

(4.) John i. 18. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*." Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακε πώποτε · ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός, ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς, ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο.

Here, instead of ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός, "the only-begotten *Son*," we find in some important authorities the reading ὁ μονογενὴς Θεός, "the only-begotten *God*." This strange reading (for so it will seem to most Trinitarians as well as to others) has not yet been adopted in any edition of the Greek Testament; but it deserves notice, since it is defended by a critic so worthy of respect as Dr. Tregelles. Michaelis also appears disposed to regard it as the original reading; †

ing thrown themselves prostrate before him,' as the words strictly interpreted imply." — Campbell *in loc*. See also Meyer's note.

* "And they, worshipping him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy."

† Introduction to the New Testament, Chap. X. Sect. 2. Vol. II. p. 393, 2d ed.

and Lachmann, as Dr. Tregelles assures us, would undoubtedly have received it into his text, had he known all the authorities by which it is supported.

The evidence of *manuscripts* and *versions* for and against the reading in question may first be stated. The testimony of the Fathers will require a particular discussion. It should be premised that the words *υίός* (Son) and *Θεός* (God), in the abbreviated form in which they are written in the most ancient manuscripts ($\overline{\Upsilon\text{C}}$, $\overline{\Theta\text{C}}$), differ in but a single letter, so that one might easily be substituted for the other through the inadvertence of a transcriber.

The reading *Θεός*, then, is found in the manuscripts B C* L, 33; that is, in the Vatican manuscript, of about the middle of the fourth century, in the Ephrem manuscript (*a primâ manu*), probably written before the middle of the fifth, in another highly valuable manuscript of the eighth century, remarkable for its general agreement with the Vatican, and in a manuscript of the eleventh century, written in cursive letters, but preserving a very ancient text. As to versions, it is supported by the Peshito Syriac, as hitherto edited, the Coptic, the Æthiopic, and the *margin* of the Philoxenian or Harclean Syriac.

On the other hand, the reading *υίός* is that of the Alexandrine manuscript (A), probably written not long after the middle of the fifth century, and of the manuscripts X and Δ, written in the ninth century, but often agreeing with the most ancient documents, in opposition to the later. It is also found in the other uncial manuscripts E F G H K M S U V, ranging from the middle of the eighth century to the tenth, and in several hundred manuscripts in cursive letters, mostly later than the tenth century, but some of them of much value from their usual accordance with the best authorities. The ancient versions which exhibit it are the Old Latin or Italic, the Vulgate, the Cure-

tonian Syriac,* the Philoxenian Syriac (in the *text*), the Jerusalem Syriac, and the Armenian.

So far as the evidence has yet been stated, it will probably be admitted that the common reading is best supported. But it is on the testimony of the *Fathers* that the advocates for the reading $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ appear chiefly to rely. The following is the account given by Dr. Tregelles of this branch of the evidence.

“As to fathers,” he says, “the reading [$\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$] may almost be called *general*, for it is that of Clement of Alexandria, Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius, Lucian, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzum, Gregory of Nussa, Didymus, Basil of Seleucia, Isidore of Pelusium, Cyril of Alexandria, Titus of Bostra; as also of Theodotus (in the second century), Arius, Marcellus, Eunomius, etc.; and amongst the Latins, Hilary, Fulgentius, Gaudentius, Ferrandus, Phœbadius, Vigilus, Alcuin, etc.” The reading $\nu\acute{i}\acute{o}\varsigma$ “is found twice in Origen, in Eusebius, Basil, and Irenæus (though all these writers have *also* the other reading, and in general they so speak of $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ in the passage, that $\nu\acute{i}\acute{o}\varsigma$ *must* have proceeded from the copyists):—the Latin writers in general agree with the Latin versions in reading *filius*. $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$, as the more difficult reading, is entitled to especial attention; and, confirmed as it is by MSS. of the highest character, by good versions, and by the general consent of early Greek writers (even when, like Arius, they were opposed to the dogma taught), it is necessary, on grounds

* This name has been given to a very ancient and valuable Syriac copy of part of the Gospels,—one of the Nitrian manuscripts recently added to the British Museum,—which is soon to be published (if it has not been already) by the Rev. William Cureton. It is “a version,” as Tregelles remarks, “far more worthy the epithet of ‘venerable’ than that which is called the Peshito as it has come down to us.” (“Account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament,” p. 137; comp. pp. 160, 161.)