to come, are here thought of, as the next  
two clauses place the patriarchs and Christ.  
together without any mention of the prophets. So Abraham is described, Heb. vii. 6,  
as “*he that had the promises*”),—w**hose  
are the fathers** (probably to be limited to  
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob :—but Stephen  
gives the appellation a much wider meaning in Acts vii. 11, 12, 19, 39, 44, and  
so apparently St. Paul himself, Acts xiii.  
17. In all those places, however, except  
Acts vii. 19, “*our*” is joined with the  
word “*fathers*,” whereas here it is absolute: so that the above limitation may  
be true),—**and of whom is Christ, so  
far as regards the flesh** (the expression  
implies that He was not *entirely* sprung  
from them, but had another nature; ‘*on  
His human side*’—“*as far as pertains  
to His human body*”), **who is God over  
all** (this word **all** is of uncertain gender  
in the original, but must be probably  
taken as neuter: **all things**, not “*all  
persons*:” compare ch. xi. 36), **blessed for  
ever. Amen**.—The punctuation and application of this doxology have been much  
disputed. By the early Church it was generally rendered as above, and applied to Christ.  
Passages, it is true, have been collected from  
the fathers to shew that they applied the  
words “*God over all*” to *the* FATHER  
*alone, and protested against their application to the* SON; but these passages themselves protest only against the erroneous  
Noetian or Sabellian view of the *identity* of  
the Father and the Son, whereas in Eph. iv.  
5, 6, “*one Lord*,” “*one God and Father  
of all, who is over all,*” are plainly distinguished. That our Lord is not, in the  
strict exclusive sense, “*the God who is  
over all*,” every Christian will admit, that  
title being reserved for the Father: but  
that He is “*God over all*” none of the  
above-mentioned passages goes to deny.—The first trace of a different interpretation,  
if it be one, is found in an assertion of the  
Emperor Julian, who says that our Lord is  
never called God by St. Paul, nor by St.  
Matthew, or St. Mark, but by St. John only.  
The next is in the punctuation of two of  
our later manuscripts of the eleventh and  
twelfth centuries, which arrange the sentence thus: of whom as concerning the flesh is  
Christ. God over all [be] blessed for ever.”  
This is followed by several among the moderns, and generally by Socinians. The objections to this rendering are, (1) ingennously  
suggested by Socinus himself, and never  
yet obviated,—that without one exception  
in Hebrew or Greek, wherever an ascription of blessing is found, the predicate  
**blessed** *precedes* the name of God. (2)  
That the words **who is** on this rendering, would be superfluous altogether (see  
below). (3) That the doxology would be  
unmeaning and frigid in the extreme. It  
is not the habit of the Apostle to break  
out into irrelevant ascriptions of praise;  
and certainly there is here nothing in the  
immediate context requiring one. If it  
be said that the survey of all these privileges bestowed on his people prompts the  
doxology,—surely such a view is most  
unnatural: for the sad subject of the  
Apostle’s sympathy, to which he immediately recurs again, is the apparent  
*inanity* of all these privileges in the exclusion from life of those who were dignified with them. If it be said that the  
*incarnation of Christ* is the exciting cause,  
the words “*according to the flesh*” come  
in most strangely, depreciating, as it would  
on that supposition, the greatness of the  
event, which then becomes a source of so  
lofty a thanksgiving. (4) That the expression “*blessed for ever*” is twice  
besides used by St. Paul, and each time unquestionably not in an ascription of praise,  
but in *an assertion regarding the subject  
of the sentence*. The places are, ch. i.  
25, and 2 Cor. xi. 31: whereas he uses  
the phrase “*Blessed be God*” as an  
ascription of praise, without joining “*for  
ever*.” See the rest of the discussion in my  
Greek Test. I have shewn there, that the  
rendering given in the text is not only that  
most agreeable to the usage of the Apostle,  
*but the only one admissible by the rules of  
grammar and arrangement.* It also admirably suits the context: for, having  
enumerated the historic advantages of the  
Jewish people, he concludes by stating one  
which ranks far higher than all,—that  
from them sprung, according to the flesh,