

*Mr. Calamy's Caveat against
New Prophets.*

by

Edmund Calamy



Mr. CALAMY's

CAVEAT

AGAINST

New PROPHEETS.

A
CAVEAT
AGAINST
New prophets,
IN TWO
SERMONS
AT THE
Merchants Lecture
IN
SALTERS HALL,

On *Jan.* the 6th. and *Jan.* the 20th. 1707/8.

By *EDMUND CALAMY*, E.F.&N.

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TO

JOHN LACY Esq;

SIR,

I Adore that Providence that fixes the Bounds of our Habitations. Tho' you had a considerable hand in my Settlement in the Congregation of Protestant Dissenters in Westminster, and was the first who sign'd that Solemn Call by which I was desir'd thenceforth to watch for your Soul ('tis your own Expression) yet I as little then thought as you, that one Great End of my coming thither, was that upon your quitting the Simplicity of the Gospel of CHRIST, and falling into strange Delusions, to the endangering your self and others, I might stand up against you for the Truths of GOD: But he knew the End from the Beginning.

I return you Thanks for the many Civilities I have receiv'd from you since I have stood in a Pastoral Relation to you. I should have been glad to have been more useful to you and yours. I heartily beg Pardon of GOD, and of you, for my Omissions. I can assure you that your changing a Scriptural for a Fantastical Religion hath been the greatest Grief I ever met with in the Course of my Ministry. What may have provok'd GOD so far to leave you to your self, may be more easily discover'd by you than by another: And I make it my Earnest Request for your own sake, that you would seriously enquire.

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The Dedication

I was much concern'd for you, while you so diligently attended on the three Pretended French Prophets, with so great an Opinion. I then fear'd the worst, Caution'd you as I had Oportunity, and put up many a Prayer for you. When you shew'd me a few of those Declarations which you afterwards Printed in The Cry from the Desart, Attested by your self and two other Gentlemen, I intreated the Names might be blotted out, lest Religion might suffer, if any Fraud or Fallacy or considerable Mistake should be afterwards discover'd in the things Attested. When Marion's Advertisements came out, you may remember, I in my own Study, gave you several Objections against them, (some of which are mention'd in these Papers) which you made light of, excepting one or two, which you promis'd me to consider? though you never thought fit to acquaint me with the Fruit of your Consideration.

When you was pleas'd to send for me, upon your first being seiz'd with the Agitations, I plainly saw that my former Fears were far from being Groundless: And the Disorder that follow'd, seem'd to me a very Speaking Providence. However I continu'd my Visits, and as your Temper and the Circumstances of your Family would allow, I made Enquiries, and often started Difficulties; your returns to which discover'd to me an Aversion to listen to any thing that at all made against the Notions you were so fully possess'd with. And when you fell into one of your Fits, while I was alone with you in your Chamber, and under Agitation Address'd your self to me in particular, with a Compliment or

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two that I could not in Modesty suppose to come from the Spirit of GOD: I must confess I had enough. If the Spirit then really spake in you, I find I am to be a Convert to your New Dispensation, and to draw others after me: But I am sure it must be upon better Evidence than appears as yet.

When Hacket was Guilty of such Execrable Blasphemies as our Historians mention, in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, Religion was aspers'd, and the Puritans reflected on, because he had been among them. We have some that give themselves a Liberty even at this Day, of Censuring those who were the great Upholders of serious Religion in the Land among our Forefathers, upon that Account. Lest there should be any thing of that kind, when the Prepent Extravagancies come to be reported to Poverty, (and who knows what may happen, notwithstanding that you have so many more among you out of the National Establishment, than from among the Dissenters?) I was willing thus publicly to enter my Caveat; and with Thankfulness to GOD to make it known to all the World, that though you were a Member of that Congregation to which I relate, yet you were far from having any Encouragement either from me, or from any of your Fellow Worshippers, in Affecting New Prophecies and Revelations: And I'm heartily sorry that I could do no more to divert and discourage you.

May the GOD of Heaven prevent the unhappy Confidences which some are afraid of. May the 29th of April, and the 25th of May ensuing, which you have set a special Mark upon, contribute to your
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The Dedication

Conviction, and not lead to Desperation. May you then see your Error and Retract it as publicly as you have Espous'd it; And be as industrious in undeceiving those whom you have seduc'd, as you have been in spreading the Delusion. May you instead of pretending to Bless and to Curse others in the Name of the LORD, secure a Blessing to your self and escape the Curse that all those mi unavoidably be expos'd to, that continue Fighting against GOD.

May Your Pious Consort still have Divine Supports under so Severe an Exercise and your agreeable Off-spring prove Ornaments to Religion as they grow up. May you fall under that Regret that it necessary to your Settlement in the Divine Favour, after such foul Miscarriages. May you walk humbly with GOD all your Days under a Sense of them, and return to a Regular Course of Duty; that GOD may be Glorify'd, His Servants Comforted, your Family Preserv'd, the Present and Future Generations Edify'd, and your own Peace and Safety secur'd, is and will be the Hearty Prayer, of

Sir,

Your Servant for JESUS sake,

Edmund Calamy

JEREMIAH XIV. 14.

Then the Lord said unto me, The Prophets Prophesie Lies in my name: I sent them not, neither spake unto them. They Prophesie unto you a false Vision, and Divination, and a thing of nought, and the Deceit of their Heart.

TO Personate Earthly Princes, and to pretend to transact with others in their Names, without being Empower'd and Commission'd, has in all Ages been reputed the highest Insolence. And as the Majesty of Heaven infinitely surpasses that of any Princes on Earth, and the things which the Great GOD treats with Mankind about, are unspeakably more Noble and Momentous than those that Human Envoys have in their Instructions, so the Crime must be proportionably Greater, for any to presume to act the Part of immediate Messengers from Heaven, and Extraordinary Agents for GOD, whom he hath not employ'd, and call'd, and sent. And yet there have been many such bold Undertakers both in the Jewish and the Christian Church. That there were such in the former my Text bears Witness: and that there would be such in the Latter, was signify'd beforehand, by our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles.

There were many False Prophets as well as true in GOD's Ancient Church, and they were frequently complain'd of, by such as gave good Evidence of their own being truly inspir'd of GOD; but by none more freely and frequently than this Prophet *Jeremy*. The same complaint as we have in the Text, may be met with again, *Chap. 23. 21. I have not sent these Prophets, says GOD, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they Prophesied.* And again, *Chap. 27. 15. I have not sent them, saith the Lord, yet they Prophesie a Lie in my name.* And yet again, *Chap. 29. 9. They prophesie falsly to you in my name; I have not sent them, saith the Lord.* There appear to have been many such when the Jewish Church was in its declining State: And the Grand Charge brought against them was this, that they acted of their own head, and pretended to bring special Messages from the GOD of Heaven, which were either the pure Forgeries of their own Brain, or the Dictates of an Heated Fancy, and deluded Imagination. The People of GOD were indeed at that time so happy, as to have some among them, who being immediately inspir'd, did by a special Order from Heaven point out such Pretenders to them; and by giving sufficient Proof of their own Commission, they laid all that

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heard their Report, under an Obligation to acquiesce in it: But though we that Live in Gospel-times, and are liable to the same Danger, have not in that respect the same Happiness, we yet have General Warnings given us of *False Prophets*, and Charges to beware of them and those that are in the Office of the sacred Ministry, whom our Lord hath employ'd as his Watchmen, and promis'd his Presence with, are bound to do their endeavour, by Rational and Scriptural Arguments to detect them, that the Flock of Christ may not be seduc'd. God has not left us without Witness. We need not be impos'd on, if we'll duly Hand upon our Guard.

'Tis well known that a new sett of Men hath Lately started up among us, who pretend that immediate Inspiration is reviv'd, and claim an equal Regard with the Ancient Prophets of the Lord and take upon them to speak as in the Person of GOD, and declare that they bring a special Message to us from Heaven; by which many have been amus'd. I have been call'd on not only by my Office in General, but by a Charge under the pretended Inspiration in particular, deliver'd to me in private, to search into the whole matter: And having as carefully examin'd their Pleas, and enquir'd into Circumstances, as I could conceive to be necessary or requisite, I think my self oblig'd to declare, that I am upon the whole fully satisfy'd that my Text is as applicable to them, as ever it was to any in the days of *Jeremy*; Nor am I afraid not with standing their Threatnings so freely pour'd out against all that shall dare to oppose them, to give it as my fixed Judgment, that they who set up for Extraordinary Prophets now among us, *Prophesie Lies in the name of God*, and that *he sent them not, neither spake unto them*; but that *they Prophesie unto you a false Vision, and Divination, and a thing of nought, and the Deceit of their Heart*. In short, their Pretended Prophesies, are partly Impostures and partly Delusions.

I shall set before you the Grounds upon which I form this Judgment, by shewing you,

1. That no Men have from Scripture any Reason to expect a farther immediate Inspiration for General Use; or any Promise that they can fasten on with just Assurance.

2. That a New immediate Inspiration is not really needful in the Present Day.

3. That there is nothing as yet discover'd in those Rhapsodies that are call'd *Prophetical Warnings*, that would make it worth while for GOD to be at the Expence of a New Inspiration.

4. That upon *trying of Spirits*, according to Proper Rules, our *Modern Prophets* must be Cast and Condemn'd.

5. That

5. That tracing the *False Prophets* which the Writings of the *New Testament* foretel us would arise, from one Age to another in the Christian Church, these *New Pretenders* appear much of the same Stamp and Spirit and Design.

6. That they give us no such Evidence of their Mission from GOD, as Reason and Scripture allow us to demand.

And *Lastly*, That several Matters of Fact that relate to them which are well attested, and the Account which they themselves give of some Circumstances, naturally lead to such Objections as make it utterly incredible, that they should be Inspir'd.

I. The First Assertion I advance is this: That no Men have as far as I can discern any Reason from the Word of GOD, to expect a farther immediate Inspiration for General Use, or any Promise of it which they can fasten on with just Assurance. I pretend not but that GOD is as able now to Inspire Men as ever. I assert not that it is any way impossible, that a new Inspiration should be afforded, and suitable Miracles to back it, before the end of time: But I think we ought to make a wide Difference between what GOD may do if he pleases, and what his Word gives us just Reason to expect he will do. Nay, I'll go further: I think a Great difference is to be made, between GOD's Communicating His Mind in a way of Inspiration to some particular Persons, in some extraordinary Cases, and his giving forth Inspiration for the General Use of his Church. After diligent search I cannot find in all the Book of GOD a certain intimation, that he would do any thing of this kind, after the Death of the Apostles.

The *Old Testament* hath many Predictions and Promises of a fresh effusion of the Spirit, in a way of Inspiration, in the Days of the Messiah; ana this justly encourag'd an expectation of it beforehand, and both made a full submission to it justifiable, and pav'd the way for such a submission. When our Blessed Lord who visibly bore all the Characters of the Promised Messiah, brought in that New Dispensation that had been before so much spoken of, Considerate Observers readily fell in with it. Our Lord also gave his Disciples in his Life time a punctual Promise of *the Spirit of Truth, to lead them into all Truth*, And to Inspire them in their Writings: Which Promise they had good Reason to expect would be accomplished; and we also have Reason to account its Accomplishment our security in depending upon their Writings. Had we in like manner any plain signification in our Sacred Records, that after the first settlement of Christianity, and the finishing the Canon of Scripture that some Ages after Inspiration had been wholly withdrawn, The Spirit of Pro-

John 16.
13.

phesy should again be restor'd unto the Church, we have had Reason to expect it, even tho' its coming was long deferr'd: We might have concluded that it certainly would come, before the end of Time, tho' we had been uncertain when. But now that we have no such Hints in Scripture as fairly can bear that Sense, eagerly to look for any thing of that kind, while greater matters are neglected, is to imitate the simple Man, that stands gazing upon the Heavens, without minding his way, till he falls into a Ditch.

Rev. 19. 10.

'Tis true; *The Testimony of Jesus, is the Spirit of Prophecy*, and will ever be so. The Prophetick Spirit that was pour'd forth in our Saviour's Days, was design'd to be a standing Witness for him in all Ages; but it does not therefore follow that it must be pour'd forth afresh in every Age, or indeed in any Age, after it was once withdrawn. That Spirit of Prophecy that appear'd at the first spreading of Christianity, was design'd to give a Convincing Assurance to all that would consider it (whether they liv'd at that Time, or in the Ages following) that our Jesus was the true Messias, of whom there were so many Promises made, and soon after whose appearance, there was to be an Eminent Effusion of the Spirit; 'twas design'd to be a full Proof of Christ's Mission, and the Divinity of his Religion, even to the End of the World: But that this Testimony must be given to our Jesus anew, almost 1700 Years after he left the World, is not intimated, nor any thing like it.

Joel 2. 28,
29.

The Passages of Scripture that have been most urg'd, are these. The first is the Prophecy of *Joel*. *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall Prophesie, your Old Men shall dream Dreams, your young Men shall see Visions: and also upon the Servants and upon the Handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.* The second is, that saying of *St. Peter* concerning our Saviour,

Acts 3. 21.

Whom the Heaven must receive, until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the Mouth of all his Holy Prophets since the World began: And the third, is that saying of the Angel to *St. John*, *thou must Prophesie again before many People, and Nations, and Tongues, and Kings,* But I cannot see that any one of them, nor even all of them put together, give sufficient ground to warrant a certain expectation of a return of the Spirit of Prophecy to the Christian Church, after it once had been withdrawn.

Rev. 10. 11.

The Prophecy of *Joel* is most urg'd in this Case, and hath the Greatest stress laid upon it by our *New Prophets* and their Abettors, and therefore I'll consider it the more largely, and shew you both the true Sense of it, and to how little purpose it is produc'd by our *Modern Prophets*, to support their Claim.

That

That I may lead you into the true Sense of the Prophecy, I'll both Consider what it foretels, and the time referr'd to when the Prediction was to be accomplish'd.

1. The Thing that the Prophet *Joel* foretels, is GOD's affording a Plentiful Measure of his Spirit. *I*, says GOD, *will pour out my Spirit, i. e.* I will not barely conferr it as before, but in a larger Measure, and a greater Abundance than ever. I will fill my People with all good Gifts and Graces; so that not only Knowledge and Holiness shall peculiarly abound and spread, but I will give many and divers Extraordinary Gifts, that shall make it appear how much my Church is in my Favour, and exceedingly add to the Lustre of it. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh: i. e.* upon some of all Sorts, and every Condition, without Exclusion of any, by Reason of their Country, Sex, Age, or Circumstances. The Gifts particularly mention'd, that should be freely and plentifully afforded, are *Prophecies, Dream, and Visions*. The Persons on whom its laid these Gifts should be bestow'd, are *Sons and Daughters, young Men and Old, Servants and Handmaids*. GOD declares he would conferr the excellent Gift of Prophecy very liberally, on either Old or young, Male or Female, Bond or Free, as he should see would be for the Good of his Church: Revealing his Will to them by *Dreams and Visions*, as well as by clear immediate Inspirations. The meaning is not that when this Prophecy should be accomplish'd, all Persons without exception were to partake of these Extraordinary Gifts. That is indeed the Fancy of those that affect untrodden Paths in our Times; they will have it that every one was to have a Share in the Miraculous and Extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit; every one to have a Prophetical Touch, when the Dispensation promis'd, was to take place in the Church: But this is altogether without Foundation. St. *Paul* expressly disclaims it; and crys out, *Are all Apostles? are all Prophets? are all Teachers? are all Workers of Miracles? have all the Gifts of Healing? do all speak with Tongues? do all interpret?* He intimates that this could not be. Every one could not have such Gifts. But having in the beginning of the Chapter reckon'd up the several Ways in which GOD was pleas'd to pour forth his Spirit, he adds afterwards, *All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every Man, severally as he will.* The meaning then of the Prophecy in *Joel* is this, that peculiar and extraordinary Gifts were to be more commonly and generally bellow'd than ever before, but that they would be differently distributed, and dealt forth among particular Perions, as GOD in his infinite Wisdom should think fit; so as to keep up Order, Superiority and Inferiority, Teachers and Learners in the Church, without which nothing meer Confusion could be expected.

1 Cor. 12.
29. 30.

Ver. 11.

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2. The Time when this Prediction and Promise was to be made good, is not particularly specify'd by the Text in *Joel*. It gives us no other light as to that, than by saying, *it shall come to pass afterward*: but if we consider the Connexion of this Prophecy; the usual manner of the Prophets, and the positive Determination of the time of the accomplishment of this Prediction that we meet with in the *New Testament*, we may I should think be abundantly satisfied. *It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh*: i. e. After the making good the Promises that had been before recited. For GOD is pleas'd here for several Verses together, to relate to his People, what great things he would do for them in Temporals; what Peace and what Plenty he would afford them, that should cause them to rejoice in his Favour: And then he adds, *afterwards, I will pour out my Spirit*. That is, after the former Promises have been made good; and particularly, some time after the Return from the *Babylonish Captivity*, which was to make way for the other promised Blessings. Or we may take this Word *afterwards*, to point to the Days of the Messiah, to which the Ancient Prophets usually referred, when they gave forth to the Church and People of GOD any remarkable promises of Spiritual Blessings, which they all agreed were then to abound. But St. *Peter* infallibly directs us to the time when this Promise was fulfilled, by citing the very words of the Prophet *Joel*, and declaring that then, and in his Days, they were to be verify'd. For speaking of the pouring forth of the Spirit on the Apostles at the time of *Pentecost*, which struck the Spectators with amazement, he says expressly, *This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel, &c.* After which he recites the very Words of his Prophecy, with very little variation, saving that instead of *afterward* in the Prophet, he puts in *in the Last Days*. Whence it is easy to observe that *Joel's afterward* and the *Last days* of St. *Peter* are all one. And by St. *Peter's* calling those *the last days* in which he liv'd, and in which he declares this Prophecy and Promise was to be fully accomplish'd we are at the same time taught how to Construe that Phrase of *the Last days*, in a great many places both of the *Old Testament* and the New. Tho' it cannot be deny'd that we are sometimes thereby to understand, the times that should immediately precede the Consummation of all things, and the general judgment, yet in many places we are to understand it of the Last days of *Jerusalem*, and the Jewish State. For the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the rejection of the *Jews*, is reckon'd the End of the Old World, and the coming in of the *Gentiles* under the Gospel, is as a new World: And accordingly call'd a *New Heaven, and a New Earth*. The *Last days* therefore in which St. *Peter* declares the Prophecy of *Joel* was to be fully accomplish'd

Acts 2. 16,
17.

Isa. 66. 22.

plish'd, are the Days just before, *the great and notable day of the Lord*, that is mention'd both by the Prophet and the Apostle, which without doubt is directly meant of the Day of *Jerusalem's Destruction*, which fell out within Forty Years of our Saviour's Resurrection and Ascension: Tho' 'tis at the same time possible that there might be something in the attending Horrors of that Day, that might be very Emblematical of the Terrors that will attend the General future Conflagration. However, this being a direct Prediction of what should come to pass before the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by the *Romans*, and it being visibly and remarkably accomplish'd in that Age which the Apostle assign'd for its being verify'd, it follows,

Joel 2. 31.

Acts 2. 20.

That it is produc'd to but very little purpose, to support the Pretences and Expectations of those that in our Day let up for Prophets. The Apostles indeed prov'd the Truth and Reality of their Divine Inspiration, from the Scripture Prediction, which was in their Case fulfill'd, which has been the Common way since GOD has began to reveal his Mind and Will in Writing. The first Revelation must barely depend on the Concomitant Evidence that attended it: But Revelation being once begun, it has been a considerable security, that a New Revelation or Inspiration has still had one before it, that has prepar'd and made way for it, and given it a considerable Confirmation. Thus *Moses* foretold the Prophets that should come after him, to instruct, and guide, and warn GOD's Ancient People *Israel*; and when those Prophets came, they appeal'd to *Moses*. The Prophets distinctly foretold the Messiah, and a farther more noble and more plentiful Effusion of the Spirit in this Day, and soon after his Appearance: And the suitability of the Event to the Prediction was a satisfactory Confirmation to Considerate Observers, that both the Prediction and the Event that answer'd it was from GOD. And this was St. *Peter's* Argument with the Spectators of what happen'd on the pay of *Pentecost*. You see, says he, the Spirit pour'd forth remarkably upon us. Behold this is a Verification and accomplishment of the Prophecy of *Joel*. That Prophet foretold just such an Effusion of the Spirit as this; and that at this time. And they being certify'd that this was the very thing that the Prophet had predicted, and this the very time which he had pointed to, they could not but be satisfy'd that the Apostles were indeed Divinely Inspired. Our *Modern Pretenders* therefore are for taking this course too; and they appeal to *Joel*, as St. *Peter* did, but with this difference, that they have no Warrant for such an Appeal, and at the same time they contradict the Scriptures by pretending to make one.

They have no Warrant for such an Appeal. St. *Peter* could in-

indeed safely say, that what then befel him and his Brethren was that which was spoken by the Prophet *Joel*, because he was really Inspired, and Taught by the same Spirit as that Prophet was, and in the same manner too, of which he was able to produce good Evidence: But for others, as to whom it is barely asserted, and not evidenc'd that they have any peculiar Gifts above their Neighbours, to pretend to say, that their Cafe answers *Joel's* Prophecy, is much the same, as if they should tell us, they were the Old Prophets risen from the Dead.

Herein they plainly contradict the Scriptures. Our Sacred Oracles assure us, that St. *Peter*, whose being Inspired, we han't the least reason to call in question, apply'd the Prophecy of *Joel* to the particular Age in which he liv'd, and no other; not by way of allusion, but directly; intimating, that there was and would be a concurrence of all the Circumstances mention'd *This*, says he, *is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel*: Which sufficiently argues, that there was no Age before, in which it had been fully made good and that there was no need of expecting any After-age for the compleating it. For Persons then to say, that that Prophecy of *Joel* is to be yet more fully accomplish'd in our Days, is to fly in St. *Peter's* Face, who intimates, that the full accomplishment of it was begun by the Effusion of the Spirit on the Day of *Pentecost*, and would be finish'd in that Age.

'Tis said, * That *this Prophecy is allow'd by many not to be so fulfill'd by the Pentecost, but that a more full Accomplishment thereof is yet to come*. I doubt, it would be hard, to find those *many*, except among the *Jews*, with whom the remarkable Events of the Day of *Pentecost* stand for nothing. Some few, I know, there have been among Christians, that have inclin'd that way but as their number hath been small in companion, so neither is it easy to reconcile them with St. *Peter*, who by Authority from GOD, positively assures the *Jews*, that what was spoken by the Prophet *Joel*, should be fulfill'd in their time; *i. e.* between the time of his speaking, and the *coming of that great and notable Day of the Lord*, in the Subversion of their Church and State, to make way for a Dispensation entirely New, of which the Ancient Prophets so often had given them warning.

'Tis a vain thing here to say, That sundry Scripture Prophecies have a double Accomplishment, and therefore so might this Prophecy of *Joel* among the rest; one in the Days of the Apostles, and another sundry Ages afterwards: For tho I cannot say, but the Antient Prophets do mention several Passages that had a double Reference, one to their own Times, and another to the Times of the Messiah (nor can I see that vast danger in allowing this, that the Ingenious Mr. *Whiston* † represents) yet we find no Passages of theirs, that first refer to the Times just after the appearance of. the Messiah, and again refer

* Preface to the Cry from the desert, pag. 6.

† In his accomplishment of scripture Prophecies, pag. 13, &c.

refer to a new Dispensation to commence above Sixteen hundred and fifty Years afterwards. It has indeed been a prevailing Notion, that the account which is given by our Saviour in the four and twentieth of St. *Matthew*, refers partly to the time of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and partly to the end of the World, and the Attendants of the Final Judgment; or rather, that the one was a representation of the other. This I call not into Question: Nay, I conceive it probable, that the Disciples might apprehend it would be so, by their thus wording the Request they presented; *Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the World:* But this is very different from supposing St. *Peter* under Inspiration to assert, that that Old-Testament Prophecy was fulfilled in his Age and Day, which was more compleatly to be fulfilled in a new Dispensation, so many hundreds of Years afterwards, without his giving the least hint of it. This is so peculiar an Instance that it would be hard to find a parallel.

Mat. 24. 3.

'Tis Objected, * *that the Apostle explaining and insisting on the words of Joel, of God's pouring out his Spirit upon all Flesh, recites Fire, and Blood, and Smoke, to attend that Day. Now that General Judgments attended the World upon the pouring out the Spirit upon the Apostles, no way appears, or will: And therefore there must be a farther fulfilling of the Prophecy of Joel.* But he that reads the History of *Josephus*, will find such an Account of Wonders in Heaven above, and Signs in the Earth beneath; such Blood, and Fire, and Pillars of Smoke, preceding and accompanying the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, that he'll see no occasion to seek for any farther Completion of the Prophecy in the Letter of it. Many are the Prodigies related by that Historian, which portended their Destruction. There were dreadful Thundrings, and Lightnings, and Earthquakes. The Effusion of Blood that was amongst them, was incredible; partly, through their intestine Divisions; and partly, by the Sword of their Enemies. A flaming Sword hung over the City of *Jerusalem*, and a fiery Comet pointed down upon it for a whole Year together. Their Houses and Villages, Oratories and Synagogues, nay, their Capital City and their Temple, were consum'd in one common Conflagration, which occasion'd such pillars of Smoke, as were without Example.

* Mr. Lacy's
Warnings,
Part 3.
Pag. 72.

'Tis farther objected, that our Lord himself speaking of that time that *Joel's* Prophecy refers to, says, *The Sun shall be darkned, and the Moon shall not give her light, and the Stars shall fall from Heaven and the Powers of the Heaven shall be shaken.* Which is but agreeable to what is said by the Prophet *Joel* himself, who declares, *That the Sun shall be turned into darkness, and the Moon into Blood, before that great and terrible Day of the Lord come.* And the same also is recited from him by St. *Peter*:

Mat. 24. 25.

Joel 2. 31.
Actss 2. 20.

Which 'tis said, cannot be apply'd to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the Nation of the *Jews*; but must signify something more. I reply, That the darkning of the Sun and Moon, and the Stars withdrawing their Light, are usual Scripture Expressions to set forth the greatness of a publick Calamity and Destruction and this is the plain import of such Expressions in several places. For instance, we have a Prediction of the Destruction of the City of *Babylon*, and it is said, *That the Stars of Heaven and the Constellation: thereof should not give their light; the Sun should be darkened in his going forth, and the Moon should not cause her light to shine.* And the Indignation of the LORD against the *Idumeans*, is represented in like dreadful Words; *All the Host of Heaven shall be dissolved, and the Heavens shall be rolled together as a scrawl, and all their Host shall fall down.* And when the Destruction of *Senacherib* and his People is fore-told, 'tis declar'd, *That the Heavens should vanish away like Smoke.* And when a Prediction was given forth of the Destruction of *Egypt*, GOD says, *I will cover the Heaven, and make the Stars thereof dark; I will cover the Sun with a Cloud, and the Moon shall not give her light.* And to name no more Instances; When *St. John* is in the Apocalypse describing the fall of *Paganism*, he uses the same Language: *The Sun became black as sackcloth of Hair, and the Moon became as Blood; and the Stars of Heaven fell unto the Earth, and the Heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together,* 'Tis an Observation of the Learned *Gataker* * than whom I could hardly cite a more Competent Judge, that 'tis the manner of GODs Prophets in their Descriptions of some Extraordinary Judgments, to set them forth in such Colours, as if they were deciphering the Face of the last Universal Judgment, whereof such are in some sort Resemblances and Forerunners. All that is signify'd by such Strong, Vehement, and Pompous Expressions, is the utter Destruction and Ruin of a Nation or People; an Overthrow of their Civil and Ecclesiastical State and an extreme Horrour, without any Glimpse or Hope of Relief, Counsel, or Comfort: When Men are in such dismal Confusion, and so forelorn a Condition, that they are as if the Light of Heaven was wholly taken from them so full of Horror and Terror that the Heavenly Bodies seem as it were to have lost their Light. And such most certainly was the Condition of the *Jews*, who had Crucify'd the Lord of Glory, when *Jerusalem* was sack'd and destroy'd by *Titus*, within such a compass of time after our Lord's Prediction, as that *that Generation was not wholly past away till it was fulfill'd*, according to his Declaration before-hand. Which very Passage and Declaration gives us as full satisfaction as to the time particularly pointed at, as we need desire. For if what our Sa-
viour

Isa. 13. 9,
10.

Isa. 34. 4.

Isa. 51. 6.
Ezek. 32. 7,
8.

Revel. 6. 12,
13, 14.

* See his
Notes on
Isa. 34. 4.

24. 34.

viour fore-told in the Twenty-fourth of Sr. *Matthew*, which agreed so exactly with the Prophecy of *Joel*, with which also St. *Peter's* Explication so admirably harmonizes, was to be fulfill'd in that very Age, or whilst some of that Generation liv'd, we have neither need nor warrant to seek for any other Time, or any farther Accomplishment.

Upon the whole then; When St. *Peter* an inspir'd Apostle referred the Prophecy of *Joel* precisely to his own time, the time that ran out from our Blessed Saviour's Resurrection to the Deduction of *Jerusalem*, and all Circumstances so exactly answered and our Saviour's own Prediction that look'd the same way so fully agreed, and confirm'd it; for any to apply this Prophecy to Persons in our times, and say, that in them it is to be more amply fulfill'd than it was in the Days of the Apostles, to say the least, is very fallacious and assuming.

Another Text that is urg'd and pleaded, is, a Declaration of St. *Peter* to the *Israelites*, That the Heaven must receive our Saviour, till the time of the Restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the Mouth of all his Holy Prophets since the World began. Now the Dispensation that is commencing, is represented as this time of the Restitution of all things. The *Jews* are to be call'd by the Diffusion of the Spirit, and therefore Prophecy is to be restor'd. * *Is it not mention'd*, say they, that all the Prophets from the beginning of the World, until the Day wherein it is recited, did speak of Christ's coming again from Heaven, and a Restitution of all things? I Answer, No; Many of the Antient Prophets said nothing of it; nor does that Declaration of St. *Peter* intimate that they did. And seeing we are so freely told, That there is never a Minister among us that knows the meaning of that Text, or has Honesty enough to speak it out; I'll venture to say, that the sense of this Text is grosly mistaken, notwithstanding that 'tis pretended to be given us by Inspiration. This very Instance may suffice for a Conviction, that the Interpreter has not yet receiv'd the Gift of Languages. For that which we translate the time of the Restitution of all things, signifies only the time when all things shall be consummated. So that Christ is to continue in the Heavens, till the time that all things shall be compleatly finished, that were predicted by the Prophets from the beginning of the World; as any Man will agree, that understands the Original cited in the Margin †. And that the Spirit of God should misrepresent it, is to me inconceivable. But in the mean time, that the Gift of Prophecy or Inspiration should be restor'd, from the time of the Death of the Apostles, till all Scripture Predictions were fulfill'd, and the final Judgment, we have not here the least

Acts 3:21.

* Mr. Lacy's Warnings, Part. 3. pag. 16. 22.

Act. 3. 21. Ὅν δεῖ οὐρανὸν μὲν δέξασθαι ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων ὧν ἐλάλησεν ὁ Θεὸς διὰ στόματος πάντων ἁγίων αὐτοῦ προφητῶν ἀπ' αἰῶνος.

† See Dr Whitby in locum.

Hint. And this I take to be *plain Truth*, without any *Qidlibets* or *Quodlibets* against which we are so gravely warn'd tho' I believe there never was such a Caution given by Inspiration before.

Revel. 10.
11.

The third Text that is pleaded, is that Saying of the Angel to St. *John*, *Thou must Prophesie again before many People and Nations, and Tongues and Kings*. Where a stress is laid upon its being said, that he must *Prophesie again*; of which I must confess myself unable to discern the force. He had been Prophesying for several Chapters together, and he did Prophesy yet again, foretelling the state of the Church under Anti-Christ, and his Tyranny, and Ruin, which began at the sounding of the seventh Trumpet. In his foregoing Predictions, he had signify'd what would befall many People, Nations and Kings; and he was now to begin a new Prophecy that concern'd them, and to manage it in a different manner. And whereas he had Prophesy'd to them before concerning their Temporal Estate, he was now to fore-tell what regarded their Spiritual Estate, and the Concerns of Religion. He did Prophesy yet again. As he had had Prophecies reveal'd to him before, under the Seals and Trumpets, to communicate to the Church so he was to have others reveal'd to him under the Vials, to the same purpose. Or, supposing that St. *John* was in this Case a Type, (as some apprehend, and the pious, Mr. *Durham* among the rest) and his eating the Book, that is spoken of, and the Commission he received to proceed in Prophesying, was to represent before-hand the revival of the Gospel-Doctrine after Anti-Christian Darkness; Still, blessed be GOD, we may have full satisfaction, since the Reformation from Popery; the Christian Doctrine being effectually reviv'd in the Preaching of Gospel-Ministers; And they that are not satisfy'd with this, but are for a farther *Prophesying*, set themselves adrift, and know not whether they may be hurry'd.

Revel. 11.
15.

Had I known of any other Pleas from Scripture, for a revival of the Spirit of Prophecy, I would have Consider'd them, and either yielded to the force of them, or given Reason to the contrary. And if there be nothing in the Scripture certainly to encourage such an Expectation, we ought to be very cautious how we give way to it.

*Preface to the
Cry from the
Desart, page.
[[?????]]*

I would no there be mistaken. I agree as freely as can be desired, That * *GOD has no where in the Scriptures concluded himself from dispensing again the extraordinary Gifts of his Spirit unto Men*. He has not said the Prophetick Spirit shall never in any Case, return again; neither has he promis'd that it shall. And whereas he did both promise and foretell its return formerly, and that Prediction and Promise was an inducement to expect it, and an encouragement to admit of it when it came; and the
fore-

fore-going Prediction and Promise was answer'd there being now no Prediction or Promise of that sort, is an intimation that it would little become us to expect or look for it: tho' at the same time I'll own, that if it should please GOD at any time, in order to the serving any extraordinary Purposes, to afford a new Inspiration, that no way contradicted his former inspiration, and give it sufficient Evidences of Divinity to attend it, we should nevertheless be bound to receive it, and submit to it. But,

As we have no Reason to expect a New Inspiration, there being no Prediction or Promise to encourage such an Expectation, so neither is there any Real Necessity of a New Inspiration in the Days we live in. The Apostles needed Inspiration to carry them through the work they were call'd to: But what need have we of a farther Inspiration now? We have a Gospel Ministry, by which the Gospel Doctrine is faithfully Publish'd, and enforc'd. Those of us that are in that sacred Office, and have the Grace to be faithful, desire no regard to what we say to you in the Name of the LORD, any farther than what we deliver is agreeable to the Holy Scriptures. We urge you to imitate the *Bereans*, of whom we are told that *They were more noble than those of Thessalonica, and searched the Scriptures, daily to see whether things were as the Apostles reported them.* We exhort you to the very same Course, that so your Faith may not be barely bottom'd upon our representation of matters to you, but upon the Word of GOD. And if after this you are impos'd on, it must either be owing to your selves, or your Bibles. It must be either thro' your Carelessness and negligence in searching the sacred Records, or thro' the Defectiveness of the Scriptures themselves. And indeed I can't see how there can be need of a new Inspiration, unless the Scriptures be defective, which is a supposition that it no way becomes a Christian to allow. Another Inspiration was highly needful when the Messiah appear'd that had been so long foretold. The Old Oeconomy was to be taken down, and a New One erected. A new mode of Worship, a New Ministry, New Ordinances, and new Seals of the Covenant were to be settled in the Church, which was to be entirely cast into a New Form. This was not the least Reflection upon the Old Dispensation which was in the Nature of it Typical, and representative of somewhat that was to come after, and was fix'd only for a time, as was many ways hinted, tho' the *Jews* for the most part unhappily mistook it. The Addition of the *New Testament* to the Old was not the least Reflection upon the Old; it was rather a compleating and fulfilling it: But to add a farther Revelation to The *New Testament*, would be a trolling and undermining it, unless we had

Acts 17. 11.

had any Reason to believe what our *New Pretenders* boldly tell us; viz. *That the Gospel is so spoiled as that we must have one quite New.* But I can't see how that: suggestion can otherwise affect than in a way of Detestation, such as Believe that *St. Paul* was inspir'd when he cry'd out, *Tho' we or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, that than which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* We have a solemn Curse denounc'd just at the close of our Bibles, and in the very last Chapter, that might strike a Terror in such as come with their New Inspirations, if they would but Consider it. It is in these Words; *I testify to every Man that heareth the words of the Prophecy of this Book, if any Man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book.* Should it be pleaded, that that Passage has a particular Reference to the Book of the Revelations, it cannot be deny'd: But I think we may allow it to pass for a good and a strong inference, that if it be dangerous to add to that particular Prophecy, it must be much more so, to add to that Canon, which our LORD hath declar'd to be finish'd, and given forth as the Rule of Faith and Life to the Universal Church,

The main Pleas I have met with allerdg'd for the Expediency of a New Revelation in our times are these two. Its said it is requisite, because of the great Changes GOD is bringing about in the World; and because of the Negligence of the Body of the Ministers of all Persuasions, to give People warning to prepare for what GOD is about to do among us. But I can't see but both of them are easily answer'd.

1. Its pretended that a New Inspiration is therefore necessary, because of the Great Changes God is upon bringing about in the World. They tell us that *Isaiah mentions New Heavens and a New Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness. And we are told of the Holy City the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. This Dispensation, they say, is to take place before this Generation passes away. The State of the Church on Earth is to be more resplendent than ever it yet was. And this dispensation is to be proclaim'd in every Nation under Heaven, beginning first in England; and it is to be manifest over the whole Earth, within the short term of three Years; one of which Years, by the way, is already past over, and something better. In such a Case as this they apprehend Inspiration to be highly needful. But this is all Assertion without any Evidence.*

The Prophet *Isaiah* does indeed Speak of *New Heavens, and a New Earth.* GOD says by him, *Behold I create New Heavens and a new Earth, and the former shall not be remembred, or come into mind;* And he hath been as good as his Word by the Gospel Dispensation, and by the taking place of the Kingdom of Christ in the World. He hath this way caus'd plentiful

* Avertisse-
mens Pro-
phetiques
d' Elie Ma-
rion: pag.
20.

Galat. 1. 8.

Revel. 22.
18.

* Preface
to the Cry
from the De-
sart, pag.
20, 21.

Isa. 65. 17.

ful endowments of Spiritual Graces to abound. He has much more clearly reveal'd the Mysteries of Salvation, and settled his Worship and Service in a more Spiritual way and removing Ancient Types and Shadows, he hath given his People the substance of those Spiritual Blessings which were thereby pointed at: And the excellency of the Church under the Gospel far exceeds that of the Church under the Law, that it is as it were new, and the Old Face and State of the Church is comparatively forgotten. The Apostles therefore Cry, *Old things are past away behold all things are become new.* But what is this to a New Dispensation to be erected now at the End of the World? 'Tis as different from it, as Light from Darkness.

2 Cor. 5.
17.

At the same time it is not to be contested, there is certain ground for a yet farther expectation. For after this Change in the Gospel-state, St. Peter says of himself and his fellow Apostles, *We according to his Promise, look for new Heavens, and a new Earth wherein dwelleth Righteousness,* which (as plainly enough appears from the Context,) are to be after the day of judgment, and the Dissolution of all things; and refer to the other State and Life, and not this present. But it's said by one of our modern Prophets, * that St. Peter speaks of the day of Perdition of ungodly men without describing it, as raising the Dead, the Sea giving up hers, and the Grave giving up hers. Nor yet is it a Dissolution For there is to be a new Heaven, and a new Earth wherein dwelleth Righteousness. Who can forbear observing how blessed a thing it is to explain Scripture by the help of Inspiration! Who could have made this Discovery without it! We that stand upon plain ground, tho' we might indeed easily have observ'd, that 'tis, *the day of Perdition of ungodly men* the Apostle is speaking of, yet it being expressly declar'd that when that Judgment by Fire should come, for which the World that now is is reserv'd, it should be attended with a general Dissolution; for that *all these things shall be dissolved;* should have been apt to have thought that a Dissolution there would be, and that it would little have become us to have question'd, much less deny'd it. But when a Man has a new Inspiration, why may he not upon occasion contradict the old one, if there be any mistake in it? We also from the Words us'd and their Position, should have been inclinable to have gather'd, that *the Day of Judgment and Perdition of ungodly Men,* and the Conflagration of the World would be contemporary; and that *the Heaven and Earth that now are* would be burnt with that very Fire, by which the ungodly would be tormented: And seeing this Conflagration that is to come, is compar'd to a former Universal Deluge, *whereby the World that then was being overflowed with Water perished,* nothing more likely than that we should have gather'd that the World that now is would

2 Pet. 3. 13.

* Mr. Lacy's Warnings Part 3. pag. 24.

Ver. 7.

Ver. 11.

ver. 6.

would in a like manner perish by the Fire for which it is reserved, and yet a New Heaven and a New Earth follow, design'd to serve different purposes from what the present State of things will allow. But how any Man could from hence be Positive that there would be a New Dispensation, before the Day of Judgment, and General Conflagration, *in which the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements melt with fervent Heat, the Earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up*, without his being anew Inspir'd, I cannot imagine; tho' how to reconcile it with this Chapter that is acknowledg'd to be written by Inspiration is and remains a very great difficulty.

Ver. 10.

Revel. 21.

Acts 1. 7.

As for the *Apocryphical Millennium*, I'm very willing to suppose it to point at a more Glorious State of the Church of Christ here on Earth, than it has reach'd as yet; But then, 'tis an obvious Query, upon what grounds it can be determin'd with Assurance, that it must begin *before this Generation passes away*? Our Saviour, indeed, positively asserted, that the Desolation he foretold in the Twenty-fourth of St. *Matthew*, should happen before the Generation that then was, pass'd away. But whence does it appear, that any Man can warrantably assert the same as to the *Millennium* in our times? It is easy to observe, that they that have been positive in fixing *Times and Seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power*, have been wretchedly mistaken; and have liv'd to see it to their *shame*, when they have made a Period to expire or commence in their own Days. And how do we know, but it may be so in this Case among the rest? Who could be more positive, than one who wrote *A Line of Time*; and another that publish'd *The Accomplishment of Prophecies*, in our Age? and yet, is it not evident they were mistaken? What security then have we that we shan't be led into a Mistake, if we believe those, that confidently assert that the *Millennium* is just now Commencing? Or, supposing it should be at hand, why may not the old Inspiration serve? Where's the necessity of a new one? We have nothing, as I can perceive, produc'd to give us satisfaction in this Case, but a bare positive Assertion, That the New Dispensation pleaded for must be publish'd in all Parts in three Years time. If so, methinks they that are to be the great Agents in the propos'd Publication, most strangely loyter, that they are not yet set forth, but have let almost the half of that time run out, while they have been doing nothing, or what comes to nothing. The remaining Year and half to hardly be sufficient for their compassing the whole Earth, in order to an Universal Notice. The Flying which is mention'd by some of them, will be no more than will be needful! But what if the whole Scheme proves a gross Mistake?

Mistake? This is what we may very well be afraid of. And indeed, notwithstanding their Confidence, until there is good Evidence given that such a Dispensation as they speak of, is really now to commence, and to be publish'd in all Parts, to pretend that a new Inspiration is necessary for that purpose, is to build upon one of the most frantick Suppositions that could be imagin'd. 'Tis a meer erecting a Castle in the Air. And if that won't do their Business; Much less,

2. Will their other Plea do it, That a New Inspiration is requisite, because of the negligence of the Body of the Ministers of all Persuasions, to give People warning of what GOD is about to do among us. What would these Gentlemen have us do? Would they have us call upon those whom we Minister to, to discern the Signs of the Times, to suit themselves to the various Dispensations of Divine Providence, and make their Remarks on what GOD is doing in the World? Would they have us warn not only particular Persons, but whole Bodies of Men and Communities, Cities, Nations and Kingdoms, of the just Judgments that hang over them, if they persist in Impenitence, and will not be purify'd and reform'd by the various apt Methods which GOD takes with them in order to it? Why, this is what the Ministers of Christ have been doing in this Land very seriously, ever since the Reformation from Popery: Nor can the Ministers of our Times in this respect, I conceive, be justly charg'd with Negligence. But this it seems won't do. We are told, that we should ** give such Warning as that Unbelievers may be left without Excuse, to fall under the direful Strokes of Almighty Vengeance in the new Dispensation; and the true Followers of the Lamb may be prepared to partake of the Magnificence and Triumphant Joy of his Marriage Feast.* That is to say, we must warn of such particular Judgments and Blessings as they tell us are approaching, even tho' we with them run the hazard of being grossly mistaken; and so must put it to the venture, whether our Holy Religion, and Sacred Office be not expos'd to Contempt. Which is a Motion that carries great Absurdity in the Face of it. In a Conference that was held with them, in which many were present, they freely ascrib'd the necessity of their own extraordinary Call, and Ministry and Inspiration, to the neglect of our Ministers, in not warning the People of extraordinary Judgments. But how does this hang together? If extraordinary Prophets are therefore only inspired and sent, because the ordinary Ministers have neglected to warn of Judgments approaching, then if the ordinary Ministers had given that Warning, such extraordinary Prophets had not been inspired and sent. Which in effect is all one as to say, That if we Ministers had but warn'd People of the Judgments which their neglects of extraordinary Prophets would expose them to,

** Preface
to the Cry
from the De-
sart, pag. 1,
2.*

there would have been no extraordinary Prophets rais'd up among us. If we had told Men of the Judgments they would this way have incurr'd, they would have had no Capacity or Opportunity of incurring them; for there would have been no Prophets to slight, and therefore we might as well have spar'd our pains, as gravely to warn People about their Carriage to them. But alas! If we Ministers do but faithfully preach and inculcate the Gospel Doctrine, and apply it to the Consciences of our Hearers, according to Times, Seasons and Circumstances, we sufficiently answer our Commission; which is, *to perfect the Saints, and to edify the Body of Christ*; tho' we never meddle with uncertain Futurities; never pretend to pry into the Counsels of the Most High. Either therefore the Holy Scripture has not made suitable Provision for the Church, or such extraordinary Officers are not needful. If they were needful at any time after the closing the Canon of Scripture, it would have been at the time of the Reformation from Popery: But our Reformers have abundantly justify'd their Proceedings without a new extraordinary Mission; and to plead for one as necessary now, is scandalously to reflect on, and openly desert their Cause and Principles. But,

Ephes. 2.
12.

III. As we have no ground from Scripture to expect, no present occasion for, New inspir'd Prophets, so neither is there any thing that is as yet publickly known to have come from those who pretend to that Office, that should make it worth while for GOD to be at the expence of a New Inspiration.

When the Gospel was added to the Law, the New Testament to the Old, many most advantageous Discoveries were made, both as to Truth and Duty. Important Truths about the Terms which Sinful Man stood in with the GOD whom he had offended; about the Method of Reconciliation, the Attoning Sacrifice, and the way of sharing in the Vertue of it, and effectually reaching the Happiness of the other World, were laid open: These things were clear'd beyond what was ever done before. Men were also directed about the Spiritual Worship of GOD, the purifying their Hearts, the Life of Faith on things unseen, and an Heavenly Conversation, with a great deal of accuracy and exactness. Every way was there a great increase of Light in things Divine, by the new Inspiration of the Apostles added to that of the Prophets. And can the same be said of our new pretended Prophets? Do they really give us any new Light, discover any new Truths, or farther Inforce ments of old Duties? Do their pretended *Propheticke Warnings* contain anything that tends to increase either Knowledge or Piety? For my part, I have taken the pains to peruse them all, and must declare, that I cannot find it. They tell us, indeed, that *many Texts that have been conceal'd and corrupted, are explain'd.*

* Mr. Lacy's
Warnings,
Part III.
pag. 31.

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They should have said, perverted. For they are as justly chargeable with perverting the Scripture, as any Men whatsoever. They apply all the Passages that speak of our Lord's coming again to the General Judgment, to the New Dispensation they publish, which is their *Shibboleth*: And when their poor deluded Followers shall live to see them egregiously mistaken in that speedy Coming of Christ, which they expect, 'tis an hundred to one, but they'll be tempted to question, whether there is any farther Coming of his at all intended. They would have us believe, that they *revive, explain, and enforce the Doctrines that are conceal'd and neglected; to wit, all those Passages that regard the Glory of the Messah's Kingdom.* By their way of speaking, they would almost tempt a Man to imagine, that these wretched Creatures the Ministers (of whom they upon all Occasions speak as contemptibly as any Men could do that were the open and avowed Enemies of all Reveal'd Religion) had blotted out of the Bible a great many Texts relating to the Kingdom of Christ, which they were come to restore in a new Edition: And yet after all, they can't give us satisfactory Evidence, that any of those things which they most insist on, ever were in the Bible, and are not their own Additions and Inventions, And when in so formal a manner the Question is put, *Where's the Expection taught of his Coming again?* Methinks such a Demand, is unbecoming a sensible Man, and therefore cannot with any decency be ascribed to the Spirit of GOD, unless he could be suppos'd ignorant that the Expectation of Christ's Coming again is Taught every where, where they own the Apostles Creed; of which this is one Article, *That Christ shall come from Heaven to Judge both the Quick and the Dead.*

As to Duty, it must be own'd, that they urge and press Sobriety. Amendment of Life, Repentance of Sin, Prayer and Watchfulness: But are not these things all urg'd already in the Holy Scriptures? Could a new Inspiration be necessary for any thing of that kind? But we are told, * *That Duties neglected universally, are more powerfully inforc'd by this Dispensation, urging a sudden Judgment of the obstinate and unrelenting Sinner, &c. And that the Matter divulg'd by this Mission, if entertain'd and believ'd, will be a powerful Motive to all Duties, and a higher Motive than others urge, or can urge.* Whereas, on the contrary, if the Matter divulg'd by this Mission should prove a Mistake, and the sudden Judgments threatned should not be inflicted, (which the silence of the Scriptures about these Matters, gives us cause to suspect) the entertaining and believing their Report, instead of being a powerful Motive to all Duties, would be a strong Temptation, when the Fallacy is discover'd, to lay aside all Religion, as a meer Fancy and groundless Pretence.

The main thing they seem to aim at, is to bring us to own

* Ibid. pag. 33.

them to be Divinely Inspired: That is the turning Point. Then they expect we should receive whatever comes from them, and so they'd have us at a vast Advantage. But wherein would this make us a jot the better? 'Tis too evident from Experience, that Persons may acknowledge them to be Inspir'd and yet be in Love with impurity. Is that then fit to be the Grand Discriminating Mark? May Persons be the peculiar Children of GOD, which they represent as the Case of all their Followers; and may they be sav'd from common Judgments, which they stick not to promise to all that will but believe them Inspir'd, and yet be allowedly impure! Then what signifies Religion? 'Tis hardly worth while for GOD to give forth a new Inspiration to make such a discovery as that, which would justly expose Inspiration to Contempt. And what have we more in their Warnings, but *I'll tell thee my Child, I'll tell thee, I'll tell thee, My Child, my Child*, a thousand times over, where all that is told, is no more than every Man knows already; together with *Gulpings, Sighings, Sobblings, Groanings, Hiccuppings, Heavings, Shakings of the whole Body, and inarticulate Voices, and mimical Gestures and Postures, and Repetitions* of the same things a great many times over, which they themselves observe to have been very convenient for the Writers, * and others cannot but observe to be very convenient for the Speakers too, in order to their recollecting or inventing what is to come next: Is such a Medley as this a fit subject for a Divine Inspiration? Believe it who can. For my part I'm fully satisfy'd that either the Nature and Perfections of the Blessed GOD are alter'd, and are not now the same that they were when he Inspir'd the Prophets under the *Old Testament* and the New, or it could not be worth his while to give forth a fresh Inspiration, when only such a Hotch-potch as this was to be the Product of it.

Lets then make a little pause, and give way to a few Reflections. If we look a little back we shall find 'tis no new thing for the Servants of GOD to be Assaulted by such as pretend to a Peculiar Knowledge of his Purposes. Time was when under the *Old Testament* we read of a *Lying Spirit in the Month of all the Prophets* at once: And if we consult the *New Testament*, we shall find a Disposition to Determine Positively about uncertain futurities, and pretending to do it as from GOD, is as old as Christianity it self. The Second Epistle of St. Paul to the *Thessalonians* is by all agreed to be one of the first Epistles which that Apostle ever wrote; and there we have this Admonition *Now we beseech you Brethren that you be not soon shaken in Mind, or be troubled, neither by Spirit, nor by Word, nor by Letter, as from us, as that the Day of Christ is at hand*. And if such an inclination was so soon stirring, we need nor wonder at any thing of that Nature in our own times. While Men pretend
only

*Preface
Lux Avertis-
emens Pro-
phetiques d'
Elie Marion.
pag. xiii.
xiv.

1 Kings 22.
22.

2. Thes. 2.
2.

only to the Knowledge of common things, they stand upon a Level with their Neighbours: But when they know things future, and can tell when Christ will come, and in what manner and how he will proceed, and what he will do, and whom he will own as Friends, and whom he will treat as Enemies, and how, they are presently distinguish'd for this makes them taken notice of.

It would be strange, if such a Temper should find encouragement from the Ministers of Christ. They have in the several Ages of the Church set themselves to oppose it, as in Duty they ought; and on that Account have fallen under a great deal of obloquy and reproach. And as it has been, so 'tis now; our Pretended Prophets, because we that are Ministers dare not in Conscience own them, take a Liberty to represent us as grudging at their Gifts and Graces, and opposing them out of envy in which they grosly wrong us. For my Part, I can safely say with *Moses*, *would God that all the Lords People were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them:* And I'm very well satisfied that that is the Prevailing Temper of my Brethren in the Ministry at this Day. Could we see just reason to believe that GOD had truly Inspir'd these Gentlemen, and favour'd them with his extraordinary Gifts; could we see that GOD had put his Spirit upon them, and Authoriz'd them to publish his Messages to the World, We should rejoice in their endeavours and Success. We should be glad to see GOD's work going on, whosoever were the Instruments. What occasion then have they to insult us. and say; We dont wonder the Ministers are enrag'd, for they'd lose their People, should our Notions prevail. Alas for them, what are our People to us, any farther than we may hope to carry on the Interest of Christ among them, and promote the good of their Souls? What need have we to matter the losing them, if they prove Gainers in the issue? If our subsistence be the thing pointed at, tho' it is well known that GOD himself has made it the Duty of those whom we Minister to in Spirituals, to Minister to us in Temporals, yet if we made that Income which the Office of the Ministry generally affords us, our aim in devoting our selves unto that Service, we must be of all Men the most weak and foolish: For the expence of our Education would have fitted us for more profitable Stations by far; and I hope it wont be suppos'd but many of us might have been as capable of rising in the World as our Neighbours had we look'd that way. But for those, to whom we wish no harm, but all manner of Good; for whom we heartily pray, and whom we would readily serve to the utmost of our ability, to endeavour to expose and insult us while we are

* Advertis-
semens de
Marion pag.
177.

† Mr. La-
cy's Warn-
ings.

2d. Part pag.
100.

|| Avertisse-
mens de Ma-
rion p. 39.

are engag'd in our Master's Work, and call us * *Dumb Dogs*, † *Pharisees*, *Ravenous Wolves* || *Devourers of Gods Heritage*, and the like: Tho' 'tis much such sort of treatment I confess as our Fathers and Predecessors have formerly met with, on which Account we have no great reason to be surpriz'd, yet it discovers very little of a Christian Spirit, and is no promising indication.

And let us all be Admonish'd to beware of affesting to be wise above what is written. Let us not gape after New Prophets, as we would not be impos'd on with *Lies*, *false Visions*, and *Divinations*, and *things of nought* in the Name of the LORD. I doubt this is the Process with several who now fancy themselves Inspir'd. They first resorted to a few strangers, that came among us from Forreign Parts, sent by they knew not who, and to serve such Purposes as they it may be little thought of; and they believ'd them to be Divinely Inspir'd. Hereupon they admir'd them as the Peculiar Favourites of Heaven; and Admiration we all know has a transforming and Assimilating Power. Admiring them, they wisht they might be like them; wish'd they might be favour'd of Heaven as much as they: And what more natural? From wishing they came to praying to GOD that it might be so: And by Degrees, the Fancy being elevated, and the Natural Spirits strangely Agitated, they first try'd to imitate them, and then fancy'd they were like them, and as much Inspired as they. And all this has fallen out through discontent with the plain Old way of Religion. It was therefore Good Advice that was given heretofore by the Prophet *Jeremy*, and very needful and seasonable in the Present Day: *Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the Old Paths, Where is the good Way? and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your Souls.* But I go on to the Fourth Head, which is this:

Jerem. 6. 16.

IV. If we set ourselves to try the Spirits of Men, according to Just and Proper Rules, our ~~Modern Pretenders~~ must be Cast and Condemn'd. And this is earnestly recommended to us by one of our Lord's own Disciples. *Beloved*, says he, *believe not every Spirit; but try the Spirits, whether they are of God; becauae many false Prophets are gone out into the World.* When any pretend to be immediately Inspir'd, we are to prove and try them, as Gold or other Metals are prov'd or try'd in the Fire, or by the Touchstone. Believing every Spirit, we cannot be safe; because every Spirit is not of GOD. If we listen to every Pretender, we shall lie at the Mercy of all such, who have but Vanity enough to exalt themselves above their Neighbours or Confidence enough to attempt to impose upon us. We must try the Spirits of Pretenders, whether they are of GOD and

1 John. 1. 4.

and must judge for ourselves, in the use of those Helps and Assistances which GOD affords us for that purpose.

There was indeed, in the Primitive Church a peculiar Gift of Discerning Spirits. *To one*, says St. Paul, *is given Prophecy, and to another the discerning of Spirits.* Which Connexion very plainly intimates, that there were many in the Church at that time, so eminent for their clear-sightedness in things Divine, that they could on a sudden, and without any pains, satisfactorily and assuredly distinguish between true and false pretences to Inspiration. They had a Faculty of quick and sure Discerning, whether such as pretended to the Spirit, truly spake from GOD or not. A Faculty of this kind was really necessary in the Infant-Church, when the Foundations of our Holy Religion were to be firmly fix'd for the Benefit of all succeeding Ages, The Apostle therefore in the Case of his *Philippians*, prays for them, *That they might abound yet more and more, in Knowledge and in all Judgment and that they might approve things excellent; or things that differ*, as you have it in the Margin of your Bibles, Now, the discerning between true and false pretences to Inspiration, is one of the greatest Differences which Christians could need Knowledge and Judgment to help them to make; and therefore it must necessarily be included. And the same Apostle charges Christians to *prove all Things: i. e.* all things contain'd in the usual Prophecying of those Times, which are mention'd in the Verse just before; they were to try all Pretenders to Prophecy, by that Spirit of Discerning that was then in the Church. This was not only requir'd of such as were Guides of others; but even of private Christians, who ought to have their *Senses exercis'd to discern between Good and Evil.* The Church of *Ephesus* is much commended for acting regularly in this respect. *Thou hast tryed them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them Lyars.* They try'd them by the Word of GOD, and that Spirit of Discerning, that was yet among them; and found upon search, that notwithstanding their Boasts, they had no such immediate Mission, Authority, or Message from Christ, as they pretended to.

How long this Faculty, as far as it was Miraculous, lasted in the Church, is hard to say; but a Faculty of the same Kind, tho' of a lower Degree, and to be manag'd in the use of ordinary and common Helps, was certainly continu'd. Had it not been so, the Church had unavoidably been expos'd to shameful Impostures and Delusions, without any Guard: Which it is absurd to suppose, considering who it is that has undertaken the Care of it. Nor is it at all supposable, that St. *John* would in this Case have put us upon Labour in vain, and charg'd us to try Spirits, whether they were of GOD, if there had not been a way within our reach, to discern between real and pretended Inspirations.

1 Cor. 12.
10.

Philip. 1.
9, 10.

1 Thes. 5.
21.

Heb. 5. 14.

Revel. 2. 2.

Inspirations. Nor is it hard to find out the way. We are to make our Tryal both by Reason, and by Scripture.

1. We must use our Reason. Revelation supposes the Truth of the Principles of Natural Religion, which Reason leads us to. And all our Reasonings about Revelations are right, that are truly govern'd by those Principles. Nothing contrary to those natural Principles ought ever to be admitted to come from GOD by Revelation. Should any Men tell us, with ever so great appearance of Solemnity, That this World was made by Chance, and is not Govern'd by a Providence: Should they set before us an ignorant, changeable, cruel and malignant Being, and move it to us to take him for God: Should they go about to persuade us that there was no Life after this, or that our Souls would dye with our Bodies: Tho' they should say and Swear a hundred times over, with ever so serious an Air, that they had all this from GOD, we ought not to regard them. Should they do ever so many surprizing Feats of Activity, and call them Miracles to prove their Mission, we might still be able to justify our slighting them, because their Scheme directly overthrows Natural Religion, which is as truly from GOD, as that can be that is Reveal'd: And we cannot be more certain of any thing than we may be of this, That GOD cannot contradict himself. Should they tell us very gravely, that Reason must vail to Divine Revelation, (a Principle which I'm well assur'd all that have joyn'd to our ~~new~~ ~~Prophets~~ have not always been fond of) we readily grant it; provided we have good Reason to believe a Revelation truly to be Divine: But till then, as GOD has made us Reasonable Creatures, we are bound to be Cautious, lest we are impos'd on, and have that obruded upon us as a Divine Revelation, which GOD has no hand in. To say that in this Case, we must not make use of our Reason, if to tell us, we must act Irrationally when we believe an Inspiration to be Divine which is the ready way to justle Reveal'd Religion out of the World.

2. We must also use the Holy. Scriptures. Having upon good and sufficient Grounds, receiv'd the Sacred Writings of the Old and New Testament as *Divinely inspir'd, and therefore profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness*, we are carefully to enquire, what Marks are there given us, by which the Spirit of GOD, and the Spirit of Error may be distinguish'd and we should apply them to such as pretend to be Inspir'd, and by them pass a Judgment, whether they are really Inspir'd, or not.

And here, I take this for a very just Remark, That one solid Objection against the Inspiration of any Persons, ought to out-weigh ever so many plausible Pleas in favour of it. To clear this, I desire it may be observ'd, That it is enough in any case

Case, to make an Act Virtuous, if it wants one thing that is necessary to the making it Virtuous and Good. Let there be in an Action of ours ever so many things that appear commendable if there wants but one Circumstance that is necessary to make it Good, it is so far spoil'd, it is not Good; because not agreeable to the Rule. So where any pretend to be Inspir'd, if their Discourses which they say, are *pronounc'd under the Operation of the Spirit*, contain but any one evident and certain Mark of such Imperfection, as we are well assur'd the Blessed GOD cannot be charg'd with if they have any one thing in them that is really inconsistent either with Natural or Revealed Truth; if they are justly liable to any one Objection, that GOD hath declar'd that which truly comes from Him, cannot be liable to, this one thing is enough to overthrow the Truth and Reality of such pretended Divine Inspiration, notwithstanding any thing that might be pleaded in favour of it. For GOD cannot belye himself; 'tis flatly impossible he should contradict himself. And therefore, should what is pretended to come by Revelation be in other respects ever so plausible, if yet in any single Instance, it has such an Imperfection attending it, as GOD has given us good Evidence and Satisfaction cannot belong to a Revelation that truly comes from him, it must be an Imposture, or Delusion, or both. I don't mention this, as if we had but one considerable Objection against the pretended Prophets of our Time; for we have many strong Arguments against them and whether we try them by Rational or Scriptural Marks, I can't see how an impartial Person can avoid Condemning them. The Marks and Characters, which to me are Decisive in this Case, are these.

1. A False Spirit cannot be from GOD. That Spirit that absolutely and positively, (without any limitation either express'd or imply'd) Predicts any thing within a certain time, and it comes not to pass, cannot be of GOD, whatsoever may be pretended as an Excuse. This is plain from GOD's own Words, *If thou say in thine Heart, How shall we know the Word which the Lord hath not spoken: When a Prophet speaketh in the Name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the Prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shall not be afraid of him.* Judging by this Rule our Modern Pretenders can by no means be allow'd true Prophets.

Monsieur Merlat, Minister of a French Church in the City of *Lausanne*, not far from *Geneva*, in a Sermon Preach'd An. 1689. tells us, That some who pretended Inspiration in *Dauphiny*, from whom the same Spirit afterwards came into the *Cevennes*, fix'd the time of the Deliverance of the Church, of which they said such Great and Glorious Things, in the Years 1688, and

1689. At which time we all know, no such Deliverance came 'Tis true, we that inhabit this Island had at that time a Glorious Deliverance from Popery, and Slavery, which we ought never to forget, and in the good Effects and Fruits of which, we to this Day have reason to rejoice: But the French Churches, which they plainly had their Eye upon, had no Deliverance at the time they fix'd, nor have they since. And therefore that Spirit that so Positively foretold it, was a falsifying Spirit.

Pag. 29.

Again in the very Account that is given us of what pass'd in the *Cevennes*, in *The Cry from the Desert*, we are told, That one under Extasy, and who pretended to speak from GOD immediately, assur'd those that were present, that they should be happy, that should see the Year 1706. Which Year is not only come and gone, but the Year 1707 too, and yet it is hard to say, wherein the poor *French* Protestants are now happier than they were before. Here again their Spirit has plainly falsified. But to come nearer Home, I'll mention to you a few Modern Instances: And when they are so strangely Confident, 'tis a vain thing to be shy of charging Particulars, which may be Satisfying and Convincing.

'Tis well known to many, that it was Prophetically declar'd by one of them, and afterwards reported by many, that a Dismal Judgment would fall on this City in three Weeks time. But blessed be GOD, tho' many Weeks have since elaps'd, this Noble City, the Ruin of which would be the greatest Joy to *Hell* and *Rome* that could be, continues safe and I hope will be still preserv'd from all their Curses, by the help of the serious fervent Prayers, of the many upright Souls that inhabit it. They would not willingly have this brought as a Proof of the Falsity of their Spirit, and therefore have found out a subtle Key of Time. The three Weeks must be three Weeks of Years; and who can help pitying such as are that way to be impos'd upon!

Mr. Lacy's
Warnings,
Part II. Page.
[[?????]].

In a Warning which is said to have been dictated by the Spirit on the Twenty-sixth of *July* last, are these Words: *The Tower Guns will roar in a few Days: by this Day Seven-night*. But a Week and a Fortnight past, and no Man could hear the sound of them. By that time it should seem their Spirit was convinced it might be charg'd with a Falsity. Upon *August* the twelfth therefore, that is seventeen Days after the Prediction, out comes a Salvo: And 'tis declar'd, that the Tower Guns, were the *Tormenta e turre Ætherea*, the *Guns from the Tower of Heaven*, with which this City was to be batter'd: And that a *Key of Time* was not yet given by which to explain the seven Nights express'd; but that a few Months should produce that Key. Is not this a meer Bantering the World, under the pretence of Revelation? Is

Ibid. pag.
[[?????]] 2.

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not here a falsifying Spirit? Do but recollect what News were about that time generally expected from Foreign Parts, and it will appear as fit a Season for such a sort of a Conjecture, to raise the Reputation of a Prophetick Spirit upon, as could have been found out. But our expectations were cross'd and their Spirit not willing at once to lose his Credit, comes with an Excuse, and tells the World, that truly his meaning was mistaken. Certainly if they had not been Infatuated they had never made this publick!

But their Spirit still goes on for one of these Prophets delivers to a near Relation, a Paper drawn up on *August* the 17th, in which there were these Words, which I transcrib'd from the Original: *Thou hast put me from thee whereas thy Duty was to seek: if thou dost not now do it with the whole Heart, of me in secret, and of my Servants in whose Mouths I'll speak to thee, then thou shalt feel the Power of him whom thou rejectest upon thine own Head, and thine eldest Daughter's. I give thee still ten Days to examine and determine thyself absolutely on the one side or the other, I expect a positive Resolution: And then I will visit thee with Mercy or Judgment as thou choosest.* I had an opportunity of Arguing with the Person that deliver'd this Paper to his Relation, before the Ten Days expir'd. He positively assur'd me, that there was nothing of his own in the Paper but that every Word of it was dictated by the Spirit. And what is the Consequence? Truly tho' it is now above five Months ago, that ten Days were given, after which GOD was to visit with Judgment, there is no Judgment yet appears. The Persons concern'd are living, and signal Monuments of the Goodness of GOD, upon many Accounts. Perhaps, it may be said, GOD is merciful, and he may in some Cases be better than his Word. He threatened by his Prophet that *Nineveh* should be destroy'd within forty Days, which the Event did not answer; and yet *Jonah* was a true Prophet. But alas, this suits not the Case before us. For GOD never is merciful, to the damage, or at the expence of his Truth. His Veracity was not concern'd in the Case of *Nineveh*. For He has given a general Rule, by which we are to understand the Threatnings of his Prophets. *At what instant, says GOD, I shall speak concerning a Nation and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that Nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the Evil, that I thought to do unto them.* And the Rule holds with relation to particular Persons, as well as to Nations and Kingdoms. By this Rule it appears, that the Threatning against *Nineveh* was not absolute but conditional. Tho' that Wicked City was threaten'd, yet if it repented, it was not to be destroy'd. But even this won't do in our Case. For there has been no Repentance, real or pretended in the Party concern'd. The fault (if

Jerem. 18.
7. 8.

it was one) was persisted in not only thro' the Ten Days that were specify'd in the Prediction, but for several Months since. And yet there's no remarkable display of the Divine Power, unless in a way of Support and Consolation. And therefore the Spirit from which this Threatning came, must be a falsifying Spirit. This was *spoken in the Name of the Lord; and yet it followed not nor came to pass*: And therefore we may conclude ii GOD's own Words, That *this is a thing which the Lord hath not spoken*. There's no need of fearing such a Prophet: No reason to regard any thing that comes from him afterwards, under the pretence of Inspiration. Both Reason and Scripture will berr us out in refusing it.

Deut. 13. 5.

2. That Spirit that diverts from the Scriptural way of Worshipping GOD, while it remains in force, cannot be from GOD, 'Twas declar'd heretofore, that that Prophet was not to be regarded by the *Israelites, that attempted to thrust them out of the way that the Lord their God commanded them to walk in*: The Text says, *Thou shalt not hearken to the words of that Prophet*. Not only thou shalt not do the thing he tempts thee to, but thou shalt not so much as patiently hear the Temptation, but reject it with the utmost disdain and detestation. This is as good a Rule for us now, as ever it was for the Jews of Old: For we have as great Cause to be concern'd not to be *thrust out of the way which the Lord our God has commanded us to walk in*, as they could have. This solemn Charge would have justify'd the *Jews* in a refusal to listen to any that should have pretended to alter their way of Worship. nay in their standing it out even against our Saviour and his Apostles, if GOD had not signify'd before-hand, that in the days of the Messiah, a New Mode of Worship should be introduc'd. The *Jews* having sundry Predictions of this sort, which intimated that their Peculiarity would come to an end, were indeed to blame that they were so fond of their Old Ways and Methods, when the time that GOD prefix'd for Alterations was plainly arriv'd. But as for us Christians we have not the least intimation in the *New Testament*, of any design'd Alteration of the way we are to walk in even to the birth of Time: and therefore for us to listen to any that would put us out of that way of Worship which we are by our Sacred Records directed to, is to pour Contempt on them, dishonour our Saviour, and bewilder our selves.

Now it appears to be one Great Design of those that set up for Prophets among us, to thrust us out of the way which the Lord our God hath commanded us to walk in. They'd have us leave our Sacred Ordinances, manag'd by a regular Ministry, that explains the Sacred Scriptures in their proper connected Sense, inforces all the Great Truths and Duties of Christianity, and administers both the Sacraments as our Lord has appointed them in
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his Church, to associate with them in confused Meetings, where all may set up for Teachers that have but a sufficient flock of Confidence where Women teach as well as Men, tho' St. *Paul* has explicitly forbidden it*, where Rapture and Extacy supply the place of Order and Regularity where they are gaping after they know not what; and are without Ministry, without Sacraments, without any opportunity of being reminded of many of the most important Truths and Duties of our Holy Religion; the insisting on which is postpon'd to incoherent Harangues, which for the most part run upon such things as have no tendency to make People either Wiser or better. If this is from GOD, I can't see to what purpose it would be for us, any longer to own the Bible as the Rule of our Religion.

That Spirit that rationally and visibly produces ill Fruits, cannot be from GOD. 'Tis our Saviours own Mark. *Beware*, says he, *of false Prophets; ye shall know them by their Fruits*: i. e. by the Effects which their Doctrines, Discoveries, and Methods of Management produce in the Tempers and Lives of their Followers. Now do but observe what are the fruits and effects of the Discoveries and the Methods of those that have set up for Prophets among us. Do they make Persons really better, and more holy than they were before? By their boasts indeed any Man would be led to expect it; But enquire and see: Search narrowly, and you will find it otherwise. And methinks it should grate upon any sensible Spirit, to conceive that Scheme and Method to be from GOD, that lays all the stress in Religion on things dubious or trivial; that Blesses such as continue in notorious Drunkenness, and pronounces all their Sins pardon'd tho' there's no sign of a Change and that confers the favour of GOD to those of their own way, and confers it upon them without any exception, if their new Scheme be but embrac'd. He that can let it enter into his Thoughts, that that Dispensation is the fruit of being divinely inspir'd, that makes Men worse in their Families, and in their Carriage their nearest Relations; less strict to their Word? less punctual to their Promises, and less careful in their observation of that day which GOD hath requir'd should be peculiarly consecrated to himself and his Service, than they were before He I say that can let this enter into his Thoughts, might I should think without much difficulty be persuaded, that Religion has really nothing in it; but is a meer Fancy and Fiction.

4. A Proud haughty and turbulent Spirit cannot be of GOD. The best of Men are indeed but too full of themselves; But a Dispensation that bolsters Men up in Pride, and naturally fills them with Vanity and Haughtiness, can never be from GOD. Reason and Scripture agree in this. 'Twas therefore a good Criterion that was given by the Monk of *Bangor* to the Old

* 1 Cor. 14.
34.
1 Tim. 2.
12.

Mat. 7. 15,
16.

Bede *Ecc.*
Hist. Lib.
cap. 2.

Britains

Britains to help them to judge of *Austin* the Romish Agent in this Island, whose aim it was to make them Conformable to the Roman Church, that if he did not rise up at the coming in of the British Bishops, 'twas a sign he was not of GOD. And do our *New Prophets* here bear the Test? They talk much indeed of their Humility, but do but question their being Inspir'd, and you'll see disdain in their Looks. Put them upon fixing Bounds and Periods, and so limiting matters as to prevent Evasions, in order to a Rational Satisfaction, and they are quickly out of all patience; and cant bear the thoughts of your prescribing to the Spirit. They are wonderful zealous to pull down others, in order to the exalting themselves. They openly and scurrilously traduce the Office of the Ministry, and vilify all that are in it without distinction, in most opprobrious Language. And all this while they tell us they have nothing to seek, no interest to pursue, nothing to aim at: Forgetting that the Reputation of being the Chief Favourites of Heaven, of being let into the Secrets of the Almighty, and able to discover them to others also; and the hope of being advanc'd to Thrones, and having other mighty marks of Distinction which they so often hint at, are as engaging Gratifications of Human Ambition, as could well be propos'd. What can be more grateful to Flesh and Blood, than to be Caress'd and Idoliz'd as Persons of extraordinary Gifts and Powers, and to have a Multitude at the beck of their Passion and Humour! for which as far as I can discern the Dispensation which they so much applaud, leaves as much room, as any that the World has been hitherto acquainted with.

5. A Ludicrous Spirit is not likely to be of GOD. Words and Actions that become not a Man of Gravity, cannot reasonably be suppos'd to come from the Spirit of GOD. Is it likely that he should speak by the Mouth of a mean Wench, such words as these *Oh now do you believe it, do you? Aye, this is for your Unbelief Gentlewoman?* Does this look like inspiration? Would GOD call her a *Gentlewoman* whom he knew to have been but a little while since an inferiour Servant, and that to a Snuffer of Candles in the Play-House? And is it supposable if GOD was the speaker, that he should use such a Bantering sort of Language, as tends to provoke Laughter, rather than to stir up serioufness and regard? In another place its said that *the Devils should set the King of France in the Pillory in Hell, that they might flout at him.* Could any thing be more ridiculous? And so when they *Whistle*, and *Hiss*, and *Drum*, and *Trumpet* in their Exstacies, and take these things with many other childish and fantastick Motions for evident marks of a Gracious Visitation and when the Spirit employs them to beat, and thump and cuff, and trample upon one another, and to play

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Mr. Lacy's
Second
Warnings,
pag. 111.

Ibid. pag. 42.

tricks like Merry Andrews upon a Stage, can this be the Spirit of GOD? He must have very strange thoughts of him that can suppose it. To pretend to parallel such things as these, in the case of the Ancient Prophets, argues either gross Ignorance or wilful Prevarication.

Lastly, A Malicious Spirit-cannot be of GOD, for *God is Love*. We may therefore remember that when St. *James* and St. *John* were in their rage for commanding down Fire from Heaven to consume the *Samaritans* that would not receive them, our LORD rebuk'd them, saying; *Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of*. He charges them with an Uncharitable and Revengeful Spirit which he could not approve of, and which was opposite to that Spirit of Love and Gentleness which he came to diffuse. Forgetting this, they that now set up for Prophets, freely pour out their Curses on all that oppose them; and seem to delight in nothing more than in threatening Vials of wrath, and Fire from Heaven, on all such as refuse to own them the Peculiar Heritage of the LORD, and his special Messengers. Judgments on opposers is their Common Theme, on which they are warmest and freest: And they are required. *never to pity* those that fall under these Judgments. Nay upon the supposition of their near Approach, they often scornfully-insult. And can this be of GOD? Alas, Darkness is not more opposite to Light, than such a Temper to that Spirit of Love and Meekness, and Tenderness, which it is the great design of the Gospel to spread abroad in the World.

Trying our *New Prophets* by such Rules as these they must be Cast and Condemn'd. And if so, then to have been too forward and Credulous in falling in with them, must be faulty, It has been declar'd by some, that supposing they should give these People encouragement, and at last prove mistaken, there could be no great harm in it: In which I can by no means agree with them. As if it were no great harm flatly to disobey a plain Scripture Precept, of *Trying Spirits* before we believe them! As if there were no great harm in taking a method that naturally tends to harden and embolden Scoffers, and encourage them in contemning the sacred Scriptures, that we are assur'd were given by the Inspiration of GOD! Which is what they really do, that are easy of Relief as to any New Divine Inspiration. Tho' in this Case there has manifestly been a Peculiar Hazard from the Beginning. For the Author of the *History of the Edict of Nants* who is even in the *Cry from the Desart*, produc'd as a Voucher for the Inspir'd in the *Cevennes*, tells us in so many Words, that the Papists in France *suborn'd some, who were un-thier Direction, to Counterfeit Inspiration*. This being Fact, that some were suborn'd as Counterfeits, what evidence have we that the three Persons that came from thence hither, and have

1 John 4. 8.

Luke 9. 54, 55.

* Mr. Lacy's 1st. warnings, pag. 53.

* *Cry from the Desart* pag. 4.

have occasion'd such a noise by diffusing their Spirit among us, are not of the number of those Counterfeits; and were not design'd to serve the Purposes of those who are our Enemies because of our Religion and who would be glad of slar-[[?????]] ring the Reformation, Should this at last prove true, and be Evidenc'd (and I have some Reason to believe that it will in a little time) will there then appear, to have been no Hazard in Credulity? Will not that be found in the issue, to be much to GOD's Dishonour, and the scandal of our Holy Religion.

And as for those that Cry, Well if this is of GOD, it shall stand after all; I can't admire the Wisdom of their supposition, when there is such Proof upon Tryal, that GOD has not spoken by them. If these Rules are just, and these Facts true. I think instead of standing Neuters, we are in Duty bound to oppose them, and cannot answer for doing otherwise either to GOD, or our own Consciences. But farther.

V. Tracing the *False Prophets* which the Writings of the *New Testament* foretel us should arise in the Christian Church from one Age to another, these *New Pretenders* appear in the main to be much of the same Stamp and Spirit and Design. Had there never been any [[?????]] *old Pretenders* to a Prophetick Spirit in the Church before, or had they been very rare, our surprize might have been the greater at those that have started up in our Times: But when we find that such were stirring even in the Days of the Apostles; and that there have been some such in most Ages since, we have the less Reason to wonder at the Late Attempt. Our Blessed LORD foretold the *arising of False Prophets* betimes: And *Josephus* the Celebrated *Jewish* Historian relates how that Prediction was fulfill'd, before *Jerusalem* was destroy'd. And that, there were false Prophts in the Days of the Apostles, is plain from forecited passage of St. *John*, who declares in so many Words *many false Prophets are gone out into the World*: And if we compare St. *Peter* with it, we shall find reason to conclude that it would be the same also in the times that follow'd from one Age to another.

Cerithus liv'd in St. *John's* Days, and had many followers. He pretended to extraordinary Revelations, * and taught that Chrisft would have a Temporal Kingdom after the Resurrection, when Men should spend the space of a Thousand Years in a Nuptial Festivity. And some think St. *John* had these in his Eye, when he says that *many false Prophets* were even then *gone out into the World*.

In the next Age *Justin Martyr* and some of the Fathers that were Cotemporaries with him, zealously asserted that the *Sybils* were

Mat. 4. 24.

1 John 4. 1.
2 Pet. 2. 1.
&c.

* Euseb.
Eccl. Hist.
Lib. III. cap.
28.

were Inspir'd: * And several of them had more respect for the *Sibylline Verses*, than even for the *Revelation of St. John*.

About the Year 200 arose that Impostor *Montanus*, who thought himself so full of Light and Inspiration, that he Asserted that the Promise of our Saviour to his Disciples of leading them into all truth, was principally intended of himself, and fulfill'd in him. He declar'd himself the Paraclete, and had two Prophetesses attending him, who Attested the Divinity of his Mission, tho' they were not very eminent. for their Sanctity themselves. *Tertullian* tho' a great Man fell in with him, and was an Abettor and Publisher of his Notions,

These *Montanists* for the most part agreed with the Generality of Christians as to the Doctrinal Principles of Religion: But they pretended to be sent of GOD to fix a more perfect Discipline in the Church, than had been settled by the Apostles. They had violent Agitations, and often fell into Exstasies, and whatsoever they Spake either then or immediately after, was reckon'd to be spoken by Revelation; and they thought there was no room to doubt of the truth of it. They failed much; and were remarkable for several Austerities. There were many Meetings to consider of their Prophecies, which were generally censur'd and condemn'd by the Guides of the Church, and the most serious and judicious Christians. *Eusebius* gives us the most particular Account of them, and how they were oppos'd. *Apollinarius* prov'd them False Prophets, because they foretold Wars that never happen'd. *Miltiades* argu'd them to be False Prophets, from their Ecstasies, to which the Prophets of the *New Testament* were Strangers. And *Apollonius* prov'd them False Prophets, because they produc'd ill Fruits. And after making a great noise for a while, they at length disappear'd and dwindled away.

In the next Age the Violence of Persecution drove many Christians, especially in *Egypt* and *Palestine*, into the Wilderness, to save their Lives; where they liv'd like Hermites and became Visionaries. *St. Jerome* writing the Lives of several of them, draws up Spiritual Romances. We have Visions, Revelations, and Miracles at every turn; Discourses with Monsters, and what not! And something very peculiar might for what I know befall some of those first Founders of a Monastick Life, for the warning of all the Ages that follow'd, to beware of an Enthusiastick Spirit, as they would not be led by it into the utmost extravagance.

A little after the Year 600. arose *Mahomet*, who styl'd himself *the Apostle of God*. He did not pretend to deliver a New Religion, but to revive the Old one, which he said GOD first gave to *Adam*, and afterwards restor'd by Revelation to *Abraham*. He own'd *Moses* and *Christ* for Prophets; but said that

* Blondel
des Sybils
Liv. 2. Clt.
26.

Eccles. Hist.
Lil. 5. cap.
14, 16, 17,
18, 19.

the Jews and Christians had corrupted the Holy Writings; and that he was sent to restore the Law of GOD, to its primitive Purity. He pretended to receive all his Revelations from the Angel *Gabriel*. He complains in his *Alchoran*, which is but a Collection of his Prophetical Warnings, of the Charges that were brought against him of his being a Magician, an Impostor, and Teller of Old Fables. He deluded Men by Promises of great and agreeable Rewards to such as should believe in him, and threatnings of most dismal Punishments on such as should reject him. The *Alchoran* that he compos'd, which is the Bible of his Followers, they represent as so excellent for its Eloquence and Doctrine, as to be equivalent to Miracles. He boasted of a Journey to Heaven, under the conduct of the Angel *Gabriel*, but could produce no credible Witness. And all his Sayings and Doings are collected as a Supplement to his *Alchoran*, by way of Tradition. And thus in the course of a few Years, as ridiculous an Imposture as ever was vented, gain'd Credit in many Countries, and over-spread some of the most Noble and Beautiful Parts of the World, where it obtains even at this Day. Such as will take the pains to read over the Life of that Impostor, written by the Learned Dr. *Prideaux*, and publish'd in the Year 1698. and compare it with the Schemes and Methods of our ~~New pretended Prophets~~, will in many Particulars find a most surprizing Agreement.

The Superstitions and Idolatrous Corruptions of the *Church of Rome* prevail'd in the *West*, much about the same time as the *Mahumetan* Fooleries spread far and near in the *East*. And in the *Romish* Church an Enthusiastical Spirit has remarkably prevail'd, ever since its first Degeneracy. The Histories of the Lives of their Saints are full of Visions, Extraordinary Revelations, and Extacies. Whenever any thing was to be undertaken for the Advancement of the Church and when any new Doctrine or Worship was to be establish'd, a Revelation has still been coin'd to direct to it, and confirm it. Thus was the way pav'd for the settlement of Image-worship *. And when the *Croisades* were afterwards set on foot, to recover the Holy Land from the *Saracens*, and make way for aggrandizing the Pope of *Rome* by weakning all the *Western* Princes, *Peter* the Hermite declar'd he was directed by Inspiration to urge that Expedition, † And so when the Doctrine of the Real Presence, Transubstantiation, and the Adoration of the Sacrament was to be establish'd, there happen'd just at that very time to be a Woman in the City of *Leige* nam'd *Eve*, to whom the Spirit revealed that they ought to institute a Feast to the Honour of the Holy Sacrament. To make way for the passing the immaculate Conception of the Virgin into an Article of Faith, the *Cordeliers* produc'd the Revelations and Visions of St. *Brigit*, and
the

* *Vid.* Span-
[[?????]] Hist.
i. cap. 1.
§. XIII.

† *Vid.* Tyrii
Bell. Sacr.
Lib. 1. cap.
[[?????]] 2.

Vid. Balae-
[[?????]] &
M[[?????]]
[[?????]] nam,
&c.

the *Jacobites*, who there were against them, by way of opposition produc'd the Visions and Revelations of St. *Katharine* of St. *Hildegard* also was a celebrated Prophetess in her Day; and her Revelations were confirm'd in a full Council at *Tryers*, with the concurrence of St. *Bernard*, An. 1148. She and *Cyril* the Presbyter and Anchorite of *Mount Carmel* prophecy'd lustily against the Mendicant Monks and Friars of those Times *. Nay, the Romish Church has He Saints and She Saints, famous for Visions and Revelations from one Age to another. She can produce an *Angelick Carmelite*, a St. *Gertrude*, a St. *Elizabeth* of *Schonhoven*, a St. *John of la Croix*, and a thousand more, whose Legends are as full of Revelations as they can hold. Particularly if we consult the Lives of all the Founders of their Religious Orders, as St. *Francis* of *Assize*, St. *Dominick*, and St. *Ignatius Loyola*, we shall find them full of Extasies and Visions, Relations, and Combats with the Devil; and such like things. And what pity is it that we Protestants should imitate the Romish Church in her Visionary Temper; and therein take Pattern from her! I fear we may conclude, that if she once infects us with her Giddy Spirit of Enthusiasm, we shall find that that will soon be follow'd with her usual Superstitions and Idolatries.

* See their Prophecies in Hospin. de Orig. Monach. Lib. 6. cap. 17.

We have a surprizing Story as to what happen'd a little after the Year 1200. that is commonly reported in the History of that Age. The *Mendicant Monks*, the *Jacobites* and *Cordeliers* being weary of the Old Gospel, were for bringing in a New one, which they call'd, *the Eternal Gospel*. It was (as they said) to be the Gospel of the Holy Spirit, and to succeed the Gospel of Christ. * They said that God the Father reign'd under the Law, and the Son under Grace; but that under the *Mendicant Orders* the Holy Spirit was to enter into his Reign, and reign forever. The Fancy had a mighty spread, and the University of *Paris*, was in an Uproar about it: But at last the Design was quash'd by the subtle Methods of the Court of *Rome*. However there remain such Foot-steps of it to this Day, as may be assistant to such as are desirous by a New Form of Religion to supplant the Old one.

Vide Usserium de Christianarum Eccles. Successione & Statu, cap. 9. Sect. 20, &c.

An. 1364. *Joannes de Rupescissa* a Minorite Fryar fore-told two Anti-Christ's, the Desolation of the Nations, the intire Oppression of the Clergy, and the Reduction of the World to the Faith of Christ, before the Year 1370. All this he pretended was Revealed to him by the Lord JESUS, tho' no one particular came to pass.

Fascic. rer. expet. & fug. Vol. 2.

An. 1446. one *Nicolas a Buldesdorf* going into the Council of *Basil*, Sirnam'd himself *The Angelick Pastor*, and declar'd that he should destroy Anti-Christ, deliver the *Jews* from Captivity, collect the Church out of all Nations, and extirpate the Wicked.

Campanella Append. ad Monarch. Hisp. p. 361. Edit Amstel. 1653.

But we have not in all History any thing of this nature, that is more remarkable, than what has happen'd since the Reformation of these Parts from Popery. When *Zuinglius* Preaching the pure Doctrine of the Gospel to the *Swiss Cantons*, he had some that warmly oppos'd him upon the Head of Infant-Baptism and they fancy a themselves Prophets. They Prophecy'd publickly in the Streets of the City of *Zurich*, against the Old Dragon, meaning *Zuinglius*: And cry'd, Wo, wo, wo, to *Zurich* And some of them fix'd *Jonah's* term of Forty Days for the Destruction of that wicked City. And tho' the Event of it prov'd them false Prophets, they yet persisted long in their unaccountable Fancies; and gave a great deal of Disturbance.

Zuinglii Op.
Tom. 2.
Fiench, Con-
tra ----
Cataba-
pustas. p. 8.

Luther also was oppos'd by some of the same Stamp at *Wittembergh*, soon after he attempted a Reformation. They that set themselves to oppose him pretended to have Discourse with GOD, and said he had given them a Command to kill the Wicked, and settle a New World, in which only the Godly and the Innocent should live and bear sway and *Carolostadius* too much sided with them, and even *Melanchthon* himself * was for a while a little disturbed with them. At first they kept secret; but afterwards they created dismal Confusions. *Muncer* was train'd up amongst them. He at first inveigh'd against *Luther* and the rest of the Protestant Ministers jointly with the Pope; and then set himself above them, by boasting of immediate Revelations; † under pretence of which, he became absolute Dictator, among his Followers, who at length amounted to Eleven thousand Armed Men, that were wholly at his Beck. Making a Speech to these poor Creatures that hung upon his Lips, he assur'd them that he did every thing by a Command of GOD. He promis'd them help from Heaven, and a sure Victory when they came to engage their Opposites: And undertook to receive all the Bullets that should be shot against them in his Coat, without any harm. When the Wretch was at last taken, and under Torture, and was put in mind of the multitude of poor Souls of whose Misery and Ruin he had been the Occasion, instead of discovering the least remorse, he laugh'd and said that it was their own Fault.

* See Came-
tar. in Vit.
Melanch. ---

† Sliidani
Comment.
de Statu
Relig. &
Reip. p. 72,
118, 119.

Id. pag. 123.

Id. pag.
270, 271.

Afterwards when some of the same Crew had got the City of *Munster* in *Westphalia* in their Possession, they us'd frequently to run about the Streets and Cry *Repent and be Baptiz'd, or the Wrath of God will speedily overwhelm you*. One *John Matthew* that was a Celebrated Prophet among them, requir'd they should bring all their Goods and Possessions into one common Store: And he ran thro' the Streets with a Pike in his Hand, declaring that GOD the Father had commanded him to drive those from the City who then Besieg'd it. As he drew near the Camp, he

was

was slain in the view of many and tho' he by that was most effectually prov'd a *False Prophet*, yet the People were still so infatuated as readily to listen to others of the same Stamp; and particularly to *John of Leiden*, who step'd forth and told them that it was reveal'd to him that his Brother was to have such an Exit, and that he was to marry his Widow. Afterwards he signify'd to them that it was reveal'd to him from Heaven that a Man might marry as many Wives as he would: And it was also reveal'd to another Prophet that it was the Will and Command of their Heavenly Father, that this *John of Leiden* should have the Empire of the whole Earth, and possess the Throne of his Father *David*; all other Princes being ejected. Whereupon this *John* with great modesty fell on his Knees, and lifted up his Hands to Heaven, and told the People that this had been known to him many Days; but that he would not divulge it, that their Faith might be confirm'd by the Fathers using another Minister: And after this, he us'd the State of a King. *Knipperdoling* was his chief Minister, and very Officious. He once creeping on the Heads of the People as they stood very thick and close together in the Market Place, breath'd upon them one after another, saying, the Father hath sanctify'd thee, receive thou the Holy Ghost. Nothing was more commonly talk'd of among them, than the Kingdom of Christ on Earth, when the Wicked were to be destroy'd, and the Elect to reign: And *Luther* with them was even worse than the Pope himself. The Infatuation continu'd all the time that the City was Besieg'd. King *John* sent his Emissaries out to Convert the World, and promis'd the poor People Deliverance to the last. After 'they had long waited to no purpose, and seem'd almost tir'd, he at length fix'd the *Easter* following for the time when they should be deliver'd. When *Easter* came, they were rather in greater straits than before, and it appear'd difficult to pacify them any longer. Upon which this Wretch of a King feign'd a Sickness of six Days continuance, and then publickly told the People that he had been sitting upon a blind Ass, and that the Father had laid on him the Sins of the whole Multitude, who were now free from Guilt; and that this was the Deliverance that he had promis'd them, and with which they ought to rest contented. Thus were they unaccountably troll'd on by one Flam after another, and Multitudes of them were destroy'd while the City was Besieg'd, and when it was taken, and yet they who surviv'd still doted on the same Fancies, and expected they should have the World at command in a very little time; and to pretend to argue with them, was to as much purpose as to reason with the Wind. From them, among others came *David George* who was afterwards so famous.

Id. pag. 276,
278.

There

There are few but have heard of the Story of *Hacket*, *Coppinger*, and *Arthington*, in the Days of Queen *Elizabeth*. *Hacket* was a mighty Man for Revelations, and would attest the truth of them with most direful Oaths and Execrations. He pretended that the Principal Spirit of the Messiah rested in him. *Coppinger* who was a Gentleman of good Descent, was his Prophet of Mercy and *Arthington* a *Yorkshire* Gentleman was his Prophet of Judgment. These two proclaim'd out of a Cart in *Cheapside*, that Christ was come in *Hacket*, with his Fan in his hand, to purge the Godly from the Wicked; and cry'd Repent *England*, Repent. They were all seiz'd by the Government: and *Hacket* was hang'd; *Coppinger* starv'd himself in Prison, *Arthington* made a Recantation. Some have attempted to cast the Odium of this wretched Delusion upon the Puritans of those Days, among whom *Hacket* was very Conversant: But Dr. *Fuller* does them but justice in declaring, that they as cordially detested *Hacket's* Blasphemies, as any of the Episcopal Party.

Fuller's
Church Hist.
of Britain.
Cent. 16.
Book 9. pag.
205, 206.

But this Delusion was much sooner over, than another in *Germany* which was occasion'd by *Kotterus Drabitus* and *Ponitvia*, who pretended to Propheticall Inspiration in the last Century. They were favourably regarded by several good Christians, and some worthy Divines and among the rest the Learned *Comenius* was a great Admirer of them and took unweary'd pains to collect and disperse their Predictions. The good Man took them to be as truly Inspir'd of GOD, as any of the Pen-men of the Holy Scripture: And being one that was much affected with the Calamities of the Protestant Churches in his Day, and long'd with impatience for their Restauration, he as readily suck'd in whatever came from those Pretenders, as Monsieur *Jurieu* and some others have since done, whatever has come from the poor Creatures in *Dauphiny* and the *Cevennes*, without any Examination. Their Speeches which they represented as Propheticall were meer Jargon. * They declar'd that the *Turk* was to turn Christian, and overthrow the *Emperor* of *Germany* and the *Pope* in a very little time. And by 1680. the Nations and People of the Earth being reduced into the Lap of the Church, the Building of the *New Jerusalem* was immediately to succeed.

* See The
Prophecies of
Christopher
Kotterus
Christiana
Poniatovia,
& Nicholas
Drabitus,
Printed at
London in
1664. in
Octavo:
And *Commenii*
Historia Re-
velationum,
&c. in 4to.
An. 1659.

There are some now living that remember *Doomsday Sedgwick*, who receiv'd his Name, from his pitching on a certain Day for the Commencement of the general Judgment. The Day prov'd very stormy and tempestuous, and remarkable for its Thunders and Lightnings, at which many were startled, because he (who had the Reputation of great Piety and Probity) had so positively predicted them; but the Fear soon dispers'd, when fair Weather succeeded soul, and all things were found to continue as they were before. And

And the late Story of Mr. *Mason* in *Buckinghamshire* ought not to be forgotten. He firmly expected the Appearance of Christ at a little Village in that County call'd *Water Stratford* *, to Conduct his People from thence to *Jerusalem* and begin the *Millennium*: But about the very time that was six'd for Christ's Appearance, Mr. *Mason* dy'd; and left a Company of poor deluded People behind him, who continu'd together, Praying, and Dancing and Singing Night and Day, in hope of Christ's sudden Appearance among them: But after long Waiting to no purpose, they at last dispers'd.

* See *Maurices Impartial Account of Mr. John Mason of Water-stratford, and his Sentiments.* 4to, 1695.

These Passages being consider'd, we need not much wonder it any sayings or doings of those who now set up for *Prophets* among us: For they hardly have any thing that is odd or fantastical, but it is Copy'd from one or other of the Instances fore-mention'd. It is an easy thing to observe, that such as have been Acted by a Spirit of Enthusiasm from one Age to another, have in several things agreed most wonderfully, All are still for inveighing against such as went before them; and for pouring contempt on the standing Ministry in the Church, and those that Officiate in it. All are for keeping as long as ever they can in Generals in their Predictions, to prevent being detected. And when they come to particulars, all are very Positive, tho' without any suitable Grounds. Go to argue with them, and they'l stop your Mouth with a plain Revelation from Heaven; and they expect their Affirmation should be Credited, without Proof. They all grosly misinterpret the Scriptures, and apply the whole of them to those Notions of which they are so hugely fond and fancy they meet with them wherever they cast their Eye, between *Genesis* and the *Revelation*. All are apt to lay more stress on the things they fasten on, than on much Greater matters. We may observe in all of them, a [[?????]]want of due search and enquiry into the Grounds on which they admit their suggestions to be Divine and from GOD; and a readiness to find Evasions when the Event has Confuted their Predictions, or when any thing is urg'd that tends to Convince; Much Spiritual Pride cover'd with a pretence of more than ordinary Humility great Ignorance, and thick darkness in the midst of their Highest Flights; and a greater dependence on their own Whimsies, than on the Sacred Oracles themselves. And if we cannot from such instances as these produc'd, learn not to make light of a pretence to immediate Inspiration, which tho' it begins low, often issues so Tragically; if we don't learn to be afraid of any thing that borders upon Enthusiasm either in our selves or others, we shew that we are not to be instructed by the experience of other Men, but are of the number of those that can only be taught by feeling, the danger of running Divisions in Religion, and of taking the Spirit

Spirit of Error and Delusion, for the Spirit of Truth and Soberness. But I add farther,

VI. That supposing our *Modern Pretended Prophets* not to be Impostors, (which I believe as to some among them but really to apprehend themselves Inspir'd it would yet by no means be safe, to depend on their Word in such a Case, unless they give us such Evidence as Reason and Scripture also us to demand. With some indeed the Characters of the Persons who pretend to be Inspir'd, supplies the place of Evidence that 'tis GOD that Inspires them: But this is a most fallacious Method. For what can be more common than mistakes in the Characters of other Men? We may take him for a Man of Great Piety and Probity, that hath carry'd a fair outside, and had a General Reputation, who may yet secretly have been a Man of Intreagues, and Fraudulent Practices; and may have run into such Enormities, (tho' not generally known) as GOD may see fit to punish by leaving him to himself, and giving him up to a strong Delusion, to believe a Lie. And we may fancy him a Man of Good Sense, who talks tolerably well on some particular occasions, who may yet have had a Visionary Disposition from his Cradle, or received it Hereditarily; or who may have been led in some of the important turns of Life, by Dreams and Omens, and meer Groundless Whimsies, rather than by sober Reason and Consideration. Or let suppose that we have good satisfaction upon probable grounds both as to the Probity and the Sagacity of those that pretend to be Inspir'd, yet when the Devil may so artificially disguise himself, as to put on the Appearance of an *Angel of Light*, we cannot even thence have sufficient satisfaction but that they may be themselves impos'd upon: Our depending barely upon their word may ensnare us. It may much confirm us in this, to observe that many have believ'd themselves Inspir'd without just Grounds; and that several honest and well meaning People have taken the mere Convulsions of the Body, and the sallies of an heated elevated Fancy for Divine Inspiration. Now how can the firm Persuasion and Positive Affirmation of any Persons that they are truly Inspir'd, secure us from a Delusion, when it may consist with their being Deluded?

We may further observe that when GOD hath dealt with any in a way of Inspiration, he hath not only wrought in their Minds a firm Persuasion, but he hath given them good Proof in order to their satisfaction. * He gave *Gideon* a Proof by his Fleece, and suffer'd him to turn it both ways; and satisfied *H Ezekiah* by returning back of the Shadow of the Dial, for so many degrees as were mention'd: Nor indeed is any Man represented as Inspir'd, either in the *Old Testament* or the

New

2 Thes. 2.
11.

2 Cor. 11.
14.

* See a Late
essay on In-
spiration,
pag. 46. &c.

New, but GOD afforded him such Proof of it, as might give him Rational satisfaction. Withal GOD has not disallow'd those whom he truly hath Inspir'd, to insist upon their being enabled to give suitable Rational Evidence of their Inspiration to others. Thus *Moses* when GOD was sending him upon a Peculiar Errand insisted upon his being able to give farther satisfaction to those to whom he was sent, than his bare Word and GOD did not disallow it. He has herein Gratified his Servants whom he has truly Inspir'd; and enabled *Moses* and others to work Miracles, for the satisfying those whom they had to do with, that GOD truly Inspir'd and sent them. It must indeed be own'd that there have been some Inspir'd Persons that have wrought no Miracles; But then either their Revelations have been but of Private Concernment, or GOD hath himself done something that was Miraculous in their Case; which made known to others has tended as much to give them full rational satisfaction, as if they had wrought Miracles before them for Confirmation. Thus tho' we read not of *Jonah's* working any Miracle, yet his Preservation for so long a time without the least harm, in the Belly of a Whale, after he had been cast forth into the Sea in a Storm, (which we may well suppose was known to the Men of *Nineveh*,) tended as much to satisfy them that *Jonah* came from GOD, as if he himself had wrought Miracles amongst them.

Exod. 4. 1.

What I aim at therefore stands firm. When Inspiration is pretended by any, we may demand Good Evidence; and a concern for the Honour of GOD, as well as for our own satisfaction may lead us to it. It need not discourage us to hear those who let up for Prophets pretending to come immediately from the Great GOD: We may have a Becoming Awe and Reverence for his Divine Majesty, and yet demand suitable Evidence; nay we therefore ought to demand suitable Evidence, because of our Reverential regard to that Majesty from whom they pretend to be Deputed and Sent: Or if the bare Word of any Man might be taken in this Case without Proof, then an Impostor, or one that is himself Deluded, would have as good a right to be receiv'd as a true Prophet; and so GOD's Inspiring Men would signifie just nothing, because when they were Inspir'd there would be no certain way of knowing them from those by whom Inspiration was but falsly pretended.

If it be enquir'd, what Evidence Reason and Scripture does allow us to demand and insist on, in the Case of Inspiration; I make no difficulty to reply, that we may very justly insist on some such Evidences as taken jointly cannot deceive us, or leave any danger of a Delusion. Several things have been often urg'd as Efficient Proof, where the whole has plainly appear'd in the

Issue to be Delusory. I must confess I don't take either. Visions, or speaking Languages not distinctly known before, or Extacies, to be in this Case sufficient Evidences without something further. Many Instances where such things as these have been the Product of Bodily Distemper, as well as Design, may be seen in Dr. *Meric Casaubon's Treatise of Enthusiasm*. Our best way is to insist on such Evidence as GOD has most usually given to those whom he has Inspir'd as his Prophets. We may be satisfy'd the Blessed GOD wont send special Agents without Credentials: And the most usual Divine Credentials, have been open and uncontroul'd Miracles, and punctually accomplisht Predictions.

Then, we may justly insist on Miracles. Resolution under complicated sufferings may go a great way to convince of the sincerity of the pretenders to Prophecie in some Circumstances especially: But Miracles are necessary to convince that they are not themselves impos'd on, but really are such Divine Messengers as they would be taken for. We find the former Prophets very generally appealing to their Miracles and I think we need not question but that if GOD should ever restore again to his Church the Gift of Prophecy, he will restore also the Gift of Miracles, by way of Attestation. If he sends forth any new ~~Prophets~~ to make Additions to his former Revelations, or give new Explications, to be of equal Authority with what is before reveal'd, 'tis but reasonable to expect that such Explications and Additions should have an equal Proof, with what is before reveal'd And the Miracles produc'd as an Attestation in such a Case, ought to be open and well attested, so as to leave no just suspicion of Collusion: All without exception who desire it, ought to be admitted to be Spectators, with free Liberty to make the utmost search and enquiry into Particulars in order to their full satisfaction; And at the same time the Miracles ought to be compleat, and not wrought by halves.

2. We may also insist upon punctually accomplish'd Predictions, as to Futurities which fell not under Humane Cognizance. But then these Predictions should not be mostly express'd in general Terms that may be apply'd afterwards to different Events: Particulars ought to be so far specify'd, as to lay a just foundation for a Conviction, when the Event is found answerable, that there was nothing fortuitous in the Case, but that there was the Real influence of that Superiour Being, whose peculiar Character it is, That he knoweth the End from the Beginning. Taking a bare Word, is more than our LORD himself insisted on in the Case. For says he, *If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true*: By which he plainly intimates, that if he had no other Testimony but his own Word, they would not have been bound to believe him-

John 5. 31.

Let

Let then these Gentlemen give us such Evidence as this Let them work compleat Miracles openly, and in the face of the Sun, without any Collusion and let them plainly and particularly fore-tell some future Event that GOD only could foresee, and then if what they pretend to bring us from GOD, carries nothing in it that is repugnant to Natural Religion, nor to that Revelation which we have abundant evidence came from him, I'll grant we should deserve to be blam'd for refusing to Credit them: But till then, our abetting or encouraging them by our Credulity, I cannot but take to be a provoking Sin, that might justly expose us to the Divine severity, as not having a sufficient or a duly regulated concern for the Honour of GOD, and the Credit of our Holy Religion.

VII. The Seventh and Last Assertion advanc'd is this; That several Matters of Fact relating to those that now set up for Prophets, which are well attested; and the Account which they themselves give of some circumstances, naturally lead to such Objections, as make it utterly incredible that they should be Divinely Inspir'd.

The Characters of the three *French Men*, who have been the first Leaders, in this New Dispensation, give just Ground of suspicion. One of them has notoriously broke his Faith; for after he had been conduced to *Geneva* he return'd into the *Cevennes* * contrary, to his agreement with the *Marquis de Lalande*; and he pretends to justify it, by saying that he was determin'd to it by an Inspiration from above. As if the Blessed GOD would dispose Men to break their Contracts, by Inspiration, when his Word which we know was Inspir'd, represents it as so great a Crime, and threatens it with so severe a Punishment!

Another of them that has been charg'd with killing several Persons in cold Blood, from which charge he has never yet clear'd himself, as I can hear of, has declar'd in the Hearing of many, *That he would murder his own Father if he was command-ed to do it by Inspiration*; † such a Wretch is a thousandfold more likely, to be Inspir'd by the Spirit of the Devil, than the Spirit of GOD.

The third, who is the most boisterous of all, lies under a most unhappy Character as to his Morals; and I have seen an Affidavit Sign'd by Col. *Cavallier* himself, when in *Holland*, by which he disowns him, tho' he pretends to be his Relation.

And

* See the Account of Elias Marion gives of himself, in the Cry from the Desert, pag. 81. &c.

† This I have from those that were themselves ear witnesses.

* A Copy of this Affidavit taken by a to bring us such Halcyon Days as some People Dream of? Publick No-Certainly 'tis high time to awake!

tary in the City of London, from the Original, that is under the Hand of a Publick Notary in the *Hangue* in *Holland*, I have now by me, which I shall be ready to shew to any that desire it. In it are these Words.

*Qu'il n'a jamais sceu ni enendu dire dans le Pais, que le dit Cavallier ait ete Prophete.---*and afterwards; *quoy qu'il porte le meme nom que le Sieur Depo- sant, il n'est pourtant pus de ses Parens.*

The Colonel Declares that the *Cavallier* that has here set up for a mighty Prophet, was not esteem'd such in the *Cevennes*: he never knew nor understood in that Country that he was a Prophet; And that tho' he bears the same Name with the Colonel, he is not related to him.

The Colonel also declares in the same Affidavit, that he never heard that *Marion* was a Prophet in the *Cevennes*; and that *Durand Eage*, was never look'd upon any otherwise among them, than as a Vagabond and a Poltrun.

One of our *English Prophets* and an early Convert, applying to GOD since he has been willing to pass for Inspir'd, has these very Words: * *Lord they impute Delusion to me: It may be so: I know not; thou knowest, and thou alone.* By which Saying, he owns himself to speak as from GOD, and personate him, when he knew not but he might both be De- luded himself, and an Instrument of the Delusion of others. Was ever any thing of that kind drop'd by a true Prophet? Did any truly Inspir'd Person ever bring a special Message from GOD, when he knew not but he might be under a Delusion?

Nor can it in reason be expected we should believe *Marion* is Inspir'd with the Spirit of Truth, because he doth not certainly know it himself. He knows indeed that he is strangely mov'd and agitated at certain times, but by what Spirit he doth not certainly know. If he did certainly know it, he would not so often doubt of it as the Spirit saith he doth, and therefore it threatens to destroy him. I argue then thus: If he do not doubt but certainly know, then it is a Lying Spirit which often says he doubts, and does not believe it: If on the other side he doth often doubt, even when he is under the Operation of the said Spirit, then it is evident he himself doth not certainly know, what kind of Spirit it is; whether it be a Good Spirit, or a Bad and Lying Spirit †. And if he does not know this, what reason have we to regard him?

They vent very false and wrong Notions of GOD, that are very injurious to him. Thus for Instance, when *Marion* would present how the Blessed GOD would be dispos'd towards the Wicked when praying to him upon their being visited with his Judgments, he brings him in as using these Words: || *I know not whether or no I should then be in the Humour to hear them.* So that his God is plainly at once both an Ignorant, and an humoursome

* *Mr. Lacy's* 2d. *Warnings,* Pag. 177.

† See pag. 17. line. 19, 20, 21, 22. and pag. 39. the whole Pretend Prophecy of *Dec. 1.* and off else-where.

|| *Advertisse- ments Pro- phetiques de Elie Marion* pag. 16.

moursome Being. Certainly they must come of their own (Heads, or on the Devil's Errand, who make such a representation of GOD to Mankind as that is; and charge him with such Imperfections as a wise Man would be ashamed of!

They give most wretched Glosses upon Scripture, and in some Cases flatly contradict it. They turn every thing they meet with in our Sacred Records, without any regard to Connexion, to their beloved *Millennium* even to the tempting Persons to call in question the Resurrection of the Body, and a future Judgment. The Scripture says expressly, that *both* Wheat and Tares are to *grow together until the Harvest*: And that we might not be at a loss as to the time refer'd to by that Expression, 'tis positively declar'd that *the Harvest is the end of the World*: Whereas these Men say, that in their New Dispensation, (which is not to be the end of the World neither) *the Angels shall root out the Tares, and there shall remain on Earth only good corn*.

They profane Divine Institutions. Never did I see any thing that had so horridly profane an appearance, as a Mock sort of a Sacrament, of which we have a particular Account in one of their Books, that was manag'd with an empty Plate and Cup or Bowl *. The Spirit of GOD could never put upon such an egregious mocking of his own Appointments, which he has six'd in his Church.

They delight in railing Accusations. They say the Body of the Ministers has *left out the Noblest part of the Gospel*: and a multitude of as black Charges are obvious to every Reader. What wonder then is it that they pour the utmost Contempt upon them, tho' Christ has promis'd his Presence with them? But this Promise of his, Ministers, may plead and depend upon, till the truth of such Charges is evidenc'd.

Their management of their Converts favours not of Divine Inspiration. They pardon their Sins without Repentance foregoing; and if they'll respect them as *Prophets*, they'll readily Bless them tho' they live in notorious Vice. Thus one *John* being call'd for, had these Words said to him under the pretended Inspiration; *This Day all thy Sins and Iniquities are forgiven, and blotted out, and shall never be call'd to remembrance again*: And yet this *John* was before notorious for sottish Drinking, and is the same since.

In their Account of themselves, there are some Circumstances that are unsolvable, Thus they tell us that in one Meeting of these Prophets in France, several of the Inspir'd began to speak at once. Whereupon one said to the rest, *In the Name of God be silent*: And the others immediately held their peace. If the Spirit of GOD was here the Agent, led into a plain Irregularity, and was subject to controul.

Either

Mat. 13. 30.

Ver. 39.

Preface to the Cry from the Desart. pag. 21.

* *Mr. Lacy's Warnings,* 2d Part. pag. 102, 103, &c.

Mr. Lacy's Warnings, Part III. pag. 20.

Mr. Lacy's Warnings, Part III. pag. 20.

Cry from the Desart pag. 22.

Either he that check'd the rest, and they that were check'd by him, were Inspir'd, or not: If he was Inspir'd of GOD, and they too, then here's Inspiration against Inspiration, If he was not Inspir'd, but they were, then here's an uninspired Person, who controul'd those who were Inspir'd; which is Gross. Or, if he was Inspir'd, and they uninspir'd, how could others understand the difference when the Symptoms were the same?

And finally their Evasions when pinch'd, are unbecoming Persons Acting by the Spirit of GOD. Thus when I was Arguing with one of them about his going for a *Noli Prosequi*, to a Person of Eminence, that could not Legally grant it, (and it was the very Day after the Fast) he told me very gravely, that a *Noli prosequi*, had a different sense in the Language of the Spirit of GOD, from what it had in our Law. And at another time, when I was endeavouring to reason with him with all the Calmness I was able, about his Charging all Ministers without exception, with the Spirit of Imposition and I was querying what Impositions he could charge on those whom he had been related to? He told me that he had none to charge, nor did he know of any; but that the Words he had us'd were the Words of the Spirit of GOD, who could prove the Truth of them tho' he could not. And yet after all 'tis Query'd, *What meek Endeavour, what Argument have you brought to convince of Delusion?* As if there was any room for a Conviction, where such Evasions are allow'd! Alas! all the Arguments in the World are insignificant, to such as think they can confront them, by a Vision or Revelation.

But to conclude: I can appeal to GOD, that what I have deliver'd upon this Occasion, is (as far as I can judge) the fruit of as impartial an Enquiry, and serious Thought, and as full a Conviction of Conscience as the Subject calls for, Tho' I question not but our *Prophets* will in the Issue prove Deluded, yet I am dubious how it may affect them; and am not without my Fears, that when some that at present are beyond measure confident, come to see the Grossness of their Delusion, they may prove desperate. GOD grant, it may be otherwise The LORD in mercy to them make them as signal Instances of Repentance, as they have been of Apostacy. Let all good Christians Pity and Pray for them. And let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. Let us look upon it as an humbling Dispensation that GOD should suffer such a Spirit to break loose among us. Nay, we should do well to turn our Eyes about every way, and take notice of what GOD is doing in the present Day. If we look Abroad, behold He is shaking all these Western Nations at once by a consuming War; and according to all appearance, we are upon the border of some

some considerable Revolution. Look to the Church, and things have every where a peculiar Aspect, There's not a Protestant Church at this Day to be found, but it is divided; and each Party is full of fears and jealousies, and under concern about the Issue of present Motions. And here at Home, not only has every Party its own Principles oppos'd by some amongst themselves, but the Common Principles we all go upon as Protestants and as Christians, were hardly ever more vigorously and industriously oppos'd than now. Whatever Hand the Devil has in all this, it happens not without the super-intending Providence of Almighty GOD, who without all question has a considerable Purpose to serve. He calls us not only to try others, but to search anew into our own Principles and Foundations, and not take things upon Trust. He calls us to keep close to his Word, and more accurately to distinguish between his Revelations, and Human Additions than we as yet have done. We should be careful to fall in with Providence. Let us heartily receive and entertain the Gospel-Doctrine, and endeavour to adorn it by an Holy Life. This will be the best way not to fall from our Stedfastness. This will keep us open to all needful Divine Light, and pave the way for our receiving it: For we have a Promise, upon which we may safely depend, That *if any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of GOD.* John 7. 17.

FINIS.