

THE ARGUMENT OF THE EPISTLE OF S. PAUL TO THE HEBREWES.

That the Hebrewes were not all the Iewes, but only a part of them, it is manifest *Act. 6.* where the primitive Church of Hierufalem, although it consisted of Iewes only, as we read *Act. 2.* yet it is said to consist of two sorts, Greekes and Hebrewes. Which againe is manifest *Phil. 3.* where S. Paul comparing himself with the Iudaical false-Apostles, saith, that he also is *an Hebrew of Hebrewes.* Finally, they seeme to haue been those Iewes which were borne in Iurie, which for the most part dwelled also there. Therefore to the Christian Iewes in Hierufalme and in the rest of Iurie, S. Paul writeth this Epistle, out of Italie: saying thereupon, *The Brethren of Italie salute you. Heb. 13.* By which words, and by these other in the *same place, Know ye our brother Timothee to be dismissed, with whom (if he come the sooner) I will see you,* it is euident, that he wrot this, not only after he was brought prisoner to Rome, wherein S. Luke endeth the Actes of the Apostles, but also after he was set at libertie there againe.

Many causes are giuen of the Doctours, why writing to the Iewes, he doth not put his name in the beginning, *Paul an Apostle, &c.* as he doth lightly in his Epistles to the Churches and Bishops of the Gentils. The most likely cause is, for that he was *the Preacher and Apostle and Maister of the Gentils.* And againe in another place he saith, that himself was appointed the Apostle of the Gentils, as Peter of the Iewes. *Gal. 2.* Only S. Peter therefore writing to the Iewes, doth vse this stile: *Peter an Apostle of IESVS Christ &c.* because he was more peculiarly their Apostle, as being the Vicar of Christ, who was also himself ^amore specially *Rom. 5.* *the Minister of the Circumcision,* that is (as himself

^a Yet was Christ head of the Gentils also. So likewise his vicar S. Peter, notwithstanding his more peculiar Apostleship ouer the Iewes.

ſpeaketh) *not ſent but to the ſheep which were loſt of the houſe of Iſrael. Mat. 15.*

Heb. 13. The Argument of the Epiftle S. Paul himſelf doth tel vs in two words, calling it *verbum ſolatij, the word of ſolace and comfort.* Which alſo is plaine in the whole courſe of the Epiftle, namely in the *tenth chapter v. 32. Ec.* Where he exhorteth them to take great comfort and confidence in their manifold tribulations ſuſtained of their owne Countrey-men the Iewes, whereof the Apoſtle alſo maketh mention to the Theſſalonians. *1. Theſs. 2. v. 14.* Thoſe perfecutions then of the obſtinate incredulous Iewes their countrey-men, was one great temptation vnto them. Another temptation was, the perſuaſions that they brought vnto them out of Scriptures, to cleaue vnto the Law, and not to beleue in IESVS the dead man.

And whereas the Iewes did magnifie their Law, by the Prophets, and by the Angels by whom it was giuen, and by Moyſes, and by their land of promiſe, into which Iofue brought them, and by their father Abraham, and by their Aaronical or Leuitical priefthood and Sacrifices, by their Tabernacle, and by their Teſtament: he ſheweth, that our Lord IESVS, as being the natural Sonne of God, paſſeth incomparably the Prophets, the Angels, and Moyſes: that the reſt or quietnes which God promiſed, was not in their earthly land, but in heauen: that his figure Melchifedech farre paſſed Abraham: and that his priefthood, Sacrifice, Tabernacle, and Teſtament, farre paſſed theirs. In al which he ſhooteth often at theſe three markes: to take away the ſcandal of Chriſtes death, by giuing them fundrie good reaſons and teſtimonies of it: to erect their minds from viſible and earthly promiſes (to which only, the Iewes were wholly bent) to inuiſible and heauenly: and to infinuate that the Ceremonies ſhould now ceaſe, the time of their correction by Chriſt being now come.

The Epiftle may be deuided into theſe parts: the firſt, Of Chriſtes excellencie aboue the Prophets, Angels, Moyſes, and Iofue, *c. 1. 2. 3. 4.* The ſecond, of his priefthood and excellencie thereof aboue the Priefthood of the old Teſtament: *c. 5. vnto the middeſt of the 10.*

Argument of Hebrewes

The laft part is of exhortation *c. 10. v. 9. to the end of the Epiftle.*