

PREFACE.

NEW and startling, to the majority of even professing christians, as many of the great truths may be which it is proposed to demonstrate from the Bible, they, nevertheless, are 'written, as with a sunbeam,' on the pages of that blessed book, which was 'given by inspiration of God.' And however visionary and fabulous they may be considered by 'the wisdom of the world,' they will as surely be realised, and made 'manifest in all the earth,' and that, too, the writer believes, at no very distant day, as it is certain that 'the mouth of the Lord hath spoken' there.

For such as earnestly desire to 'prove all things,' which constitute their religious *faith* or 'the substance of things hoped for,' by a close and diligent examination of the Word of God—especially the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which were the only inspired writings out of which Jesus and his Apostles 'reasoned' and 'taught the people,' or appealed to for proof of the truth of what they preached: for such as are willing that their *faith* be 'built upon the Prophets,' as well as 'upon the Apostles,' and are ready and sincerely desirous—like the noble Bereans of Paul's day, who 'searched the Scriptures *daily*, whether those things were so,'—to be 'taught' of God, through his holy Prophets and Apostles; and to believe neither more nor less than what a careful study and comparison of these convince them of: for such as have no respect for the doctrines and traditions of men, the following pages are especially intended. Let the reader always bear in mind the following truths: '*Whatever is not of faith is sin*;' and 'faith cometh by hearing,' or understanding; and 'hearing by the Word of God.' Hence, in the absence of inspired teachers, any item of a man's religious belief, which has not come by hearing and believing the Word of God, contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is *sin*.

The reader will please also remember what Peter says respecting the '*sure word of prophecy*,' 2 Peter i: 19, 21. 'We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well to take heed, *as unto a light that shineth in a dark place*. Knowing this first, that *no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation*. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.'

Surely nothing can be plainer than Peter's meaning: 'take heed to the sure prophetic word, as unto a *light that shineth* in a dark place, but beware of *privately* interpreting, of *spiritualizing*, of understanding it otherwise, than in its plainest and most obvious meaning, comparing scripture with scripture.

'THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AND OF GOD' is the sublime theme of all the prophets. Without a knowledge and correct apprehension of it,—its locality, king, rulers, subjects, &c.—a great portion of the scriptures cannot be understood or become 'profitable;' and 'the sure word of prophecy,' instead of picturing to the eye of faith the glorious future it reveals, and enabling the diligent student to realise and anticipate the awful, wonderful, and amazing events, of which this