

only word, "more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold," require that we should exert our best faculties, in digging out of the mine, (if I may carry on the metaphor,) and in separating the actual SUBSTANCE of divine communication from that which is necessarily human, the *forms* of language, and the condescending *methods of comparison* with the affections and actions of men, by which God is pleased to bring spiritual and divine realities within the sphere of our narrow comprehension. The *matter* is divine, but the *vehicle* is human. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." Pursuing this train of thought, we arrive at some important *principles* for Theology and the study of the Scriptures.

I. Of the nature and attributes of the Infinite Spirit, of his purposes and his acts, which cannot but have the characters of his own perfection, we have *no intuitive* knowledge : and we have *no possible* means of receiving knowledge, though communicated from its own Divine Fountain, except through the medium of RESEMBLANCES to objects of our own thought, or of sensible perception by our own organs. "Behold, God is great ; and we know him not !" Of the Divine Nature as Infinite Intellect, PURE MIND, we can form no conception but by reflecting upon, and drawing conclusions from our own consciousness, and the operations of our own minds. In like manner, we gain our knowledge of the *Eternity* of God, by adding the notion of infinity to our perception of the flow of time. By our touch and our sight, we get the ideas of motion, resistance, and impulse ; and, by reflecting on the lesson thus taught, we rise to the notion of effects and causes. We look and feel around, we lay hold of bodies extraneous to ourselves, and we discover certain states and alterations of states following upon certain conditions of tangible and visible things ; we then rise to a wider survey of the sensible world around us,