

A.  
CONFERENCE

Betwixt a

MUGGLETONIAN

And a

BAPTIST,

On these PROPOSITIONS:

- I. There was no GOD in Heaven when CHRIST JESUS was on this Earth.
- II. GOD became as a Creature, Sin excepted.
- III. GOD dyed.

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L O N D O N:

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## *Introduction.*

**T**HE following Pages are a Defence of certain Propositions, contain'd in the Writings of *John Reeve*, which were taken out by a *Baptist*, and asserted to be false, and contrary to the Scriptures; who likewise affirm'd that there was not a Man in the World who could defend them; which was the Occasion of what follows; which was utter'd before some Hundreds of People, who met to hear the Conference. I thought it better to commit my Defences of the Propositions into the Method in which they now are than to write them as they were spoke Extempore, even if I could have remember'd them exactly: However, I have vary'd but little, added but

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little, and left little out. They who were present may recollect that the Answer that was then made to what I advanc'd consisted of some Quotations from Scripture, which were intended to prove, That there was a God in Heaven distinct from *Christ*: To which I reply'd, that I acknowledged those Texts to be true, and that they relate to *Christ* in the State of the Father; and I then proceeded to shew the Truth of my Assertion by producing those Passages from the Scriptures, which make *Christ* and the Father one: I likewise observed that the Scriptures are not reconcileable upon any other Hypothesis but that of *Christ Jesus* being the very God: I also said that God witnessed to the Truth of himself being both God and *Christ*, when he condescended to talk to his Creatures; which Expression occasion'd a little Laugh, and this Question was ask'd upon it, Did ever  
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## INTRODUCTION. V

any one hear before of God's talking to his Creatures? Which Ignorance in them arose from their not knowing that *Christ* was that *Word* which was made *Flesh*, and, as the Scripture says, *that Word was God*: And when *Jesus*, after his Resurrection, appear'd to the Eleven on a Mountain in *Galilee*, he said, *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth*, Matt. Chap. xxviii. Ver. 18.

I think the Preservation of these Texts in the Mind necessary for Believers that they may not be suddenly drawn to think, with the World, that there is any Absurdity in the three following Propositions.

First, *There was no God in Heaven when CHRIST JESUS was on this Earth.*

Secondly, *God became as a Creature, Sin excepted.*

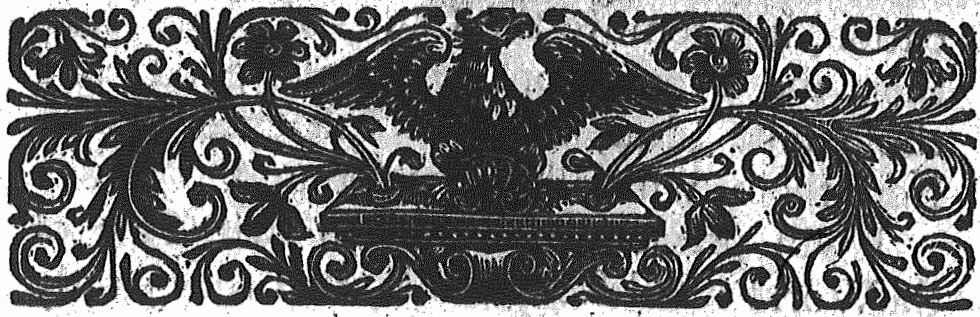
Thirdly, *God dyed.*

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These Truths of God's Existence are in his sacred Records, and are not to be known but by his Spirit; and where that is not they will be as Stumbling-blocks. As the Knowledge of God's Existence in Heaven, and while on Earth, is contain'd in the Knowledge of these Propositions, (which is of the highest Importance to Mankind, it being no less than eternal Life, as the Scripture assures us, *to know the true God,*) I hope it will be a Motive sufficient to produce an impartial Enquiry.

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## PROPOSITION the 1<sup>st</sup>.

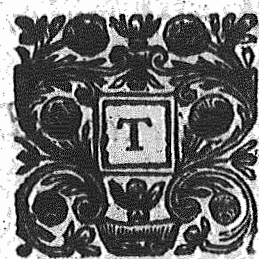
*There was no God in Heaven when CHRIST JESUS was on this Earth.*

## PROPOSITION the 2<sup>d</sup>.

*God became as a Creature, Sin excepted.*

## PROPOSITION the 3<sup>d</sup>.

*God dyed.*



THE Inferences which are drawn from these Propositions, by the Objector, are, *first*, That we deny the Father. *2dly*, That if God was a Creature he was finite, so consequently not God. *3dly*, That if God dyed, then there was no God in Heaven or on Earth.

As the Ideas which the Objectors annex to these Propositions arise from a false Foundation,

dation, if I remove the Causes of those Ideas; then the Propositions will hold good, and those false Ideas, and the Inferences drawn from them, will fall to the Ground.

I will previously observe to that Part of the World call'd Religionists, that they jointly acknowledge the Existence of one God, whatever Demonstrations they go by, but the Mode of his Existence is the principal Subject of Dispute among them, and which, I believe, will continue as such to the End of the World: That the World by Wisdom knows not God can not be understood of his Existence only, but of the Mode of his Existence; and as the Knowledge of his Mode of Existence is the Effect of Revelation, it is evident that it can not be attain'd but thro' God's Assistance; and that Knowledge is contain'd in a Demonstration of the following Propositions:

- 1st. *There was no God in Heaven when CHRIST JESUS was on Earth.*
- 2d. *God became as a Creature, Sin excepted.*
- 3d. *God dyed.*

On these Propositions arises the Demonstration of the Manner in which God was a *Father*, in which a *Son*, and in which the *Holy Ghost*. If I can shew how God is a *Father*, how a *Son*, and how the *Holy Ghost*,



*Ghost*, without dividing the Essence or confounding the Terms, I shall gain my Point, and the Argument will be at an End. The first Proposition in Natural Religion is, That there is one God; so the Unity of God is a Part of both Natural and Reveal'd Religion rightly understood. All Men, who have undertaken the Proof of the Existence of one God, have proceeded on Observations made on sensible Objects; and tho' they unanimously agree that the Essence and Mode of his Existence, are abstracted from all sensible Ideas, yet they as unanimously agree that the Knowledge of his Existence, and of his Attributes, is to be acquir'd by the Judgment of Sense. This is all that is necessary to be offer'd from the Province of Reason; for if Reason proceeds any farther than the Knowledge of the Existence of God, he wades out of his Depth. Now we have arrived thus far by the Use of our Rational Faculties, we must have Recourse for farther Discoveries to Revelation; for Reason is here at his Journey's End. As the Existence of one God is the Foundation of all Natural Religion, the Divine Being was pleased to make the Knowledge of the Mode of his Existence the Foundation of all Spiritual Religion.

Here we enter into the Province of Faith: What I have already offer'd shews how unanimous the wiser Part of Men are in the Ac-

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knowledge of God's Existence and his Unity: And great is the Absurdity which arises from a Supposition of two or more such self-existent intelligent Agents.

I now proceed to shew that God was Creator and Father, Son and Redeemer, but in different Respects.

Moses having discover'd by Revelation from God that the Almighty was a Being in the Form or Image of Man, according to these Words, *In the Image of God made he Man*, he goes on in his inspired Strain, delivering his Message to *Pharaoh*, and saying to him *I am* hath sent me. Here it is plain there is one Father, not two Fathers: And *Isaiab* tells us the Love which this Father bore to his People in these express Words, *Ye are my Witnesses, saith the Lord, and my Servants whom I have chosen, that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: Before me there was no God form'd, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour,* Chap. lxiv. Ver. 10, 11. From these Words it is plain that, to effect their Redemption, there was a Necessity for him to become a Son; for by becoming a Son he became their Redeemer: And when all the Prophecies which are contain'd in the Old Testament became fulfilled in him, when he was born of a Virgin, by that great Change he was a  
Son

Son and a Redeemer; and tho' he was the very God, yet in the Condition that he was in, they would not have respect to him as a Creator and a Father, but, suitable to that State, they regarded him only as Son and Redeemer: For God as Father has respect to himself as in the State of a Creator; and God as a Son has respect to himself as a Redeemer; and God as Holy Ghost has respect to himself as a Sanctifier: And if we do not keep these different respects in our Minds distinctly, we shall not only confound the Terms, but be liable to divide the Essence.

I think what I have already offer'd is a sufficient Proof of the Title of *Father* having Relation to *Christ Jesus* when he was in the State of *Creator*, and of the Title of *Son* having Relation to him as a *Redeemer*, and of the Title of *Holy Ghost* having Relation to him as a *Sanctifier*: So here is a Trinity which creates no confused Ideas, but presents to us a clear Idea of one personal God, who is a *Father* and *Creator*, a *Son* and *Redeemer*, *Holy Ghost* and *Sanctifier*: which are three glorious Titles centring in the Divine Person of our Lord *Jesus Christ* in his threefold Appearances or Manifestations of himself according to Scripture-Records; which fully prove that the Holy One of *Israel*, the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, is one identical Person, and not two or three, as most  
*Christians*

Christians ignorantly imagine. All, since the Time of *Moses* and the Prophets, who believed in their Declarations, did expect the great *Jehovah* to fulfil his own Prophecies in his own Person, in becoming a Creature or a Son by taking on him the Seed of the Woman, that he thereby might bruise the Serpent's Head, as he had promised in this Saying, *I will put Enmity between the Seed of the Woman and the Seed of the Serpent*; and, that we may not be ignorant of what is meant by the Seed of the Woman, the Creator declar'd that he would not take on him the Nature of Angels, but the Seed of *Abraham*: So was he call'd a Man of Sorrows, a Son, a Saviour, the everlasting Father, the mighty God, *Immanuel*, which is, God with us: This is the Language of the Prophets, as of *Isaiab* and others.

Whoever hath the Knowledge of the Mind of God, contain'd in the written Records, will undoubtedly perceive what is meant by that Saying in Scripture, *Great is the Mystery of God, manifesting himself in Flesh*: And it will ever remain a Mystery to the Natural Man, who cannot conceive how the Creator of all Forms should condescend to leave his glorious Throne, that he might become a Creature himself, and subject himself to his own Divine Power, with which he had invested *Moses* and *Elias*, to fulfil the Prophecies, and

and that Saying, *I will give my Angels Charge concerning thee*; which Charge was given by him while he was in the State of a Father, and had Relation to himself when he should come into the State of a Son: and when he said he thought *it no Robbery to make himself equal with God*, he said it because he had humbled himself to his own Power, or Decree, which he made when in the State of a Creator or Father. As this Knowledge of the Divine Being (which he has been pleased to manifest of himself, and which is the Knowledge of the Mode of his Existence) is wholly out of the Reach of the Natural Man, and belongs only to the Man of God, or the Seed of Faith, who are the spiritual Men capable to be made wise to Salvation, and they only, they consequently are capable above other Men to see the perfect Harmony of the Doctrine of the Holy One of *Israel* being *Father by Creator, Son by Redemption, and Holy Ghost by Santification*: Herein only are the Scriptures reconcileable, without confounding the Terms or dividing the Essence. This is the Manifestation of the Mode of Existence of One God under three Titles; which is suitable to his Appearance under his different Dispensations, according to that Scripture which saith *There are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are One: And there are*

are three that bear Record on Earth, the Water, Blood, and Spirit, and these three agree in one. Moses's Commission was the Commission of Water, and he bore Record of God to Abraham that he was the Creator and Father: The Commission of the Apostles was the Commission of Blood, and they bore Witness of that Word, (which was the Creator and Father) when it became Flesh, being a Son and Redeemer: John Reeves's Commission was the Commission of the Spirit, and bore Record or Witness of the Lord Jesus Christ being that Holy Ghost or Spirit: So as Father, Word, and Spirit, are three Titles, there are three Commissions which bear Testimony thereof: The first, bore Testimony of God before he became Flesh that he was the Father, the second, bore Testimony after he became Flesh that he was the Word or Son, and the third, bore Testimony that, after he had risen and ascended into Heaven, he was the Holy Ghost or Spirit, of whom it is said, *I am ALPHA and OMEGA the first and the last; I am he that was dead, and am now alive for evermore.* This is the Trinity in Unity, that is, a Trinity of Names or Titles worthy the Divine Being, as being a Creator and Father in one respect, a Son and Redeemer in another respect, a Holy Ghost and Sanctifier in a third respect; which neither confound the Terms nor divide the Essence;

Essence; for which Reason there is nothing in the Doctrine to shake our Faith.

By this Time, I suppose, the Mode of God's threefold Existence appears from what I have said, agreeable to Revealed Religion, and not inconsistent with Reason: Since therefore I have removed the Stumbling-blocks which lay in the Way, I may venture to say that the three Propositions which I undertook to defend are obvious to an impartial Enquirer. When we say, *God* died, we do not say he died as a *Creator* or a *Father*, but as a *Son*: 2dly, When we say *God* became a *Creature*, we mean no more than that *God* in becoming a *Son* became like us, Sin excepted: 3dly, When we say there was no *God* in Heaven when *Jesus Christ* was on this Earth, we do not mean that the Power of *God* was not there, but that his Person was not: So the Inferences which are drawn against us that, by these Propositions, we deny the *Father*, that we make him finite, and thereby deny his being *God*, and that by making him die we destroy his very Existence, these Inferences, I say, all vanish; and what I have said opens a Way to the easy apprehending the Consistency of a Trinity in Unity; which is discover'd by the threefold Manifestation of the great *God* of Heaven, which neither confounds the Terms nor divides the Essence.

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Now let me ask which Hypothesis seems most consistent with the Unity of God, that which neither confounds the Terms, nor divides the Essence, or that which makes a second *Person* in the Trinity co-equal and co-eternal with God? No one surely can think it more absurd that the eternal God should become a Son and redeem us, than that a second Person, who they say is God, should do it.

I think I have said all that is necessary for the Support of my Argument: And I am inclin'd to believe that what I have advanced will stand like a Rock not to be shaken, it being impossible to prove a Trinity in Unity on any other Hypothesis: No other Doctrine of a Trinity can be consistent with the Unity of God, or with the Scriptures; and no other can be advanced without confounding the Terms, and dividing the Essence.

*The E N D.*