**CHAP. I. 1-4.]** INTRODUCTION: THE  
PERSONAL AUTHORITY OF THE WRITER,  
AND OBJECTS OF THE EPISTLE.{1} —This  
Epistle does not begin with an *address*,  
properly so called. But there is in this  
sentence the latent form of an address : the  
“*unto you*” of ver. 3, and the wish “*that  
our joy maybe full*,” answering (see note) to  
the more usual *greeting*, seem to shew that  
what follows is an Epistle, not a treatise.

The construction of these verses is  
difficult, and has been variously given.  
The simplest view, and that generally  
adopted, is, that in ver. 1 a sentence is  
begun, which is broken off by the parenthetical  
ver. 2 inserted to explain ver. 1,  
and carried on again in ver. 3, some  
words being, for the sake of perspicuity,  
recited again from ver. 1. The smaller  
clauses, &c., are co-ordinate with each  
other. So that the sentence and construction  
flow smoothly and regularly.

**That which was** (not, ‘*took place*’)  
**from the beginning** (not synonymous with  
“*in the beginning*,” though in the depth  
of its meaning it is virtually the same.  
It sets before us the prior limit, but without  
meaning strictly to define it as such  
exclusively. The interpretation, “*Since the  
beginning of the Gospel*,” is connected  
with the misunderstanding of the whole  
passage by the Socinian interpreters, and  
cannot stand for a moment when we consider  
the context with ver. 2, and the use  
of this term by St. John when applied  
Christ or to supernatural beings: see ch. ii.  
13, 14, iii. 8; John viii. 44. Wherever  
he uses it of the preaching of the  
Gospel it is definitely marked as bearing  
that meaning: compare ch. ii. 7, 24, iii. 11.  
On the meaning of this clause see below),  
**that which we have heard** (the perfect  
tense extends the reference of the verb  
from the beginning, and that which the  
Apostle might have heard concerning  
Christ, e.g. from John the Baptist, down  
to the time when he was writing: regards  
his hearing as a finished and abiding possession),  
**that which we have seen with  
our eyes** (the same is true again. The  
seeing as well as the hearing is a finished  
and abiding possession. The clauses rise  
in climax: seeing is more than hearing:  
**with our eyes** emphasizes the fact of eye-  
witness), **that which we looked upon**(now, the tense is altered: because the  
Evangelist comes from speaking of the  
closed testimony which abode with him  
asa whole, to that of the senses actually  
exercised at the time when Christ was on  
earth. Notice the climax again: *to look  
upon* is more than *to see*: so Beza here:  
“which I saw with these eyes, and that  
not once, nor by the way, but which I