

2. Admitting, what indeed every person must be aware of, that the word is often used in the wide acceptation, as when we speak of “the day of the Son of man,”—“the day of salvation,”—the day of human life; it is evident that this figurative use is employed, more generally indeed in poetical or oratorical diction, but always when the connexion in any given instance makes it unquestionably manifest that a figurative sense is intended. No examples need be brought in proof of this fact: it must be familiar to every person.

Yet there is one instance which is peculiarly important, because it occurs in another of the archaic records with which Moses the inspired and faithful servant of God,* was directed by the Divine Being to commence his narrative. For, it is not irrelevant here to remark, that the earlier part of the Book of Genesis consists of several distinct compositions, marked by their differences of style and by express formularies of commencement.† It is entirely consonant with the idea of inspiration, and established by the whole tenor of the Scriptural compositions, that the heavenly influence operated in a concurrence with the rational faculties of the inspired men; so that prophets and apostles wrote from their own knowledge and memory, the testimony of other portions, and

* “My servant Moses is not so [on an equality with other prophets,] who is faithful in all my house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently [*Heb* in visible form,] and not in dark speeches [obscure representations:] and the similitude of Jehovah he shall behold.” Numb. xii. 7, 8; and compare Heb. iii. 2, 5.

† The following appear to be the distinct compositions, yet it must be observed that the evidence is not equally clear in every case. I. Gen. i. 1, to ii. 3. II. ii. 4, to iii. 24. III. chap. iv. IV. v. 1, to vi. 8. V. vi. 9, to ix. 29. VI. chap. x. VII. xi. 1—9. VIII. xi. 10, to 26. IX. xi. 27, and all that follows may be regarded as the records of the house of Abraham. Chap. xxxvi. a separate document, inserted in the most suitable place.