

**SACRED PHILOSOPHY. GOD REVEALED IN THE
PROCESS OF CREATION, AND BY THE
MANIFESTATION OF JESUS CHRIST;
INCLUDING
AN EXAMINATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT
THEORY CONTAINED IN THE "VESTIGES OF THE
NATURAL HISTORY OF CREATION"; PP. 1-272**

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JAMES B. WALKER

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CONTAINED IN THE

"VESTIGES OF THE NATURAL HISTORY OF CREATION."

BY

JAMES B. WALKER,

AUTHOR OF "PHILOSOPHY OF THE PLAN OF SALVATION."

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INTRODUCTION.

ALL the Bridgewater Treatises aim to develop the central idea in Natural Theology—that design, apparent in the phenomena of creation, indicates an intelligent Designer. In the work of Chalmers some new strength has been added to the argument for the *moral character* of the Supreme Architect. These treatises are able and discriminating, each marching through a different province of science to the same grand conclusion. By a few these volumes will always be appreciated; but we fear little has been added by their publication to the popular religious conviction of Christendom beyond what had been produced by the work of Paley. And, indeed, it is doubtful whether any work, predicated solely upon the deductions of Natural Theology, can add much to the strength of the persuasion, possessed in common by all men, that a Supreme Being exists and reigns over the universe.

What the world needs, is not so much evidence of the *existence* of a Supreme Being, as evidence of the *moral character* of the Creator—evidence of the *moral aim*

and *end* of the *Divine Plan*—evidence not only “that God is,” but also “that he is a REWARDER of those who diligently seek him.” This has been the actual point of conflict between the unbelievers and the faithful in all the ages of revelation.

Soon after the Bridgewater Treatises were published, the book known as the “Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation” made its appearance in America, and was immediately republished in England. It intimated in its preface the opinion of its author, that the Bridgewater books did not meet the want of the times. They did not answer to the great question which the inquiring reason of the civilized world propounds. Men might read them all, and go forth more skeptical in relation to revealed religion than before. The very fact that the vital question had not been discussed might indicate to the philosophic skeptic that it could not be maintained upon the basis of a sound philosophy, nor by the processes of rational induction.

Deeply sensible, therefore, that the Bridgewater Treatises, whatever they might be in other respects, had failed upon the main issue, the author of the “Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation” aimed to do what they had not done—to identify the God of the Creation with the God of the Bible, and the first principles of Christianity with the canons of human reason. He aimed to show, by the same process by which the conclusions of Natural Theology are reached, that the Mosaic and Christian Dispensations are the work of the same Mind that planned and developed the Physical Creation. This is the question of the Christian Ages