practical wiſdom, as the ingenuity of man could never have diſcovered. The Chriſtian, with the ſcriptures in his hands, can regulate his conduct by an infallible guide, and reſt his hopes on the ſureſt foundation. Theſe ſcriptures it is now our buſineſs to examine.

Part II. Of REVEALED THEOLOGY.

IN every civilized country the popular ſyſtem of theology has claimed its origin from divine revelation. The Pa­gans of antiquity had their augurs and oracles ; the Chineſe have their inſpired teachers Confucius and Fohi ; the Hin­doos have their ſacred books derived from Brahama ; the followers of Mahomet have their koran dictated by an angel ; and the Jews and Chriſtians have the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtaments, which they believe to have been writ­ten by holy men of old, who ſpake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.

That the claims of ancient Paganiſm to a theology de­rived from heaven, as well as the ſimilar claims of the Chineſe, Hindoos, and Mahometans, are ill founded, has been ſhown in various articles of this work, (ſee China, Hindostan, Ma­hometanism, Mythology, and Polytheism) ; whilſt, under the words Religion, Revelation, and Scripture, we have ſufficiently proved the divine inſpiration of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian ſcriptures, and of courſe the divine origin of Jewiſh and Chriſtian theology. Theſe indeed are not two ſyſtems of theology, but parts of one ſyſtem which was gradually revealed as men were able to receive it ; and therefore both ſcriptures muſt be ſtudied by the Chriſtian divine.

There is nothing in the ſacred volume which it is not of importance that he ſhould underſtand whoſe office it is to be a teacher of religion ; for the whole proceeds from the fountain of truth : but ſome of its doctrines are much more important than others, as relating immediately to man’s everlaſting happineſs ; and theſe it has been cuſtomary to arrange and digeſt into regular ſyſtems, called *bodies* or *institutes* of *Christian theology.* Could theſe artificial ſyſtems be formed with perfect impartiality, they would undoubtedly be uſeful, for the bible contains many hiſtorical details, but remotely related to human ſalvation ; and even of its moſt important truths, it requires more time and attention than the majority of Chriſtans have to beſtow, to diſcover the mutual connection and dependence.

Artificial ſyſtems of theology are commonly divided into two great parts, the *theoretic* and the practical*;* and theſe again are ſubdivided into many inferior branches. Under the theoretic part are ſometimes clasſed,

1. *Dogmatic* theology; which comprehends an entire ſyſtem of all the dogmas or tenets which a Chriſtian is bound to believe and profeſs. The truth of theſe the divine muſt clearly perceive, and be able to enforce upon his audience : and hence the neceſſity of ſtudying what is called,

2. The *exegeſis,* or the art of attaining the true ſenſe of the holy ſcriptures ; and,

3. *Hermeneutic* theology, or the art of interpreting and explaining the ſcriptures to others; an art of which no man can be ignorant who knows how to attain the true ſenſe of them himſelf.

4. *Polemical* theology, or controverſy ; and,

5. *Moral* theology, which is diſtinguiſhed from moral philoſophy, or the ſimple doctrine of ethics, by teaching a much higher degree of moral perfection than the mere light of reaſon could ever have diſcovered, and adding new mo­tives to the practice of virtue.

The practical ſciences of the divine are,

1. *Homiletic,* or *paſtoral* theology ; which teaches him to adapt his diſcourſes from the pulpit to the capacity of his hearers, and to purſue the beſt methods of guiding them by his doctrine and example in the way of salvation.

2. *Catechetic* theology, or the art of teaching youth and ignorant perſons the principal points oſ evangelical doctrine, as well with regard to belief as to practice.

3. *Caſuistic* theology, or the ſcience which decides on doubtful cases of moral theology, and that calms the ſcruples of conſcience which ariſe in the Chriſtian’s ſoul during his journey through the preſent world.

We have mentioned theſe diviſions and ſubdiviſions of the ſcience of theology, not becauſe we think them impor­tant, but merely that our readers may be at no loſs to underſtand the terms when they meet with them in other works. Of ſuch terms we ſhall ourſelves make no uſe, for the greater part of them indicate diſtinctions where there is no difference, and tend only to perplex the ſtudent. As the truths of Chriſtianity are all contained in the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtaments, it is obvious that dogma­tic theology muſt comprehend the ſpeculative part of that which is called moral, as well as every doctrine about which controverſy can be of importance. But no man can extract a ſingle dogma from the bible but by the practice of what is here called the *exegesis* ; ſo that all the ſubdiviſions of this arrangement of theoretical theology muſt be ſtudied together as they necessarily coaleſce into one. The ſame thing is true of the three branches into which practical theology is here divided. He who has acquired the art of adapting his ho­milies to the various capacities of a mixed audience, will need no new ſtudy to fit him for inſtructing children, and the moſt ignorant perſons who are capable of inſtruction ; and the complete maſter of moral theology will find it no very difficult taſk to reſolve all the caſes of conſcience which he can have reaſon to ſuppoſe will ever be ſubmitted to his judgment. For theſe reaſons we ſhall not, in the ſhort ſummary which our limits permit us to give, trouble either our­ſelves or our readers with the various diviſions and ſubdivi­ſions of theology. Our preliminary directions will ſhow them how we think the ſcience ſhould be ſtudied ; and all that we have to do as system-builders, a title of which we are far from being ambitious, is to lay before them the view which the ſcriptures preſent to us of the being and perfections of God, his various diſpenſations to man, and the duties thence incumbent upon Chriſtians. In doing this, we ſhall follow the order of the divine diſpenſations as we find them recorded in the Old and New Teſtaments, dwelling longeſt upon thoſe which appear to us of moſt general importance. But as we take it for granted that every reader of this article will have previouſly read the whole ſacred volume, we ſhall not ſcruple to illuſtrate dogmas contained in the Old Teſtament by texts taken from the New, or to confirm doctrines pe­culiar to the Chriſtian religion by the teſtimony of Jewiſh prophets.

Sect. **I. Of G**od and his Attributes.

In every ſyſtem of theology the firſt truths to be believed are thoſe which relate to the being and attributes of God. The Jewiſh lawgiver, therefore, who records the earlieſt revelations that were made to man, begins his hiſtory with a diſplay of the power and wiſdom of God in the creation of the world. He does not inform his country-