

deed, these two doctrines underlie all that is said in the Scriptures about the sending of Christ into the world; and from the style and manner of thought and writing common to all the authors of the New Testament, at least it appears that these two doctrines are with them indisputable—so much so, that the structure of their arguments, and the aptness and beauty of their illustrations, depend upon their admission.

It is worth while, also, to notice how in this prayer Jesus Himself adverts to his preëxistence: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self: with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," and to notice how He speaks of His return to His Father after the end for which He was sent into the world should be answered: "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee; and now I come to thee, and these things I speak in the world that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." But this is not all the truth which these words of Jesus embody and express. As they assume that He was, before He was sent into the world, so they assume that He was God—that He was the Son of God—that He was equal with God—the same in substance, equal in power and glory; at least, so this Church believes and teaches; at least, so this Church reads and understands the Scriptures. How else are we to get any sense out of the language of Jesus Himself, as recorded by one of the Evangelists: "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?" And did Paul mistake the whole matter of Christ's preëxistence and incarnation when he wrote these words, the like of which no man, however deeply he thought, or however truly he brought out his thought on this subject, had ever set down before: "Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; and being found in the fashion of a man he humbled

himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

And it is no low or common-place theme to work out from the teachings of the Bible Christ's personal views and feelings in the prospect of being sent of His Father into the world. How heartily did He say: "Here am I; send me. Lo! I come in the volume of the book." It is written of me—

To do Thy will I take delight,
O Thou my God that art:
Yea, that most holy law of Thine
I have within my heart;

and the expectations that were entertained of His coming ever intensifying with the progress of the ages till the fulness of the times should arrive, and which found their expression in these joyful strains—

Hark! the glad sound, the Saviour comes!
The Saviour promised long!
Let every heart exult with joy,
And every voice be song.

He comes from darkening scales of vice
To clear the inward sight,
And on the eye-balls of the blind
To pour celestial light.

He comes the prisoners to release,
In Satan's bondage held;
The gates of brass before Him burst,
The iron fetters yield.

Our glad Hosannas, Prince of Peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And Heavens exalted arches ring
With thy most honoured name.

And O the gladness when He did come. The day of His birth is the culminating point of time. All that happened before looked to it,—all that has happened since or shall yet happen, has taken, and shall take its cast and its bearing from it. It is the era of the world and of time; and because of its position in history and its power to affect the destiny of the earth and of man, the prophet thus foretold it,—“Thou hast multiplied the nation and not increased the joy; they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, or as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. And the angel thus proclaimed it to the shepherds of Beth—