

who agonize to obtain they know not what, but which not obtained, they feel wretched and undone.

It furthers implies that God takes an interest in our happiness. Who could think of calling upon a being for aid, of whose existence he may have no doubt, but of whose benevolence and mercy he knows nothing. No one prays for anything, Jew or Gentile, Athenian or Barbarian, merely because he admits there is a God, but because he has some idea, from some source, written or unwritten, that God takes some interest in man, nay, has a care for him, a merciful regard for his condition and circumstances.

And farther still, a man upon his knees, in the dust prostrated before the God of the whole earth, acknowledges not merely that there is a God—an omnipresent God—but there is a God who listens and hears—that sees, and looks upon man, and who reads the language of his heart—a God humane and condescending, who takes an interest in man who can be importuned, and who is merciful and kind to those who betake themselves to his mercy.

The omnipresent of this idea in all the systems of religion from

—————“Where first the sun
Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on the Atlantic isles.”

proves to a candid and uncommitted mind the glorious truth, that in the beginning of time while yet one single family contained an embryo world—the humane race within itself—God made himself known to man as a God that heareth prayer, and attends to the wants and wishes of his friends. Wherever, then, we see any one engaged in prayer, no inference is more in accordance with fact than that he has faith in the being, and in at least some of the perfections of God, made certain to the Christians in the writings of Prophets and Apostles.

But it is not to dwell on one view of prayer as an indestructible and a glorious proof of an ancient oral revelation of God bestowed on the whole human race, which no revolution or apostacy of man could ever efface from the memory of the species, though in this single point of view it is worth more than all the mines of earth—more than all the learning of man; but to invite the special attention of the reader—whether Gentile or Jew, whether saint or sinner—to the whole subject of prayer, personal and social, private and public—prayer in the closet, in the family, in the church—prayer, ejaculatory or extemporaneous—prayer, spoken or written.