

THE ARGVMENT OF S. IOHNS GHOSPEL.

S. Iohns Ghospel may be deuided into foure partes.

The first part is of the Actes of Chrifft before his folemne manifeftation of himfelfe, while Iohn Baptift was yet baptizing: *Chap. 1. 2. 3. 4.*

The fecond, of his Actes in Iurie (hauing now begunne his folemne manifeftation in Galilee, *Mat. 4, 12.*) the fecond Eafter or Pafche of his preaching: *Chap. 5.* For of the first Pafche, we had in the first part. *chap. 2. 13: And the Pafche¹ of the Iewes was at hād.* And that feaft whereof we haue in this fecond part, *chap. 5, 1: After this there was a feftiual day¹ of the Iewes,* is thought of good Authors, to be the feaft of Pafche.

*Iren. li. 2.
c. 39.*

The third part is of his Actes in Galilee, and in Iurie, about the third Pafche, and after it: *chap. 6, to the 12.* For fo we haue *chap. 6, 4: And Pafche the feftiual day¹ of the Iewes was at hand.*

The fourth part is of the fourth Pafche (which we haue in the end of the *chap. 11, 55: And the Pafche¹ of the Iewes was at hand*) that is to fay, of the Holy weeke of his Paffion in Hierufalem: *chap. 12. vnto the end of the booke.*

By which diuifion it is manifeft, that the intent of this Euangelift writing after the other three, was, to omit the Actes of Chrifft in Galilee, becaufe the other three had written them at large: and to report his Actes done in Iurie, which they had omitted.

And this he doth, becaufe Iurie with Hierufalem and the Temple, being the principal part of the Country, there abode the principal of the Iewes, both for authoritie, and alfo for learning in the law or knowledge of the Scriptures, and therefore that was the place, where our Lord IESVS finding in the Head it felfe and in

¹ This fpeech very cōmon in this Ghospel, as appeareth by the places here marked, declareth that he writeth to the Gentils.

the leaders of the rest, such wilful obstinacie and desperate refittance, as the Prophets had foretold, did by this occasion, much more plainly then in Galilee, both say and proue, at fundry times, euen euery yeare of his preaching, himselfe to be the CHRIST that had bene so long promised vnto them, and expected of them: and the same CHRIST to be not only a man, as they imagined, but also the natural, consubstantial, and coeternal Sonne of God the Father, who now had sent him. Therefore these were the wordes and deedes that serued best the purpose of this Euangelist, being to shew the glorie and excellencie of this Person IESVS: that thereby the Gentils might see how worthily Hierufaleme and the Iewes were reprobated who had refused yea & crucified such an one: and how wel & to their owne saluation themselves might doe, to receiue him and to beleue in him. For this to haue bene his purpose, himselfe declar-eth in the end, saying: *These are written, that you may beleue that IESVS is CHRIST the Sonne of God: and that beleeuing, you may haue life in his name.*

Io. 20, 31.

Hier. in Catal.

Io. 21, 20.

Mat. 4, 21.

Act. 12, 2.

And hereupon it is, that S. Hierom writeth thus in his life: *John the Apostle whom IESVS loued very much, the sonne of Zebedee, the brother of Iames the Apostle whom Herod after our Lords Passion beheaded, last of all wrote the Ghospel, at the request of the Bishops of Asia, against Cerinthus, and other Heretikes, and specially against the assertion of the Ebionites then rising, who say that Christ was not before MARIE. Whereupon also he was compelled to vtter his Diuine Natiuitie.*

Of his three Epistles, and of his Apocalypse, shall be said in their owne places.

It followeth in S. Hierome, that *In the second persecution vnder Domitian, fourteene yeares after the persecution of Nero he was exiled into the ile Patmos. But after that Domitian was slaine, and his actes for his passing crueltie repealed by the Senate; vnder Nerua the Emperour he returned to Ephefus, and there continuing vnto the time of Traiane the Emperour, he founded and gouerned all the Churches of Asia: and worne with old age, he died the threescore and eight yeare after the*

Pafsion of our Lord, and was buried befides the fame citie.

Whofe excellencie the fame holy Doctour thus briefly defcribeth. *li. 1. Aduers. Iouinianum.*

John the Apoftle, one of our Lords Difciples, who was the yongeft among the Apoftles, and whom the faith of Chrift found a virgin, remained a virgin, and therefore is more loued of our Lord, and lieth vpon the breaft of IESVS: and that which Peter durft not aske, he defireth him to aske. And after the refurrection, when Marie Magdalen had reported that our Lord was rifen againe, both of them ranne to the Sepulchre, but he came thither firft: and when they were in the ship and fished in the lake of Genefareth, IESVS ftood on the shore, neither did the Apoftles know who they faw: onely the virgin, knoweth the virgin & faith to Peter: *It is our Lord.* This Iohn was both an Apoftle, & Euāgelift, and Prophet. An Apoftle, becaufe he wrote to the Churches as a Maifter: an Euangelift, becaufe he compiled a booke of the Ghofpel, which (except Matthew) none other of the twelue Apoftles did: a Prophet, for he faw in the ile Patmos, where he was bannifhed by Domitian the Emperour for the teftimonie of our Lord, the Apocalipfe, containing infinite myfteries of things to come. Tertulian alfo reporteth, that at Rome being caft into a barrel of hote boiling oile, he came forth more pure and freffer or liuelier, then he went in. Yea and his Ghofpel it felf much differeth from the reft. Matthew beginneth to write as of a man: Marke of the prophecie of Malachie and Efay. Luke of the Prieft-hood of Zacharie: The firft hath the face of a man, becaufe of the genealogie: the fecond the face of a lion, for the voice of one crying in the defert: the third the face of a calfe, becaufe of the Prieft-hood. But Iohn as an Eagle flieth to the things on high, and mounteth to the Father him felf, faying: *In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and God was the WORD.* Thus farre S. Hierome.

Vpon this Ghofpel there are the famous commentaries of S. Auguftine called *Tractatus in Euang. Ioan. to. 9.* and twelue bookes of S. Cyrils commentaries.