



The Praelections of *Edward Deering*
vpon certaine of the first chapters
of the Epistle to the Hebrewes.

The first Lecture vpon the first verse of the
first Chapter.

At sundry times and in diuers manners, God spake in the olde
time to our fathers by the prophets: in these last daies, hee
hath spoken vnto vs by his sonne.



T sundry times and in diuers maners, &c. Be-
fore we begin the exposition of this E-
pistle, I will briefly speake somewhat of
these three points: Why this Epistle
was written, by whom, and at what
time. And first touching the cause of
the writing, though we know assured-

*Why this
Epistle was
written.*

ly, it was cause sufficient to leaue so excellent doctrine vn-
to the Church of God: yet a speciall occasion then giuen
was vndoubtedly this; The Iewes were stubbornly set to
the maintenance and defence of the law of Moses, holding
fast all the ceremonies of it, as things necessary, neuer to be
abrogate, but perpetually to be vsed in the worship of
God. Among the residue, they did especially strue for
Circumcision; next vnto it, for the obseruation of meates,
and drinckes, and times, and feasts, and sundry purifyings,
as these things are namely mentioned in the Scripture: be-
sides these, other ceremonies, which they embraced, and
loued. And though many thousands (as it is in xxj. of the

*Gal. 4. 10.
Col. 2. 16.
Ac. 21. 25.*

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Actes) did belecue : yet were they still zealous for the Law nor would possibly heare of the abrogation of it. Inſomuch, that they and their forefathers had made this an article of their faith, and it is the ninth article of their Creede, and they hold it to this day : GOD gaue his Law to his faithfull ſeruant Moſes, and he will neuer alter it, nor change it for any other. And this their opinion, as it was rooted in them, ſo they had very many, and plauſible perſwaſions for it : they ſtroue not for the inuentions of man, but for the Law of God ; not holden by traditions, but written by Moſes ; not in doubtfull testimony, but in manifeſt ſhew of the glory of God. And this their opinion, they did not think was any coniecturall expoſition, but the manifeſt word, as it was often repeated, that this ſhould be an ordinance to them for euer. For this cauſe, the Apoſtle hauing compaſſion vpon his weake brethren, who beleued in Chriſt (but were alſo thus addicted to the Law,) he writeth vnto them this Epistle, by all meanes perſwading them, neuer to ioine together our Sauour Chriſt with the Ceremonies of the Law, whoſe glory is perfect in himſelfe alone, and al height muſt be abaſed before him. He created alone, and he will redeeme alone ; He made alone, and he will ſaue alone ; & to be ſet in compariſon with him, all the gold, ſiluer, precious ſtones, and all the ornaments of the Temple, they are but *beggerly Elements*. Nothing elſe in earth, nothing vnder earth, nothing in heauen, nor in the heauen of heauens, no vertue, no power, no ſtrength, no name elſe that is named, in which, or by which, we can be ſaued, but only the name of Ieſus Chriſt. And for this cauſe, this Epistle was written. Vvherin it ſhall be good for vs, to marke how from the beginning Satan hath ſtriuē to obſcure & darken the glorie of Chriſt ; and how he hath holden ſtill the ſame purpoſe vchangeably, euen to our dayes. Firſt he changed himſelfe

Cap. 5. 12. & 6.
5. & cap. 12.

Gal. 4. 9.

selfe into an Angell of light, with glorious names of Moses, Moses; vnder pretence of holines striuing against truth: a maruellous practise, and in those dayes enough to haue subuerted the faith of many. For who would haue thought that such men, so great louers of the Law, of the Temple of Moses, should be enemies of the true Messias? or be ignorant of the saluation and spirituall worship, which hee should teach them? But here we learne, not to ground our faith, neither vpon the glorious words, nor vpon the glorious names of mortall men; for this deceiued from the beginning: but the word it selfe must be graffed in vs, if wee will not erre. So now in these our last times, (in which the diuell striueth as at the first) we see how many say vnto vs, The church, the church, The pope, the pope, The fathers the fathers; and many thousands are led with the sound of words: yet in these words is no wisdom, onely they renewe the olde deceit, in which the diuell first troubled the Church of God. For what is the Church they speake of? who is the pope? who are their fathers? Are they greater than the Temple? than the Law? than Moses? If not, then their names may be vsed for a cloake of falshood, as the others were. Then we must trie them, and examine them, whether it be a true Church, or true Fathers they speake of. To follow a Church you know not what, is to trust to the Temple you knowe not how. And knowe it well, such words are but mockeries, and such spirites are of error and darknesse. The effect is prooffe enough: for the end of their religion is, that ignorance is the mother of deuotion.

Now touching the Authour of this Epistle, who it was, *The Authour.* it skilleth not. For if the name had beene heere, what had it shewed, but that GOD vsed the ministry of such a man? & now the name is not known, it teacheth exprestly,

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the doctrine is of God. And for this cause, to the bookes of holy Scripture, names are sometimes added, sometime not; that the doctrine of the Lord might bee vnto vs, without respect of person. And for my part, who wrote this Epistle, I cannot tell, nor I see no cause, why I should seeke it. For when the Spirit of God hath left it out, can I thinke it the better, if I should adde it? I remember *Athanasius* saith; that since the Gospell was first preached, this Epistle was euer thought to bee *Pauls*. But *Eusebius* as boldly on the other side, saith; that he dareth constantly affirme, as the sense is the Apostles, so the phrase and penning is some other mans, but whose God knoweth. And thus much of the Author, whom we will leaue as wee finde him, a faithfull witness of Iesus Christ, euen to the endes of the world, but whose name we know not.

Now for the time in which it was written. It is certaine it was in the Apostles dayes: For if it had been after the destruction of *Jerusalem*, threatening so oft the anger of God to those who would despise his Son, no doubt he would haue mentioned so singular an example. Besides this, he maketh mention of *Timothy* as his companion and fellowe, who was famous among the Apostles. And it is like that this Epistle was written about the latter end of the Apostles age, because he saith; that this doctrine first preached by the Lord, hath now bin confirmed vnto vs by thē that heard it. And noting the time how long the Gospell had been preached afore, he saith; that time required that now they should be able to be teachers of it. Againe, in the x. chapter he putteth them in remembrance, that in times past they had suffered great & manifold afflictions for the Gospels sake. So that we easily see this Epistle, as it is holy and apostolicall in the truth of doctrine, so it hath also the honor of their time. And thus farre of the occasion, Au-
thor

In Dialog. de
S. Tri. fol. 11.
Lib. 6. ca. 19.

What time
this Epistle
was written.

thor, and time of this Epistle. Now as briefly as I can, I will shewe you the Argument of the whole Epistle, and that is this; That onely in Iesus Christ is the forgiveness of our finnes. Which argument he handleth thus. First setting out our Saviour Christ, who he is, in the ten first chapters; then, how saluation is through him, in the residue of the Epistle. In setting forth our Saviour Christ who he is, hee sheweth first the nature of his person, in the two first chapters; then what is his office, in the next eight. Touching his person, hee teacheth first that he is perfect God, in the first chapter; then, that he is perfect man, in the second chapter; of which wee will speake more particularly, in expounding of the text. Of his office, whereof we sayd he intreateth in the viij. next chapters, he teacheth this first, that hee is our Prophet, from the beginning of the iij. chapter, to the xiiij. verse of the iij. then, that he is our Priest, from thence to the xix. verse of the x. chapter. And though the Apostle of purpose, and with great care, doe plainly teach, that Christ is our King; yet because this necessarily followeth of the other, & there was no doubt, but that Messias, their Priest and Prophet, should be also their Prince and King; therefore he seemeth not to make any particular treatise of this, as of the other of fices: but as he was a kingly Prophet, a kingly Priest, & the Sonne of God; so in prooffe of all these, hee maketh with them manifest prooves of his Kingdom, as in the text more plainly (God willing) I will shewe, when I shall more particularly speake of them. Now of his Prophecie, in the iij. & fourth chapters he teacheth this, that he is our only Prophet; proving it first, because the Sonne of God, tooke vpon him our nature; the excellency of his person is warrant enough, that God ordained him our only Prophet. Secondly, he was faithfull in his ministry, neither needeth any

The Argument of this Epistle.

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to be ioined with him. Thirdly, he was more honorable than Moses himselfe, and therefore much more should rule in the house of God alone. Fourthly, the Prophet saith, *To day if you wil hear his voice, &c.* Therefore by the Prophet cōmended to vs as our own Prophet. Last of al, the nature of the word, agreeable onely to his person, maketh that he is our Prophet alone: and thus he endeth this treary. Of his Priesthood he speaketh more at large, shewing first in the ende of the fourth chapter, what maner of Priest he is, such a one, as by his owne vertue hath entred into the hea-
vens, & made a way for vs, that we might boldly through him, come vnto God. After this, he beginneth a comparison of the Priesthood of Christ with Aaron, and so more clearly sheweth, both his Priesthood & the excellencie of it. This comparison he maketh in these points; First, that the Priest of the Law was a naturall man like vnto his brethren. Secondarily, that he hath not a private worke, but doth all the peoples seruice in things appertaining to God. Thirdly, that he appeared not before God, in his own vertue and righteousness, but with offerings and sacrifices for sinne. Fourthly, that he was full of compassion toward his brethren, to pity them in their weaknes. Fifthly, that he had his calling of God: In all which things, Christ exceeded all that were before him; and this he teacheth in the ten first verses of the fift chapter. Then beginneth by occasion, an exhortation which cōtinueth to the vij. chapter. After that he setteth out at large, the example of Melchisedech, & the cōparison of the first couenant, with the tabernacle & sacrifices appertaining vnto it, so teaching at the last, our Sauioer Christ to be our only Priest. The second part of the Epistle which is, how this saluation of Christ is given vnto vs, in the 11. 12. and 13. chapters; the sum of it is, that we haue this saluation through faith, which faith is tried in manie afflictions,

Christes
priesthood.

afflictions, and still bringeth foorth fruit in good workes.

Now let vs come to the text. I told you first, the Apostle prooueth the excellency of the person of Christ, God and man. In this first chapter he prooueth his Godhead, and beginneth thus, *Many times, &c.* In this first verse, setting downe the generall proposition of the whole Epistle, that God hath now made known vnto vs all our saluation in his Sonne Christ; naming him, Son, that these titles after attributed vnto him, might appeare more, to be according to the prophecies of him. Then straight he describeth him, making it manifest that he is God. First, by the glory which his father hath giuen him. Secondly, by the excellency of his person. Thirdly, by the greatnes of his power. Fourthly, by the benefit purchased vnto vs. Fifthly, by the dignity which to himselfe he hath obtained: all this is in the third verse. Lastly, by comparison with Angels; which comparison he maketh in many points, alleading Scripture, according to the titles before giuen vnto him, and so enderh this first chapter.

Many times, and after diuers sorts, &c.

Out of this verse first let vs note and consider well, touching this doctrin which we are taught by Christ: the certaintie of it, which is first in the Author, who is God himselfe, euen the same God of our fathers, which so manie times and waies, spake euer by his Prophets: euen he in assured truth, hath also spoken by his Son. Thus giuing the authority of the word of Christ to God the Father, that it might be confessed true, & to take away al vain quarrelling of contentious men, who vnder pretence of the name of God, would easily haue disputed against our Sauour Christ, and said: Wee know God is true, and he spake to Moses, he spake to the Prophets: but this man speaketh of himselfe, and we will not heare him.

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To stop this offence, though the Apostle might haue giuen the authority of his word; euen to the person of Christ himselfe; yet he would not; but sayd thus, *God spake by him.* And ther proofe for the certainty of his word is, that he spake by his Sonne: in which name God sealed it vnto him, to be his sufficient witness in the world, euen as himselfe had spoken with a voice of glory; *This is my beloved Sonne, in whom I am well pleased, heare him.* And this was a sure and knowen truth vnto them, that no man had seene God at any time; but the onely begotten Sonne, who is in the bosome of his Father, he reuealeth him. He is the personall word, & maketh knowen all the mysteries of God, euen as he hath been present with him in all his waies.

Now, as our Sauour Christ is our certaine teacher of vndoubted truth; so how farre this truth is taught by him, appeareth also in the words: *Many times, many wayes, by many Prophets, of olde, to our forefathers.* Of all these we must see the contrariety in our Sauour Christ, that God spake by him, not many times, revealing his will by measure, now some, then more; but once he hath sent him, filled with all treasure of wisdom and vnderstanding. And before, God spake many wayes, eyther by Angels, or by the slowde, or betweene the Cherubins, or by Vrim, or by visions, or by dreames: but now he hath spoken one way, euen by Christ made our brother, with the voyce of a man, in the midst of the congregation, plain and euident in all mens hearing; and all variety shall cease for euer more. Likewise before, God spake by many Prophets; now hee doth not so, but hath sent his sonne alone in stead of all, that all his people should heare him. Likewise those times they are olde and past; but the time of Christs teaching passeth not, but is for euer. And that was to the fathers, men of diuers calling, but this is to vs all of one condition. So this the Apostle

He searcheth, that Christ alone, once euen in the daies of his
 life, after one manner and forme hath preached vnto vs all
 that Gospell, which eternally shall be the power of his hea-
 uenly Father, to saue all which doe belecue. Now let vs
 marke first the agreement, and then these differences, mani-
 festly to be seene betweene Christ and the Prophets. First, *Only God
must speake
in the mouth
of all minist-
sters.* they agree all in this, that God spake by al, & this only they
 haue alike from the first to the last. Adam, Seth, Enoch,
 Noah, Abraham, Moses, Dauid, Esay, Christ, not one of
 them, spake one word of a naturall man in all their minist-
 ry, but onely the words of him that sent them: that is, they
 spake not themselues, but God spake within them. When-
 soeuer were the time, whatsoever were the meanes, who-
 soeuer were the man, wheresoeuer were the place, what-
 soeuer were the people, yet the words were the Lords. And
 whosoever he be in the Church of GOD from the begin-
 ning to the ending, to whom this Ministry shall bee com-
 mitted, if he will be numbred with Patriarchs & Prophets,
 Apostles and Pastors, & with our Sauour Christ himselfe;
 whatsoever he speake, *Let him speake as the word of God;* For *1. Pet. 4. 10.*
 this covenant God hath made with all his seruants, euen as
 the Prophet Esay saith; *My spirit which is upon thee, and my* *Eccl. 59. 22.*
words which I haue put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy
mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seede, nor out of the mouth of
thy seedes seede, from henceforth, euen for ever. And in deede
 whose words else should deuide betweene the marrow and
 the bones, but his only, who alone searcheth the hearts & *Heb. 4. 12.*
 the reynes? or whose words should kill our earthly affecti-
 ons, but his alone who giues the sword of the Spirit. And
 we, whose messengers are *we?* or of whom are we sent? Is
 not God our master? & shall we not make our accompt to
 him, according to that which wee haue receiued of him?
 Wee must looke vnto our owne charge, and for all other
 men,

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men, though they seeme to be pillars, what they are it skilleth nothing to vs, we are not accomptable by their giftes. Augustine, Ambrose, Hierome, Gregorie, or any else, they had their owne charge of God, and we haue ours by warrant from God: they did speake, and so must we. If I speake out of the fathers of the Church, and know it to bee the word of God, why doe I attribute it to man, rather than to God, whose truth it is? or if I speake of the fathers, and know it not to be the word of God, bee it neuer so true in the Doctors mouth, in mine it is sinne, because I speake not as I am taught of God: This I speake not so much for the papists, whose hearts and soules the decrees and decretals haue stolen away, and left them without vnderstanding: but I speake it because of brethren, who know not their calling, but fill the pulpets with Doctors and Counsels, & many vanities, where they should only speake the word of God, that our agreement may be with the Apostles and Prophets, and with our Sauour Christ.

Now let vs see the difference heere spoken of, betweene our Sauour Christ and all other Prophets, what wee may learne of them, was at diuers time reuealed, but that which Christ teacheth is reuealed but once.

And this is twice after expressly noted by the Apostle himselfe, as in the ninth chapter, *Now at the latter end, Christ hath bene once reuealed.* And in the xij chapter, *Yet once will I strike, not onely the earth, but the heauens also.* And this it is which Saint Iude saith of the christian faith, *that once it was given to the Saints*; which *once*, doth meane the time of Christ in earth; for so hee saith, it was by his Sonne. For though the Apostle yet vnderstood not all, & the Spirit was after giuen them, yet the same spirit did but lighten the in such things, as Christ had also taught the. By this we learn boldly to refuse it, & accompt it as a bastard doctrin, what-

focuer

*The first
difference.*

Cap. 9. 26.
Cap. 22. 26.

sect is sprung vp since, and cometh vnder the warrant of a mortall man; as namely the idolatries of that mighty king and priest, Prete Giam, of the Abizannes in Africa; & the idolatries of the great Cham, king & priest of the Tartarians in Asia; and the idolatries of Ismael, king and priest of the Persians; and the idolatries of Mahomet, king and priest of the Saracins; and the idolatries of the Pope & papall men, this day kings and Priests, as proud as the other: and of these whatsoeuer sects haue sprung of Homares or Halys, Cuselbasoe or Casaboe, of decrees and decretals, Thomists or Scotists, white friers or blacke; that eternall Gospell (as they called it) more than 300. yeare since deuised at Paris; the reuelation of S. Bridget, al other doctrines and expositions; we must cast them all away, so many as came not in the warrant of our Sauour Christ once preaching vpon earth; which because it was once, it confuteth all after it, and abrogateth all before it, which had diuersity of time, as the Apostle himselfe gathereth, 12. Chapter 27. verse.

The second difference, that the doctrine of Christ is taught after one sort. For though first were miracles, and now none; first Apostles, now none: these were but meanes to confirme the preaching, the Word onely was the power of saluation, which is the same it was then. Which because it is but one, therefore it is perfect. For if any had any way before been absolute in himselfe, there should none other haue come after it: but it pleased not GOD to giue the glory vnto all those manner of Reuelations; but reserued it to the preaching of the Gospell, which hee hath made his owne power to saue all that doe beleue, and giuen it so great grace, that it worketh more mightily than all miracles; and pierceth deeper into the heart of man, than any manner

The second difference.

perswas-

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perswasion, yea, though one should arise from the dead to
speake vnto vs. And therefore we may condemne that, which before vs
was done, in building monasteries, vowing of pilgrimages,
honouring of Saints, setting vp of Crosses, and such like.
For how were these things taught vnto men? not by prea-
ching the Gospell, but for the most part, men were driuen
vnto it by feare and terrour of the night, as wee may see in
their owne bookes and legends. But as it was, so it is come
vnto it, and the darkenesse hath couered it, out of which it
sprang.

The third difference here, is, that that was olde, & there-
fore abolished: for it cannot be, but that which waxeth el-
der and elder, must at last vanish. But the Testament of
Christ, it is still newe, yea though it were from the begin-
ning, yet it is still the same, & the day passeth not, in which
it was giuen, but it endureth with the age of man. And ther-
fore it is no sacrifice of the new Testament, to haue a masse
which waxeth olde, and when it is done, is not, but you
must haue a new, and so fill your number. Neither yet is it
possible that workes should iustifie, which also wax old and
are forgotten: so that the righteous man of an hundred yere
old, if he leaue then his righteousnes, it hath none account.
The saluation of the world it is not thus, but alwayes new;
if once I be in this couenant, it is an euerlasting couenant;
I was not taken vnder condition of time, nor no time shall
preuaile against me. The saluation it selfe, it is not changea-
ble as Adams was in Paradiſe, but it is made sure in the bo-
dy of Christ, vnited with the person of his Godhead; so the
wayes in which we are led vnto it, they are immutable, our
faith is not quenched, our loue not extinguished, our hope
faileth not, nor the holy Spirit can euer bee taken from vs,
but still they are new euen to eternall life.

The third
difference.

*The fourth
difference.*

The fourth difference, is, in the fathers with whom the first couenant was made, who, though they were all called in Iesu Christ, yet was there a difference of their honor, & enery one more exalted, as God approched more neer vnto them. So Abraham and his posterity were a more honorable people, than the other before him. So the Israelites that had receiued the Law, and dwelt in the land of promise, had greater blessing than their Fathers in Ægypt. So Iohn Baptist more than all Israel. But nowe they that are called of Iesu Christ, by his owne voyce, and in him crucified before their eies, haue attained a singular honor, & the least of them touching their calling, are greater than all Patriarchs and Prophets. And these all in like precious faith, like spirit, like promises, like couenants, like accepted of God, euery man in his owne measure of grace. No difference of Iewe or Gentile, learned or vnlearned, but all haue throug faith one entrance vnto the throne of grace: that I neede not say now, O Lord remember Dauid, and the Couenant made with Abraham; but, O Lord remember mee, and the Couenant which thou haste made with my Fathers house. For vnto all, both those that are nigh, and those that are farre off, there is but one couenant in Iesu Christ, whom nowe wee knowe, not according to the flesh. And this excellent glory of Christian men, (dearely beloued) as often as I remember it, it griueth me to thinke vpon the madnesse of some, who call themselves spirituall, and other temporall: themselves cleargy, and other laity; themselves regular, & other secular; themselves (they should say) strangers from the Lord Iesus, & other the liuely members of his body: For what is it els to make this difference, but to deny the brotherhood in the calling of Christ?

The fift difference is, that G O D then spake by his Prophet,

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*fift dif-
rence.*

phets, now by his Sonne: by Prophets, meaning the continuall succession of Prophets in all ages. For as they were men taken away by death, so it was necessary for others to come in their places: and because no Prophet was able to giue his grace to other, or of his fulnesse make other learned in the mysteries of GOD, but they were all taught of the Lord: therefore they had the credit of their word euery one in himselfe, and none iudged by anothers gifts. But so it is not with the Sonne of God: for both hee liueth to appoint vs teachers still, and of his fulnesse he giueth all other their continuall encrease of grace; for which cause nowe, the warrant of all dependeth vpon him alone; and the greatest Apostle that euer was, hath no other glory, but onely to be his seruant and messenger; for hee is that Redeemer, whose word must be in the mouth of his seede, and in the mouth of his seedes seede, after him for euermore. So that it must needes be the pride of very Antichrist, for a mortall man to exalt himselfe, and giue the warrant of truth vnto his owne word: that he cannot erre, that all knowledge is in the closet of his breast, that we must belecue it as the Gospell whatsoeuer he decreeth. A vile seruant so to swell in pride, and set himselfe in the seate of the Sonne of GOD: why doe wee not abhorre it? and rather kisse the ground vnder the feete of the Sauour of the world, to bee slow to speake out of our owne heart, and quicke to heare what he hath commanded? And these bee the differences, which I thought good to note vnto you, as the Apostles words plainly teach them. Now where it is said, *in these last times*, meaning the dayes in which this Gospell is preached, which also the Apostles and Prophets call *the ende of the world, and last dayes*: It hath this name, both for because in comparison of the age of the world, these daies shall be but few; & also for that the will of God is finally reuealed in his Sonne

Christ;

Christ; who shall inherite the glory to be our Prophet, from the day in which first his Father sealed him to that office, euen to the latter end : and thus much of this first verse.

Now let vs pray to Almighty God our heauenly Father, who hath so loued vs, that hee gaue his onely begotten Sonne, to leade vs into the way of truth, to saue vs from the bondage of death, and to sacrifice his owne bodie for the ransome of our sinnes; that for his sake we may bee strengthened with the grace of his holy Spirite, to heare his word, and keepe it, that we may in a good time, and happy issue of our wayes be blessed by him, who is our onely Saviour : to whom with the Father and the holy Ghost, bee honour and glory for euer.

The second Lecture, vpon the
second and third verses.

- 2 *Whom he hath made heire of all things, by whom also hee made the worlds.*
- 3 *Who being the brightnesse of the glory, and the ingraued forme of his person, and bearing up all things by his mightie word, hath by himselfe purged our sinnes, and sitteth at the right hand of the maiesty in the highest places.*



WE haue heard, how the Apostle hath taught, that our Saviour Christ the Sonne of G O D, hath beene once sent vnto vs, an eternall Prophet, to teach vs all things which God hath done for our saluation, and thorough the preaching of the Gospel,