

P284.04
M356t

DIVINE GOODNESS AND JUSTICE,

AS REVEALED IN

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

58866

P284.04
M356 垢

A TREATISE
ON THE
DIVINE GOODNESS AND JUSTICE,
AS REVEALED IN
THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

BY
JOHN G. MARSHALL.

HALIFAX, N. S.
PRINTED BY WILLIAM MACNAB, PRINCE STREET,
1875.

ON DIVINE GOODNESS AND JUSTICE, ETC.

1. In one of our secular newspapers some time past, a brief essay was published under the title, "The Goodness of God." It had no signature shewing its author, but from its whole composition, it is evident that the writer holds the doctrine which denies the punishment of the wicked in the future state, as revealed in the Scriptures. Many of the expressions in the writing are boldly presumptuous, or even *profane*. An answer to it will here be given, shewing its contrariety to the plain truth of Scripture, and that such future punishment of those who die in an impenitent and guilty state, is perfectly just, and quite consistent with the goodness of God towards all mankind during the present life. The commencing and other principal portions of the writing referred to, are as follows:—"There are only three positions conceivable as the purpose and end of creating mankind, whatever the character or disposition of the Creator. 1. The final misery of all. 2. The final misery of a part, and the happiness of the rest. 3. The happiness of all. One of these must have been the motive for creating, the end which God proposed to himself on entering upon the work. The *first* would make him infinitely malignant; the *second* would make him a compound of good and evil, capricious, partial, unjust, and cruel; and the *third only* makes him infinitely benevolent, and as the Bible declares, 'good unto all;' and his wisdom 'full of mercy and good fruits, and without partiality.' It is idle to argue that God is infinitely good, and at the same time affirm that he would create an immortal being, knowing at the moment of doing it that the existence He was forcing upon him would prove an endless curse to him." * * * * If God deliberately went to the work of creating millions of intelligent beings with the certain knowledge,—we will not say intention or purpose,—but with the certain knowledge that they would, in any way, through any

agency or sin of their own, fall into a condition of endless wickedness and torment, then He is not infinitely good, not good to them at all, in any just sense of the word? If the goodness of God does not embrace the conversion, purification, and final welfare of his sinful and rebellious children, how are we to interpret such teaching as the following?—‘I say unto you, love your enemies, do good to them who hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them who despitefully use you. * * * * For if ye love them who love you, what thanks have ye, for sinners also do the same? But love your enemies, and do good, and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest, for he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father is also merciful.’ Luke vi.

“Is it possible to believe that God expects greater goodness and mercy in us than he himself possesses? Would he command us, poor, frail, tempted mortals, to love our enemies, when he had not moral courage to do it himself? Can any Christian suppose, for a moment, that God would command us to bless and do good to those who hate us, when he means eternally to curse and do evil to those who hate him? * * * * But why ask these questions? His infinite and everlasting goodness will reveal its power, in subduing enmity, in purifying all hearts from sin, and restoring the whole human family to holiness and happiness.”

2. In proceeding to answer that erroneous and delusive production, it may first be premised, as dictated by reason and propriety, that the revelations contained in the inspired Scriptures afford the only true and safe information and guide as to the subjects here treated of, and of all other doctrines, as well as duties, of our divine religion. These sacred records, therefore, will here be appealed to as the only conclusive and binding authority. A few remarks, however, may first be suitably offered regarding human speculations and opinions on religious subjects. All such speculations, or reasons on those subjects, independent of Scripture, are presumptuous and dangerous, and ever have been more or less erroneous. The world, by its own wisdom, as Scripture declares, and as experience has always shown, never knew the true character of God, or of the nature or design of his dispensations towards mankind, or their true relations and responsibilities to Him as their Creator and Benefactor, their moral

Ruler and Judge. And further, under both systems of true religion, especially the present, many, through the pride of unregenerate nature, without searching Scripture, and comparing spiritual things with spiritual, as scripturally directed, form schemes and notions of their own on religious subjects, and hence have arisen most of the heresies which have afflicted the true Church, impeded the progress of divine truth, and in every age led vast multitudes astray and to final ruin. If such self-sufficient teachers, when preparing their writings, look into the Scriptures to any considerable extent, they select a few of its passages, the meaning of which they misapprehend, and consequently misapply them, and all the rest of their compositions are merely their own speculations and notions as to good and evil, right and wrong, truth and error, and their opinions are formed accordingly. The writer now being answered, has evidently proceeded after this presumptuous and erroneous manner. The Scriptures he has cited have no reference to the general dispensations of God toward mankind, while in this life, or to future judgment and punishment of the wicked, but they were given to teach the conduct of men toward each other. He has taken no notice, made no reference to the other attributes of the Divine Being, his wisdom, holiness, justice, and righteousness. Similar to this instance has ever been the course of all who have been framers and propagators of heretical or erroneous opinions on religious subjects.

Far be it from the thought of the present writer to attempt to lower the scriptural standard of the goodness of God. He is indeed good to all in this life; makes his sun to shine "on the evil and the good;" sends "his rain on the just and the unjust;" and has declared and shown that "He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked;" but wills that all should repent and find mercy. But all His gracious and beneficent dispensations in the present probationary state, are in perfect consistency with his justice and other perfections, and his determination most clearly and fully declared in his written revelation, that he will finally judge all mankind, and eternally reward the righteous, and eternally punish those who have died in an unrenewed and guilty state.

3. Designs of God in the Creation of Mankind.

The author of the writing under review has further shown his reckless presumption in specifying, in most improper, or even pro-

fane terms, the supposed "ends" designed by God in the human creation. He has not mentioned or alluded to any Scripture on the subject, but has set forth *three* alternatives of his own speculative invention regarding it. There *are* many Scriptures which clearly and satisfactorily show the divine purposes in that creation. Here are a few of them:—"I have created him for my glory." Isaiah iv. 3—7. In Colossians i, 16, it is declared of the Lord Jesus Christ—"All things were created by him and for him." And again, in Revelations iv. 11—"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Other Scriptures might be mentioned of the same import. There are also many solemn warnings and prohibitions as to mere human speculations or suppositions concerning the attributes and character of the holy and the glorious Creator and Ruler, or of his dispensations towards his creatures, or any of his various arrangements or works. The pious and devoted Job truly said—"Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" In Deut. xxix. is the solemn caution—"The sacred things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." "Why dost strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters." "Wilt thou also (said God himself) disannul my judgments?" He that reproveth God, let him answer it."—Job xxxiii. 40. In Rom. ix.—"O man, who art thou, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" Surely these inspired warnings ought to be sufficient to restrain from all merely human suppositions or reasonings regarding the dispensations of an infinitely wise and just God towards his creatures. The author of the writing under review must either not have known, or have not regarded them. In either case he is justly blameable.

In further referring to the design and the goodness of God in the creation of man, the first truth for notice is the declaration of inspired Scripture that "God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." That image, in the human creatures, consists chiefly in knowledge, holiness, and righteousness; wise in the mind, holy in the heart, and righteous in principles and conduct. Created by an infinitely wise

and holy Being, they could not have been formed in any other manner. Possessing those excellent qualities, they could not but be happy, for there can be no true and permanent happiness where those qualities and corresponding endowments are wanting. It is, therefore, evident that God created man with the design that he should be, and remain, in a state of holiness and happiness. But he was formed as a free, moral, and responsible creature, with a will and power either to remain in that happy condition, or by the sin of disobedience to the divine command, to forfeit and lose it. A test and command, not at all difficult as to his obedience and continuance of happiness, were made known to him, and a solemn warning especially given, that in the day he disobeyed the command, he should "surely die." He wilfully disobeyed the warning and violated the command and thereby immediately lost his original spiritual life, enjoyments, and blessings, and became subject to temporal afflictions, and natural diseases, and death. Having thus fallen into a state of deprivation of holiness and of propensity to sin, he was incapable of conveying to his posterity any other than the like unholy and unhappy condition; and accordingly it is said of Adam in Scripture, after this he "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." All mankind have inherited and shown the same natural state of alienation from holiness and righteousness, and propensity to evil in principle and practice. But the gracious Creator, in his wisdom and mercy, devised, and immediately on that revolt and degradation of our first parents, intimated to them the mode through which they might be restored to his image and favor, by informing them that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head," and by protracting their natural life, and continuing to them numerous temporal blessings.

The typical sacrifices of animals which immediately commenced, and which prefigured the future holy and atoning sacrifice, must in some way have been intimated to them, though its meaning was not clearly understood, for we see in Scripture that the offering to the Lord by Abel, was "of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." The Scriptures also mention the burnt offering of Noah, on an altar, on his leaving the ark; the offering of a ram by Abraham instead of his son; and of several offerings of Jacob. We read in Exodus of the institution of the passover, and the killing and sprinkling of the blood

of the pascal lamb, and the divine command for the continuance of the institution with its prescribed sacrificial offerings; and in that book, and the three following books of the Pentateuch, numerous sacrificial offerings are prescribed for certain persons, and for the whole nation of Israel. Such sacrificial offerings, with occasional interruptions, were continued through the whole subsequent history of the nation, down to the end of that legal dispensation, by the destruction of Jerusalem, with its Temple, religious offerings, and services. All the inspired prophets and others of the nation, spiritually enlightened and truly pious, were aware that those offerings had a reference to some holy being who should appear and explain, and fulfil the divine purposes for which they were instituted. Moses, as we see in Deut. xxxi., recorded them for their continued remembrance and hope—"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken." Isaiah, in chapter liii., foretold in most melting and also heart-rejoicing terms, of a holy, suffering, and divine substitute for affording a full propitiation and satisfaction for the sins of all mankind, and opening a way for their eternal salvation. Daniel also, as we see in chapter ix, declared—"Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself." In Zachariah it is said of "Zion's King"—"As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." All these sacrificial offerings and inspired predictions, manifest not only the benevolence and goodness of God towards mankind for their encouragement and hope, but also his infinite holiness and justice, the enormous and dreadful nature of sin, and the necessity of the renovation of man's spiritual character, in order to his restoration to the favour of God, and to temporal and eternal happiness.

The numerous divine promises in both the Old and New Testament Scriptures, even more fully exhibit the goodness of God towards mankind. Several hundred years after the deluge, and when nearly the whole world had again become idolatrous and wicked, God in his continued forbearance and goodness, made himself known to Abram, and gave him repeated promises, not only as to his posterity being put in possession of the land of Canaan, but declaring to him, "in thy seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed." The like promises were given to his descendants, Isaac and Jacob. When the pos-

terity of these eminent patriarchs had become a very numerous people, and by the Lord's power and goodness were marvelously delivered from Egyptian bondage, he gave them, in their journeyings through the wilderness towards the promised land, most wise and excellent institutions and laws for their observance, as to both their religious and civil condition, when in possession of that land. These institutions, and the numerous precepts for the regulation of their conduct, as given through Moses, their inspired human leader, were recorded by him, as commanded by God, and were carefully secured, and by divine providential goodness have been preserved to the present time, and are the same we now have in the first five books of our sacred Scriptures. From time to time, through upwards of a thousand years, the gracious Lord raised up and sent among those his chosen people, prophets and other inspired persons: some to record their history, and others to warn, reprove, and instruct them, and make known to them gracious promises as to their obedience, and sublime, and encouraging predictions concerning the divine Teacher and Deliverer who was to come among them, and further instruct them as to the predicted and more gracious system of divine wisdom and mercy. Through a benign providence we now possess all those early prophetic and other sacred books, as well as all the inspired records of the present universal and more glorious dispensation. In Heb., chap. 11, mention is made of a great number of those patriarchs and prophets, and other faithful servants of God; of their persecutions and cruel sufferings; their firm belief in the divine promises, and confidence as to their fulfilment. It is there said of them—"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." The Israelitish nation, in divine mercy, was evidently chosen and designed to serve for the instruction, and as an example to all other people, in regard to the knowledge of the only true God, his worship and service, and their duties among themselves in all the various relations of life. Had that nation been faithful and obedient, they would indeed, to a great extent, have fulfilled those gracious divine purposes, and vast multitudes of other nations would have been proselyted to the true religion, and the knowledge and the worship of God very far more extensively preserved in the earth.

But the Israelites—kings, priests, and people—with few exceptions, fell into idolatry and wickedness in various forms, and thus on the whole, in a very great degree hindered, and at times altogether prevented the accomplishment of those divine purposes as to the rest of mankind. Unhappily it may here be truly remarked, that with greater light and much higher advantages and motives, professedly Christian nations have always, in greater or lesser degrees, exhibited by their wars and numerous vices and crimes, a similar example of ingratitude, and of disobedience to the plainly declared divine will and design, as to the instruction and salvation of the millions of their fellow creatures perishing in ignorance, idolatry, and their various enormities. By the further goodness of God, and according to his many gracious promises, the divine Messiah, at the due time, appeared in Israel, and most fully taught divine and saving truth, exhibited its sublime power and example, suffered and died, and thereby made, as divinely predicted and promised, the needed propitiation and satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of the whole world; and for obtaining their restoration to the divine image and favour, and their present and eternal salvation and happiness.

The New Testament Scriptures, with the other sacred records; the established Christian ministry, and ordinances, and other divinely appointed and providentially provided means for the religious instruction and salvation of all mankind, and to the end of time, afford further proofs of the goodness of God, and his will and design that all may be pardoned, regenerated, and be finally saved and happy. All these manifestations of goodness, however, are in perfect accordance with his holiness, justice, and all his other glorious attributes and perfectisms.

Some Scripture truths and corresponding remarks may here be given, by way of answer to the objection, by infidels and others, against punishment in the future state, with reference to the opinion or supposition that young children and persons destitute of divine revelation, are liable to such punishment. The Scriptures as to both are sufficiently clear and satisfactory. Therein is repeatedly given the joyous fact, that the compassionate Saviour took “the little children up into his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them,” saying, “of such is the kingdom of heaven.” Of those destitute of revelation, it is said in Romans 2—“For when the Gentiles which

have not the law, do, by nature, the things contained in the law; these having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts, the meanwhile, accusing or else excusing one another." They, like all the rest of mankind, have, through the Eternal Word, the second person in the divine and glorious Trinity, "that light" and life, which the Scripture declares, "lighteth every man that cometh into the world." An eminent Christian minister has of them truly spoken in such terms as these—"That Eternal Light, which is Christ, is to them, as a principle of redemption and salvation, if they act in conformity with that light of reason and conscience with which they are endowed." And further of them, as of all the rest of mankind, it is said in Scripture, God "left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

4. Divine Plan and Means by which all mankind may obtain salvation and eternal happiness, are clearly revealed.

In the sublime and beautiful Psalms revelations are given of the glorious attributes and perfections of God, of his goodness towards all mankind, especially to those who love and obey him; his gracious promises to these of numerous blessings, and of their fulfilment, both here and forever; also warnings, reproofs, exhortations, and threatenings, to the ungodly and unrighteous, to alarm and reclaim them. Through the whole of the prophetic books are similar announcements and promises, with exhortations to repentance, faith, and obedience; and threatenings against acts and courses of wickedness, both as to individuals and nations, more especially Israel, and facts are therein given, as to the fulfilment of those awful threatenings. The sublime and eloquent Isaiah has recorded these words of the Lord to his chosen people—"Put away the evil of your doings, from mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him. * * * Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him." Later in the history of Israel, we see in the book of the persecuted and mourning but faith-

ful Jeremiah, the following passages—"If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me, and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove." * * *

"O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved." Hear also the prophet Hosea—"O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord." Again, in Amos—"Seek good and not evil, that ye may live; and so the Lord the God of hosts shall be with you as ye have spoken." In addition to these warnings against sin, and exhortations to righteousness, they were by several of their inspired prophets and teachers, sought to be allured and encouraged to faith, love, and obedience, by numerous predictions of the appearance of the promised and glorious Messiah among them, and by the numerous divine promises of the rich and manifold blessings, both temporal and spiritual, with which he would rejoice and exalt them. In the sublime 72nd Psalm are these beautiful and heart-cheering promises—"The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight." By the highly-inspired Isaiah were given these gracious promises concerning the divine Messiah and Redeemer—"Behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

* * * He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young—a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth." In the four first books of the new covenant revelation, are recorded the birth and teachings of the divine Messiah and Redeemer, his rejection, persecution, sufferings, and crucifixion by that ungrateful and atrociously impious and wicked people, whom *primarily*, as well as the rest of mankind, he came to "seek and save," and make happy both in time and eternity. The succeeding book,—the "Acts of the Apostles," contains numerous facts and narratives, relative to the teaching and spread of christianity, its divine support, the performance of miracles, the persecutions and

various events which befel its first and chief teachers, especially the zealous, intrepid and highly gifted Paul; the establishment of many churches in different countries, and numerous particulars, as to the *reception* as well as the *rejection* of christianity; and the endeavours by the Jewish and other rulers to suppress it. The twenty-one Epistles which follow, give more fully than in the previous books, the various doctrines of christianity, and the duties of every description, of all who profess this sacred and consoling religion. The last book of this new and most gracious canon of truth and righteousness, contains warnings to the churches, and numerous most sublime and symbolical representations, and predictions, as to the future history of the church to the end of time, and lastly, regarding the new Heavens and Earth which the holy and righteous God has promised to create for the perpetual residence and enjoyment of his faithful and glorified people.

Throughout these new Covenant Scriptures, the divine plan and methods are fully and clearly revealed, by which the whole of polluted and guilty humanity may be restored to the divine image and favour, and secure salvation and happiness both as to time and eternity. The four first books of these inspired records, contain the doctrinal and other teachings of our Lord and Saviour himself. He gives the sublime announcement, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Also the joyful intelligence, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life;" and "sent not his Son to condemn the world, but that the world, through him, might be saved." Also the alarming truth, that "Except a man be born again." * * * Born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." He therefore called upon men to repent, and believe the Gospel, meaning the new divine system of religion, he came to proclaim, for securing the salvation, and present and eternal happiness of all mankind. In his sublime instructive and comprehensive sermon on the mount, said during the whole of his sacred ministry on the earth, he taught and enforced numerous doctrines and duties of the new divine system of religion. He was introducing, commanded the forsaking and avoidance of all sin, and enjoining the fear, love, and worship of God; and faith in his mercy and goodness,

the love and forgiveness of enemies, praying for them, and doing them good—prohibiting the judging of others, and laying up worldly treasures, and forbidding the resistance of evil, or returning it; directing as to prayer, bestowing alms, manner of speech, and cautioning as to worldly cares and anxieties. He gave warnings for all his disciples and followers, that unless their righteousness should “exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees,” they should “in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven;” and commanding, “let your light (example) so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven;” and that “all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.” He graciously declared that he came “to seek and to save that which was lost;” that he was “the bread of life;” “the light of the world;” the Good shepherd who would give “his life for the sheep.” He has invited all the “weary and heavy laden” to come to him, and that he will give them rest;” and “the water of life” freely; that none who come to him will he “cast out;” and saying for the encouragement and consolation of all his faithful people. “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you;” ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full. He that loveth me, shall be loved of my father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” But that love and enjoyment of his favour depends as he has shown on their abiding obedience, for he has said:—“Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven,” but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.” “If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love.” And further, in no part of the scriptures are there more severe and awful threatening against the finally impenitent and wicked and prediction of their future and eternal punishment, than have been declared by the compassionate Saviour himself. All ye who deny the punishment, or disregard the threats concerning it, hear the following, as only a few of his awful announcements on the subject:—“If thy hand offend thee cut it off, and cast it from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” The like warnings and threatenings he twice repeated: again, “at

the end of the world, the angels shall come forth and sever the the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." In describing his final judgments, at the end of the world he declares:—"Before him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and he shall set the sheep on the right hand, and the goats on the left." * * * Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand,—depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. * * * And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

In view of all the before-mentioned divine institutions, and laws, doctrinal and preceptive teachings, and instruction, warnings, and exhortations, promises and threatenings, and the refusal or neglect of such vast numbers to accept the promised salvation, the words of God regarding the people of Israel, whom he had delivered from Egyptian bondage, and established in the promised land under such happy circumstances, may well be applied to all under the present gospel dispensation. "Judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard, what could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done to it; wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes." But the words of the prophet—"Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there?" cannot be employed, for there are *both*, for affording instant and full relief. The true cause that the great salvation so richly provided and freely offered, is not universally obtained, is precisely this—that

5. The Wicked and Ungodly refuse and neglect to seek that Salvation as it is Scripturally proposed.

The situation and circumstances of those not possessing the sacred Scriptures have been treated of, in a previous section, therefore what will here be offered is not intended to relate, and will not be applicable to their case. Those who possess those Scriptures, or have the means of obtaining them, or a knowledge of their contents, are the persons whose conduct, as to divine revelation, and true religion, will here be considered. In all countries where that revelation and religion have been known, there have always been vast numbers, who have either rejected, or constantly disregarded both. There are many such persons in the present day, in all lands who do or may possess

all the inspired records. Such characters are wilfully content to live utterly ignorant of the truths contained in the scriptures, and in the indulgence of all their base and wicked propensities and passions, and impious and flagitious courses. They have readily within their reach, not only the scriptures, but numerous other means, to show them the way of life and salvation; but they wilfully despise or utterly disregard the whole of those divine blessings, as well as conscience and reason, and live many of them to fifty, sixty, or more years, in the same vile and wicked habits, and die in their sins and guiltiness. Surely, all these are without the least excuse, as to not obtaining the gospel salvation and future happiness; and are justly deserving of that indignation and punishment, from a holy and righteous God, which he has so explicitly and repeatedly declared he will, at last, inflict on all such characters.

In all countries which have possessed the divine records, there has always been another and very numerous class of the ungodly, and of wilful sinners, neglecters of a spiritual salvation, and careless as to future happiness or misery, whose conduct and character, and final destiny and circumstances, must be here brought under special consideration. They are not openly wicked and immoral persons, such as those previously described. They are *outwardly* what are generally called honest, moral, and respectable characters, discharging the ordinary duties of civil life in an average and useful manner. They make no profession of spiritual or experimental religion, but attend regularly, on its public services; many of them, indeed, are members of churches. All of them have the Sacred Scriptures in their houses, but large numbers seldom or ever look into them, except on the Lord's day, when some small portions of them will be read, and the book will be carefully laid aside in some safe place, until the return of that day. Yet this is a book, in which the great and glorious God who has their present good or unhappiness, and future bliss or misery entirely in his power, has clearly and fully informed them that he is *holy, just, and righteous*, as well as *merciful*; and that they are "by nature" and practice, sinful creatures, "all under sin, none righteous, no, not one;" and while remaining in that state, they "are justly exposed to his indignation and wrath," and to "everlasting punishment;"—that in order to be relieved from that dreadful condition, and be restored to his favour, and secure present and eternal happi-

ness, they must "be born" of his Spirit, "repent of their sins," and "bring forth fruits meet for repentance;" "cease to do evil, learn to do well;" "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ"—the divine Saviour provided for their "ransom," "redemption," and present and eternal salvation;—"watch and pray,"—search the scriptures, and "meditate" on them;—"seek and strive, in prayer and supplication," to obtain constant supplies of the "spirit of truth and life," the "Holy Spirit," to sanctify and make them holy, as commanded by God, who says "be ye holy, for I am holy—and without holiness no man shall see the Lord." They must "show their faith by their works," walking in obedience to the commands of God, as given in the Scriptures, being as therein enjoined—"doers of the word, and not hearers only," "abhorring that which is evil, and cleaving to that which is good;" giving all diligence to make their calling and election sure, and have "an abundant entrance administered unto them into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,"—in that day when God, by Him, "will judge the world in righteousness," and will, as scripturally declared, "render to every man according to his deeds: to them by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." * * * "But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good."

The younger persons in this careless and disobedient class dislike, and refrain from the perusal of the divine book, and the private exercises of religion, thereby manifesting that they consider such employments *dull* and *unsatisfactory*. They are lovers of worldly pleasures; they desire and delight in the ball, theatrical, and other amusing scenes, the novel, personal adornments, the gossip of companionship, and all the other varieties and forms of vain, sensual gratification. Many of them, while thus indulging in folly and vanity, are called away unsaved, and "lie down in sorrow."

The elder male members of that careless and neglecting class are even more culpable than the young, in failing to seek and obtain the gospel salvation; but the causes of that failure are, in many particulars, different. They are so deeply absorbed in worldly pursuits and affairs; in the acquisition of gain, or of honour and distinction in

society,—or in the indulgence of the lusts of the flesh, and the eye, and the pride of life, that they have no desire or time to spare for affording the attention, or employing the means towards obtaining personal salvation. They fully come under the description given by our Lord of those invited to the wedding feast, “who made light of it,” and “went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandize.” In addition to business, and other peculiar pursuits, most of these careless and disobedient persons, have wives and children, to whom as they may say the rest of their time must be given, and, therefore, they “cannot come” to the *wedding*. But none of these excuses can be admitted, for there are no persons who, as divinely commanded, are more “diligent in business,” and also attentive to the welfare of their families than true spiritual christians; and yet they find time for the discharge of all their religious exercises and duties; and for seeking and obtaining present and eternal salvation, as well as for imparting religious instructions to their children, one of the most important duties they are bound to fulfil, not only as to them, but in reference to the future condition of society. Now, here, a few remarks may fairly be made as to the female heads of families, who are neglecters of personal salvation, and alas they abound—though generally are not so numerous as the male delinquents. Those family defaulters are so inordinately and constantly engaged in the anxieties, cares, and employments of the household, in keeping furniture, decorations, and ornaments, whether few or many, in the most careful preservation, and most attractive arrangement, making and receiving visits, and *obtaining* and *imparting* a great variety of what they seem to consider interesting, though really very needless and trifling, and at times injurious information. These will assuredly be wanting in duty, as to the religious and moral instruction and teaching of their children; and will also neglect the means towards acquiring religious knowledge and personal salvation, and therefore must inevitably fail to secure these inestimable blessings. Very many, everywhere, *nominally* as Christians, on the rolls of the churches, and vast multitudes outside of them, are in those perilous circumstances, and when dying in them, according to the word of God, must inevitably fail of future and eternal happiness, and find the agonizing and enduring reverse.

6. The Pains, Afflictions, and Death of the Righteous, as well as of the Wicked, manifest the Holiness and Justice of God, his hatred of Sin, and the necessity of a Future and Final Judgment.

The whole history of mankind has indubitably proved that nearly the whole of the bodily diseases and pains are common to both those classes. In certain cases, however, the wicked do bring diseases and other temporal afflictions on themselves by their sensual and reckless courses and habits, which afflictions the righteous, by their opposite conduct, do not experience. In regard to public calamities, it is said by God, in Ezek., ch. xxi., to the whole laud of Israel—"I will draw forth my sword out of his sheath, and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked." Also in Amos, ch. iii.—"Shall there be evil (calamity) in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" In all prevalent diseases, pestilences, famines, tornadoes, earthquakes, shipwrecks, railway collisions, in wars and other national calamities, the righteous and little children, as well as the wicked suffer, and are taken away. Infants, who have never actually sinned, yet, like all others, suffer pains, and often in severe degrees, in dying. *These*, with many other temporal afflictions, manifest the holiness of God, and the enormously evil consequences of the first transgression; and also show the necessity of a future and distinguishing judgment.

7. The *Designs* of God as to the Temporal Prosperity and Afflictions of the *Wicked*, and of the *Righteous*.

There is, indeed, a *general* sameness, or equality, in the temporal advantages and blessings of the righteous and of the wicked; but in very many instances the latter have far more worldly prosperity and enjoyments than the former. The patriarch Job was at first amazed and disheartened on viewing that superior prosperity, and employed the following seemingly dissatisfied language—"Wherefore do the wicked live, become old; yea, are mighty in power. Their seed is established in their sight, with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them. * * * Their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf. They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, depart from us,

for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?" The pious Asaph also, in Psalm lxxiii., employs somewhat similar language concerning the wicked—"Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. * * * They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. * * * And they say, how doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High? Behold these are the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency." But he soon checked himself, and said—"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end." David also, in Psalm xvii. speaks of "men of the world, who have their portion in this life, whose belly thou fillest with thy hidden treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes."

Throughout all ages, and in all countries, there have been very numerous instances of the greater temporal prosperity and advantages of the wicked than of the righteous. It is from the arrangements of an overruling Divine Providence that it is so, and it is quite consistent with the universal goodness of God, and his gracious will and designs as to the real present welfare and eternal happiness of both classes. We can obtain no real or satisfactory information, or conclusions, as to the designs of God in relation to his dispensations towards the righteous and the wicked in regard to their temporal prosperity or otherwise, except from his own Scripture revelations. All mere human suppositions or reasonings on these subjects are not only unsatisfactory and useless, but often lead to *impiety* and *profanity*. But in the sacred records we find explicit and full information concerning those dispensations. In Proverbs is the inspired command—"Labour not to be rich." In Isaiah is the simple promise to the righteous man for his life—"Bread shall be given him: his water shall be sure." Our Lord has commanded—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." Again there are the divine injunctions—"Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth;" "Mind not high things;" "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content; but they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish lusts, which drown

men in destruction and perdition." In these two last passages we see the gracious reason why the Lord almost universally withholds from his people great temporal prosperity and worldly possessions. The pious Agur, as we see in Proverbs, presented the wise and humble prayer—"Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny thee, and say who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." The goodness of God is displayed towards the wicked in temporal things, that they may, by that goodness, be constrained and allured to forsake their sins, and turn unto him, and seek and find the present and eternal blessings of his salvation. Accordingly it is said in Scripture, and experience has always proved, that "he is," in those blessings, "good to all;" that "his tender mercies are over all his works;" "makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust;" gives to the wicked as well as the righteous "fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness." In Rom. ii. it is said to the wicked and impenitent man—"Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" The upright and benevolent conduct and good example of the righteous, are also divinely intended to contribute towards the reformation of the ungodly and unrighteous, as well as for good to others. Accordingly our Lord has commanded—"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your father who is in heaven." Also further, in 1 Pet. ii. 12—"having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

There are divine chastisements also inflicted, both on the wicked and the righteous, and in the goodness of God are designed for their benefit. The Scriptures here also declare the divine intentions by those chastisements. Of the former it is said in Psalm xciv.—"He that chastiseth the heathen shall not be correct;" and in Lam. iii.—"Though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies; for he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men;" and in Heb. xii. it is expressly declared that it is for their benefit, that they might be partakers of his holiness. But unhappily, to vast numbers, these words in Job precisely

apply—"The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath; they cry not when he bindeth them." The gracious Lord also manifests his Goodness in chastening the righteous—his own people—of whom he says in Zech. xiii.—"I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call upon my name, and I shall hear them." The Saviour has said of his Father—"every branch" in me "that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit;" and further, in Rev. iii.—"As many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent." In Prov. iii. is the exhortation—"My son despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction; for whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even a father the son *in whom* he delighteth." And in the following passages in Psalm xciv. is shown the gracious purpose of all the divine chastisements—"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law, that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity." All the chastenings and tribulations of the righteous are, in wisdom and grace, designed by God to contribute, and if rightly received and endured, will certainly operate towards producing patience, resignation, and diligence, and that holiness which is the essential requisite for admission into the eternal kingdom of purity, glory, and happiness. Thus God will be glorified for his wisdom and goodness, and his designs in the creation of man be fully accomplished.

8. The Wicked being permitted to persecute and afflict the Righteous manifests the necessity of a future and discriminating Judgment as to both.

Not only Scripture, but all other history and universal experience, have shown that such unrighteous conduct has been permitted by God, but always with his deep displeasure and severe condemnation. Looking into Scripture, we find from the first, and throughout all ages, multitudes of instances of such persecutions and afflictions. Cain was not divinely prevented from slaying his brother Abel: Joseph's brethren were not restrained from selling him into captivity; but God ultimately made it available towards preserving all the rest of the family from perishing by famine. Pharaoh was not hindered from causing the Hebrew male children to be drowned. The envious and malicious Saul was not prevented from grievously persecuting David through many years; nor was the atrocious Doeg,

the Edomite, withheld from slaying eighty-five priests of the Lord. The wicked people of Judah, at the command of their impious and cruel king, stoned to death the faithful Zachariah, the son of the good priest Jehoiada. The haughty and cruel princes of Judah were not prevented from casting the zealous and faithful Jeremiah into the stocks and the miry dungeon; but they were not permitted to take his life. The impious and cruel Herod caused all the children under two years in and around Bethlehem to be slain, some of whom doubtless belonged to pious parents. Another wicked Herod imprisoned and put to death the faithful John the Baptist. Another Herod slew James the Just, and imprisoned Peter. The faithful Stephen was stoned to death by a furious and cruel mob. The bigoted but zealous Saul was for a time suffered to persecute unto imprisonment and death many of the first Christians; and we see in the book of Acts many other instances of their persecutions, imprisonments, and deaths by ungodly rulers and raging mobs. Paul, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, says—"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned." Innumerable instances of the like persecutions, in all ages, since the close of revelation, are given in *church* as well as *secular* history. During the three first centuries of Christianity idolatrous and wicked rulers caused millions of Christians to be tortured in various forms, or put to death, banished, or otherwise persecuted and afflicted. Vast numbers also of the faithful were persecuted and afflicted by imprisonment, banishment, and in various other forms, and many put to death, during the long period of the heretical Arian power and rule in the churches. Through hundreds of subsequent years, and down to the time of the extensive establishment of the Protestant Reformation, many millions, in all, of the true people of God, under the names of Albigenses, Waldensis, Wickliffites, Husites, Lollards, Hugonites, and other designations given to them by their enemies, were persecuted by those enemies in high ecclesiastical and secular rule, by destruction of their property, by banishment, long and severe imprisonment, tortures, and death by the atrocious Inquisition, and others slain by the sword of military violence. These dreadful persecutions, tortures, and destructions of life, took place in nearly all the professedly Christian countries of Europe, vast numbers of them in England, even as late as the reign of *her* who is

rightly designated *bloody Mary*; and many later still, under the first hypocritical Charles, as also, under the *second* of that name, both a hypocrite and a profligate; and later, in the reign of the bigotted and cruel James.

Now the deeply-important question arises, how are all those murders, and other atrocities and persecutions, inflicted on the righteous, by the wicked, to be reconciled with the power of prevention by God, and with the attributes of mercy, goodness, and justice. They can only be so reconciled by concluding, as is true, that he has created and continued man a moral agent, with a will and power either to *commit* or *refrain* from sin, and that he will not destroy that will, and compel man to refrain from transgression, and to design and act righteously. Man is, therefore, in a state of responsibility to God, and accountability to him hereafter, for his conduct in this life. It is true that God does often so overrule as to prevent the wicked from committing *all* the crime and evil work they desire to accomplish. By his merciful and beneficent providence he has so overruled in all civilized countries, during the last two or three centuries, as to nearly altogether prevent the commission of any such dreadful persecutions and atrocities as have just been mentioned; but still, in various lesser modes, the wicked are permitted to afflict the righteous. All those cruelties and persecutions inflicted on the righteous are made by God to serve for the purification and real good of his church, and each and all of his people, as he has previously told them in his word. Such persecutions show the necessity for a future discriminating judgment, and for rewards to the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked. If it were not so, the Almighty Ruler could not be said to be just and righteous. But verily such is his invariable and glorious character; and he surely will, as repeatedly declared in his infallible word, bring at last "every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil," and will render to all according to their works. To them who patiently "continued in well doing," he will render "glory, honor, and everlasting life;" but to the wicked, "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," and "everlasting punishment," "in the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." These last awful words are by the compassionate Saviour himself.

9. On a Future and Final Divine Judgment.

No doctrine, in any system of religious belief, has been more universally held than this,—of the future Judgment of all mankind, as to the good and evil of their conduct, while in this life. Not only by the professors of the true religion, under its several dispensations, has it been the invariable belief, but also among heathen and idolatrous nations, it has been the general supposition or sentiment. Among such of these last as were the most advanced in civilization, arts, and other branches of knowledge, this belief has appeared in all their systems of theology,—in the writings of their poets,—the speeches of their orators,—the systems of their philosophers, and in common transactions, and modes of conduct. The faculty, or inherent attribute, called conscience, which dwells in every man, in a greater or lesser degree of perception and activity, informs him as to the moral good or evil of his feelings, motives, and actions; in the wicked, always to their annoyance; in some with tormenting power. In Divine mercy, it has been implanted, not only, in general, to direct and inform us what we ought to *do*, and what to *avoid*, but also checks or encourages, according as to what we are about to do, or have done is *good or evil*. Unless in the case of those who are thoroughly hardened in iniquity, the action of conscience will become more powerful, as the sinner approaches death. On the contrary, all those who have sincerely loved and served their God and Saviour, when about to pass into the eternal world, will experience the supporting and consoling witness of the Divine Spirit, and can also add in the words of Scripture:—“we have the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we had our conversation in the world.”

In looking into the affairs of this world, with reference to *virtue and vice*, *prosperity and adversity*, *enjoyment and suffering*, we do not see the signs of an exact divine *justice and goodness* regarding those affairs. In numerous instances, the best men are the most deficient, and in very many others, the ungodly, and the wicked, are the most abounding in the possessions and advantages of this life. As we know that God is a *Just and Good Being*, and considering this disparity of circumstances, it might, even independently of Scripture declarations on the subject, reasonably be inferred and ~~con~~cluded, that

He would ordain and execute a future Judgment: in which all the uncertain and irregular dispensations of His Providence,—as they appear to us,—shall be cleared and adjusted, and the righteous and the sinner receive, respectively, the just recompense of what their works in this world have deserved.

But far beyond all merely human thoughts and conclusions on the subject, we have the positive and infallible word of the Just and Holy Judge Himself, that He will, hereafter, “bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil,” (Ecc. xii.) and “will render to every man according to his deeds,” (Rom. ii.) The whole intelligent creation will then, as the prophet Malachi has declared, “discern between him that served God, and him that served Him not.” At that infallibly just Tribunal, Princes and Nobles, and others the most exalted of the earth, will, like the poorest and meanest, be judged according to their religious and moral conduct. To employ, concerning that Judgment, the eloquent and beautiful language of Pollock, that pious and eminent poet:

“It was a congregation vast of men,
Of unappendaged and unvarnished men,
Of plain unceremonious human beings;
Of all but moral character bereaved.
His vice or virtue now to each remained alone;
All else with their grave clothes, men
Had put off, as badges worn by mortal, not
Immortal man; alloy that could not pass
The Scrutiny of Death's refining fires.”

The poor also will have to give an account as to the manner in which they bore their poverty; whether they bore it with humility, and were patient in privation and suffering; and submitted to the will of God, without murmuring or repining. The Lord has also informed us of the Rule by which he will proceed, as to *inequalities* in mental power and capacity, and the means of attaining useful knowledge, especially of a religious nature. He hath said: “That servant that knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.”

The universality of the judgment will extend not only to all *persons*, but to all *things*, for the scriptures declare, that God "will bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."—Ecc. xii. The motives of the deeds will be judged. He that did benevolent acts to gain popular *applause* and *favour*, or other selfish motives, if he succeeds in his desire will thus be fully rewarded, and get no further recompense. But he that did them from *pious* and *benevolent* or other good motives, will have at that judgment a happy and enduring compensation. Further, we are clearly informed in several parts of scripture, that we shall be judged for our words as well as our works. The Epistle of James declares, that "the tongue defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell." By its *tattling* and *back-biting*, it produces *disturbances* and alienations in family circles, and various evils in society. They are generally deceived who make little account of their words, and think that their violent imprecations—their impious or other corrupting language—their profane or foolish jests—their quarrelsome and abusive words—their private slanders and calumnies; and their tattling and vain gossip shall not come under review, and a righteous judgment be passed on them. Our Lord has plainly declared the contrary, by saying, "that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof, in the day of judgment, for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shall be condemned."

Not only will persons be brought into judgment for their own words and works, but also, to some extent, they will be held accountable for the conduct of others, in cases where they have by perverting and corrupting the Divine Word, teaching them unscriptural and false doctrines, and principles, led them astray from the Scripture standard of religious truth and plan of salvation, and thereby prevented them from seeking and obtaining that real and only conversion and salvation described in the inspired and infallible Scriptures. In the second epistle of Peter, mention is made of some who would "bring in damnable heresies," and that "many would follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of Truth would be evil spoken of." It is further declared of such characters, that "their judgment now of long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." These awful declarations fully apply to all teachers of

unscriptural and false doctrines and principles of every description ; to all such as have a tendency to relax the obligations of the divine laws, and the motives to obedience, by denying the future punishment of the wicked ; or that it is not so tormenting as the Spirit of God in his word has declared it to be, and that no future punishment is of *eternal* duration. All teachers of a course of discipline and correction in a future state, for purification and of exemption from punishment, and final admission to happiness, belong to this class of deluding and corrupting characters, and therefore all who teach such profane and pernicious doctrines, largely partake of the guilt of those whom they have seduced into the belief of such false and destructive doctrines, and will, therefore, meet with similar punishment. The appearance of all the righteous and the wicked for judgment, at the *same time* as the Lord of judgment has declared, is perfectly appropriate, not only in vindication of the *justice* and impartiality of God, but for the greater manifestation of the faithfulness of the righteous, and his approval of them and for the confusion of the wicked. These faithful characters who had patiently laboured, suffered and endured in their God and Saviour's cause, will be placed by him at his right hand, and with rapturous delight they will await the announcement of his righteous approbation, and the gracious and glorious rewards of their faithfulness. On his left hand, the judge will arrange and place the countless myriads of the ungodly and wicked of every class and degree, who had ever lived on the earth. The malicious *murderer*, the vindictive *oppressor*, and profligate and cruel *seducer* will prominently appear, laden with guilt, and distorted with horror and despair. In vast numbers will be seen the various classes of the dishonest and unrighteous ; from the secret *speculator* in high and low places, the *adulterating traffickers*, the scheming and perjured *insolvent debtors*, and through all the countless modes of *fraud* and *knavery*, and down to the secret thief, and daring and violent robber. *There* also will be the backbiting *slanderer*, now dumb with terror ; the sabbath violator, and the various other classes of the *impious* and *profane*, and the lying *jester*, who was the delight of his companions in scenes of dissipation, rivalry, and folly. In that guilty assembly will be present the vast myriads of selfish worldlings, whose whole powers and lives had been anxiously and insatiably devoted to purposes and

efforts, to obtain earthly distinctions and honours, or to acquire *sordid gain*, which as scripture declares, "taketh away the life of the owners thereof," or else in the various scenes and modes of merely sensual and frivolous indulgence. *There* will be seen the multitude who by their gluttonous habits, shortened their days on the earth, and made, in the words of scripture, "a God of the belly." In suitable companionship with these, but most probably in far greater numbers will be the victims of the intoxicating draught; and in fit association, but even in greater guilt, will be those who through the lust of gain, and in the face of the denounced woe of the righteous judge, freely supplied the *poisonous* and *maddening* drink, which destroyed the bodies and souls of the others, and made the *hearts* and *lives of widows* and *orphans* afflicted and desolate. *There* will be seen the numbers who have secured the larger portions of this world's possessions, often by *extortion* and *unrighteousness*, and instead of humanely considering the wants and claims of their suffering fellow creatures, as divinely commanded, and ministering to the relief of their destitution and wretchedness, lavished their *superfluous* wealth, in the gratification of "the lust of the flesh," and "the eye," and "the pride of life," in the accumulation of sumptuous and luxurious furniture and decorations for their dwellings; in *jewels* and *trinkets* for *personal adornment*; in rare and costly *gems*; in *pictures* and *statuary*, and in the various other modes and exhibitions of *pride* and *vanity*.

On the *left hand* will also appear, in utter dismay and terror, a vast multitude of self-deceived Antinomians, who had blindly presumed on possessing a truly religious character and fitness for an acceptable and happy appearance in the eternal world, and in suitable association with *these* will be seen no inconsiderable number of the professed but *unfaithful* stewards of Sacred Truth, who either had neglected to inform themselves aright as to the Scriptural plan of salvation, and the divine will and purposes concerning souls, so as duly to instruct and warn, exhort and rebuke, and render to all, as commanded, a portion of the Divine Word in proper season; or else, knowing their responsibility and duty, and having under their notice from week to week the plain and public exhibitions of the worldliness and vanities, and divinely forbidden conformities and customs of those among whom they ministered, had, through the "fear of man," or *desire of popular*

favour, proved cowardly and recreant to the truth of him they called Master, and his express command, and had failed to warn and admonish such unfaithful professors and others living in ungodliness and wickedness; although peremptorily charged by their Lord to “cry aloud, and spare not;” to “lift up their voices like trumpets,” and show to all their “transgressions and sins.” On all such will then be fulfilled the predicted righteous judgment, of which they had been plainly forewarned, that they who so neglected their duty should have “their portion with unbelievers,” and “be beaten with many stripes.” On the *left* will also stand the youth of both sexes of accountable and responsible years, most prominently those in Christian lands, who thought or cared for little else than *fashions*, and the varied and vain displays of dress and *ornamental appendages*, to attract notice, and gratify the ruling vanity within; also *there* will appear the vast multitudes of the votaries of *dissipation*, of vain and frivolous amusements, and the various other modes and scenes of reckless folly; also those who wasted such large portions of their time in weakening and depraving, still more, their shallow minds, with tales of *fiction* and *corrupting tendency*; and in their *immediate* Company, as we may well suppose, will *fitly* stand *those*, who, by a base and guilty perversion of the intellectual powers with which heaven had endowed them, furnished the means for the mental and moral debasement and the eternal misery of the others. *There* also will be the weak and guilty parents, who, instead of training their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,” as divinely commanded, and endeavouring kindly to *check* and *restrain* their rising tendencies and impulses of vanity and folly, and striving rightly to direct their reasoning powers, and to store and fortify their minds with useful knowledge manifested towards *some* of them, an earnest care and solicitude for their appearance in public, as well as in the social circle, in *gay* and *ornamental* apparel, thereby encouraging the native vanity; and as to others of them, afforded *promptings* and instructions, for creating and stimulating ardent desires and efforts to acquire and accumulate *worldly* possessions, thereby assisting to implant a covetous and sordid spirit adverse to the claims of *Religion* and *Benevolence*. No further classified description of the innumerable multitudes of the guilty and eternally ruined need here be given. No language, indeed, could fully exhibit the vast variety of forms of profanity, unrighteousness, and wicked-

ness, which will then be made manifest, or depict their deadly and hateful atrocity and guilt, as they will be made clearly apparent, under that application and review of Eternal Truth.

10. On the Future and Everlasting Happiness of the Righteous.

The following are only a few of the passages of Scripture, which set forth and describe this gracious and heart-inspiring subject, which to the mind and feelings of the true christian, is ever most attractive and joyous:—Ps. xvi.—“In thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Ps. lxxiii. “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory;”—Matt. v. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;”—Matt. xiii. “The righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father:”—Rom. ii. “Glory, honour and peace to every man that worketh good:”—1 Cor. ii. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him:—Rom. vi. “The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord:”—Rev. ii. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life:”—Rev vii. “He that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters:”—Rev. xxii. “There shall be no night there, * * * for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

These passages of Scripture, with many others of the like import, reveal, in the most explicit terms, the cheering and joyous truth of the future and eternal glory and happiness of the righteous, with all the particulars concerning their enjoyments, of which, while *here* we need not be informed. We may sufficiently learn from the Scripture, that the Place of future happiness is far beyond these visible heavens, and is that transcendentally glorious region, where the holy and gracious God, and our Divine Saviour, more *immediately* dwell, and manifest their Majesty and Glory. The Scriptural Christian is fully warranted in taking, in their *literal* sense, these words of our Lord,—“In my Father’s house are many mansions. * * * I go to prepare a Place for you. * * * And I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, ye may be also.” As regards the *nature* of the happiness of the righteous, in the future state, and a

knowledge of the particulars wherein it consists, these can only be rightly ascertained from such declarations as God has been pleased to make, for our encouragement and support, while passing through our earthly course. One of their modes of happiness will consist in the expansion and free and unwearying exercise of their rational faculties. In this life, such exercises, and the pleasures derived from them, are being constantly suspended or impaired, by the intense and continued exertion of the mental powers, and the weariness and languor of the body. But the inhabitants of the heavenly place will be entirely free from all such impediments. *There* they will be at the very fountain of Truth and Knowledge, and will be able to fulfil their desires with the ready discoveries of the glorious attributes of the Almighty and infinitely Wise Creator, as manifested in His wonderful works of Creation and Providence, and more especially in the designs and exhibitions of His Grace.

We learn from our Lord's words that the highest enjoyment of "the pure in heart" will be, that "they will see God;" not as is said in another place, as we see *here* "through a glass darkly," but then "face to face," and "shall know," even as we are "known." There will also be an equally perfect and happy change in the *bodies* of the righteous. *These*, as Scripture declares, will be made like unto their Saviour's "glorious body." They will never feel any wants or infirmities, any uneasy importunity of appetite, and weariness, pains, or sickness, febleness or decay. In further addition to their happiness, they will be united in endeared and everlasting companionship with patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs; an innumerable company of angels; the general assembly and church of the first born; with the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus their beloved Saviour and King, whom they shall see in all "his beauty" and "glory." His blessed presence and the ardent thoughts and feelings, of what he had done and suffered, to purchase for them such inestimable enjoyments, will constantly inspire them, in ascribing in grateful and rapturous strains—"blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb for ever and ever." These sublime and cheering subjects may here be closed, with the beautiful descriptive lines of a true and evangelical Poet:

“Far from a world of grief and sin,
 With God eternally shut in,
 Then will they see and hear and know,
 All they desired and loved below,
 And all their powers find sweet employ,
 In that eternal world of joy.”

11. On the future and everlasting punishment of the wicked.

The announcements on this awful subject, in so many parts of the sacred volume, are so very express and free of ambiguity or uncertainty of meaning, that it is not too much to say, that there is no spiritual truth, more positively and pointedly declared. Those therefore, who deny that there will be such a punishment are not entitled to be considered as true believers, in any other portion of the sacred word, and in the *divine veracity*. There are numerous express passages declaring that punishment, in many of the books of the scriptures. The following are only a portion of those passages:—“Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest, this shall be the portion of their cup.”—Ps. xi. 6. “Her guests are in the depths of hell.” Prov. xi, 9, 18. “As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. The son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”—Math. xiii, 40. “It is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands, to be cast into hell, into the fire that never can be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”—Mark ix, 43. (These same words—as to the *eye*, and the *feet*, were at the same time repeated by our Lord.) “And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments.”—Luke xvi. 13.—v. 44. “I am tormented in this flame.” “And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them, one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on the right hand, but the goats on the left.
 * * * Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. * * * And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.” Matt. xxv.—“But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which

burneth with fire and brimstone ; which is the second death."—*Rev.* xxi, 8.

In all countries and ages in which the Holy Scriptures have been in use, all the versions of them in the respective languages of those countries, have contained words of the same meaning as those just cited, with all others of similar import seen in our present English standard version. Now will any person professing to be a christian, or to know anything of the Scriptures, or of christianity, assert that the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, and all the other inspired writers of the books which contain the passages just cited *forged* and *interpolated* those passages ; or that they were *forged* and *inserted* by others, in any following age, or ages, and in all the versions, in the different languages of the countries in which the Scriptures have been held and used ? Any such numerous and continued *forgeries* and insertions, early or later, are utterly beyond any rational belief or even the slightest supposition, and it is altogether impossible that they could have been successfully accomplished. The attempt to prove anything of the kind on that broad scale, has never been made. Nor with all the infidelity, or scepticism of the present age, will any one *now* be so bold as to make the attempt. Not a shadow of proof could be found to support it. The same words are contained in the Scriptures used by the unitarians, universalists, and most, if not all others who hold unscriptural doctrines. All the passages on this subject of the tormenting and everlasting punishment of the wicked, are as clearly and explicitly inspired truth, as all the other portions of the Sacred oracles, and their true meaning cannot be misunderstood.

We are not scripturally informed of the particular locality of this place of punishment, and therefore any speculations or conjectures on the point would be worse than useless. All who believe that there is a God who created all things, will readily conclude that he will be at no loss to find a place for the infliction and endurance of such punishment. There is not the slightest intimation in any part of the Scriptures that the passages declaring that punishment are employed in a merely *metaphorical* or *figurative* sense. In truth, there is no Scripture *doctrine* or *fact* declared in plainer terms, or more adapted to be readily understood. There are, however, some objectors who say, that if the fire employed in that punishment be *material* fire,

such as we have in this world, it would inevitably *consume* the bodies cast into it. How then did it happen that the three Hebrews mentioned in the Book of Daniel were not *consumed* in the raging fire into which they were thrown, while it *did* destroy those who cast them therein; but on the faithful three it had no effect, not even, as Scripture declares, “the smell of fire passed on them?” In Heb. ix. their faith is referred to as having “quenched the violence of fire.” Surely the Almighty Being who created fire can *prevent* or *allow* its usual effect, according to his own will. Even in this world there is one substance, if not more, which fire will not *consume* or *impair*. The *Linum Asbestum*, or incombustible flax, is of that nature. A towel or other fabric composed of *this* (one of the kind being in the British Museum) may be thrown into the *hottest fire*, and when taken out will not, on the nicest experiment, be found to have lost *one grain of its weight*. Another class of objectors say, that the word *everlasting* is, in Scripture, frequently applied to things of only temporal duration, as for instance, the Scripture expression—“the everlasting hills” of this earth. The word is here employed with sufficient propriety, because the hills *will* remain, and *can* remain *only* as long as the *world*, of which they are a part, shall continue, and *this*, we are scripturally informed, will be destroyed. In this instance, and all others regarding *things* or *subjects* evidently of only temporal duration, the word *everlasting* is used merely in an *accommodated* sense, and can only be understood to apply as long as the *things* concerning which it is used, remain in *existence*. But the case is entirely different when the word “everlasting” is used regarding *persons* or *things* in the future or eternal world. The words of Scripture—“everlasting fire”—“everlasting burning”—“everlasting destruction”—“everlasting punishment”—“eternal damnation”—“the fire is not quenched”—“blackness and darkness forever”—“the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever,” all relate and apply to *persons* and *things* in the eternal world, and, therefore all these expressions must have the application and meaning of *endless duration*.

The punishment will not in *degree* be the same to all, for the Lord Jesus, the appointed and righteous Judge, has declared that “then he will reward every man *according* to his works;” and Psalms xcvi., 9, declares—“With righteousness shall he judge the world,

and the people with equity." There would be good reason to conclude that the punishment of the wicked in the other world would be *everlasting*, even if the Scriptures had not been so express in declaring it, by reason that they will then be continually under the power and influence of the base, furious, and other evil passions which possessed them while *here*, but in a far greater degree, and doubtless will be continually blaspheming the being who is punishing them; and as none can be admitted to a state of glory without having first become endued with the love of God, and goodness, and a principle of holiness; and as their time of *grace* and *probation*, as scripturally shown, has for ever passed away; and the endurance of such tormenting punishment can never beget love to the being by whom it is inflicted, it must follow that their unholy and blaspheming condition will still remain, and consequently their *punishment* must *eternally endure*.

12. Seeing then, that the eternal glories and happiness of the righteous, and the everlasting punishment of the wicked, as plainly declared in the Scriptures, are most solemn *realities*, it will be the highest wisdom for all,—not only the unconverted,—but those who have *found*; and those who are *seeking* present salvation, to think frequently of the *views* and *apprehensions* which will fill their minds, on that day of *Final Retribution*; and on its Awful Solemnities, when they will have a clear view of the indescribable happiness, and the horrible miseries of another world; when, in short, Heaven, with all its glories, shall be open before them; and, as expressed in the Book of Job,—“Hell shall be naked before us, and Destruction have no covering.” Reflecting on these awful Truths, may all, as Scripturally commanded, “give all diligence to make their calling and election sure,” so that when “the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His Mighty Angels, in Flaming Fire,” taking vengeance on His enemies, their portion shall not be with those “at the left hand,” who “shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of His Power,” but shall be among those at His *Right Hand*, to whom He will say,—“Come ye Blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the World.”

