

known in the world, and as derived from an earlier age of antiquity.

Y. You suppose, therefore, that these opinions were derived from a common source?

T. Undoubtedly they were transmitted from an earlier age: for

1. The wonderful agreement of even the superstitions of all Heathen nations, in recognizing certain facts of the Mosaic history, is a strong proof that they are but perversions of the religion and history of the patriarchal times. Plato, one of the wisest and most learned of the ancient Greek philosophers, says, "After a certain flood, which but few escaped, on the increase of mankind, they had neither letters, writing, nor laws, but obeyed the manners and institutions of their fathers as laws; and when colonies separated from them, they took an elder for their leader, and in their new settlements retained the customs of their ancestors, *those especially which related to their gods, and thus transmitted them to their posterity; they imprinted them on the minds of their sons, and they did the same to their children.* This was the origin of right laws, and of the different forms of government."

2. The practice of sacrifice, which may at once be traced into all nations and to the remotest antiquity, affords an eminent proof of the common origin of religion; inasmuch as no reason drawn from the nature of the rite itself, or the circumstances of men, can be given for the universality of the practice: and as it is clearly a positive institute, and opposed to the *interests of men*, it can only be accounted for by an *injunction*, issued at a very early period of the world, and solemnly imposed.

3. The events, and some of the leading opinions of the earliest ages, mentioned in Scripture, may also be traced among the most barbarous, as well as in the Oriental, the Grecian, and the Roman systems of

my
THE
POV
und
SER
the
EXP
and
DEL

4.
seat
All
mon
in th
his
mort
notie
wors
truth

Y.
claim
these
who
much

T.
will
philos
and t
only
The
under
Pytha
confes
very s
be cle
only
sophist
assura