if we han't sufficiently prov'd the first Branch of our Charge, that the Quakers speak contemptibly of the Bible, which according to their own Confession, is one dangerous and detestable Opinion.

II. The 2d. is, "That they will by no means allow it to be the Word of God: And this is so plain, that it almost surpriz'd us to find they had the Brow to deny it, since 'tis one of their most notorious avow'd Principles. However, we'll give 'em one or two home Instances to refresh their Memories. Naylor's Answer to the Jews, p. 25. "It is the Devil that contends for the Scriptures to be the Word of God — Sure he dos not make Devils of himself and all his Followers. So W. Pen in his Key of their Principles, p. 240. In his Answer to the 6 Obj. The Quakers denying the Scriptures to be the Word of God, He acknowledges the Charge, and gives their common fallacy for't instead of a reason, because they ne're call themselves so, but denominate Christ by that Title, and that they refuse it in reverence to Christ: But they have been answer'd an hundred times over, that Christ is call'd the Word of God figuratively, because

cause he proceeds from him as words from a Man, and expresses his Will. That the Scriptures are more properly his Word, tho' written; not the very Letters, which is ridiculous to suppose, and was never affirm'd, but the sense and Divine Truths therein contain'd, and thereby convey'd unto us, and by the Cooperation of God's Spirit, working in us Faith and Obedience, which come by Hearing and the Word of God. That it's proper to call 'em the Word of God, tho' Christ is so also, is plain, because several of the Holy Pen-men call their Writings the Word of God — Nay, even the Blasphemous Quakers do the same, as has been said by their own Nonsense. The first may be prov'd from a hundred places in the Scriptures, of which take two or three, 36 Jer. 4. Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the Words of the Lord. V. 10. they are call'd the Words of Jeremiah, and yet in the 12th. the Words of the Lord, tho' at two or three removes: Nor will their silly Evasion help, that 'tis words, not word, for in the first Verse of the same Chapter, 'tis said, This word came to Jeremiah from the Lord — Take thee a Roll of a Book, &c. where are many more words than one, tho' the singular is used for the plural, a common Scheme of Speech in all Nations. Hence 'tis plain, that whatever is writ by Divine Inspiration may properly be call'd Gods Word — as even the Quakers themselves own, tho' they thereby egregiously contradict themselves, when as before they term their own Blasphemous Writings the Word of the Lord. There's a second dangerous and detestable Opinion which we have prov'd 'em guilty of.

III. The third thing we accused them of, was, Turning the most Sacred Truths of the Scripture into jejune Allegories: This we shall prove anon in the Instances of our Saviours Death, Resurrection, Heaven and Hell, all which they turn into Allegory, as we'll anon show, and all which we are sure are some of the most sacred Truths of the Gospel.

IV. The fourth is, That they speak not very honourably of our Saviour; which we'll prove: For, 1. They make him a Monster, with two Bodies to one Soul; and worse, they say he is actually present in every one of their own Bodies; a much greater Degradation to him than his lying in a Manger. And, 3. They deny him to be God, distinct from the Father. That they make him two Bodies, we'll prove from Barclay, p. 306. 'As there was the outward visible Body and Temple of Jesus Christ, which took its Origin from the Virgin Mary, so there is also the spiritual Body of Christ, by and thro' which he that was in the beginning with God, and was and is God, revealed himself to the Sons of Men in all Ages — And lower, 'Many gazing and following after the outward Body, look not to that by which the Saints are daily fed and nourish'd — And p. 87, 88. 'This Word of God and Light within is a spiritual, heavenly and invisible Principle, in which God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit dwells, and which we call Vehiculum Dei — Accordingly Ed. Burroughs in his Trumpet, p. 17. rebukes his Antagonists, for 'Feeding upon the report of a thing done many Years ago — and Parnel in his Shield of Truth, p. 30. 'None can witness this whose Eye is outward, looking at a Redeemer afar off. Pennington's Qu. p. 33. 'We can never call the Bodily Garment Christ, but that which appeared, and dwelt in the Body. Agen, 'What he took upon him was our Garment, the Flesh and Blood of our Nature, of an earthly perishing Nature, but he (Christ) is of a heavenly Nature, and his Flesh, Blood and Bones are of his Nature. Further, they say he's actually present in every one of their Bodies: This is as plain as that they say the Light within is in every Man; nay, this is all the Excuse they have for their Idolizing themselves and each other. Fox in his Great Mystery, 'He is 'deceiv'd, who saith God is distinct from the Saints — And Fox the younger, p. 53. brings in the Light within, saying, 'I am the true Eternal God, which Created all things: Tho' Barclay makes it only the spiritual Body of Christ, which he says is not God, p. 86. By this Word of God and Light within we understand not the proper Essence and Nature of God, which is not divisible, but a pure and simple Being — we can't help these two Infallibilities contradicting each other, any more than Barclay's contradicting himself; for he says expressly, p. 10. 'That he 'was the Word, and was and is God — tho' as before he denies the Light which they hold the same with the Word

to be properly God; therefore he must think our Saviour only improperly so, a made God, as the Socinians; or a God by Emanation, as the Arrians; or rather not at all distinct from the Father, of which more anon. However, they generally believe this Light within to be Christ, and that Christ to be God; tho' they'l by no means allow that Man who suffer'd at Jerusalem to be God, or so much as Christ in a proper sense, Christ, as they say, only taking that Body upon him. Now that they make this their Excuse for Idolizing and formally Praying to each other, viz. Because Christ is in them, we shall prove from their own words and actions. Many of 'em Worship James Nailor, as appears by the Process made against him, and the Confession of one Bolton, who still continu'd a Quaker; who when he appear'd displeas'd with the Practice, Nailor told him, 'If they did it to him as a Man, he disown'd it, but if any did it to the Light within him, he accepted it. Thus Jos. Coal to G. Fox, we have his Letter in Faldo's Book and Francis Bugg's, every word of which Mr. Pen has it seems undertaken to defend: 'Dear G. Fox, who art the Father of many Nations, &c. whose being and habitation is in the power of the highest, in which thou rules and governs in righteousness, and thy Kingdom is establish'd in Peace, and the increase thereof is without end: And yet higher, in Jo. Audland's Letter to the same Person — 'Dear and precious one, in whom my Life is bound up, and my strength in thee stands — By thy breathings I am nourished, by Thee my strength is renewed. Blessed art thou for evermore, and blessed are all they that enjoy thee. Life and Strength comes from thee, Holy One! Daily do I find thy Presence with me, which doth exceedingly preserve me, &c. Pray for me, that I may stand in thy dread for evermore. Pray for us all, that in thy Power we may abide for evermore! I am thine, begotten and nourished by thee, and in thy Power am I preserved. Glory unto thee, Holy One! for ever. With all these Blasphemies when they were Charged, G. Whitehead's Answer was, 'How proves he, that they gave and intended those Names and Titles to the Person of G. Fox, and not to the Life of Christ in him, whereof he was a partaker? in his Innocency against Envy, p. 18.

We cannot proceed any further now, but shall finish our Discourse on this Subject in our next Mercury.

There is in the Press a Book against the Quakers, which in probability will be published in July next, entituled, New Rome Unmasked, and her Foundation Shaken, &c.

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