rael ſhall be ſaved by the word of the Lord with everlast­ing ſalvation.” But there is a passage in the Jeruſalem Targum which puts it beyond a doubt, that by the λογος the Jews underſtood a divine perſon begotten of his Father before all worlds ; for commenting on Geneſis iii. 22. the authors of that work thus express themſelves : “ The word of the Lord ſaid, behold Adam, whom I created, is the only begotten upon earth, as I am the only begotten in heaven :” in conformity with which, Philo introduces@@\* the Logos speaking thus of himſelf ; Και γαρ *ουlε αγεννηlος* ως ϐεος *ων, ουlς γενυηlος ως υμεις, I am neither unbegotten, as God, nor begotten after the ſame manner as you are.*

From theſe quotations we may juſtly conclude, that the Nicene fathers expressed themſelves properly when they declared that the only begotten Son of God was begotten of his Father before all worlds, and is God of God ; for if St John had believed the λογος or word to be unbegotten, contrary to the belief of all who made uſe of the phraſe at the time when he wrote, he would ſurely have expreſſed his deſcent from the generally received opinion. This how­ever he is ſo far from doing, that he gives the ampleſt con­firmation of that opinion, by declaring, that “he beheld the glory of the word incarnate as the glory of the only begotten of the Father ;” for this declaration is true only of the divinity of Chriſt, his human nature not being be­gotten of the Father, but conceived by the Holy Ghoſt of the Virgin Mary. Hence our bleſſed Lord aſſures us, that “as the Father hath life in himself, ſo hath he given the Son to have life in himself;” that “the Son can do nothing of *himſelf,* but what he ſeeth the Father do@@\*;” and that “ he knew the Father, becauſe he was from him and ſent by him@@\*.” We muſt therefore agree with biſhop Pearſon @@(d), that “ though the Father and Son are both truly God, and therefore equal in reſpect of nature, yet the one is greater than the other, as being the fountain of the Godhead. The Father is God, but *not of God;* Light, but *not of Light.* Chriſt is God, but *of* God; Light, but *of* Light. There is no difference or inequality in the nature or essence, becauſe the ſame in both ; but the Father of our Lord Jesus Chriſt hath that effence of him­delf, from none ; Chriſt hath the ſame eſſence, not of himſelf, but from him.”

The great purpoſe for which this divine perſon was ſent into the world, and born of a woman, was to bruiſe the head of the ſerpent, and reſtore mankind to the inheritance which had been forfeited by Adam’s tranſgreſſion. Every dispensation of Providence from the fall had been prepara­tory to this reſtoration. Prophets had been raiſed from time to time to preserve in the early ages of the world the knowledge and worſhip of the true God : the children of Abraham, as we have ſeen, had been ſeparated from the surrounding nations for the ſame purpoſe ; and by the diſperſion of the ten tribes, the captivity of the other two in Babylon, and the tranſlation of the Hebrew fcriptures into the Greek language, much of the knowledge which had been revealed to the Iſraelites was gradually diffuſed over the eastern world.

But while the Jews were thus rendered the inſtruments of enlightening the heathen nations of antiquity, their intercourſe with thoſe stations made them almoſt unavoidably acquainted with the philoſophy which was cultivated among the Chaldeans, the Perſians, and the Egyptian Greeks ; and ingrafting many of the opinions derived from thoſe schools upon the doctrines of Moſes and the prophets, they corrupted their own religion while they improved that of their neighbours. Hence, by the time that Chriſt came among them, they had made the word of God of none effect through a number of idle fancies which they inculca­ted on the people as the traditions of the elders; and as they had attached themſelves to different maſters in philoſophy, their unauthorised opinions were of courſe different accord­ing to the different sources whence they were drawn. The peculiar tenets of the Essenes ſeem to have been a ſpecies of myſtic Platonism. The Pharisees are thought to have derived their origin from a Jewiſh philoſopher of the Pe­ripatetic school ; and the reſemblance between the doctrines of the Sadducees and the philoſophy of Epicurus has eſcaped no man’s obſervation.

Though theſe ſects maintained mutual communion in public worſhip, they abhored each other’s diſtinguiſhing te­nets ; and their eternal wranglings had well nigh baniſhed from them every ſentiment of true religion. They agreed, however, in the general expectation of the Meſſiah promiſed to their fathers ; but, unhappily for themſelves, ex­pected him as a great and temporal prince. To this miſtake ſeveral circumſtances contributed ; ſome of their pro­phets had foretold his coming in lofty terms, borrowed from the ritual law, and the ſplendour of earthly monarchs. The neceſſity of caſting this veil over theſe living oracles we have ſhewn in another place (ſee Prophecy, n⁰ 17.). At the time when the predictions were made, the Moſaic ſyſtem had not run out half its courſe, and was therefore not to be expoſed to popular contempt by an information that it was only the harſh rudiment of one more eaſy and perfect. To prevent, however, all miſtakes in the candid and im­partial, when the Meſſiah ſhould arrive with the credentials of miraculous powers, other prophets had deſcribed him in the cleareſt terms as having no form nor comelineſs, as a ſheep dumb before his ſhearers, and as a lamb brought to the slaughter ; but the Jews had ſuffered ſo much from the Chaldeans, the Greeks, and other nations by whom they had been conquered, and were then ſuffering ſo much from their maſters the Romans, that their carnal minds could think of no deliverance greater than that which ſhould reſcue their nation from every foreign yoke.

What men earneſtly wiſh to be true, they very readily

@@@[m]\* De Agricult. lib. ii.

@@@[m]\* St John v. 16. 19.

@@@[m]\* John vii. 29.

@@@(d) We beg leave to recommend to our readers this author’s excellent exposition of the apoſtle’s creed, as a work which will render them great assiſtance in acquiring juſt notions of the fundamental articles of the Chriſtian faith. They will find it, we think, a complete antidote againſt the poiſon of modern Unitarians and modern Tritheiſts ; of whom the former teach that Jeſus Chriſt was a mere man, the ſon of Joſeph as well as of Mary ; while the latter, running to the other extreme, maintain, that, with reſpect to his divinity, he is in no ſenſe ſubordinate to the Father, but might have been the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghoſt, according to the good pleaſure of the eternal three. We have been at some pains to prove his divinity, and likewiſe his eternal generation; but in ſuch a ſhort compend as we must give, it ſeems not to be worth while to prove his miraculous conception. That miracle is plainly asserted in the New Teſtament in words void of all ambiguity ; and as it is ſurely as eaſy for God to make a man of the ſubſtance of a woman as of the duſt of the earth, we cannot conceive what ſhould have induced any perſon professing Christianity to call it in queſtion. The natural generation of Chriſt is a groundleſs fancy, which can ſerve no purpoſe whatever, even to the Unitarians.