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# A SYSTEM OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

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Vol. 2 of 2

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by  
William Lindsay Alexander

Forgotten Books

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## A System of Biblical Theology

By

William Lindsay Alexander

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A SYSTEM  
OF  
BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

BY THE LATE  
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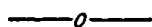
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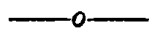
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# PART III.

## CHRISTOLOGY.



### CHAPTER XI.

#### SECOND DIVISION.—THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST. (Continued.)

##### 3. *Mosaic Sacrifices.*

THE sacrificial system introduced by Moses among the Jews was the most complete the world has ever seen. Whatever is necessary either for the solemnity or the didactic effect of a ritual, we see here provided for with the utmost care and efficiency. For all kinds of sins the appropriate ablution and sacrifice were appointed, and the most minute instructions given as to the time, place, and manner of their observance. Nothing is omitted that could tend to contribute to the successful operation of such a system; and during the many centuries it continued in operation, nothing seems to have been at any time added to it that did not prove a needless or enfeebling excrescence. Whatever deficiencies in other respects might attach to the Mosaic economy, as a system of ritual and symbolical worship it was perfect.

##### (1.) *Sacrificial Offerings.*

The offerings appointed by Moses were of four kinds,—the burnt-offering, the thank-offering, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering. Of these the last two may be viewed as one, for the difference between them is so slight as to render it difficult to understand why they should have formed

separate institutions.<sup>1</sup> The second, the thank-offering, does not fall within the scope of our present consideration, so that it is only the burnt-offering and the sin-offering to which we have particularly to advert.

a. The burnt-offering consisted in the slaying of a male animal, sometimes a bull of three years old, sometimes a ram or goat of one year old, more rarely a dove or turtle-dove. The peculiarity of this offering was that it was wholly consumed by fire. From this came its name *עֹלָה*, from *עָלָה*, “to ascend,” because it all went up in flame and smoke to heaven. It is also called *עֹלָה* (Deut. xxxiii. 10; Ps. li. 21), a word formed from *עָלָה*, *all* or *whole*, to signify that it was entirely consumed as a sacrifice—that no part of it accrued to the priests or was eaten by the worshippers. In the Targum the word *עֹלָה* is substituted for this with a similar meaning. From this we may arrive at the signification of this offering. “The concept ‘whole,’” says Bähr, “constitutes the ground-idea of the burnt-offering. But among the Orientals this concept was a combination of two: the whole is, on the one hand, the general in opposition to the particular; on the other, it is the entire in relation to the deficient; hence in the former reference it is the comprehensive, in the latter the complete. . . . Thus, in virtue of its designation, the burnt-offering unites the idea of the comprehensive and the complete: it is the comprehensive offering as the most

<sup>1</sup> Different opinions as to the reason of the distinction:—

The sin-offering for sins of omission, . . . . .	}	Grotius.
The trespass-offering for sins of commission, . . . . .	}	
	}	M <sup>i</sup> . . . . .
The reverse (with equal arbitrariness), . . . . .	}	Warnekros, Jahn, etc.
The sin-offering for sins of ignorance, . . . . .	}	
The trespass-offering for sins of forgetfulness, . . . . .	}	Aben Ezra.
The sin-offering refers to objective crime, . . . . .	}	
The trespass-offering refers to subjective crime, . . . . .	}	
The man who brought a trespass-offering accused himself in his conscience; the man who brought a sin-offering was convicted of a definite but unconscious offence, . . . . .	}	Winer.

It seems, on the whole, wiser to conclude with Winer, in his former edition, that “as none of these attempts is satisfactory, and as in the statements of the law itself nothing is contained that can in any measure conduct us safely to a determination upon the distinction between the sin-offering and the trespass-offering, it seems best entirely to renounce making a distinction.” Quoted by Dr. Pye Smith, *Four Discourses*, p. 265.

general, referring to nothing particular or special, but embracing and including in itself whatever the other offerings had in common. [Rosenmüller justly observes on Deut. xxxiii. 10 : 'לֵלִי : Holocaustum, qua una sacrificii specie comprehenduntur ceteræ omnes.'] Hence it appears as the representation of the Mosaic idea of sacrifice in the general. It is, moreover, the completest offering, inasmuch as in it, representing as it does the idea of sacrifice in the general and on the whole, the entire ceremonial or worship (*cultus*) is concentrated." <sup>1</sup>

b. The sin-offering, חטאת, and the trespass-offering, עוֹלָה, were offered for such transgressions as were not punished by the laws of the State,—sins of ignorance, ceremonial impurities, mistakes, and in general all offences, whether detected or not, which brought defilement either on the individual or the nation. These offerings consisted principally of animal victims, which were not, however, wholly consumed on the altar, but parts of which were burned without the gates of the city, and part might be eaten by the priest. As compared with the burnt-offering, these offerings have a more special character and reference; they have to do with sin, and their signification is exhausted in the making atonement for sin.

The sin-offerings were divided into the lesser and the greater. To the former belonged offerings for such offences as a private person sinning through ignorance, or a Nazarite touching a corpse, and such legal purifications as were required in a woman after child-birth, or on the cleansing of a leper. To the latter belong such as were offered when the high priest had committed an offence and thereby brought guilt on the nation, when the whole nation had sinned through ignorance and repented, and on the great Day of Atonement for the high priest and the nation. Of these the last is so important in itself, and so tends to illustrate the whole subject, that we shall dwell on it for a little.

This festival was observed once a year on the tenth day (*i.e.* from the evening of the ninth to the evening of the tenth) of the seventh month Tisri, five days before the Feast of Tabernacles. The law concerning it may be found in Lev. xvi. 1–34, with which may be compared Lev. xxiii. 26–32; Num. xxix. 7–11. It was held as a day of peculiar solemnity,

<sup>1</sup> *Symbolik*, c. ii. 361, 362.

as שַׁבַּת גְּבוּרָה, "an high day of rest," as our version gives it. On this occasion the high priest almost exclusively officiated. After he had purified himself by bathing his whole body, and had put on the white linen garments appropriate to the occasion, he slew a bullock and a ram taken from his own possessions, and offered the latter as a burnt-offering, the former as a sin-offering for himself and the rest of the priests. He then took a ram as a burnt-offering and two he-goats as a sin-offering for the people; but of these latter only one was slain, the one on which, after they had cast lots, the lot for Jehovah fell. The other goat was preserved alive unto the Lord, or before the Lord, to make an atonement with Him, and to be sent to "Azazel into the wilderness." As to the meaning of this word "Azazel" much difference of opinion exists. Some think that it designates the place to which the goat was driven; and of these some, as Kimchi, Abenesra, and others among the Rabbis, and Vatablus and Deyling among the moderns, think that it was the name of some place in particular; whilst others, as Bochart, etc., regard it as describing merely any rough, rugged, and desolate locality, from the Arabic *azaz*, or any solitary and remote place, from Arabic *chazal*. According to others, this is the name of the goat itself, from עז, a goat, and אזל, *abire*, so that the word signifies "the goat to go away": so the Vulgate *hircus emissarius*, and the English Version "scape-goat;" also the Talmud, where it is called עֵזֶר הַמִּשְׁתַּלֵּה, and several interpreters, ancient and modern. A third opinion is that Azazel is the name of an evil demon, or rather of the devil; this is the view of many of the Rabbins and of Spencer, who has very ably defended it; and it has been embraced by Gesenius, who contends that the LXX. rendering, *αποπομπαιος*, though commonly taken as favouring the preceding interpretation, is to be understood as signifying the averter or expiator, in which he is probably right; and as consequently favouring this explanation, in which he is undoubtedly wrong. De Wette also inclines to this view, but says, with his usual caudour, that if it be adopted it must be greatly modified so as to suit the system of Hebraism. To all these explanations there are serious objections. Azazel cannot designate a place, because in the text it is discriminated from the place, viz. the wilderness, to which the goat was sent.



It cannot designate the goat itself, because it is expressly said that the goat was sent *to* Azazel, which therefore denotes something different from the goat. It cannot designate an evil demon or the devil, because had Azazel been a recognised appellation of the evil spirit in the Law, the Jews would not have been at a loss for the explanation of the word, nor would the Targum and the oldest Rabbins have given another explanation of it, to say nothing of the utter opposition of the idea of offering a sacrifice to demons to all the religious conceptions of the Mosaic theology. The true explanation seems to be that suggested by Tholuck (App. 2 to *Commentary on Hebrews*), that עֲזָזָל is the Pealal form of the verb עָזַל, *removit*, with the extension of the final letter of the penultimate syllable, and the compensating for it by an immutable vowel, like הַעֲזִיזַר for הִעֲזִיזַר: this form is intensive, so that the meaning here would be to “complete removal.”<sup>1</sup>

These preliminaries being settled, the high priest slew the bullock of the sin-offering for himself and the rest of the priests, and with the blood of this he entered the holy of holies, having with him also a censer full of burning coals from off the altar, with which he kindled a composition of perfumes, so as to envelop with the smoke the mercy-seat or lid of the ark of the covenant. He then sprinkled the blood on the mercy-seat, and round about or before it he sprinkled the blood seven times. He then came out and slew the goat on which the lot for Jehovah had fallen, and with its blood he re-entered the holy of holies, and, as he had done with the blood of the bullock, he sprinkled it on the mercy-seat, and seven times before it. The text makes it clear enough that the high priest entered at least twice into the most holy place during this service; and it is possible he may have entered oftener, because, as Winer remarks, he had to carry a censer of burning coals, and with it to kindle the incense before he sprinkled the mercy-seat for the first

<sup>1</sup> The Pealal is a rare conjugation, but it is recognised by the grammarians as a genuine form of the Hebrew verb. It consists properly in the repetition of the two last radicals of the root form, and is described by Ewald as a strong intensive, and by Gesenius, less correctly, as used of slight motions repeated in quick succession. The Pealal of עָזַל would be regularly עֲזָזָלָל; but the ל of the penultimate being cast out, and its place supplied by the immutable vowel א—, the word עֲזָזָל is formed.

time; and it seems probable that as he is said to have gone in for this purpose with his hands full of sweet incense (Lev. xvi. 12), he did not at the same time carry in with him the blood with which to sprinkle the mercy-seat; to which it may be added that in ver. 14 the injunction that "he shall take of the blood of the bullock," etc., appears as announcing a new stage in the procedure of the service. The text itself would thus lead us to conclude that the high priest entered three times into the holy of holies on this memorable day; and it is not improbable that, according to Jewish tradition, he went in a fourth time to fetch out the censer which he had left burning before the mercy-seat. When, therefore, Paul says (Heb. ix. 7) that the high priest went in *απαξ* into the holy of holies, he must be understood not as referring to the day but to the year: he went in only on one occasion in each year, though in order to complete the service on that occasion he had to enter it oftener than once. These services over, the high priest came back to the people, and having laid both his hands on the head of the goat that remained alive, confessed over it the sins of the nation, and laid these on the goat; after which the goat was sent away by means of a person worthy of trust and prepared for the duty into the wilderness. Jewish tradition informs us that in laying the sins of the people on the head of the goat, the high priest used the following formula: "O Lord, Thy people, the house of Israel, hath sinned, done perversely, and transgressed before Thee. I beseech Thee now, O Lord, expiate the sins, perversities, and transgressions in which the house of Israel, Thy people, hath sinned, done perversely, and transgressed before Thee; as it is written in the Law of Moses Thy servant: For in this day he shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you from all your sins, that ye may be pure before Jehovah." As he uttered the word "Jehovah," the priests and the people bowed themselves, and worshipped and said, "Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever;" after which the goat was sent away. (The Rabbis add also that it was taken to a rock about twelve miles from Jerusalem, from the summit of which it was dashed down and destroyed.) Meanwhile the high priest had laid aside the linen garments peculiar to the day, and

assumed his ordinary official clothing. In this he proceeded to offer the rams which had been set apart as burnt-offerings for himself and for the people. Neither the bullock nor the goat of the sin-offering was eaten; but after the usual pieces of fat had been laid on the altar, the rest was burnt without the camp, according to the general rule. The man who conveyed the goat into the wilderness, as well as the man who attended to the burning of the sin-offering, were required before they returned to the camp to wash themselves and their clothes.

c. Such were the regular sacrifices instituted by Moses. Besides these there were occasional sacrifices, and of these there was one so memorable in itself and its consequents that it was celebrated by a yearly festival among the Jews—the sacrifice of the Passover on the night preceding the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. It becomes the more necessary that we should briefly notice this, because the apostle makes special reference to it in connection with the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ. “Christ, our Passover,” says he, “has been sacrificed for us,” or “our Passover has been sacrificed, even Christ:” *το πάσχα ημων ετυθη Χριστος*.

Referring you to the narrative of Moses for the facts connected with the institution and observance of this sacrificial offering, I here only briefly note the following things:—

(a) The phrase by which this was denoted. This was *נִסְחַח*,<sup>1</sup> the sacrifice of passing over, where *פָּסַח* does not denote any sort of passing over, but passing over in the sense of not smiting or destroying, and consequently it stands in antithesis to the *נָּפַח* in the next clause of the verse, where it is said that this passing over of the Israelites took place when Jehovah smote in judgment the Egyptians. Hence Gesenius gives *spar* as the proper force of the word; so that this was the sacrifice of *sparing*, i.e. the sacrifice in virtue of which the Israelites were spared.

(b) This sparing took effect in consequence of the blood of the victim being sprinkled on the lintel and doorposts of the houses. “When I see,” said God, “the blood, I will spare you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt” (Ex. xii. 13). The

<sup>1</sup> Ex. xii. 27 : *נִסְחַח הָיָא לְיִהוָה*.

sprinkling of the blood was the great sacrificial act, and was that through means of which the Israelites were to be spared and saved from the plague that was to come on the Egyptians. This sprinkling, be it observed, was to be done only this once; in after times, though the lamb was slain and its flesh eaten at the Passover, there was no sprinkling of the blood; and the reason of this was that the first observance alone was of a sacrificial character, the subsequent observances were mere commemorations of the great and memorable event.

(c) This observance stood connected with the deliverance of the Israelites out of the house of bondage. The judgment from which the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb brought them exemption was intended by God to secure, and did secure, their escape from the thralldom in which they had so long been held. On this account they were commanded to observe this feast in the future. "Ye shall observe," said God to them, "this feast, for in this self-same day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt; therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever" (Ex. xii. 14).

The first Passover was thus a symbolical and sacrificial act on the ground of which the Israelites were spared when others were destroyed, and were delivered from bondage, so as to be able to go to the land which God had promised to them.<sup>1</sup>

(d) That this ordinance was of a typical nature, and had reference to the deliverance to be brought by the Messiah, both Jews and Christians believe. In one of the prayers used by the Jews in the present day at the observance of the Passover they say: "The Passover was given for a sign or token by the Lord that He will protect and deliver, pass over and cause to escape, His people on the future Passover," by which they intend the day of the Messiah's advent, which they suppose will be at the time of the Passover. In the N. T. the reference of the paschal lamb to Christ, and of the

<sup>1</sup> The sacrificial character of the Passover has been denied by some. Many of the early Protestants took this ground in order to meet the Romanists, who adduced the Passover as an instance of the repetition of a sacrifice, and as thereby authorizing their professed repetition of the sacrifice of Christ in the mass. But the real answer to this is, that though the first Passover was a sacrificial act, those that followed were not, but were merely commemorative of that, just as the Lord's Supper is not a sacrifice, but the memorial of a sacrifice.

slaying of it to His sacrifice, is distinctly set forth. Not only does the evangelist John assert that the circumstance of His bones not being broken on the cross was providentially brought about in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "A bone of Him shall not be broken"—a statement which would be utterly irrelevant save on the supposition that the injunction given to the Israelites regarding the paschal lamb, no bone of which was to be broken, had a typical and therefore a primary reference to Christ; but the Apostle Paul expressly calls "Christ our Passover," and says that as such He was "sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. v. 7).

We do not need to resort to any fanciful and far-fetched resemblances between the paschal lamb and Christ in order to establish the typical reference of the former to the latter.

In the meekness, gentleness, innocence, and patient submissiveness of the lamb, we find the fitting type of Him who was the Lamb of God, who was meek and lowly, and gentle and pure, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not, who is described by His apostle as "a Lamb without blemish and without spot," and of whom the prophet wrote that "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth" (Isa. liii. 7). In the slaying of the lamb and the sprinkling of its blood on the doors of the houses, whereby the Israelites were spared by the destroying angel, there was a foreshadowing of the sufferings of Christ as the substitute for sinners who are spared from the avenging sword of divine justice through that sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ to which they are chosen of God (1 Pet. i. 2; comp. also Heb. x. 22, xii. 24). And, in fine, the way in which men become personally advantaged by the sacrifice of Christ was significantly set forth by the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb on the door of the house; for, just as the destroying angel would not have passed over any house the inmates of which had neglected to sprinkle the blood on the door, so without a personal application of the blood of Christ, a sprinkling as it were of that blood on our selves, we cannot enjoy the benefits of His death; His blood has been "shed for the remission of sins," but this will avail no man unless he personally go to Christ, and by faith in

Him bring himself under the shelter and the sprinkling of His blood.

As Israel was the type of the spiritual Church of God, and as the deliverance of Israel out of Egyptian bondage was the type of the deliverance of the people of God out of the bondage of sin and evil, so the slaying of the paschal lamb and the sprinkling of the blood upon the doors of the Israelites were the type of the slaying of Christ the true Paschal Lamb, and the deliverance of His people through faith in His atoning blood. How far this was understood by the Israelites at the time of the exodus, or by their descendants in after times, it is impossible to say; but as they were commanded by God when their children should say to them, "What mean ye by this service?" to say to them, "It is the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses" (Ex. xii. 26, 27), we may believe that the deeper significance of the service was not hid from them.

(2.) *Mosaic Sacrifices—their Character and Purpose.*

Having considered the Mosaic sacrifices generally, I now proceed to offer some observations bearing more particularly on their character and purpose. And—

*a.* It is important to observe that they occupied the place of a divine institute, and were to be observed according to divine appointment. This assertion is not rested on the assumed divine origin of the sacrificial rite; let that point be decided as it may, there is room for the assertion that the sacrifices enjoined upon the Jews by Moses were enjoined expressly by divine authority, on either hypothesis. Of this there can be no doubt. Not only did Moses, in all that he enjoined, act simply as the servant of God and His medium of communication with Israel; not only did He introduce all his laws with a "thus spake the Lord unto Moses;" but in the special case of sacrifice it is said by God to the Israelites, "*I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls*" (Lev. xvii. 11). God, then, appears here as the author and ordainer of the sacrificial rite; and from this flow certain important inferences: (*a*) If God

ordained and appointed sacrifice to be offered to Him under the law, then the aspect under which the law presented God was not that of a cruel and vindictive sovereign who had to be placated by means of gifts and offerings; but as a compassionate sovereign, who, seeing His subjects brought by their own rebellion under the condemnation of His law, Himself ordained and provided the means by which their guilt might be removed and their doom remitted—a representation which is fully in keeping with the revelation God gave of Himself to Moses when He “proclaimed the name of the Lord,” and said, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,” etc., and a representation which establishes a fundamental and abiding distinction between the Mosaic system and all systems which represent God as needing to be soothed, bribed, or propitiated from wrath to leniency, and suppose that sacrifice was the proper method by which that was to be effected. (b) If it was God who appointed sacrifice as a medium of expiating sin, then it is with Him and not with man that reconciliation originates; it is He who takes the initiative in the matter of man’s redemption, and not man who, desiring to return, seeks some acceptable medium by which this may be done; and (c) if it was God who ordained this method of expiation, then the difficulty to be overcome by this expedient was neither one arising from the divine feeling towards man, nor one arising from the feeling of man towards God; for, had it been the former, the method of removing it would not have originated with God; had it been the latter, a scheme originating with God, which man was to follow, would not have been accepted by man. This leaves open the conclusion that the difficulty to be removed was of a legal or judicial nature—a conclusion which cannot on such narrow ground alone be *proved*, but which these considerations prepare the way for our finding probable.

b. The great end to be answered by the sacrificial rite as instituted by Moses was the enabling of man to draw nigh unto God. This appears from the generic term applied to such observances in the Old Testament, זָבַח. This term is applied to offerings in general in Lev. i. 2; it is applied to the burnt-offering, Lev. i. 3; to the sin-offering, Lev. iv. 3,

xiv. 23; and to the trespass-offering, Lev. v. 8, vii. 3, etc. In like manner the act of offering is denoted simply by the word **הִקְרִיב**, the hiphil form of the verb **קָרַב**, “to bring near;” and in accordance with this, the priest, as the offerer, is called **קָרוֹב**, “the approacher or near-comer,” as in Lev. x. 3, xxi. 17,—an expression for which is used, as designating the same act with it in vers. 21 and 23 of this 21st chapter, the verb **נָגַשׁ**, “to approach,” and which is more fully expressed in Ezek. xlii. 13, where we read: **הַכֹּהֲנִים אֲשֶׁר-קָרוֹבִים לִיהוָה**, “the priests who are approachers to Jehovah.” These usages determine the meaning of the word **קָרַב**; it signifies not merely a gift or offering, but something which brings near unto God. From this it may be inferred that the avowed purpose of sacrifice was to form a medium by which men might draw nigh or approach unto God; and this inference may be confirmed by the language of such a passage as Mic. vi. 6: “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old?” etc., where the great design of sacrifices is stated to be the enabling the man to come before the Lord. Now, what idea are we to attach to coming before God, to approaching Him, to drawing nigh to Him? All idea of local approximation to God is, of course, excluded by the nature of the case: and, on the same ground, we must equally exclude all idea of mental approximation to Him; for “who can by searching find out God? who can find out the Almighty unto perfection?” The only idea we can attach to such forms of expression is that of acceptance with God, or enjoyment of His favour. As the monarch permits those whom he intends to honour, or whom he is pleased to command, to approach his presence, so God is represented as permitting men to draw nigh to Him when He graciously accepts them and treats them with favour. If, then, the proper medium by which men were taught that they were to draw near to God was the offering of sacrifice, there must have been implied in this that sacrifice effected something towards procuring the divine favour for man,—that it was that without which the divine favour or acceptance could not be obtained. And when man is viewed as a sinner, and when it is considered that it is his sin which constitutes the main obstacle in the way of his acceptance with God, it follows that



that which procures him acceptance, or is the medium of acceptance, must have an effect in the way of cancelling guilt, of covering or removing sin.

c. This brings us to remark that these Mosaic sacrifices had all to do with sin. With respect to the sin-offering and the trespass-offering this is evident from the very names they bear, as well as from the whole tenor of the laws regarding them; and with respect to the burnt-offering it may suffice to adduce such a passage as Lev. i. 4, where we read that the offerer is to "put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him," compared with Lev. xiv. 20, etc., to satisfy us that this offering was also an offering for sin. Indeed, the whole system of sacrifice has respect to sin, and assumes on the one hand its existence, and on the other the necessity of removing, covering, or cancelling it, ere the sinner can be accepted of God.

d. The effect of the sacrifice in relation to sin was to expiate it, or to make propitiation on account of it. This is placed beyond any doubt by the frequent use of the words translated "atone" and "atonement" in connection with the design or effect of sacrifice, and from such a declaration as that of Jehovah in Lev. xvii. 11, where He says that He had given it to them on the altar to make atonement for their souls. The word rendered "atonement" here is כִּפּוּר, which is the standing technical expression for the effect and purpose of sacrifice in the Mosaic code. It comes from the root כָּפַר, "to cover," the Piel form of which, כִּפֵּר, is constantly used of the covering of sin, *i.e.* the expiating of an offence so as to free the party who has committed it from guilt [see Gesenius, *in verb.*]. "According to the ground-meaning," says Bähr, "nothing else can be intended by the idea of *atonement* than the covering of that which God cannot suffer to show itself in His presence; what is covered is no longer visible, and hence is as good as dissipated, as no longer there. Consequently, according to the Hebrew usage, to cover is equivalent to—to remove, take away, annihilate. . . . By the atonement, therefore, that which was opposed to God, which was contrary to Him, which hindered union and fellowship with Him, was removed, obliterated, annihilated." <sup>1</sup> This is the fundamental

<sup>1</sup> *Symbolik*, p. 202.

idea of all sacrifice as prescribed by Moses; and it was to give prominence and vividness to this idea that the priest was required in certain cases to eat of the sin-offering, as a symbol of the reconciliation that had been effected between Jehovah and the people as represented by the priest.<sup>1</sup>

But here a question occurs. Admitting that the Mosaic sacrifices had reference to sin, and were offered to expiate sin, were sins of *all* kinds included under those to which they had respect, or were they limited in their effect to sins of a certain class? Now, in reference to the point thus brought before us, it may be remarked in the outset that all are agreed that for sins of a presumptuous and audacious kind sacrifice was not available. Sins such as murder, idolatry, and indeed all sins committed with premeditation or from malice, were expressly excluded from the benefit of sacrificial expiation; and the reason of this seems to have been that such sins were of the nature of treason against the theocracy, and could not have been forgiven on the offering of sacrifice without endangering the stability of the theocratical institute viewed as a civil polity. Discounting these sins, however, it still remains to inquire whether sacrifice had respect to all others that those living under the Mosaic institute might commit; and here opposite sides have been taken by different inquirers. Two eminent writers, one in this country and one in Germany,—Davison in his *Discourses on Prophecy* and his work on *Primitive Sacrifice*, and Bahr in his *Mosaisches Cultus*,—have contended that only sins of a theocratic kind, *i.e.* only ceremonial defilements or disabilities, were contemplated in the sacrifices prescribed under the law. On the other hand, it has been contended that all offences, moral no less than ceremonial, with the exception above admitted, were included in the class of

<sup>1</sup> See Lev. vi. 26, x. 17; Russell, *On the Covenants*, p. 395. Tholuck (Beil. 3, *Hebræer. Br.*, p. 71) has advanced the opinion that the burnt-offering was not propitiatory, on the ground that it is not said to atone, but only to be pleasing to God. But this is a mistake, as not only Lev. i. 4 (which Tholuck admits), but also Lev. xiv. 20, sufficiently show. By the Jews the expiatory character of the burnt-offering was fully recognised. In the Targum of Jonathan on Num. xxviii. 4, after the words, “the one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning,” the Targum adds, “for expiating the sins of the night.” And one of the Rabbinical writers says expressly, “The holocaust expiates the sins of Israel” (*Tanchuma*, lii. 4).

objects on account of which sacrifice was offered. To this latter opinion two reasons induce us to incline. In the first place, the distinction assumed between a ceremonial offence and a moral one is a distinction which cannot be substantiated or carried out. From the peculiar constitution under which the Jews lived all offences possessed a double character; they were at once offences against the theocracy and offences against morality. No offence could be committed that was purely moral; and none could be committed that was purely theocratic. A neglect of some prescribed ritual, or a contraction of ceremonial uncleanness through inadvertence, was also a moral defect, because it was what *ought not* to have been; and even in regard to those legal defilements and disqualifications which arose from natural or accidental causes over which the party had no control, they had still a moral aspect, inasmuch as it was in consequence of sin somewhere that such sources of evil had been opened in our world. On the other hand, the breach of any moral law was also a theocratic offence, because the theocratic institute incorporated the moral law as part and parcel of it, and it was impossible for God, as the Head of the theocracy, to pass over an act which, as moral Governor of the universe, He stood pledged to punish. All offences, then, for which sacrifices were provided under the law possessed a twofold character; they were at once moral and ceremonial—moral under one aspect, ceremonial under another. It follows that every theory which proceeds on the assumption that some were moral but not ceremonial, and others ceremonial but not moral, must be fallacious. In the second place, the law makes no such limitation as Davison and Bähr contend for; but, on the contrary, very distinctly states that sacrifice is to be offered for *all* kinds of sin not of a presumptuous character. Thus we read, Lev. iv. 2: "If a soul shall sin through ignorance against *any* of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against them," which is the general heading, so to speak, of the section, what follows being a detailed statement of what sacrifices are to be offered in special cases; so that the general drift of the law here is that any and all sins committed through ignorance may be expiated by sacrifice. So also in the law for the services of the Day of Atonement it

is expressly stated that "on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from *all* your sins" (Lev. xvi. 30); and again, "And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel, for *all* their sins, once a year." It is impossible for legislation to be more explicit than this; nor can we conceive that in the face of this any Israelite could have supposed that these expiatory sacrifices were of avail only for one, and that by much the smallest class of offences. We find, moreover, that offences which all will agree possess a moral character, such as false swearing, detaining the property of another obtained by violence or fraud, are expressly declared to be expiable by sacrifice, provided the guilty party confess his sin and make due restitution to the party he has injured (Lev. vi. 1-6); and, indeed, in this whole context we find moral offences and ceremonial offences so mingled together that it is evident the law contemplated them, for the purposes of sacrifice, as standing on exactly the same level. Davison, indeed, says that the instances of moral offence here specified are to be viewed as exceptions to the general rule; but in making this remark he forgets that the rule is not yet established,—that we are only inquiring whether there ever existed such a rule, and that consequently it is utterly incompetent for him to *assume* the existence of the rule in order to get rid of evidence adduced to show that such a rule did not exist. If it be asked why these moral offences are specified and not others, the reason is probably that suggested by Outram, that as they were offences not capable of being brought home to the offender by the evidence of others, it was for the interest of the State, as well as for the good of the parties, that they should be encouraged by a special invitation and offer of pardon to make confession and restitution with the offering of sacrifice (*De Sacrificiis*, lib. i. c. 13, § 3).

On these accounts we must admit that all offences, excepting such as were of a presumptuous kind, were included among those for which the sin-offering or trespass-offering might be offered as a propitiation. But here it may be asked, What was the actual effect of these atoning sacrifices? Did they suffice to cancel the moral guilt of the sinner, so that his conscience was freed from all burden before God? To

this we must answer in the negative, both because of the repeated declarations in the O. T. itself of the inefficacy of mere sacrifice to remove the moral obstacle which sin placed between God and the sinner, and because of the express declarations of the apostle that "the blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin," that the sacrifices offered oftentimes by the priests under the law can never take away sins, and that the gifts and sacrifices offered under the law could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. Such statements preclude all attempts to maintain that sin as a moral offence might be expiated by sacrifice under the Mosaic dispensation; and with this natural reason coincides, for all must feel the very idea that the sins of an intelligent and accountable being might be legally cancelled by the death of an irrational animal to be incongruous and incredible.<sup>1</sup>

But if sacrifice was incompetent to cancel the moral guilt of sin, what is meant, it may be asked, by asserting that moral as well as theocratic offences were included in the propitiatory effect of sacrifice? The answer to this is supplied by advert- ing to the twofold aspect, already hinted at, under which all transgressions were contemplated under the Mosaic code. According to it, every offence was both a moral evil and a theocratic transgression. Now, for the former of these the institute of Moses, as such, provided no direct remedy or propitiation; it was a purely ceremonial institute, and as such looked at things only on their ceremonial side; the moral aspect of things it had to do with only in a shadowy and symbolical way. But for every offence under its theocratical aspect, excepting those committed בִּירְמָה, *i.e.* rebelliously and presumptuously, an atonement was provided, by the offering of which the transgressor became exempted from all the theocratic penalties he had incurred by his offences. It is thus alike true that *all* offences, ceremonial as well as moral, committed inadvertently or without deliberate intention to revolt against God, might be atoned for by sacrifice, and that the atonement covered only the offence under its theocratic aspect, leaving it under its moral aspect wholly untouched.

<sup>1</sup> "Ne in victimis quidem, licet optimæ sint auroque præfulgant, Deorum est honor, sed pia ac recta voluntate venerantium." Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, i. 6. 3.

It may tend to place this matter in a clearer light if we consider sins committed by an Israelite as capable of being viewed and dealt with under three distinct aspects: (*a*) as civil offences; (*b*) as theocratic offences; and (*c*) as moral offences. Now, in relation to sacrifice as a propitiatory instrument, these three classes or kinds of sins stood thus: With sin as a civil offence sacrifice had nothing whatever to do; whether the party who had committed such an offence offered sacrifice or not, the civil penalty due to his offence had still to be endured, death if it was death, banishment if it was banishment, restitution or mutilation if the *lex talionis* came into operation in his case. With sin as a theocratic offence sacrifice had to do in the way of procuring for such offences as were expiable the remission of all theocratic penalties incurred by those who had committed them; and with regard to sin as a moral offence, sacrifice had to do, not directly or immediately, but only mediately and symbolically. When, therefore, a man contracted guilt by an expiable offence, he could by offering sacrifice exempt himself from theocratic penalties, but his civil liabilities still remained; nor could he exempt himself from moral guilt save by means which the sacrifice might adumbrate to him, but could not directly furnish. Its use in this latter respect there will be occasion for our investigating more particularly afterwards. At present I content myself with having placed it before you in what seems its true light as a propitiatory institute. I proceed to remark,—

*c.* That the Mosaic sacrifices were expiatory by being vicarious or substitutionary; in other words, the sacrifice of the victim availed for the sinner by being accepted instead of his suffering. In support of this we may observe—

(*a*) In the case of detected murder the law prescribed death as the penalty, and in the case of simple homicide the same penalty was incurred, unless the party made his escape to one of the cities of refuge and abode there; and in both cases the Israelites are solemnly forbidden to accept any satisfaction, because the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein but by the blood of him that shed it. Here the principle of blood for blood is imperatively laid down. But, supposing the murderer or manslayer could not be dis-

covered—supposing a body found bearing tokens of having been slain by violence, but of the slayer of which no traces could be found, what was to be done? How in that case was the land to be cleansed of blood? For this the law made special provision. The guilt was to be imputed to the city next to the place where the body was discovered, and from this guilt it was to be freed by the elders of the city taking a young heifer, striking off its head in a desolate and uncultivated valley, and, in the presence of the priests of the Lord, washing their hands over the heifer, declaring their innocence of the murder and ignorance of the murderer, and praying to God that He would be merciful to them and lay not the blood to their charge. By doing this it is said “the blood shall be forgiven them” (Deut. xxi. 1–8). Now, in this transaction we have a clear recognition of the principle of expiation by substitution. The guilt of blood lay on some one unknown; it was transferred from him to the nearest city; and it was transferred from it to the sacrificial victim, as was symbolically indicated by the elders of the city washing their hands over its body; and with it the guilt remained in the outcast place where it lay, while by its being substituted for the city the guilt imputed to the city was expiated and cancelled.

(b) We have a similar illustration of the principle of expiation through substitution in the case of the ceremonial on the great Day of Atonement, when the high priest laid both his hands on the head of the live goat and “confessed over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins,” thereby “putting them upon the head of the goat;” after which the animal was sent away to Azazel into the wilderness. Here was a distinct case of transference, so to speak, of sin from the people to the animal; and by the latter bearing away their iniquity to a place not inhabited and to utter removal, was indicated the perpetual and complete deliverance of the people from the guilt of sin. But it may be said, What has this to do with sacrifice? I reply that it was not until propitiation had been made by the sacrifice of the other goat that sin was thus laid on the head of the scape-goat. The two, in fact, were for the more complete representation of the symbol

treated as forming one whole. The sacrificed goat could not scenically represent to the view of the people the carrying away of their sin; the scape-goat could not represent the dying of their substitute for them: but taken both together they between them completed the representation, and showed the people that their national sins had been carried away by a sacrificial substitute.

(c) In all cases where the hands were laid on the head of the victim, and sin confessed over him, the same truth was symbolically represented. "This imposition of hands," says Pabbi Levi Ben Gerson on Ex. xxix. 10, "was intended to show that their sins were removed from them and transferred in a manner to the animal." Hence the animal was regarded as, in consequence of that, polluted, and its body had to be carried out of the camp and burned. This pollution also extended partially to the parties employed in conveying the animal thus laden with sin out of the camp: so that they had to undergo a purification before they could again mingle with the congregation. In all this there was a constant and vivid presentation of the idea of substitution as the ground on which expiation by sacrifice was effected.

(d) The word used to indicate the offering of a sacrifice for sin is  $\text{סָפַר}$ , the Piel of  $\text{סָפַר}$ . Now, the primary meaning of  $\text{סָפַר}$  is "to make good a loss, to give satisfaction for an injury" (see Gen. xxxi. 39); and from this it came to signify to atone or expiate, by carrying with it the idea of the sacrifice being, in a manner, an equivalent for the suffering of the sinner, by which the loss sustained by law through his escape from the penalty he had deserved was made good.

(e) The most decisive evidence on this point is furnished by Lev. xvii. 11, where, in forbidding the eating of blood, God says, "For the soul or life ( $\text{נֶפֶשׁ}$ ) of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to atone for your souls: for the blood atones through the soul." Here we have distinctly stated the design of the sacrificial rite—to atone for their souls; the instrument of that atonement—the blood; and the ground of this, viz. that the soul was in the blood. In this representation the idea of atonement by substitution is most clearly brought forward. The blood atones



for man's soul, because in the blood is the soul: what can be more plain than that what is here taught is that sacrifice atones for sin on the ground that life is given for life, soul for soul?

In adopting this view, however, we must beware of encumbering it with the notion that the propitiatory act lay in the presentation or sprinkling of the blood. That was rather the symbol of the divine acceptance of the sacrifice. The *rationale* of the transaction seems to have been this. The blood, in which was the soul or life of the animal, represented the soul of the offerer doomed to death for sin; the shedding of this, and the infliction of death thereby, betokened the endurance by his proxy of the penalty which the man had deserved; and the blood or soul after that, being now pure, might be carried into the presence of God, where the sprinkling of it before Him indicated the dedication of the soul now free from sin to Him. This leads us to remark—

(*f*) That the sacrifice expiated for the sinner by being his representative as well as his substitute. For this reason it was especially prescribed that what he offered should be *his own*. It thus represented himself; when it was put to death this represented his death, and when its blood was offered to God this represented his offering of himself unto God as wholly dedicated to Him. Man, the sinner, thus satisfied the law he had broken in his representation, and so was freed from all the theocratic penalties he had incurred.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### 4. *Theories of Sacrifice.*

When we compare the characteristics of the Mosaic Sacrifices with what we previously found to distinguish the Heathen and Patriarchal Sacrifices, we perceive one great conception common to them all, viz. that man as a transgressor finds acceptance with the Deity through an expiation

effected by the substitution for him of a sacrificial victim, and the offering of its life in place of his. In this common element, then, we find the fundamental idea of sacrifice, and it will be wise in us to keep firm hold of this in all our subsequent investigations.

The first use to which we may put the knowledge we have thus acquired is to test the accuracy and validity of certain theories of sacrifice which have been propounded by inquirers.

(1.) We may at once, on the ground of what we have ascertained, set aside the notion that sacrifice was of value as a *gift or present* offered to the Deity whereby He is placated and induced to revoke His wrath against the worshipper, or to confer on him some favour. This is the hypothesis of mere ignorance and superstition, and is repudiated at once by reason and Scripture. It was a notion, however, that widely prevailed among the heathen, though by many of the more thoughtful of them its inherent absurdity was perceived and exposed. There would even seem to be something in our fallen nature which prompts such unworthy conceptions of God, and of the way in which His favour is to be secured; for how often is religion made to consist of a sort of offering to the Deity of something in virtue of which He is expected to confer a favour on the offerer? That such a belief prevailed among the Jews, who offered sacrifices in Old Testament times, is shown by such passages as Isa. i. 11 and Ps. l. 7-13, which so clearly show that, while this false and superstitious belief prevailed, it is to be repudiated as false and profane, that we need not any longer delay upon it.

(2.) A second opinion regarding sacrifice is that there was an actual *transference of sin* from the sinner to the sacrificial victim when the former laid his hand on the head of the latter. That this opinion prevailed among the ancient Jews is indicated by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who contends that it was not possible, in the nature of things, that the blood of bulls or of goats should take away sins. Among modern Jews this is the common view taken of the meaning of sacrifice. In offering sacrifice they are accustomed to use the following form of deprecation: "I beseech thee, O Lord! I have sinned, I have been rebellious, I have acted perversely, I have done this or that, but now I repent that I have sinned:

let this, then, be my expiation." And among the rabbinical writers we find such explanations of sacrifice as the following: "It was just that his blood [that of the sinner] should be shed, and his body burnt. But the Creator, by His clemency, accepts this victim from him as a vicarious thing and a ransom, that its blood should be shed in place of his blood, soul for soul [or life for life]." <sup>1</sup> To this view, also, many Christian writers have adhered, as presenting the true and original idea of sacrifice; but the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews is, that it is sanctioned or sustained neither by reason nor by Scripture.

(3.) A third theory of sacrifice is that it was purely and merely *symbolical*, that is, that it adumbrated or showed forth certain religious ideas and truths. Of those who hold this view there are two sections widely separated from each other.

*a.* One of these consists of those who hold that sacrifice was the symbol merely of reconciliation between God and man, and that it denoted this by being, as it were, a friendly meal partaken of by God and the worshipper together, of which God was supposed to take the part offered, and man the part that remained for the sacrificial feast. This hypothesis savours strongly of the shallow and outward school from which it emanates,—that of Sykes and Priestley,—a school that has never uttered one profound or noble thought, but has invariably exercised its ingenuity in seeking to eviscerate theology of all but the most superficial and marrowless tenets. A very slight consideration will show the untenableness of this view. (*a*) Even allowing that part of every sacrifice was eaten by the worshipper, yet as it was not eaten at the altar, but apart and in the offerer's own dwelling, the idea of a friendly meal between God and the offerer disappears. (*b*) It was not the case that of all sacrifices offered a part was consumed by the offerer and his friends; and though a few instances may be adduced from the usages of the heathen, yet they are few in number, and form the exception rather than the rule; for the heathen, carrying out their idea of doing a service or pleasure to the gods by sacrificing to them, frequently offered noxious

<sup>1</sup> A large collection of similar passages will be found in Outram, *De Sacrificiis*, lib. i. c. xxii. § 10 ff.

animals which they themselves would not eat, and which it was supposed the gods would be pleased to see destroyed. The practice of eating part of the sacrifice rather leads to the conclusion that the original and essential idea of sacrifice being that of the reconciliation effected by the rite, gave way in process of time to the secondary and subordinate idea of a social repast on the remains of the sacrifice as an expression of joy on account of the rite happily performed and the blessing secured. (c) This theory fails in the very instance of all others in which, if it were true, it ought to hold good. I refer to the whole burnt-offering, the express object of which was to make reconciliation between God and the sinner. This was not a thank-offering or eucharistical sacrifice ; it was, as all must allow, specially and exclusively an offering for the purpose of procuring reconciliation with God. Surely, if the essential idea of sacrifice was that of a friendly meal between God and the offerer, it would be most sacredly carried out in this sacrifice ; but it was a holocaust, or whole burnt-offering, unto the Lord, and not one part of it remained for the use of the offerer. (d) This theory is absurd as well as unfounded, for it makes a pure fiction the symbol of an actual fact. By the hypothesis, reconciliation has been effected between God and the sinner through the repentance of the latter, and the sacrifice is offered as a symbol of this. But it is made the symbol of this only by supposing what does not exist,—that the Deity actually partook of the sacrificial victim. Avowedly this is a mere fiction, and a fiction cannot be used as a symbol of something which has to be represented as real. But a sign or symbol is some actual thing presented to the senses for the purpose of suggesting or recalling to the mind some spiritual idea ; its essence lies in its actuality. Take this away and it becomes useless, as useless as an inarticulate sound would be if employed as the sign of thought. The theory is, indeed, self-destructive ; it resolves sacrifice into a mere symbol of reconciliation, and yet in order to this it makes the supposition which precludes sacrifice from having the character of a symbol at all.

b. The other section of those who regard sacrifice as a purely symbolical act take a much deeper view of the subject. They recognise propitiation as consisting of two parts—the

one the abolition or annihilation of sin, and the other the reunion of the sinner with God; and they think that sacrifice was intended to symbolize both of these. When the sinner laid his hand upon the victim and devoted it to God, it thereby entered into his place, and so was made sin for the sinner; and when it was burnt, an emblem was afforded of the abolition of the sin which had thus been symbolically laid upon it, whilst the taking of the blood and sprinkling of it before God on the altar and in the holy of holies was an emblem of fellowship with God, inasmuch as it was thereby intimated that God accepted the soul of the offerer presented to Him vicariously through the blood, which is the soul of the victim. In this way, it is contended, "both together these transactions furnished a complete representation of an accomplished propitiation."<sup>1</sup> Now, it must be admitted that this is not only ingenious, but also contains much that is true and important. Still, as a theory of sacrifice, it is exposed to an objection to all theories which regard it as *purely* symbolical. It is obvious that such a theory proceeds on the assumption that the sacrifice had no part in *producing* or *effecting* reconciliation between God and the sinner, but was simply the symbol of reconciliation *already effected*. This is untenable, for (a) nothing can be more plain than the repeated declarations of Scripture, that it was by the shedding and the sprinkling of blood that atonement or reconciliation was *made* on behalf of the sinner. This, indeed, is the ordinary phraseology in reference to this subject, and occurs so frequently that it is needless to cite instances.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, not an instance can be adduced from Scripture, nor, we may add, from the records of any nation using sacrifice, in which the slightest hint is given as to sacrifice being employed to shadow forth a reconciliation already made. Then (b) it is not easy to see, on this assumption, what was the use of sacrifice, or why such vast importance should have been attached to it by antiquity, both sacred and profane. A man by prayer and confession, or by some other means with which this sacrifice has had nothing to do, has found peace with God, and as a symbol of this he brings a lamb, or a bullock, or he-goat, and slays it at the

<sup>1</sup> Bahr, *Symb. Mos. Cult.* ii. 292.

<sup>2</sup> It occurs eight times in Lev. xvi. alone.

altar, and offers it to God. Admitting the propriety of this, which is questionable, of what *use* is such a ceremony? At the utmost it simply proclaims a fact in the personal history of the offerer of no special interest except to himself. Can it be believed that to utter such a proclamation was the sole or the main object of an institution so sacredly revered, so solemnly observed by all nations, and one instituted with so much authority, and invested with such religious sanctions by God Himself among His chosen people of old?

c. A somewhat different view of sacrifice as a symbolical act has been advocated with much ability, though without much clearness of discrimination or conclusiveness of reasoning, by Mr. Maurice in his *Lectures on Sacrifice*. So far as I can ascertain precisely his view, it seems to be this: Man as a sinner has to return to God in penitence and self-consecration, and in commemoration of this and as symbolically representing it he presented of his property to God in sacrifice, thereby intimating his surrender of himself to God, whilst God by accepting his sacrifice intimated to him His gracious acceptance of him. Of this theory it may suffice here to say that while it rests on a great truth, it utterly fails as an attempt to account for sacrifices, either by entirely losing sight of that truth or by egregiously misapprehending it. The truth to which I refer is that sacrifice is based on the idea of the sinner yielding himself up to God. This is the spiritual basis of the whole rite, apart from which it is a mere outward or dead rite. But in what relation does this stand to animal sacrifice? Or how can the slaying of an animal be in any rational way a symbol of this? Only through the medium of the doctrine of substitution, and that only by keeping fast hold of the truth that what man yields himself up to in this transaction is, not to God's favour, for that he has forfeited, not to God's rule, for there is a previous question to be settled arising out of his former transgression of that rule; but to God's righteous judgment, which denounces death against sin. All this, however, Mr. Maurice either misunderstands or ignores. According to him, man comes simply as a penitent and yields himself up to God as if there were no outstanding controversy between God and him arising from his previous sin. His theory is therefore

manifestly futile; it fails to show the *meaning* of the rite of sacrifice, and renders it virtually useless. It is absurd to represent the giving up of a brute-beast as a symbol of its owner giving himself up to God, and to represent a solemn rite appointed by God to be observed for no other end than simply to symbolize a transaction which it in no degree promoted, but which must be assumed to be already completed before the symbol could be appropriately offered. Of this theory, then, which its author has set forth with so much eloquence, we can say nothing else than that it rests on a blunder, or is the development of a sophism.

d. The same may, in substance, be said of the theory of Tholuck, that "sacrifice was a gift whereby man endeavoured to render his imperfect consecration of himself to God complete." Besides involving the very questionable idea of sacrifice being a *gift*,—an idea which seems to have found place only among the grosser notions of superstition,—this theory fails by losing sight of the actual facts of the case—the thing requiring to be done, and the reasons occasioning that requirement. Like the theories of Bähr and Maurice, it is essentially defective, because, like them, "it throws into the background the ideas which in these sacrifices are most prominent—those of a broken law, of consequent guilt, of liability to punishment, and of forgiveness through vicarious suffering."<sup>1</sup>

(4.) Profiting by the errors of these eminent inquirers, as well as by their solid and valuable conclusions, let us now attempt, from the facts we have already contemplated, to construct a just theory of the meaning and intent of sacrifice as originally instituted among men, and especially as exhibited in the divinely-constructed model of the Mosaic ceremonial—the most perfect that the world has ever seen.

a. In all scientific investigation it is of the utmost importance that we restrict ourselves rigidly to deal with *facts*. If, instead of this, we start with hypotheses or fictions, or if we take only a partial or one-sided view of the relations of the case, we can hardly miss landing ourselves in conclusions either positively erroneous or confused and misty. Now, in the case before us the facts with which we have to do are

<sup>1</sup> Liddon, *Bampton Lecture* for 1856, p. 109.

those connected with man's relation as a sinner to God. We are not now upon the ground of simple natural relationship between the creature and the Creator; we are on the ground of moral and rectoral relationship between God as a righteous Governor and man as a guilty transgressor. We must start, then, from a distinct and full recognition of the facts bearing upon this; for sacrifice is a scheme by which it is proposed to meet and adjust the difficulties arising out of these facts, so as to reconcile man the creature to God the Creator and Judge.

*b.* The facts, then, are that man as God's creature has revolted from Him, has broken His law, has incurred His displeasure, and is in danger of death as the penalty of his sins. The question is, How does sacrifice meet this peculiar case so as to cast any light on man's hopes of pardon and acceptance with God? Now, to tend towards an answer to this question we must bear in mind that the first and essential thing in religion is man yielding himself up to God in an entire and unqualified consecration. This is the proper condition of a creature in relation to his Creator, and in this state all holy creatures are. This was the religion of Paradise, and is the religion of heaven.

*c.* If, then, a sinner would be religious he must consecrate himself unto God, must renounce all enmity, and yield himself up to be dealt with by Him as He shall see meet. But in the case of a sinner this is virtually a yielding himself up to death; for as God has denounced death against sin, the only course He can see meet to follow will be to inflict on the sinner the penalty he has incurred. Here, then, at the very outset there is an apparently insuperable barrier in the way of a sinner's becoming religious. He cannot yield himself up to God in a holy consecration, for the only thing he can expect from God is death as the punishment of sin. How is this difficulty to be removed?

*d.* The only answer to this is that God shall accept something in lieu of the sinner's death—something that shall answer the same ends (at least) as would be answered by his death. If this can be procured, and if God will accept of it, the barrier may be removed, and the sinner, freed from guilt, may yield himself up in a holy consecration to God.



*e.* Now, it is evident that no gift man can present to God will ever come up to this requirement, and therefore the idea of offering animals as a gift could only be entertained by man after superstition and ignorance had beclouded his soul and disturbed all his moral relations. But the question is one belonging to the department of law, and law ever views men as elements of an organic whole, so that for its purposes the failures of one may be compensated for by the supererogations of another; and this may be carried out so far that if one man of sufficiently blameless character and sufficient moral power can be found, he may satisfy the law for many, for all. If the thing required to be done within the organic whole, it does not materially concern law how the doing of it is apportioned over the elementary parts of that whole; and hence if all fail but one, and if that one can make up for all the rest, the ends of law are answered, and the penalty incurred by the transgressors may be remitted.

*f.* In this way the doctrine of substitution emerges as a natural principle, and takes its place in the *rationale* of a scheme of religion for the sinner. It is only an application of this principle when we suppose the case of a pure being voluntarily submitting to death in order to secure the pardon of another or others who may have legally incurred that penalty. This is a notion which commends itself even to the actual reason of man, as we may gather from such a story as that in the Greek mythology of Prometheus, for whose pardon Cheiron offered himself to die, many instances of voluntary substitution recorded in ancient history, and such a sentiment as that put by Sophocles into the mouth of Œdipus when he says, "I think that one soul, if it be benevolent, by paying the penalty may suffice for myriads."<sup>1</sup>

*g.* Now, to advance another step, let us suppose that God, in announcing to our first parents the way He had provided for the rescue of man from the penalty of sin, had made known to them that through the sufferings and death of one perfectly pure and infinitely great the divine law should be satisfied, and so all barriers removed out of the way of man's consecration of himself unto God, such a revelation would shock no principle of natural justice in the mind, but would rather fall

<sup>1</sup> *Œd.* Col. 498.

in with what man's reason would tell him was the only possible expedient in such a case. Man would thus be put in possession of a basis for his religious life; and so long as he kept this in view, religion would be for him a possible and attainable thing.

*h.* But might he not forget this? Very possibly he might; and hence, in an age when there were no books, and when men were not supplied with any organized means of instruction, it was desirable to employ some means of a scenic kind for the purpose of representing to the eye the great truths and facts embodied in this revelation. Hence the institute of animal sacrifice, which is valuable as a visible representation and memorial of the great fundamental principles of religion as pertaining to a sinful creature. In this institution the ground-idea of all religion is preserved, viz. that the creature has to yield himself to God; but along with this there is continual memorial made of sin, and a sermon preached as to how alone sin can be forgiven and the sinner accepted by God. More particularly, sacrifice sets forth the following truths:—

(*a*) That sin is a terrible evil; it is not only a hateful thing, but it must be legally dealt with, and the perpetrator of it punished. In all cases the broken law of God demanding reparation lies at the foundation of sacrificial worship.

(*b*) By sacrifice men were reminded that death is the due penalty of sin,—not the death of the body merely, but the death of the soul—eternal death. Such is the penalty of sin which the law recognised by sacrifice denounces; and the endurance of death by the victim symbolized the actual infliction of this on the transgressor.

(*c*) By sacrifice the sinner was taught that only through a vicarious satisfaction to the law by means of some victim which God would accept could sin be forgiven him. The law demanded life instead of life, soul instead of soul; and it was therefore only as a victim was substituted for him and accepted by God that sin could be remitted to him.

(*d*) By the transference of guilt from the sinner to the victim, through the laying of his hands on its head and confessing his sins over it, by the killing of that victim as a satisfaction to the law, by the offering of the blood before

God, and by the subsequent burning of the whole or part of the flesh, or by the sending away of the living duplicate of the slain animal, as in the case of the scape-goat,—there was exhibited a vivid scenic representation of God's dealing with the sinner in the matter of the forgiveness of his sin. That sin is transferred in its guilt to another; the death it has merited is endured by that other; by this the law is satisfied, and then reconciliation is effected between God and the sinner, symbolized by the presentation of the blood before Him, and His acceptance of it as the symbol and representation of the purified sinner. The burning of the body or its being sent away may denote the destruction of the body of sin, or the perpetual removal of it from God's sight.

5. *The Apprehension by the Jewish People of the meaning of Sacrifice.*

These ideas were probably originally well understood by all men; but where they were left to the keeping of tradition they gradually became less and less distinct, or were mixed up with notions which destroyed their force and threw them into obscurity. Among the patriarchs, we may presume, they were retained with greater purity; but it is to the Mosaic institute that we are to look for the fullest and most striking presentation of them. Not only was that the most perfect system of religious ceremonial that has ever existed, but there was a peculiarity in the whole constitution of society instituted by Moses which gave a real and immediate effect to sacrifice, whereby the truths it symbolized were forcibly and continually brought home to the minds of the people. I allude to the fact that the civil constitution of the Jews was a theocracy, in which the God of the whole earth stood to the people of Israel in the relation of their King and Judge. This was a state of things altogether peculiar, and it gives an aspect of peculiarity to even the commonest relations of Jewish society and life. We need not wonder, then, to find that in virtue of it sacrifice acquired a character and force which it had nowhere else.

In order to understand this we must bear in mind that the theocracy was itself a symbol — a representation by actual

sensible things of the invisible things of God, even His moral government of the universe. As De Wette has justly remarked, it is only on this supposition that we can reconcile the representations given in the O. T. of the universal sovereignty of God with those given in the same books of His special relation to Israel; if the latter was not the symbolical miniature of the former, it contradicts it and makes the O. T. give a false view of God as well as a true one.

But if the Israelitish State was the symbol of God's moral government of the universe, then it follows that a whole system of correspondences would arise between God's universal administration and His administration as theocratic King of Israel. Theocratic law would be the symbol of moral law; a theocratic offence would be a symbol of a moral offence; a theocratic penalty the symbol of a moral penalty; and a theocratic expiation the symbol of a moral expiation. It is at this point we see the new light which the Mosaic institute cast on the meaning of sacrifice, and the new use to which it put that rite.

Let me remind you of a point formerly dwelt upon, viz. that sin was actually as a theocratic offence expiated by sacrifice. The man who had contracted theocratic guilt or defilement actually was purged of these, and so cleared of the penalty incurred thereby by the offering of the appointed sacrifice. There still remained the moral guilt of sin; and this the sacrifice could not directly touch. But what it could not do directly it could do by symbol. As the transgression under its theocratic aspect had incurred a theocratic penalty, so had it under its moral aspect incurred a moral penalty; and as sacrifice had, as a theocratic rite, purged the man from his theocratic guilt and saved him from the relative penalty, so *that* under the moral administration of God to which sacrifice answered would purge him from moral guilt and exempt him from moral penalties. A great lesson was thus brought home to the Israelite every day concerning the need of moral reconciliation and purity, and the means by which alone it could be effected,—a lesson which was unhappily lost upon the multitude, but which the pious and thoughtful could not fail to read and profit by.

But here a question will naturally occur. If the O. T.

saints were thus clearly taught that there was *something* in the moral administration of God which answered in nature and effect to sacrifice as an institute of the theocracy, have we any reason to believe that they knew what that something really was? In other words, did those who rightly interpreted the symbolical meaning of sacrifice, so as to perceive the lesson it read to them as to the way of escape from the guilt and penalty of sin, understand also its typical signification as foreshadowing that great sacrifice by which the sins of the world were to be taken away, and man as a sinner placed in a state of acceptance with God? If the theory of sacrifice above given be correct, the work of Christ on our behalf was the great archetypal fact to which sacrifice was adapted as a continual representation and memorial of it, and which consequently formed the substance of which sacrifice was the shadow, the antitype of which sacrifice was the type. That it was so we know from the statements of the N. T., in which the typical reference of the ancient institute to the person and work of the Messiah is strongly asserted, and the fulfilment of which in Jesus of Nazareth is clearly demonstrated. But was this reference understood by those who lived before Christ? Did they see in the sacrifices they offered continually for sin a memorial and foreshadowing of the propitiatory work of Christ as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"?

In answer to this, it must be at once admitted that the knowledge they would thus obtain of the nature of Christ's work could neither have been very precise nor very full. It is impossible either by words or signs to give men full or distinct views of events before they happen, and specially must this hold true in relation to events of a supernatural kind, and events entirely *sui generis*, as was the work of Jesus Christ. Still, as sacrifice taught men clearly the *principle* of moral administration involved in the work of Christ, there seems no reason why it might not also suggest to their minds the fact of which that rite was a *designed* and *adapted* representation. That it actually did so the following considerations render, I think, probable:—

(1.) If a pious Jew learned from sacrifice that there was something in the moral administration which in nature and

efficacy resembled it as an institute of the theocracy, we cannot believe that he would rest satisfied with knowing this and no more. He would naturally be led to inquire what that something was which was thus emphatically and constantly brought before his mind; and the more religious his state of mind, the more truly he learned the great moral lessons of the system under which God had placed him, the more intense and overwhelming would be his desire to penetrate the mystery and arrive at a solution of the problem. Nor can we conceive that such proper and necessary curiosity would be left to exercise itself in vain? Would God by means of an institute expressly adapted to excite such inquiries create this anxiety in the breast of His true subjects without affording them any means of satisfying it? Were it so, we must conclude that the godly Israelite, who in answer to his prayer that God would show him "the marvels" that are in His law was led into the spiritual meaning of sacrifice, was only punished for this by having an appetite created which there was no means of gratifying—a curiosity stimulated which there was no way of allaying. In this case the careless carnal Jew was really a wiser and happier man than the pious and devout saint who sought in the symbol the spiritual truth it contained; for by that very truth he was made restless, uneasy, and miserable. It seems almost impious to suppose such a thing.

(2.) If we receive the teaching of the N. T., we must regard the ancient sacrifices as really types of Christ—that is, sensible signs designed and adapted by God to prefigure the good things to come. But if they were so designed and adapted, they must have been so understood. If not, to whom *were* they types or prefigurations? Not to us who live since Christ came, for we need no figure to help us to realize what we know as a fact, and it is impossible we can have a *prefigure* of what is already past. It is only to those who lived before Christ that such modes of representation could be of any use; and if those who lived before Christ could make no use of them in the way they were designed and adapted to be useful, what were they but splendid superfluities, an empty and unsubstantial fragment, alike unworthy of a divine origin and of the devotion of intelligent men?

(3.) The number of priests actually engaged in the temple service was small compared with the total number of the sacerdotal tribe. The question arises, How were the residue employed? To this the answer is, that their main business was to teach the people the order and signification of the Mosaic institute. They were in this respect the official teachers of the Jews; and hence it is said, "The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts" (Mal. ii. 7); and in the historical books repeated mention is made of this as the duty of the priests. Now, it is doubtless true that in later times this duty was discharged in a manner which rather blinded than enlightened the people as to the spiritual significance of their ritual. But this, be it borne in mind, is always treated in the Bible as a sin on the part of the priests, not as an unavoidable result of want of means to do better; and in the earlier and better days of the Jewish State we cannot but believe that the priestly expositions of the law were such as were calculated to afford the people the full advantage which their ritual was designed and adapted to yield. But if so, then, as it was designed and adapted to remind them prophetically of the great Propitiation, this use of it must have been explained to the people by the priests.

(4.) Even apart from this, and at times when the priests were unfaithful to their duty, God took care for the spiritual instruction of the people by sending to them a continual succession of prophets,—men "who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and who therefore told the people exactly what God willed they should know. Now, we are certain that of the messages of the prophets the doctrine concerning the suffering and propitiatory Messiah formed a main part. "To Him," says Peter, "give all the prophets witness, that, through His name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). Pious people among the Jews then, we may be sure, *knew* this,—knew it as a precious and comforting truth,—and would often seek to realize it in its force and power. But if their minds were familiar with this truth, can we conceive that they would constantly take part in a ceremony designed to symbolize or foreshadow this very truth without even perceiving that

such was its meaning? We cannot imagine this without imputing to them a degree of stolidity such as all that we know of them declares to have been no characteristic of them.

(5.) In fine, we know that the O. T. saints did obtain the pardon of their sins, and knew by experience the blessedness of the man to whom iniquity was forgiven, and whose sin was covered or cancelled by atonement. We know that they were justified, and that from sins for which the Mosaic institute provided no expiation; as, *e.g.*, in the case of David, for whose sin no sacrifice or offering could be presented or accepted by God. Now, on what ground was this forgiveness extended to them? If not on the ground of sacrificial atonement according to the law, on the ground of what atonement was their sin covered and their transgressions freely blotted out? The only answer that can be given to this in accordance with the exclusiveness of the one salvation provided by God in Christ is, that they saw in His work a sufficient sacrifice provided for their sins, and so rested by faith on Him and were pardoned through Him. But if so, can we suppose they remained ignorant of the designed and adapted representation of this placed before them in the sacrifices which they continually offered?

These considerations enable us to complete the view we are led to take of ancient sacrifice, especially as exhibited among the Jews. It was a symbolical rite adumbrating by sensible objects and acts, great spiritual truths concerning the ground and medium of the sinner's acceptance with God, and at the same time it was typically prophetic of the great work by which Christ was to fulfil His sacerdotal functions by making an end of sin by the sacrifice of Himself. We therefore conclude that sacrifice may be most properly described as a symbolico-typical rite having respect to the propitiatory work of the Redeemer.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

(iii.) *The Sacrifice of Christ.*1. *Its Relation to Ancient Sacrifices.*

We have now to look at the subject of sacrifice in relation to the work of Jesus Christ, and to the sacrifice which He is said to have offered for us.

And here it must be obvious, at the very outset, that if the idea presented of the ancient sacrifices be correct, the death of Christ cannot be looked upon as a sacrifice in the *same* sense as the ancient offerings. For if these were originally symbolical and typical rites, and under the Levitical dispensation were legally and formally so represented, and if the work of Christ was the reality which they adumbrated, it is certain that *it* could not have been a sacrifice in the same sense as they; the reality could not be the same as that the essence of which lay in its being, not the reality, but only the symbol or type of the reality. When, therefore, the death of Christ is spoken of as a sacrifice, we are constrained to put upon the expression a somewhat different meaning from that used regarding the offering of a lamb or a goat.

In what sense, then, did the apostles refer to Christ's death as a sacrifice?

(1.) They declared that the death of Christ accomplished in reality that which the ancient sacrifices only represented symbolically, viz. the taking away of sin by a substitutionary propitiation. In proof of this I ask your attention to the following series of statements:—

a. The death of Christ is represented as an event having an important purpose. It was not an occurrence that came to Him in the course of nature or by apparent accident; nor was it one which was merely turned to some good account, after it occurred, by wise and good men; nor was it merely overruled by the Providence of God for good. It was an

event by itself, voluntarily submitted to by Christ and preappointed by God for an end, and that an end of vast importance. For proof of this examine the following passages: Isa. liii. 10; Mark x. 45; John x. 18; Acts ii. 23, iv. 28; 1 Pet. i. 20. Some of these passages attest more than I at present adduce them to prove, but this they do most unequivocally prove; for if words have any meaning, they declare that the death of Christ was both on His own part and in the decree and purpose of God a designed event for the accomplishment of a contemplated end. If He gave Himself up to death; if, having a right to resign His life or retain it as He chose, He yet laid it down; if this death, in all its circumstances of sorrow and pain, was in accordance with the good pleasure of Jehovah; and if it came to pass in fulfilment of His eternal decree and appointment,—we must regard it as having been a means to an end, and that an end of vast importance. For in such a case the only alternative supposition is that Jehovah foreordains events for no purpose or an unworthy one, and that Jesus Christ voluntarily laid down His life without knowing why He did so, or without having any worthy end to answer by such an act—a supposition which no sane mind could entertain, and which no pious mind could endure.

b. The death of Christ being a means to an end, the Scriptures teach that that end had a reference to man's benefit. On this point the testimony is so explicit that it does not admit of being called in question (see John x. 15; Luke xxii. 20; Eph. v. 25; Rom. viii. 32; 2 Cor. v. 14; Rom. v. 6). Nor is it in the N. T. alone that statements to this effect are found. What can be more explicit than the language of Isaiah (liii. 4, 5), unless it be that of Daniel (ix. 26) in his memorable announcement concerning the Messiah? Whatever difficulty there may be in determining the chronological point involved in this statement, there can be none as to the meaning of the event which the prophet announces—that the death of the Messiah was not for Himself or on His own account, and therefore necessarily for the benefit or on account of others—of those with whom He was to stand related.

c. The death of Christ was designed to benefit men by

taking away sin. This might be inferred as a corollary from the preceding proposition, because if the death of Christ was in a religious point of view for man's behoof at all, it must have had some effect in taking away the sin which is the great evil from which he needs to be delivered, and that from which if he is not delivered, all other benefits will go for nothing as respects his eternal interests. But, without dwelling on this, let us come at once to the express statements of Scripture in such passages as these: John i. 29; Heb. ix. 26; 1 John i. 7, iii. 5. These statements are very clear, and they shut us up to the conclusion that Christ's blood was shed and His death endured that thereby we might be freed from sin, that this sin might be taken away, and that we, who had become burdened and polluted by it, might be cleansed. And hence, when He would have His people commemorate His love for them, that which He especially places before them as the benefit they are to contemplate is His "blood, shed for the remission of sins."

*d.* Christ took away sin by having it imputed to Him, and bearing the punishment due to it. This is manifest from many statements of Scripture: Isa. liii. 5, 8; Rom. iv. 25; 1 Pet. iii. 18, etc. The full import of these statements we do not at present stop to explore; they are adduced here simply to show that Christ took away sin not merely by setting a good example of obedience to the law of God which men might follow, not merely by teaching fully and perfectly the will of God and urging men to obey it, not merely by making known to men God's willingness to be at peace with them and to pardon them; but specifically and primarily by taking their sin upon Him and suffering in consequence of that sin. It must be evident to any reflective mind that on the supposition of any other sense short of this the statements just quoted are extravagant, if not absurd.

*e.* In accordance with this, the special benefits represented as accruing to men through Christ are redemption from sin, including both the remission of its guilt and the removal of its tyranny, through His blood, and reconciliation to God by His death (Acts xx. 28; Rom. v. 9, 10, 11; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 19-22; 1 Pet. iii. 18, i. 18; Rev. i. 5, 6). In all these passages the redemption of sinners, their acceptance

with God, and their enjoyment of privilege with Him, are distinctly traced to the meritorious efficacy of the Saviour's death. It was His blood that purchased them, His blood that redeemed them, His blood that formed the medium of their approach to God, and the ground of their reconciliation with God. And, in perfect accordance with this, we find that that by which sinners are brought into personal enjoyment of these blessings is faith in His blood—not the mere acceptance of His doctrines, not the mere following of His example, however steadily, honestly, or successfully; but faith in His blood, reliance on His death, dependence on the efficacy of that blood of the cross which was shed for the remission of sins.

Now, when these things are duly considered, it cannot fail to be admitted that in the work which Christ accomplished by His death we have an actual performance of all that the ancient sacrifices were designed to represent and symbolize. On this ground, therefore, there was sufficient reason for our Lord's work being represented as a sacrifice for sin. It was so because by the shedding of His blood in the room of sinners reconciliation was effected between God and man. It was at once an *expiation* and a *propitiation*. It was the former as it related to man, for whose forgiveness it afforded a sufficient reason. It was the latter as it related to God, to whom, as the Just and Perfect Governor of all, it furnished an adequate ground on which He could honourably forgive sin. In this work, consequently, all that sacrifice as a symbolical act adumbrated was really and fully accomplished.

(2.) In the death of Christ there was an actual fulfilment of all that was predicted by the ancient Jewish sacrifices. On this part of the subject we need not dwell after the investigation already made into the meaning of the ancient sacrifices. Suffice it to say that they were the shadow of good things to come, that they foretold that God would provide for His people a vicarious redemption, that One would appear to take away sin by assuming it upon Him and suffering on account of it, and that thereby reconciliation would be made for iniquity, and actual redemption secured for the guilty.

The conclusion at which we have arrived as to the sense intended to be conveyed by the sacred writers when they represent the death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin may be

confirmed by comparing this with other modes of representation used in Scripture in reference to the same subject.

a. Thus our Lord is said to have given Himself as a *ransom* or *ransom-price* for us. This statement occurs frequently in the N. T. The word commonly used is *λυτρον*, which signifies properly the price of redemption, *i.e.* the price paid for the redemption of slaves from bondage, captives from captivity, and those doomed to death from the death to which they are doomed. In all these acceptations it is used in the LXX. as answering to the Hebrew *פְּדוּת*, "a ransom price;" *כֶּפֶר*, "that by which a man's life is ransomed," etc. In one case in the N. T. the word *ἀντίλυτρον* is used (1 Tim. ii. 6) with the same meaning. The root from which *λυτρον* comes is the verb *λυω*, which means primarily *to loosen* or *release*, and is constantly used by the classical authors to denote the action of one who, by the payment of money or by any equivalent means, delivers a captive from bonds or a debtor from his obligations. From this the word *λυτρον* came to denote a ransom price, or that by which the *λυειν* or releasing was effected. Cognate with this is the verb *λυτρονναι* and the verb *ἀπολυτρονναι*, "to pay the ransom price," and so "*to redeem* or *buy back*." When, therefore, Jesus Christ is said to give Himself "a ransom for many," or "for all," to give Himself, or to *be* given for us, that He might redeem us, and such like, and when in correspondence with this believers are said to be redeemed by His blood, and to have redemption through Him, the meaning must be that in some sense His life was given for their lives. Their life was forfeited by sin; and as they are ransomed by Him, He must have paid the forfeit for them, and so redeemed them; and as they have been redeemed by His blood, that blood must have been the price of their ransom; in other words, His death is the means of their being delivered from that state of forfeiture into which sin had brought them. This is substantially the same idea as we have seen involved in His being a sacrifice for us.

b. In other passages believers are represented as being "bought with a price" (1 Cor. vi. 20, vii. 23). The same idea substantially is conveyed here as in the former case; the only difference being that in the one the buying is for the purpose of redeeming from captivity or delivering from a burden; in the

other, it is for the sake of obtaining possession of that which is bought. As the buying is effected by the laying down of a sum of money which is considered the equivalent of the object for which it is given, so the blood of Christ shed for us is the equivalent rendered for the possession of us, that we might become His and, through Him, God's property. Such expressions, indeed, are not to be taken too literally and precisely, as if they were intended to convey the idea that the Christian redemption is of the nature of a commercial transaction, in which the sufferings of Christ were rendered as an exact *quid pro quo* to secure our exemption from merited suffering, or to secure us for God. The language is figurative, and must not be too closely pressed. But it cannot mean less than we have seen is set forth by our Lord's being sacrificed for us, that is, in virtue of the substitution of Christ for us and His suffering on our behalf, release, pardon, acceptance, restoration are secured to us.

c. Another class of terms used in reference to the work of Christ on our behalf consists of those in which He is spoken of as a propitiation for sins (*ἱλασμος περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν*, 1 John ii. 2, iv. 10), and as a propitiatory offering by His blood (*ἱλαστήριον ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι*, Rom. iii. 25). To propitiate is properly to render some being favourable to another by means of something which either averts his wrath from that other, or inclines him to show him kindness. Thus the publican prayed that God would be propitiated towards him, *i.e.* would on some known or assumed ground show him favour. The word is also used in the sense of *expiate*, as in Heb. ii. 17, where Christ as High Priest is said to "expiate [A. V., 'make reconciliation for'] for the sins of the people,"—a usage borrowed from the close connection in the Hebrew mind between expiation (*כַּפֵּר*) and *propitiation*, whence the caphoreth or lid of the ark of the covenant came to be denominated by the Jews who translated the O. T. into the Greek, *ἱλαστήριον*. When, therefore, Christ is called a propitiation or propitiatory offering by His blood, the meaning must be that He by His death did that by means of which man's sins have been expiated, and a way opened by which God's favour can come to man. Here again we have substantially the same thing presented to us as when our Lord is represented as sacrificed for us.

d. It is in perfect accordance with these representations that the apostle teaches that believers are "partakers" of Christ's death, as he has in Rom. vi. and elsewhere. They, according to his representation, died in Christ's death. Even on the most superficial view such a statement can mean nothing less than that it is through the death of Christ that they enjoy salvation—that it is by His death that they come to share in the blessings of the heavenly state into which He has entered. But the statement cannot be restricted to this significance. It means more than this; it means that they died in Christ's death in that He died as their representative and substitute. Believers were "in" Him when He submitted to death, as the constituent is in his representative, as the client is in his patron; and the maxim, "*quod facit per alium facit per se*," applies here as to the effect of Christ's work on the believer. He did it really *per se*; believers have done it *per illum*, and so virtually *per se*. They are thus partakers of His death. Whatever benefits were secured by His death were secured to them whose substitute and representative He was.

These considerations may serve to show that the idea involved in the sacrificial language used by the apostle in reference to the work of Christ pervades all their representations of the nature and effect of that work. The figures are different; the truth taught is the same. Instead, then, of their language being, as some would insinuate, a mere accommodation to Jewish usage and prejudice, such language only conveys under one and a most fitting representation what was the doctrine uniformly taught concerning the work of Christ. Like the image wrought into the ancient shield, these representations are so interwoven with the entire texture of the Christian doctrine that we can separate them from it only by breaking the whole in pieces, and substituting for Christianity, as the apostle taught it, something entirely different.

## 2. Names of Christ bearing on His sacrificial Work.

The evidence from Scripture which we have already adduced with the view of showing that what Jesus Christ did for men was in reality what the ancient sacrifices were designed to symbolize, is such as a perfectly unsophisticated inquirer might

regard as sufficient to support the conclusion at which we have arrived; but it is nevertheless a conclusion to which many profess themselves unable to reach from the premises. This, taken in connection with the immense importance of the subject, renders it proper, before we proceed further, that we should survey with a careful eye the scriptural evidence bearing on the design and purpose of our Lord's work.

The most thoroughly satisfactory course that could be pursued with this end in view would be to commence with the earlier books of the Bible, and follow the stream of evidence through the successive declarations of those who through divine inspiration gave utterance to the truth concerning Christ. But, gratifying and beneficial as such a survey of Scripture testimony on this point would be, we are constrained to waive it, and in its stead to content ourselves with such a glance at certain leading points of evidence as our limited time will permit. For the sake of condensation and clearness we shall arrange these under distinct heads, and shall begin with the *Names and Titles of Christ* bearing on His work. Of these we may notice the following:—

(1.) SAVIOUR ( $\Sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho$ ). This term, which is applied continually to Jesus Christ, and is the term by which we have learned from this most commonly to designate Him, conveys in itself simply the idea of a deliverer; and as applied to Christ in relation to men expresses no more, in its widest acceptance, than that He is for man a deliverer from all the ills under which he suffers here, especially from sin, the head and fountain of all the rest. Taken simply by itself, therefore, it says nothing as to the mode or means of the deliverance; it merely expresses the fact that deliverance for us from sin and its effects comes somehow through Christ. But we cannot look at the word simply in and by itself; we must look at it in the connection in which it stands as applied by the New Testament writers to Jesus Christ. And here a noticeable fact emerges—that of the many instances in which the term occurs in reference to Jesus Christ, not one of them is so framed as to lead to the conclusion that it is by His doctrine, His entreaties, or His example that He delivers from sin, whereas several connect this result with His death. The only passage that might seem to offer an exception to the



former part of this statement is 2 Pet. ii. 20, where the apostle speaks of men escaping from "the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." If we take the word "knowledge" to signify the *doctrine* taught by Christ, the statement of the apostle would certainly go to show that it was by means of His teaching that Christ delivers men from the pollutions of the world. Now, there is a sense in which this is true, even on the hypothesis that it is by His sacrificial work that Christ really effects this; for as that work forms part of His doctrine, and as it is by the believing reception of the fact thus made known that men are saved, it may truly be said that it is by the doctrine of Christ that men are delivered from the pollutions of the world, though in reality that which delivers them is not the doctrine, but the great event which it announces. But on this we need not enlarge, because it is by no means clear that the passage is to be so taken. On the contrary, it seems much more probable that by the "knowledge" of Christ here we are to understand the truth made known concerning Him, or, taking it subjectively, our own personal acquaintance with Him. In this case the passage says nothing as to *how* it is that Christ delivers men from the pollutions of the world; it simply refers to the instruments employed to bring individuals into possession of the blessings Christ secures to men as their Saviour.

Of the passages which connect the work of Christ as a Saviour with His sacerdotal office, and especially His sacrificial death, we may take the following: Eph. v. 2, 3, 25, 26. Here it is evident that Christ's giving Himself for His Church is set forth as that in virtue of which He is its Saviour and its Sanctifier. In Heb. vii. 25, Christ's power as a Saviour is still more explicitly set forth in connection with His high-priestly character and office; and the perpetual and intransferable character of Christ's priesthood is set forth as the ground of assurance of His ability to save "to the uttermost," etc. Salvation, then, is the work of Christ as a Priest, and it is in virtue of His priesthood and His sacrifice for His Church that He is its Saviour. This will be still further apparent when we notice the title of—

(2.) CAPTAIN or AUTHOR OF SALVATION (*αρχηγος της*

σωτηρίας), applied to Christ in Heb. ii. 10. It matters little comparatively how we render the word ἀρχηγος here. It properly means one who begins anything, who is at the head of it and sets it agoing. Hence it may denote “author,” “chief,” “leader,” or “foregoer.” It is probably in the last sense it is here used, though some would prefer to render it “author” or “beginner.” The important point for us at present is, that as ἀρχηγος τ. σ. Christ was δια παθημάτων τελειωθείς, “perfected by means of sufferings,” and that He was to be this in order “to bring many sons unto glory.” Interpreters differ as to the meaning of τελείωσαι here, some taking it as equivalent to “to consummate,” others “to consecrate,” and others “to make one such as he ought to be,” and others “to make perfectly blessed.” The choice lies between consummating and conservating, under one or other of which the rest easily fall. Drs. Pye Smith and MacKnight adopt the former meaning, the latter of whom says, “The word τελειωσαι properly signifies to make a thing complete, by bestowing upon it the highest degree of that perfection which is suitable to its nature; applied to the Captain of our salvation, it signifies His being made an effectual Captain of salvation, that is, an effectual Saviour.” This seems to give the true meaning of the passage. Now, how was it that Christ was thus made complete as a Saviour, so that He could “bring many sons unto glory”? It was by means of “sufferings;” and that the writer has here in view especially, though not exclusively, those sufferings which our Lord consummated on the cross, may be confidently inferred from the fact that he has in the preceding verse referred to the πάθημα του θανάτου as that through which Christ became “crowned with glory,” and by which He “tasted death for every man.” Here, then, we have a clear case in which the efficacy of Christ’s work as a Saviour is connected with His sufferings and His death. And the same may be said of other passages in which the term ἀρχηγος is applied to Christ, as in Acts iii. 15, in which He is called “the Prince of Life,” with allusion to His resurrection, though put to death by the Jews; Acts v. 31, where He is called a “Prince and a Saviour;” and Heb. xii. 2, where He is called the “Author of faith,” on the ground that for the joy set before

Him He “endured the cross, despising the shame,” etc. The conclusion to which we are thus brought is that Jesus Christ is a Saviour, not in virtue of His doctrine or example, so much as by means of His sufferings unto death, and in virtue of His sacerdotal office and functions. It follows that to call Him our Saviour whilst His propitiatory work is not recognized as the ground and medium of our salvation, is to acknowledge in words what in reality is denied.

(3.) “HE THAT SANCTIFIETH” (ὁ αἱγιαζων) is a phrase applied to Christ in the verse following that which we have been considering. In what sense is the verb used here? Does it refer to moral purification or to legal absolution, or to neither exclusively, but rather to the whole act by which Christ makes men fit to appear before God? Owen and Calvin take the first of these meanings; but Owen says, “It includes also, *κατ’ ἀκολουθῆσιν*, ‘by just consequence,’ the sense of consecration or dedication, for they who are sanctified are separated unto God.” The mass of modern interpreters prefer the second. Dr. Pye Smith explains ὁ αἱγιαζων by “he who makes men fit to be presented to God;” and this is perhaps the best explanation that can be given. It includes the whole operation of Christ for our behoof: for fitness to be presented to God implies at once the cancelling of legal guilt and the removal of moral pollution. In this phrase, then, as used of Christ, we have again a recognition of His propitiatory agency on our behalf.

(4.) MEDIATOR (*Μεσιτης*). This term, as applied to our Lord, occurs chiefly in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and there always with reference to the *διαθήκη*, or covenant of grace. Thus in Heb. viii. 6, Christ is called *κρείττονος διαθήκης μεσίτης*; in ix. 15, He is called *διαθήκης καινῆς μεσίτης*; and in Heb. xii. 24 the same phrase is used, with the substitution of *νεας* for *καινῆς*. The only other passage in which this term is applied to Christ is 1 Tim. ii. 5, where He is called the *εἰς μεσίτης Θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπου*. In what sense is this term, as applied to our Lord, to be understood? Primarily, the word signifies simply one who is between two, and it implies usually that he is there for the purpose of effecting union, harmony, or agreement between them. Hence it is used of one who mediates between two contending or

hostile parties, with a view to reconciliation ; and also of one who acts as an internuncio or interpreter between two parties, so as to convey the mind of one to the other. In this latter sense some have contended that it applies to our Lord, and that all that is implied in His being called *μεσιτης*, or Mediator, between God and man is that He is the medium of divine communication to man, whereby the latter is brought into acquaintance with God's will, and a state of union with Him. Now that this is *involved* in His mediatorship, and forms part of His mediatorial work, we would be far from denying ; but that the term as applied to Christ means nothing more than this, the passages in which it occurs forbid us to admit. In Heb. viii. 6 it is applied to Christ as showing that He had obtained "a more excellent ministry," and so is a greater Priest than the priests under the law, where, unless His office as Mediator has to do with purification and reconciliation, the apostle institutes a comparison which does not hold. Then, again, in Heb. ix. 15, the expression is introduced after a comparison between the propitiatory efficacy of the Old Testament sacrifices and the far higher efficacy of the blood of Christ as adequate to "purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God ;" and then the writer goes on to say : "For this cause He is the Mediator of the new covenant, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." It is evident that the mediatorship here intended is one which is to take effect through priestly acts—through sacrifice and propitiation ; a conclusion which is further confirmed by the remarkable passage that follows, in which the writer insists on the death of the covenant-victim for the validity of the covenant, and concludes that the covenant, of which Christ was at once the Mediator and the Victim, stands sure, because Christ "hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," and "was once offered to bear the sins of many." In Heb. xii. 24, the mediatorship of Christ with His sacrifice is no less plainly, perhaps still more directly, enunciated, in which by the "blood of sprinkling" the writer evidently alludes to the sacrificial blood sprinkled by Moses on the Israelites for

the ratification of the Levitical covenant, and he applies this to the blood of Christ shed for our sins by which the new covenant was ratified, and which is virtually sprinkled on us, inasmuch as we are thereby brought under the blessings of that covenant. In 1 Tim. ii. 5 the same connection is most explicitly brought out, for here we are referred to Christ's work in giving Himself "a ransom for all," as that in virtue of which He is a Mediator for us with God. The conclusion forced on us by all these passages is that it is only as we recognize the *propitiatory* mediation of Christ on our behalf that we recognize Him as a Mediator in the sense in which that term is applied to Him in Scripture.

(5.) SHEPHERD (ποιμήν). This is a title applied to the Messiah in the O. T. (Isa. xl. 11 ; Ezek. xxxiv. 23 ; Zech. xiii. 7), and is appropriated by our Lord to Himself, and ascribed to Him by His apostles (John x. 1 ; Heb. xiii. 20 ; 1 Pet. ii. 25, v. 4). In itself, it implies no more than a gracious relation between Christ and His people, in virtue of which He protects, leads, and feeds them, as did Jehovah, the great Shepherd of Israel, to His chosen people of old. But the way in which this title is sometimes introduced is remarkable, as intimating an essential connection between Christ's office as a Shepherd and His propitiatory sacrifice. Thus in Zech. xiii. 7, which undoubtedly relates to the Messiah, it is predicted that the Messiah as the appointed Shepherd of Israel should be put to death, that the ancient flock should be scattered, but that Jehovah would gather again, as into a new flock, the "little ones," *i.e.* the true followers of the Lord, often represented in Scripture as little, small, and despised in the world (comp. Isa. lx. 22 ; Jer. xlix. 20, l. 45 ; Luke xii. 32). There is nothing here that points us expressly to the propitiatory work of Christ ; but it could hardly have been read by the ancient Jews with intelligence without a conviction that the Messiah, as the Shepherd of Israel, was to suffer at the hand of Jehovah, and that the gathering of the true flock was in some way to stand connected with this. The minds of His disciples, then, might be prepared for what He Himself said in the discourse recorded in John x., where He expounds His relation to His Church as its Shepherd, and where He lays such stress on His giving

His life for His sheep. It is plain that, from His repeated reference to this, our Lord counted His propitiatory death as the proof and concomitant of His being the Good Shepherd, the true Shepherd appointed by the Father to care for the sheep. We are therefore not surprised to find Him called the "great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Heb. xiii. 20). Some connect this latter clause with the verb *ἀναγαγων*, as if the meaning were that God brought Christ from the dead by the blood of the everlasting covenant; but the majority of commentators connect it either with *ποιμενα* or with *μεγαν*, and this seems to be the preferable arrangement. The clause is plainly to be connected with *μεγαν*, as showing *why* Christ was the "great Shepherd." So Tholuck, Ebrard, and Stuart. A few names of note are on the other side of this question, the chief of whom is Delitzsch; but even he admits that the passage conveys the truth that Christ is the Shepherd of the sheep in virtue of the blood He shed for their redemption. In whichever way, then, the passage be construed, the connection between Christ's relation to His people as a Shepherd and His death, by which this relation was established, is affirmed. The preferable construction, however, seems to be that which connects *ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου* with *μεγαν*, or with the whole clause, *ποιμενα των προβάτων του μέγαν*. Christ became, or was constituted, the great Shepherd of the sheep by the blood which He shed for them, and by which the covenant of redemption stood confirmed.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### 3. *Phrases descriptive of the Work of Christ.*

I pass on to a second class of statements bearing on this subject, closely allied to the preceding, but differing from it in this, that the instances to be alleged are not so much *titles* of our Lord as phrases employed to describe what He became,

or submitted to, for our behoof. Of these we notice the following:—

(1.) LAMB OF GOD (*ο αμνος του Θεου*). By this phrase He was described by His forerunner John when he pointed Him out to the notice of the people on the banks of the Jordan; and the term Lamb is applied to Him repeatedly elsewhere in the N. T. There is a difference of opinion as to the origin of this phrase as applied to our Saviour. By some it is traced to the typical reference to Christ furnished by the paschal lamb, by others to that of the lamb offered in the daily sacrifice, and by others to the allusion in Isa. liii. to the Messiah as a lamb. It appears to me that there are serious objections to all these views, and I think we shall proceed upon safe ground only if we regard the appellative as originating in the transaction on Mount Moriah, where the ram caught in the thicket appeared as the lamb provided by God Himself for the burnt-offering, by the substitution of which for Isaac he escaped, and so appears as a type of Jesus Christ, the great Substitute provided by God for sinners, through whose death they are delivered from death. In adopting this view, however, it is not necessary to suppose that no allusion is intended to the paschal lamb, or to the lamb of the daily sacrifice, or to the description of the suffering Messiah in Isa. liii., for all these stand connected as referring to the same object. But the primary and chief reference is, we believe, to the ram substituted for Isaac.

Only thus do we see the full force of the addition *του Θεου*. In what sense was Jesus Christ the Lamb of God? He was so because God had Himself provided this sacrifice; and the force of the addition, *του Θεου*, arises from the contrast thus tacitly introduced between such sacrifices as men might provide for themselves and the Lamb provided by God as a sacrifice that should take away the sins of the world. So also in 1 Pet. i. 19, where believers are said to be redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb, *ἀμωμου καὶ ἀσπίλου*, the reference undoubtedly is to Him “as a lamb given up to death in the service of God.”<sup>1</sup> Here, then, we must take fast hold of sacrificial ideas if we are to do justice to the language employed to describe our Lord. It is not

<sup>1</sup> Hoffmann, *Schriftbeweis*, ii. 1.

enough that we think of Him as a lamb in respect of the gentleness and meekness of His deportment ; that is true, but it is only part of the truth, and not the most prominent part ; it is as the Lamb provided by God as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, as the suffering substitute for sinners who by His propitiatory death has covered their sins and carried them away, that He is principally presented to us under this designation. As if still more strikingly to fix this on our minds, the Apostle John tells us that when the vision of the heavenly state was opened to his view, he saw in the midst of the throne “ a lamb as it had been slain,” and that he heard the inhabitants of heaven singing a new song, saying, “ Worthy art Thou to take the book and to open the seals thereof : for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood,” etc. ; and again he heard the acclamation of a mighty multitude, which no man could number, saying with a loud voice, “ Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” There can be no doubt that the design of these passages is to convey to us the idea that the glory and honour which Christ enjoys in heaven accrue to Him directly through His propitiatory work, and are received by Him as still sustaining the character of our Sacrifice and Substitute. “ The reference,” says Stuart, “ is to the paschal lamb. . . . As the sacrifice of the first paschal lamb procured redemption or deliverance from the plague that smote and destroyed the Egyptians, so did the sacrifice of the Lamb of God procure eternal redemption for His people, or take away the sins of the world.” “ That Christ appears here in the form of a slain lamb,” says Hengstenberg, “ was done out of respect to the occasion ; His appearance imaged that through which He had conquered to open the book, His sufferings as the God-man, by which He had made reconciliation. The lamb comes here into consideration primarily as an animal for sacrifice.” The inference from all this is very obvious and certain—that if we would speak and think of Christ as the Lamb of God in the same sense in which that appellation is given to Him by the sacred writers, we must give especial prominence to His sacrificial work as therein implied.

(2.) We pass on to notice the terms *λυτρον* and *ἀντίλυτρον*



as applied to our Lord in connection with His work on earth. The former of these terms He Himself uses when He says of Himself (Matt. xx. 28), "The Son of Man hath not come to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give His life *λυτρον ἀντι πολλων*." The latter of these terms is employed by the Apostle Paul in 1 Tim. ii. 6, where he says of Christ, "Who gave Himself *ἀντίλυτρον ὑπερ πάντων*." Between these two passages there are certain shades of difference in respect of meaning; but on this we need not dwell at present, because the difference does not depend on the words we are now engaged in examining. To all intents and purposes, *λυτρον* followed by *ἀντί* and *ἀντίλυτρον* are one and the same word. Let us inquire, then, what is the idea expressed by these terms? Tracing them back to their root we come to the verb *λυειν*, which denotes simply to release, without implying anything as to the grounds on which the release is effected. Used in the middle voice, however, it has the more specific sense of liberating by means of a ransom-price paid by the liberator to the party by whom the person liberated was held. The nouns formed from the verb for the most part retain this more specific sense; and hence *λυτρον*, *ἐπίλυτρον*, and the plural *λυτρα* are used in the classics to denote a price paid for the ransom of a captive,—a sense in which they are frequently employed. In some of the later writers, also, *λυτρα* is used of sacrifices offered for expiating sin; thus Lucian, in one of his *Dialogues of the Gods*, introduces one of his interlocutors as saying to Jupiter, "But if you will let me go, I promise to you that another goat shall be sacrificed, *λυτρα ὑπερ ἐμου*, as a ransom price for me" (*Dial.* iv.). In the LXX. *λυτρον* is used (1) in the sense of a ransom of life (Ex. xxi. 30, where it corresponds to Heb. *פְּדוּת*, rendered by Gesenius "price of redemption"); (2) in the sense of a slave's redemption (Lev. xxv. 51), etc. In the former of these senses it is used in Prov. xiii. 8, where the Hebrew word is *כִּפּוּר*, "propitiation." Such being the fixed meaning of the word, no other meaning can be justly ascribed to it, as used by our Lord in Matt. xx. 28, than that of ransom-price or propitiation; so that His meaning is that He came for the purpose of giving His life as a price for the securing of deliverance to many. "The meaning," says De Wette, "is, that with His

death He might redeem many from death." The expression of Paul in 1 Tim. ii. 6 is equivalent to, "He gave Himself as a ransom-price for all;" or, if there is any difference between *λυτρον* and *αντιλυτρον*, it lies wholly in the greater force with which the latter expresses the idea of substitution; "*loco hominum pœnas luisse*" is the exegesis of Leo, *in loc.* If, then, we would assign to such expressions their full value, we must regard Christ as having effected our deliverance from sin by taking our case upon Him, and by offering Himself as an equivalent for us, so as to meet all that required to be met ere we could be exempted from the penalty due to sin. At the very least, we must assign to such modes of representation the design of teaching us that the death of Christ served as an adequate ground or reason in equity for our being exempted from the penalty of the law.

(3.) A third expression used of our Lord in Scripture as descriptive of His work on our behalf is that He was made a CURSE (*κατάρα*) for us. The passage in which this occurs is Gal. iii. 13, where Paul says: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become (or by becoming) a curse for us (for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree)." On the very surface of this passage there lies obviously the statement of a connection of some sort between Christ's ignominious death on the cross and our deliverance from the curse of the law. The apostle represents us as under the curse of the law because of sin, intending by curse here condemnation or penalty; he represents Christ as redeeming us from that; he represents the redemption as effected by His becoming a curse for us, *i.e.* by His undergoing the penalty for us; and he represents this as brought about by His hanging upon the tree, *i.e.* dying on the cross. Beyond all question, then, according to Paul here, our redemption is effected by Christ's death, and the curse which came upon Him was for our sakes, and He became a curse for us in order to this end. It could only be a very perverse ingenuity which could attempt to turn aside the force of this interpretation. But it may be fairly asked, Does not the passage teach *more* than this? Have we not here also expressly stated the fact of Christ's substitution in our room and stead? And is not this the proper force of the phrase

“made a curse for us”? The reply to these inquiries, made by almost all divines and interpreters of the Evangelical school, is in the affirmative. The theologians of the Reformation all rely on this passage as proving directly the suffering of Christ as the Substitute of His people. “Since,” says Luther, “according to the law, every murderer must be hanged, so must Christ, according to the law of Moses, be hanged; for He hath assumed the person of a sinner and murderer, yea, not of one only, but of all sinners and murderers before God.” Calvin (*Comment. in loc.*) says: “The apostle says not that He was cursed, but that He was a curse, which is more; for it signifies that the curse of all was shut up in Him.” Turretine expresses himself as follows: “He was made the curse itself, because He underwent and endured all the curse and calamity which the law threatened to transgressors.” Even De Wette admits this as the substantial force of the passage, for he says: “Christ hath purchased us by His death from the curse of the law, as He for us (whether for our behoof or in our stead is doubtful) became a curse, inasmuch, to wit, as He paid the penalty of sin which the law denounced.” But no interpreter has more distinctly brought out this view of the passage than Ruckert in his comment on the place: “As appears to us,” says he, “the doctrine of the substitutionary susception of another’s guilt is here expressed. . . . The apostle’s conclusion is this: Whosoever hangs on a tree is cursed: Christ hung on a tree; therefore Christ was cursed. But whosoever is cursed (*i.e.* bears the penalty denounced by God) is so, either on account of his own sins or on account of those of others. Now Christ suffered not for His own sins, but for those of others, namely, for those who, subject to the law, had transgressed it.” Prevalent, however, as this interpretation is, it is not without its difficulties; the most serious of which seems to be that, in order to follow it, we must suppose that as we had incurred death, because the curse of a broken law was upon us, so Christ, to liberate us from that curse, took it upon Him and in consequence died; whereas Paul, instead of saying that Christ died because the curse was upon Him, says He became a curse in consequence of the peculiar manner of His death, *viz.* by crucifixion: He was not made a curse and consequently died; but He became a curse from the circum-

stance that "cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Hence it has been strenuously argued by some that all that Paul intends here is to state in general that Christ, by submitting to a shameful and ignominious death, whereby He became an object of contempt and execration to the Jews, delivered us from the sentence of the law, without saying anything as to *how* that was effected. This is the view of the passage taken by all the Fathers, who earnestly argue against the idea that Paul means here that the curse came upon Christ from God, and contend that the meaning is that Christ submitted to become a curse among men that He might redeem His people. "Si proprius adspicias," says Ambrosiaster, "videbis Christum maledictum eorum factum, a quibus occisus est; crux enim Salvatoris peccatum et maledictum illorum a quibus suspensus est . . . Ac per hoc Salvator innocens suspensus in ligno non est maledictus, sed maledictum illorum a quibus suspensus est." This seems to have been the common view of the passage up to the time of the Reformation; it is the view adopted, of course, by those who are unfriendly to the orthodox doctrine of the atonement; but it is the view adopted by many besides, who feel shut up to it by purely exegetical reasons.

Viewed merely under an exegetical aspect, the question on which the whole turns seems to be this: When Paul, after saying Christ was made a curse for us, adds the words of the citation from Dent. xxi. 23, "For it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," does he intend thereby to adduce the *cause* of Christ's becoming a curse, or the *evidence* that He had become a curse? His words may bear either interpretation. They may either mean Christ became a curse for us, *as was proved* by His dying a shameful and cursed death; or Christ became a curse for us *in consequence of* His dying a shameful and cursed death. Now, if we adopt the former of these interpretations, his words will be seen to accord entirely with the explanation of them usually embraced since the time of Luther; if the latter, we must relinquish this passage as directly proving the substitutionary death of Christ, though it will still prove the connection between that and our redemption. Which of these interpretations is to be preferred must be left very much to the judgment and feeling of each inquirer; but it must not be overlooked as materially

contributing towards a solid decision, that in the original of the passage quoted by Paul the curse is distinctly said to be from God upon those hanged: "His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day (for he that is hanged is accursed of God, or the curse of God)" (Deut. xxi. 22). Now, the meaning of this is clearly, not that God's curse rests on a man who has been hanged merely because he has been put to death in that way; but that death by hanging was inflicted only on those whose lives were forfeited to God, and who required to be offered up to Him in this way to save the land which their crime had defiled from His vengeance. A slight examination of the passages in the O. T. bearing on this subject will suffice to show this.

Thus in Num. xxv. 4 we read that when the Israelites had been betrayed into the sin of idolatry through the enticements of the Midianitish women, Moses was commanded to assemble the chiefs of the people, and to hang the transgressors up before the Lord against the sun [*i.e.* openly], that the fierce anger of the Lord might be turned away from Israel. The punishment here indicated was that which seems to have been common among several ancient nations: the culprit was first put to death and then impaled on an elevated stake, or nailed to a cross. It was a punishment reserved for heinous transgressors, and was held to express the greatness of their guilt and the abhorrence in which they were consequently held; and on this account it was appointed in the case before us, that the people might be duly impressed with a sense of the exceeding evil into which these transgressors had been seduced.<sup>1</sup>

Again, in 2 Sam. xxi. 6, 9, mention is made of the hanging of seven sons or descendants of Saul by the Gibeonites. The occasion of this was the following: A famine had come upon the land of Israel, which was for some reason regarded by David the king as sent in judgment for some sin, the

<sup>1</sup> See Layard's *Ninereh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 374, and plate on p. 369. Comp. Herod. iii. 159: "Darius impaled about 3000 of the chief men of Babylon when he took it." So Pharaoh beheaded his chief baker, who had offended him, and then hanged him on a tree; and the birds of the air ate his flesh (Gen. xl. 19, 22).

guilt of which hung over the nation. On inquiring of the Lord, he was told that it was for Saul and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. David accordingly summoned the Gibeonites and demanded of them with what he should make atonement, so that the curse might be removed and a blessing come on the inheritance of the Lord. Their answer was a demand that seven of Saul's descendants—seven sons of the man that had consumed them, and sought to destroy them—should be given up to them, that they might hang them up before the Lord, and thereby make atonement for the innocent blood that Saul had shed.<sup>1</sup> This was accordingly done, and the victims were put to death and then exposed in the manner already described. Here, again, we have "hanging" brought before us as a penalty by which God's abhorrence of sin was to be indicated, and His wrath in consequence of sin averted by an atonement.

When, therefore, Moses in the law declares that he that is hanged is accursed, he must be understood to mean that the divine curse rested on the man of whose sin this was the proper punishment. Now, this being the purport of the declaration cited by St. Paul, and applied to the case of our Lord, he must be understood as meaning thereby to convey the idea that our Lord's crucifixion was indicative of or appropriate to the position He then occupied, as one on whom the divine curse due to man's sins rested. Apart from this, indeed, it is impossible to see the aptness of the apostle's citation; and this of itself is sufficient to guide us to the orthodox interpretation of the passage as the one to be preferred.

(4.) Closely connected with this passage is 2 Cor. v. 21, where it is said, "that God made Him who knew no sin to be SIN for us." The sin in this passage answers to the curse (*κατάρα*) in Galatians. Some, indeed, would take *αμαρτία* here as meaning sin-offering; but *a.* the word is never so used in the N. T.; *b.* the apostle would not use the same word in two such different senses in the same verse; and *c.* as sin here is opposed to righteousness, it can have no other than its proper meaning. What the apostle says is, that God

<sup>1</sup> The Vulg. renders, "ut crucifigamus eos," ver. 6; and "crucifixerunt eos," ver. 9.

made Him, in that which He endured, to be a bearer of sin in the sense that He, in His sufferings and death, was set forth as a sinner, was treated as such for our behoof.

(5.) To these may be added such statements as that Christ is our SURETY, our PROPITIATION (*ἱλασμός*), our PEACE (*εἰρήνη*). In all these there is implied the agency of Christ in the removal from us of sin as that which alienates us from God, exposes us to His wrath, and subjects us to the condemning sentence of His law. As our Surety, Christ appears as on the one hand our pledge to God, and on the other God's pléde to us, certifying to us that the mercy of God which we need is secured to us, and certifying to God (if we may so speak) that the submission and obedience which He demands of us as His creatures shall be rendered. As our Propitiation, Christ procures for us the favour of God, not in the sense of creating it towards us or causing it to flow forth, but in the sense of removing the obstacles which sin has placed in the way of our acceptance with the Father, by covering that sin, expiating it, atoning for it by means of sacrifice; just as the high priest of old by offering sacrifice covered the sins of the people and so made propitiation, so that the Hebrew כַּפֵּר is rendered by the LXX. by the Greek *ἱλασμος* or *ἐξιλασμος* (Lev. xxv. 9; Num. v. 8; Lev. xxiii. 27, 28). As our Peace, Jesus Christ brings us into a state of reconciliation with God, removing from us the condemnation of God's law by making atonement for us, and having slain the enmity by His cross, coming and preaching peace to those who are afar off as well as to those that are nigh (Eph. ii. 16, 17; Rom. v. 1). In all these respects Christ acts as a Priest, and secures the end through means of His sacrificial death.

Without dwelling further on this head, enough has been adduced to show that the most special, select, and characteristic designations of our Lord in the N. T. all turn upon His sacrificial work, all imply His sacerdotal agency, and can be properly understood and appropriately used only as we recognise in Him one who secures for men salvation, and is to them a Saviour by means of His propitiatory sacrifice.

#### 4. *Phrases designating the Design and Effect of the Work of Christ.*

I proceed now to a third class of expressions or phrases, viz. those which designate the *design* and *effect* of Christ's work on earth. And here we notice (1) those passages in which the design and effect of His work are described by the words "FOR US." Such passages are very numerous in the N. T., so numerous that it is unnecessary to quote any in particular; we meet with them everywhere, and they present the words in question to us in many different connections. The point we have to decide respects the force to be assigned to this form of expression. Here it is evident that all depends on the proper signification of the particle answering to our word "for."

Now, there are *three* distinct particles used in Greek by the N. T. writers in reference to this matter, all of which are alike rendered "for" by our translators, viz. *ἀντί*, *υπερ*, and *διά*. We have an instance of the first in Matt. xx. 28, "to give His life a ransom *ἀντί πολλων*;" of the second in John x. 11, "I am that Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd layeth down His life *υπερ των προβάτων*;" and of the third in 1 Cor. viii. 11, "the brother for whom (*δι ὧν*) Christ died." Respecting the first of these there is no room for dispute; it is the proper Greek word to denote the relation of exchange or substitution, so that when Christ says that He had come to give His life a ransom *ἀντί πολλων*, His words can only mean that He had come to redeem the many from death by dying in their stead. This, however, is the only one of the passages in which this preposition is used. In by far the greater majority it is *υπερ* that is employed, and respecting this there is not the same certainty as the former. The preposition *υπερ* does not necessarily involve the idea of exchange or substitution, though when used with the genitive it often has this signification. Thus, to take an instance or two from classical authorities: Plato, *Sympos.* 179 B, says of Alcestis, that she "was willing alone *υπερ του αυτης ανδρος αποθανειν*, though he had father and mother;" here *υπερ* has unquestionably the force of "instead of" or "in place of," and accordingly we find Euripides, when referring to the same thing in his *Alcestis*, substituting *προ* for *υπερ*—"ητις ηθελε θανειν *προ κεινου*" (17). Xenoph. *Anab.* vii. 4. 9: "And



Skeuthes asked, Art thou also willing, O Episthenes, to die instead of this one (*υπερ τουτου ἀποθανειν*)? where that *υπερ* is used in the sense of “instead of,” is rendered indubitable by the substitution for it, in the same connection, a few lines farther on, of *αντ*. Skeuthes asked if he should strike him “*ἀντ ἐκείνου*, in place of the other.” The *Alcestis* of Euripides contains several instances of this usage of *υπερ*. In the *υποθεσις* or *argumentum* prefixed to the play, the author states the subject of the drama thus: “Apollo had requested of the Fates that Admetus, who was about to die, might furnish some one who should die instead of him (*υπερ αυτου*) . . . , and Alcestis, his wife, gave herself up, since neither of his parents was willing to die for their son (*υπερ τ. παιδος*),” etc.; and in the body of the play this is frequently referred to with the use of the same preposition; as, *c.g.*, 690,—

μη θνησχ υπέρ τουσ ανους, ουδ' ἐγω πρό σου.

“Die not for me, nor I for thee.”

700,—

ει την παρούσαν κατθανῶν πεισεις αει γυναιχ' ὑπέρ σου.

“If thou wilt persuade thy wife here present to die instead of thee.”

In all these instances there is no doubt as to the force of *υπερ*, and they sufficiently show that this preposition may be used with the sense of *ἀντί*, “in room of,” “in place of.” When, therefore, we meet such expressions in the N. T. as the following:—Rom. v. 6: *υπερ ἀσεβῶν ἀπέθανε*; v. 8: *υπερ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανε*; Eph. v. 2: *παρέδωκεν εαυτον υπέρ ημων*; 1 Pet. iii. 18: *επαθε δίκαιος υπέρ ἀδικων*, etc.,—we may with perfect legitimacy translate the preposition “in the place of.” Still, it must be acknowledged that the proper force of *υπερ* with the genitive is “for the behoof of,” and that it comes to signify “in the place of” only where the party acting for the behoof of another does that by taking his place. In itself, therefore, this preposition determines nothing as to the *substitutionary* character of Christ’s work on our behalf; it simply expresses that what He did was for our benefit, and it must be determined from other considerations whether this end was secured by His suffering in our stead or not. It must be admitted that the assertion, “Christ died for our benefit,” does not necessarily mean that He died as our substitute; we can affix that meaning to the words only when we know from

other sources that such was actually the relation in which He stood to us, just as we interpret the similar phrases in the *Alcestis* of Euripides from knowing that Alcestis actually was substituted for her husband Admetus. When, however, we find our Lord Himself using the preposition *ἀντί* in the same connection, when we find it repeatedly stated that the effect of His giving Himself for our benefit, dying for our benefit, was our redemption from the penalty of sin which is death, and when especially it is stated that He gave Himself for us as a sacrifice and offering unto God, we seem to have in abundant measure the necessary knowledge supplied to us by which to determine the force of *ὑπέρ* in the instances in question. It may be added, also, that when one man is said to die for another, especially when it is specified that it was an innocent man that died for the guilty, we can hardly avoid the conclusion that the case was one in which the benefit of the latter was derived by the substitution in his place of the former, by whom the penalty incurred by the other was borne so as to deliver him from enduring it.

The same remarks will in substance apply to *διὰ* as used of those for whom Christ died. In itself this particle simply intimates that Christ died on account of or for the sake of man; but as that which rendered this interposition necessary on the part of Christ was man's exposure to the penalty due to sin, and as the benefit accruing to man from Christ's death is exemption from this penalty, it is impossible to separate in reality the one thought from the other.

(2.) Closely allied to these instances is the frequently occurring statement that Christ died "FOR SINS." The preposition here used is sometimes *ὑπέρ* and sometimes *περί*. In regard to the former of these we can adopt, in such phrases, neither the rendering "in behoof of," nor the rendering "in place of," for neither would make sense; we must take *ὑπέρ* here as denoting the ground, reason, or motive of the act, a sense in which it is frequently used. When, therefore, we read that Christ offered a sacrifice *ὑπέρ ἁμαρτιῶν*, we must take the words as simply intimating that the sins formed the ground, occasion, or motive of Christ's sacrifice, leaving it to be determined from other passages how it was that our sins required such a sacrifice, and that what Christ did implied

what was required. The same in substance must be said respecting *περί*. This preposition with the genitive has the general meaning of "about" or "concerning," so that the phrase *περί αμαρτίας*, or *αμαρτιων*, simply denotes that sin formed the occasion, or object, or motive-cause of our Lord's sufferings, without saying anything as to the relation in which he stood to us whilst enduring these sufferings. The context will, however, in the vast majority of cases suffice to satisfy us that when the inspired writers used the phrase they had in their minds the idea that Christ suffered on account of sins because He stood in our room and endured a penalty which we had merited.

(3.) We may notice, next, those passages in which the effect of Christ's work is described as consisting IN THE REMOVAL OR DESTRUCTION OF SINS. This idea is presented to us in various forms of expression. Thus He is said, *αἴρων τὴν αμαρτίαν*, or *τας αμαρτίας ἡμων*, John i. 29, 1 John iii. 5; *αμαρτίας ἀναφέρειν*, Heb. ix. 28, 1 Pet. ii. 24; and to be manifested *εἰς ἀθετησιν αμαρτίας*, Heb. ix. 26. To these we may add the passage in Isa. liii. 12, where it is said of the Messiah that He *נָשָׂא וְיָרִיבֵם*, "bare the sin of many." Taking these expressions in their simple and most obvious meaning, they convey the impression that our Lord took on Him the burden and penalty of our sins, and that by doing so He annihilated sin, so that it no longer lies on those who committed it, and for whom He bore it, as a condemning burden. This is confirmed by the following considerations. *a.* The phrase used by Isaiah invariably means in the O. T. to bear guilt in the sense of enduring the penalty of sin. This is stated by Gesenius (*sub voc.* נָשָׂא) as the proper meaning of the phrase, and it is amply confirmed by numerous instances in various parts of the O. T. Indeed, "to bear his iniquity" is the phrase commonly and specifically used to denote that a person was to suffer the penalty of his sin (comp. Lev. v. 1, 17, xvii. 16, etc.; Num. v. 31, etc.); and in accordance with this, when by substitution of one for another, the former delivered the latter from the penalty he had incurred by bearing it for him, the phrase used to express this came to be that "he bore his sin" (comp. Ezek. iv. 5, xiv. 10, etc.). The word which the LXX. usually employ to

represent the Hebrew שָׂוִי in these phrases is λαμβανω, but occasionally they use ἀφαιρεω and also αναφέρω. Seeing, then, that this is the accredited meaning of the phrase in the O. T., we are constrained, on grounds of pure hermeneutics, to give it this meaning in Isa. liii. 12 ; and as the N. T. writers were certainly familiar with this phraseology, they must be presumed, when they use the equivalent Greek phrase, to attach to it the same meaning, the more especially as in using it they seem to have had these O. T. passages in their eye.

b. The connection in which the phrase occurs in the passages above cited leads to the conclusion that it is to be taken in a sacrificial sense. When John spoke of Christ bearing the sins of the world, it was under the figure of a lamb that he represented Him as doing this. But in what respects can a lamb be said to bear the sins of men, except as a sacrifice of atonement? With the phraseology under this aspect the education and habits of the Jews would make them readily familiar; but, abstracting from this, in what sense could they understand John's words? The idea of sacrifice apart, our Lord could be represented as a lamb only in virtue of His meekness and purity; but what appropriateness could there possibly be in the assertion that in virtue of His meekness and purity Christ bore the sins of the world? In reply to this it may be said that by His meekness and purity He set a holy example before the minds of men, and exercised on them a holy influence, the combined effect of which is to draw men from sin to goodness. But it seems hardly credible that any one should seriously offer this as a *bona fide* interpretation of the passage. For, supposing a man wishing to say of another that he should exercise a beneficial influence on the character and conduct of other men, would he, by any natural process of thought, be led to express that by declaring that he should bear these men's sins? Supposing I so influence a wicked man by my good conduct and spirit as to induce him to forsake his evil ways, would it not be absurd to describe that result by saying that I had borne his wickedness? But it may be said in reply, The verb signifies not to bear, but to bear away, and the meaning is that Jesus Christ takes away the sins of the world by persuading men to forsake sin. So the Unitarians affirm, but with no success.

For, not to insist on the consideration that by this way of interpreting the passage they coolly turn it round and *reverse* the statement, substituting for an assertion that Christ takes away the sins of the world, the assertion that Christ takes the world away from its sins;—not to insist on this, we must strongly deny that the verb here means simply to bear away. *Alpō* properly denotes to take up, then to take upon one's self, hence to carry, to bear as a load or burden; and it is only as a derivation from this that the idea of carrying away is attached to it. What a man takes on his shoulders he usually means to carry away somewhere, and hence cases occur in which *alpō* signifies to carry away what is borne. But it never signifies to carry away what is not borne; it never signifies to remove or separate one thing from another absolutely or by any means. It has the meaning of removing only as dependent from the idea of bearing. Wherever, then, it is to be rendered "remove" or "separate," it is so because it involves the previous assumption of the thing removed as a load. The Unitarian translation, then, gives their cause no help here. If Christ took away the sins of the world, it was because He first took them on Him and bare them as a load in the room of sinners.

In Heb. ix. 28 and 1 Pet. ii. 24, the verb used is *αναφέρειν*. This verb does not so necessarily involve the idea of "bearing a load" as does *alpō*; it simply expresses the act of "conveying to, or up to." But it has one peculiarity in relation to our present object which *alpō* wants; it is used as a sacrificial word to denote the conveying of the victim to the altar (comp. Jas. ii. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Heb. vii. 27); so that when the apostle says that Christ was offered to "bear the sins of many," or that He "bare our sins in His own body to the tree," it is hardly possible but that he should have had in his mind the sacrificial character of Christ's death as that which gave it efficacy to remove our sins. This is confirmed by his saying in the one passage that Christ was offered to bear our sins, a statement that comes immediately after a reference to the priestly office of Christ as contrasted with that of the ancient priests, and of His abolishing or cancelling sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and in the other passage the apostle says that Christ "bare our sins in His own body to

the tree." If the reference here were merely to His example, etc., in inducing men to forsake sin, why should Peter say that He bare our sins in His body? and why specify the cross as the terminus to which He thus bare them? On the hypothesis that Christ bare our sins as a sacrifice all this is clear and intelligible, "as the sinner, under the law, in order to be free from sin brought a sacrifice in stead of himself, so Christ took on Him the curse which we deserved by our sins in order to expiate them before God" (Calvin, *in loc.*). On the hypothesis that He bare away our sins as an example, all is confused if not absurd. Besides, let us look at what follows in Peter's statement here. He says that Christ "bare our sins in His own body unto the tree, that we, being dead to sins (*ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ἀπογενόμενοι* = departed from sins, dead to them), may live unto righteousness." In this latter clause he states the end or purpose of Christ's bearing our sins to be that we might be free from the controlling and contaminating power of sin, and might come under the vivifying influence of righteousness,—a doctrine which is wholly in harmony with that of Paul, who says that Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." But on what does the whole of this doctrine and mode of representation rest? Evidently on the hypothesis of a transference of our sin to Christ, and of His righteousness to us. He, the sinless, bare our sins, and by His voluntary obedience to death made propitiation for them; we, the guilty, are endowed with His righteousness, and so escape the penalty which our sins have deserved. In all this the removal of sin by sacrifice, and not the mere turning of us from it by doctrine or example, is the prominent idea in the representation. And with this falls in what the apostle adds, "by whose stripes ye were healed." The stripes here referred to are the sufferings of Christ on our behalf—not the mere scourgings or blows which He received at the hands of the rude and violent men who treated Him injuriously immediately before His death, but all that He endured at the hands of His enemies, His death itself included. By these, says the apostle, believers are healed. Sin is a disease by which men are destroyed, and for this disease healing, a cure, is furnished by the sufferings and death of Christ. What can

more clearly indicate the propitiatory, vicarious, substitutionary character of these sufferings? "That we might live," says Tauler, "He must die; that we might be made glad, He must be troubled; that we might be healed, He must be wounded; that we might be cleansed, He must pour forth His blood: the blood of the Physician was poured forth and made a medicine for the sick." "The representation," says De Wette, "is similar to that of Paul. God has nailed the handwriting of the law that was against us to the cross (Col. ii. 14), and the idea, properly expressed, is that Christ has atoned for our sins on the cross." Even Wegscheider, the coldest and most unhesitating of Rationalists, admits that in this and in similar passages the N. T. writers "exhibit the death of Jesus Christ as expiatory and vicarious, as a penalty undertaken by Him for the sins of all men."<sup>1</sup>

I cannot pass from this part of the subject without noticing particularly Matt. viii. 17, where, after recounting certain miracles of healing performed by our Lord, the evangelist says, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." The passage here cited is undoubtedly Isa. liii. 4: "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." The quotation is not verbally exact, but in substance the one passage corresponds with the other, though in the inverse order of the clauses. The first clause of the Hebrew is חָלֵנוּ הוּא נָשָׂא, "He bare our diseases or sicknesses," to which corresponds the second clause in the Greek, *τας νοσους ἐβάστασεν*, "He carried our diseases or sicknesses." Then the second clause in the Hebrew is מַכּוֹתַי כָּבַד, "our wounds or pains He carried them," to which corresponds the first clause in the Greek, *τας ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν ἔλαβεν*, "He took our sicknesses." In the LXX. the passage in Isaiah is rendered, οὗτος τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν φέρει καὶ περὶ ἡμῶν ὀδυνᾶται, where, in the first clause, sins (*ἁμαρτίας*) is substituted for diseases, as that which was borne by the person spoken of.

This passage has come to be of much importance in connection with the question as to the import of the phrase "the bearing of sins" as ascribed to Christ. The verb is the same, both when the reference is to Christ bearing the

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.* § 136, p. 437, ed. 6.

infirmities of those He healed, and when it is to His bearing the sins of men. Hence it has been argued that as Christ bare the sicknesses of those He healed only in the sense of delivering them from them, it is in the same sense that He bare our sins; this means nothing more than that He delivers men from their sins; it does not mean that in any strict sense our sins were laid upon Him, so that He as our substitute suffered the punishment due to them.

At first sight there may appear in this something plausible, and to some it has appeared of such force that they have been drawn by it to renounce the orthodox view of the atonement, which regards the bearing of our sins by Christ as meaning His suffering in our room and stead the penalty of transgression. It may occur, however, to the careful and impartial inquirer that when a certain phrase, occurring many times in Scripture, is found to have a certain definite meaning, it is hardly legitimate to overrule and set aside that meaning because the same formula in another connection is found to require a different meaning to be put upon it. If it be conceded that when our Lord is said to have borne the sicknesses of those He miraculously healed the meaning simply is that He removed them and delivered those who were afflicted by them, it surely is not logical to conclude that on this account when He is said to have borne our sins, the meaning can only be that He removes these from us by inducing us to forsake them. The two phrases are not the same, and each must be interpreted by itself uncontrolled by the other.

But does the phrase "He bare our sicknesses" mean no more than that He removed them, and delivered those afflicted by them from their affliction? Taking the declaration of the prophet by itself, is its entire meaning exhausted in the mere fact that our Lord as the Messiah delivered a few afflicted people in Judea from their afflictions? If this be all, may we not ask, Why has the prophet expressed it in so strange a way? Why say that the Messiah had *taken on Him* our infirmities and *carried* our sicknesses, if all that is meant be, that He by an exercise of His divine power drove them away from men? We never speak or think of a doctor who heals us when we are sick taking our ailments on



himself and carrying them away. Obviously such phraseology used here of the Messiah, on all fair principles of interpretation, conveys to us the idea that in some sense there was an actual transference of the infirmity and pain He cured from the sufferer to Himself. When, moreover, we look at the whole tenor and scope of the prophecy of which this forms a part, we find that its prevailing and regulative idea is that the party to whom it refers was to be the substitute for others whom He was to deliver by taking on Himself what they had to bear. Now as this is the dominant idea of the whole prophecy, all the parts of it must be in harmony with this. Hence when the prophet says, "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," there seems abundant reason for our taking his words in their proper meaning, and understanding him to assert that in some sense the Messiah was actually to take upon Him the pains and bear the afflictions of those for whom He was substituted.

Turning now to the citation and application of this ancient prophecy by the evangelist, the remarks just made prepare us to find a deeper meaning in His words than at first sight appears. We are led to understand him as asserting that in some sense our Lord actually took on Him the infirmities and sicknesses of men, and thereby, in virtue of His personally bearing them, took them away.

But in *what* sense is this to be understood? How can our Lord be said to have Himself actually borne the sickness of those whom He healed? To this it is a very imperfect answer to say that on the occasion referred to by the evangelist it can only have been by enduring great fatigue and exhaustion that our Lord at the close of a day of active exertion could have attended to such a multitude of cases of sickness and infirmity. This is true; but the same might be said of any physician in extensive practice, who must often, when his own necessities would prompt him to seek repose, deny himself this in order to attend to others; and this would never justify the language used by the evangelist. Nor will it suffice to say that the sympathy of Jesus was so intense that He entered into all the sufferings of those who came before Him to be healed, and thereby really took upon Him their afflictions. This also is true,

and this approximates more than the former to a just solution of this problem. Still, it must be confessed that were this *all*, it would hardly furnish a meaning adequate to the language which the evangelist uses. Sympathy with a sufferer may approximate us to his condition, but we can hardly say yet that it *puts* us in his condition, and *lays* his suffering on us so that we carry it. We advance a step nearer to the truth with those who think there is a reference here to a personal suffering and exhaustion endured by our Lord in performing such miracles—as if the life and health He gave to the objects of His cure went out of Himself and left His own stock of life and health less than before; so that curing disease was not with Him a mere easy effect of omnipotence, but an actual communication from His own substance of the life and health needed to restore. That this was really the case seems probable from our Lord's own expression when the woman in the crowd touched Him (Luke viii. 46), "I felt that virtue (*δυναμις*=a dynamic force) had gone forth from me;" and it seems also to throw light on and derive confirmation from our Lord's apparent agony in bringing Lazarus to life again; for though the tears He shed on that occasion may be ascribed to sorrow and sympathy, yet these will not account for His having groaned in spirit—an expression implying deep mental agony—when advancing to restore His friend to life. We seem justified in believing, then, that all these miracles *cost* our Lord much, that the vital power He gave to others was drawn from Himself, so that in a very important sense He Himself actually "took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." But still this idea, important as it is, does not seem to bring before us the *whole* truth on the subject. For there still remains the inquiry, *Why* did Christ thus suffer while curing others? How was it that He *needed* to do this in order to accomplish the work for which He had appeared as the Messiah? To this I reply by remarking that *a.* disease, suffering, sorrow, and death are the results of sin—the *physical* aspects of that state of which remorse, shame, and spiritual death are the *spiritual* results. *b.* In consequence of this complete salvation is deliverance from both these classes of results of sin. *c.* Our Lord came to deliver

from sin and *all* its consequences—bodily disease as well as spiritual. *d.* Our Lord effects this deliverance in virtue of having cancelled sin by His substitution; we escape from sin's results because He suffered for us. *e.* But *what* did He suffer? Not sin, but those results of sin from which He delivers us, weakness, sickness, etc., as well as spiritual darkness and distance from God. As part of the price He paid for our redemption, He bare in His own person our diseases, and took on Him our infirmities. *f.* On this rests His power to deliver. He delivers from sin, not by omnipotence, but in virtue of having been made sin. He delivers from spiritual death in virtue of having endured it, and He delivers from temporal evil in virtue of having Himself submitted to it. It is therefore literally true that "He took on Him our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," and that in virtue of this He appeared among men as the Great Healer of their bodily as well as their spiritual maladies.

*5. Passages declaring the Benefits accruing to Men from the Work of Christ.*

We come now to the last class of expressions used in the Scriptures respecting the work of Christ on our behalf, viz. that in which the *benefits* resulting to us from His work are set forth. Of these we may consider the following:—

(1.) We are said to enjoy "acceptance with God" through Christ. Thus in Eph. i. 5, 6 the apostle says, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved." Here Paul represents the acceptance of believers by God as wholly an act of grace, and as resting for its basis on Christ, or finding its medium in Christ the beloved. His grace, he says, ἡς ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς. The ἡς here is undoubtedly used by attraction for η, and must be rendered by *in which*.<sup>1</sup> The verb ἐχαρ., formed from χαρις, can only mean "to extend grace to," "to bestow grace upon,"

<sup>1</sup> ἡς is the reading of A and B as well as of several cursives, the Syriac, Æthiopic, etc.; but the majority of MSS. and Versions have ἐν ᾧ, which Tischendorf has adopted.

according to the analogy of verbs in *ω* formed from substantives which have the power of making the notion or idea of their substantives into a predicate of their object (*e.g.* χρυσωω, "I gild;" θανατωω, "I put to death," etc.). But grace has both a subjective and objective meaning, and therefore to convey grace to one may mean either to make him gracious, or to show favour to him. In the passage before us both meanings have been advocated by interpreters: some, like Chrysostom, contending that the reference here is not to the grace showed by God in pardoning sinners, but to the moral excellence conferred by God on those who believe, so that *εχαριτωσε* is equivalent here, as Chrysostom explains it, to *χαριεντας* or *ἐπεραστους ἐποίησεν*; whilst others maintain that the reference here is to the acceptance of sinners on the ground of grace or free favour, so that *εχαριτωσε* means, as Beza renders it, "*gratis nos acceptos effecit*;" or as Bengel gives it, "*gratia amplexus est*." The latter is undoubtedly the true interpretation of the word. It alone preserves the meaning to the word *χάρις* which it usually bears in the writings of Paul, and it alone falls in with the train of thought of the apostle in this context. For Paul is not speaking here of the sanctification of believers, but of their deliverance from sin, as is evident from his going on to say that our acceptance in the beloved takes effect in connection with our redemption and the remission of sins: "In whom," says he, "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." The proper force of these expressions we shall examine more particularly presently; the passage is adduced at present merely to show that the subject present to the apostle's mind here is the deliverance of men from the guilt and penalty of sin. The grace, then, of which he speaks is the grace of pardon extended to the sinner; and of this Paul affirms that it is conceded to us "in the beloved," or Christ. Not, therefore, on the ground of anything in ourselves or anything proceeding from ourselves,—not on the ground that we are feeble and could not effectually resist sin, or on the ground of our repentance and begun renovation,—not on any such ground does God's grace come to us bringing pardon. That blessing comes to us *in* Christ, an expression which at the lowest estimate must

mean that it is on account of Christ, on account of something He is or of something He has done, that God shows us grace, but which, perhaps, finds its full explanation only in the recognition of the great truth that believers are in Christ, having communion with Him, at once in His propitiatory sufferings and in His acceptance with the Father, dying in His death, rising in His resurrection, and participating in His triumph.<sup>1</sup> Here, then, we are given clearly to understand that the meritorious ground of our pardon is in Christ, that God accepts us into His favour not on the ground of anything appertaining to us, but solely on the ground of something appertaining to Christ. Such a statement, if it does not in so many words declare the vicariousness of Christ's work on our behalf, evidently not only falls in with that hypothesis, but actually presupposes it; for how could the meritorious ground of our pardon be found in Christ, unless He had in some way satisfied the law on our behalf, and thereby procured for us exemption from the penalty of the law?

(2.) A second benefit which we are said to enjoy through Christ is redemption. This is frequently asserted in the N. T., and under different forms of expression. Believers in Christ are styled generally "the redeemed," as in Rev. xiv. 3, 4: *οι αγορασμενοι απο της γης, ουτοι ηγορασθησαν απο των ανθρωπων*. In accordance with this it is said of them that they "are bought with a price;" 1 Cor. vi. 20, *ηγοράσθητε τιμῆς*, "ye were bought at a great price," or "at a price of great value,"—*τιμη* signifying not merely a price, but a large price, and accordingly rendered in the Vulgate here *magno pretio*. In other passages it is declared what this price is, as, e.g., 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. In like manner we read that Christ redeemed us by His blood (Rev. v. 9); that we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our sins; that through His own blood He obtained eternal redemption for us; that He is made of God unto us redemption, etc. (Eph. i. 7; Heb. ix. 12; 1 Cor. i. 30). It is to be noticed, further, that in perfect keeping with this representation Christians are spoken of as the special property of Christ, His

<sup>1</sup> " *ἐν τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ*, i.e. *ἐν Χριστῷ*, in Christ, through His mediation and our fellowship with Him, not merely on His account, as Grotius has it." Rückert, *in loc.* See also Olshausen, *in loc.*

*περιουσιος* by redemption, and that this redemption or ransom was effected by His giving Himself for us (Tit. ii. 14); and the whole Church is represented as His “purchased possession” (*περιποίησις*, Eph. i. 14),—an expression which is illustrated by the words of Peter (1 Ep. ii. 9), where Christians are called *λαος εις περιποίησιν*, a people for a possession; and also by the use of the Hebrew *קנין* in Mal. iii. 17, and of which we have the explanation in Acts xx. 28, where Paul is reported as commanding the elders of the Church at Ephesus to “feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood” (*ἣν περιεποιήσατο δια του αίματος του ιδιου*).

Now, in all these passages we have the general idea of deliverance by means of a price or ransom enjoyed by Christians through Christ, and in some of them we have the fact very clearly stated that the ransom price paid whereby our deliverance is effected was His blood. The words rendered “redeemed” and “redemption” in our version are not all the same in the original. We have the verbs *λυτρωω* and *ἀγοράζω*, and we have the nouns *λυτρωσις* and *ἀπολυτρωσις*, *λυτρον* and *τιμη*, and we have, besides, the verb *περιποιούμαι* and the corresponding noun *περιποίησις*. But though these words are different, they all involve the same fundamental idea, that, namely, of effecting a transference from one state or possessor to another by means of purchase. The verb *ἀγοράζω* signifies simply to buy; it is a purely commercial term, derived from *ἀγορά*, a public place where articles are exposed for sale, a market-place. The verb *λυτρόω* has reference to the giving of a *λυτρον* or ransom for the liberation of a captive or a slave. The nouns *λυτρωσις* and *ἀπολυτρωσις* are from the same root, and convey the same fundamental meaning. The verb *περιποιούμαι* is the reflexive form of the active *περιποιεω*, which signifies, “I cause to remain, I reserve,” hence reflexively, “I reserve for myself, I procure, I purchase;” in the LXX. it is the word used to represent the Hebrew *קנין*, the proper word to express the getting or acquiring of property. As to *τιμη*, the only doubt that can arise respects whether it means a great price or simply a price; that it denotes that which is paid as an equivalent for something thereby obtained admits of no doubt.

This entire body of phraseology, then, is commercial. Whether it is to be interpreted rigidly in this sense, *i.e.* whether in the strict commercial acceptation of the words the death of Christ is to be regarded as the *quid pro quo* in our redemption, is a question for after consideration; but that in some sense, strictly or with a permissible latitude, these statements must be taken as affirming that our Lord's death furnished the ground on which we are liberated from the penalties of sin, it would seem a negation of all faith in the force of words as expressive of thoughts to deny. But if the Lord Jesus Christ has been made our redemption, if He has redeemed and purchased us from the penalty and bondage of sin to be a people unto Himself, and if He has effected this by His blood, by His death,—then, beyond all reasonable question, the sufferings of Christ have been the medium of our deliverance, and His work for us has been a vicarious and propitiatory work.

(3.) Another class of passages in which the benefit of Christ's work to us is described, consists of those in which it is set forth as the source of reconciliation to us with God. This idea is variously expressed in the N. T. Sometimes it is presented under the aspect of a bringing us nigh unto God, as when Peter says that Christ "suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring us unto God," *ἵνα ἡμᾶς προσαγάγῃ τῷ Θεῷ* (1 Pet. iii. 18); or when Paul says, "Having boldness adequate to an entrance of the holies by the blood of Jesus, . . . let us draw nigh with a true heart," etc., Heb. x. 19; or, as he expresses it still more generally (Eph. ii. 13), "Ye who were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ;" in all which passages the language is probably borrowed from the O. T. phraseology regarding the priests as those who draw nigh unto God, and regarding the sacrifices as the medium by which men draw nigh unto God. Closely allied to this form of phraseology is the expression repeatedly used by the apostle, that through Christ we enjoy an introduction to God and His favour, as in Rom. v. 2; Eph. ii. 18, iii. 12. Another form in which this truth is presented is that of our having "peace with God" through Christ: Rom. v. 1; Col. i. 20; Eph. ii. 14 (comp. Isa. liii. 5). The same truth is still more explicitly taught perhaps in those passages which represent reconciliation with God as the

fruit to us of Christ's work, as Rom. v. 11, xi. 15; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

Now, it is impossible to look at these statements without feeling convinced that the apostles meant to teach that the work of Christ on earth, and especially His death on the cross, form the great procuring cause of our restoration to a state of harmony with God. All must admit that the obstacles, whatever they were, which lay in the way of that harmony, have been removed by Christ, and that He removed them by His blood, by His death. This much the mere form in which the apostles have couched their statements constrain all who respect their authority to admit. But a question may arise as to what the obstacles were which Christ removed, and on which side they lay, whether on that of God or on that of men. Were they obstacles arising from unsatisfied claims of God's justice against us, or did they arise from our ungodly and rebellious feelings towards God? On this question different sides are taken by the upholders of our Lord's propitiatory death and their opponents. The latter contend that the obstacles were solely on the side of man; and they maintain that this view is favoured by the fact that in no case is God said to be reconciled to man, but invariably that man is said to be reconciled unto God. On this it may be observed,—

*a.* That whilst it is quite true that in no case is God said to be reconciled to man, it by no means follows from this that the only obstacles to reconciliation were on the part of man. For there is this peculiarity in the case, that God, the offended party, is the *author* of reconciliation; He has graciously taken the initiative in this matter; all things are of Him in the scheme of redemption. This being the case, it might with perfect propriety be said that He reconciled the world to Himself, though it was not on the side of man, but on His own side that the main difficulty lay in securing such reconciliation. In fact, how otherwise could the truth be expressed? Had the apostles given prominence to the statement that the death of Christ was designed to reconcile God to men, they might thereby have thrown into the shade their own cardinal doctrine, that the entire scheme of human salvation is the result of God's free, spontaneous love to the guilty.



b. Though it is nowhere said that God is reconciled to men, it is frequently said that the anger of God against men has been turned away by Christ. Now, if by the anger of God against sinners be understood His judicial displeasure against them expressed in the condemnatory sentence of His holy law, and if by the turning away of that wrath be understood the satisfying of judicial requirements on the behalf of the sinner, so that God may honourably forgive him his sin, wherein consists the difference between such statements and the statement that God has been reconciled to men? The sacred writers may have seen meet to avoid such a statement for the sake of giving greater prominence to their doctrine of the divine origin of the reconciliation which has been effected through Christ, but they have substantially said the same thing in other words in other places; and, as Dr. Wardlaw says, "it is not about the *word* we dispute, but about the *thing*"<sup>1</sup>

c. When the apostles describe our reconciliation to God as a bringing nigh unto God of those that were afar off from Him, as an obtaining by sinners of peace with Him, as an introduction into His favour of those who were His enemies, we are naturally directed by such language to regard the obstacles which lay in the way of reconciliation, and which Christ has removed, as obstacles rather on the side of God than on the side of men. Such language presents to us the conception of men needing restoration to God, but unable to obtain it because of difficulties in their way, rather than of God desiring man's return to Him, but unable to secure it because of man's unwillingness to be at peace with Him. If I say, "My friend has made peace for me with the sovereign, and through him I have been brought into my sovereign's favour," the meaning surely is not that I was unwilling, and my friend persuaded me, to be at peace with my sovereign; but that my friend by persuasion, or some other means, procured for me the privilege of returning to a state of amity and favour with my sovereign.

d. The emphasis laid in all the passages referring to this subject on the *death* of Christ, as that by which the reconciliation was effected, favours the view that the obstacles to be surmounted were of a judicial kind. On this hypothesis we can

<sup>1</sup> *Discourses on the Socinian Controversy*, p. 243.

at once see the meaning and force of such a representation, but on the other hypothesis it is by no means easy to see even its propriety. If the obstacles were solely on the part of man, such as his ungodliness and carnal enmity to God, why was it needful that Christ should *die* in order to remove them, or how came His *blood* to be the great solvent by which they were made to disappear? Surely His life, His doctrine, His lovely character, His noble example, in short, the moral urgency of His manifestation on earth, rather than the tragical end of His career, are the means by which the obduracy of men is to be overcome, if this be *all* that stands in the way of reconciliation. Why, then, have the apostles hardly alluded to these, while they continually lay stress on His death as the great efficient means of our reconciliation with God? His death, it is true, formed part of the great whole of what He exhibited to the contemplation of men for their spiritual benefit, and it adds impressiveness to the lesson taught by all the other parts; but, after all, on the hypothesis we are opposing, its place, as compared with theirs, is a subordinate one, and we cannot account for the apostles referring to it as they do were that hypothesis the true one.

c. In speaking of the reconciliation of man to God the apostles are careful to state that it is a boon conferred by God and received by us. "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto Himself" (2 Cor. v. 18). "By whom [Christ] we have *received* the reconciliation" (Rom. v. 11). Now, what does language like this mean on the hypothesis that the sole effect of Christ's work was to *induce* us to be reconciled to God? If I say, "God has given me health," or if I say, "I have received this as a boon," who would imagine my meaning to be that I had been induced to accept this blessing from God? Would not the meaning rather be that I, needful of this blessing, and unable to secure it of myself, had obtained it as a gift from God? And if it were added that I had obtained it through the mediation and merits of another, who would imagine that the meaning was that the efforts of that other had been expended in order to induce me to accept the boon? Would not common sense dictate that the meaning was that he had availed to procure for me a blessing I was not myself able or worthy to procure?

*f.* Great stress is laid by those we are now opposing on the language of the apostle in Rom. v. 10, where he says, *ἐχθροὶ ὄντες καταλλάγημεν τῷ Θεῷ*, being enemies, we were reconciled to God. Here, they contend, is a plain case that ought to settle the meaning of such phraseology. We being enemies to God, *i.e.* opposed in heart and life to Him, have been reconciled to Him; what can this mean, but that we have been persuaded and drawn out of the state of hostility in which we were into a state of amity? This seems plausible, but the conclusion is not quite so certain as those who enunciate it would have us to believe. For both the terms of the proposition here are ambiguous. To *ἐχθροί* we must supply, to complete the meaning, the words *τοῦ Θεοῦ*. But the phrase *ἐχθροί τ. Θε.* may be taken either actively, *i.e.* hostile to God, or passively, the objects of God's hostility. In the latter acceptance it is used Rom. xi. 28, where it stands contrasted with *ἀγαπητός*, and the probability is that such is its meaning in the passage before us, as even Reiche, Meyer, and Fritzsche admit, not to cite commentators of avowed evangelical sentiments. At any rate, it is utterly incompetent for those on the other side to assume that it is here used actively, as if no other meaning were possible. Then, with respect to the verb *καταλλάσσεσθαι* here used, it may mean, when followed with the dative of a person, "to be reconciled" to that person, either in the sense of giving up enmity to him, or in the sense of being no longer regarded by him with enmity. In Hellenistic Greek the latter is the more common meaning of the two; indeed, it is doubtful if a single decided instance can be adduced either from the LXX. or the N. T. in which it has the former signification. As instances of the latter we may cite the following: 2 Macc. v. 20 (comp. vii. 33, viii. 29); Matt. v. 24. These instances are quite decisive as to the legitimacy of such a meaning being attached to the phrase; and seeing there is a lack of any clear instance on the other side, it is altogether incompetent for our opponents to assume that the meaning they would put on the word is the *only* admissible one. As far as usage goes, the presumption is that it is not the meaning of the word at all.

*g.* What confirms this is, that in the passages in the N. T. where the word is used in reference to God the connection is such as usually to determine the meaning to be the removal

of obstacles on His part to the pardon and acceptance of sinners. Thus, to take the passage in 2 Cor. v. 18, etc., which is commonly cited as most clearly favouring the other view, we find Paul distinctly asserting that the means by which God reconciles men to Himself is by not imputing their trespasses to them. It is the non-imputation of sin, then, to the transgressors, the not holding them liable to the penalties their guilt has merited, that constitutes the means of reconciliation. It was the transgressions of men that formed the obstacle, the removal of which is necessary to reconciliation, and when accomplished actually results in that. The inference is obvious. The reconciliation in question has been accomplished by Christ, not by moral influences brought to bear on men so much as by the removal of judicial obstacles which lay in the way of their access unto God.

*h.* It is not meant by this to exclude the moral influence of the death of Christ in touching the hearts of men and drawing them to God. On the contrary, one great advantage of the view we have espoused is that it does not exclude the other, whilst if the other be accepted as the prominent meaning of the apostle's words it necessarily becomes the only one, and excludes the idea of judicial reconciliation altogether. We believe that there are obstacles on the side of the sinner as well as on the side of God, and that the death of Christ has power to overcome the one as it has had power to remove the other. It removes the obstacles on man's side, however, indirectly, while it has removed those on God's directly; or rather let us say it removes the former through the latter, the great moral power of Christ's death arising from its having secured for sinners the free pardon of their sin by God, and the enjoyment of His favour.

I have now finished the survey I proposed to make of Scripture utterances relative to the work of Christ on earth. I have not attempted to examine all the passages containing such utterances, but have rather sought to present characteristic instances under each of the heads into which they may be classified. The result of our scrutiny cannot but tend to confirm us in the belief in the doctrine of the propitiatory merits of Christ as a sacrifice offered to God for man's sins.

We have seen that not only is He spoken of by the apostles as a sacrifice, not only that He is described as really accomplishing what the ancient sacrifices accomplished only symbolically, but on a more minute examination of passages we have seen that the terms used to designate Him, in His relation to us, all rest on His sacrificial work, that the terms descriptive of Him in respect of His work on earth all have the same reference, that the terms and phrases used to describe the design and effect of His work all point to the same conclusion, and that the expressions used to describe the benefits resulting to men from His work all convey the same truth. What remains for us but to receive and earnestly to contend for this as the teaching of Scripture?—a teaching so plain and so often presented to us in varying forms, that it seems incredible that any with the Bible in their hands and free from the blinding influence of prejudice should come to any other conclusion.<sup>1</sup>

6. It may tend to confirm us in this conviction, besides being interesting in itself, if I cite the testimony of one or two men of unimpeachable scholarship and ability whose relations to evangelical truth were such as to free them from any bias or prepossession in favour of orthodox belief on this subject. And, first, I quote the statement of the late Dr. Wegscheider, who may be regarded as the Coryphæus of the old Rationalist party in Germany, whose opposition to evangelical truth is well known. In stating what he calls the *Doctrina Biblica* on the subject of Christ's expiatory work, after referring to the Jewish notions of sacrificial atonement, and stating that the Jews do not seem to have connected these with the Messiah (a statement to which we, of course, demur), he proceeds thus: "By the N. T. authors, however, this opinion was approved, and they transferred that famous prophecy in Isa. liii. to Jesus. . . . Whence, by almost all the sacred writers, in order to remove the odium and ignominy of the punishment endured by Jesus Christ, it was so expounded, especially by Paul, that they showed the death of Jesus Christ as expiatory and also vicarious, as if

<sup>1</sup> See Smeaton, *Doctrine of the Atonement as taught by Christ and by His Apostles*, 2 vols. Schmid's *Biblical Theology of the N. T.*, translated in Clark's Series.

the punishment incurred by the sins of all had been taken by Him on Himself, and that Jesus as a lamb, pure and immaculate, was destined by the Father Himself to death as a piacular victim, who by His own blood washed away the sins of the world. They seem, therefore, to have attributed to the very obedience or virtue of Jesus a certain vicarious efficacy, whilst the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews asserts that whatever pertains to piacular sacrifices is accomplished by Christ in the heavenly temple. And clearly do all these writers assert that pardon of sins is granted to men by God, on the ground of no deed of theirs, or of any other cause save the vicarious death of Christ alone, which they refer to God's supreme love for men."<sup>1</sup>

In these words we have the impartial testimony of a man who viewed the apostolical writings simply in the light of ancient books, the meaning and doctrine of which were to be explored, but by whose authority the free intellect of man was in nowise to be bound. With equal distinctness speaks another Rationalist divine, Dr. Von Ammon, on this head: "When the divine Teacher perceived that the end of His life was at hand, He compares His death, which elsewhere He teaches that He endured for the truth and the advantage of His followers, to a piacular sacrifice, by which was borne as a vicarious burden the punishment due to the sinner; and this comparison apostles and teachers in lengthened line have followed. For Paul teaches that Jesus was destined by the Father Himself as a piacular victim; Peter calls Him a lamb pure and immaculate; John declares that by His blood the sins of the world are washed away; the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews writes that all things that pertain to the sacrifices offered for sin are performed by Jesus in the heavenly temple."<sup>2</sup> This is the testimony of one who goes on to apologise for such statements as accommodations to the weakness of those whom the apostles had to teach, and who required to be conducted to higher and purer notions of religion by means of images and allegories, but which are by no means to be imitated by Christian teachers now, who are to avoid "a gaping admira-

<sup>1</sup> *Instit. Theol. Christ. Dog.*, 6th ed. pp. 437, 438.

<sup>2</sup> *Summa Theol. Christianæ*, 4th ed. pp. 282, 283.

tion of the letter of the dogma, lest they sink to the bloody ministry of the Levites."

Dr. Karl Hase of Jena, one of the ablest of German Rationalists, in his anonymous work, *Hutterus Redivivus*, or *Dogmatik of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, has given the following summary of the doctrine of the N. T. concerning the work of Christ: "In the N. T. Christ is set forth as sent by God to save the world ruined by sin. As the subjective condition of the salvation to be enjoyed through Him, there must be repentance, conversion, and heart purity; as the condition of God's giving salvation or pardoning sin, the whole life of Christ on earth, in its separate moments, above all, His death as a ransom-price for our sins, as a sin-offering in our stead, in virtue of which we are redeemed from the bondage of sin, and obtain forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and peace with God," etc.

I shall only cite one other testimony—that of De Wette, one of the greatest of modern German theologians, whether in respect to accuracy of learning, clearness of interpretation, or comprehensiveness and ingenuity of reasoning, though unhappily far from acquiescing in evangelical truth as taught in the Bible. In one of his earlier works, in giving a digest of what the apostles taught concerning Christ's work, he expresses himself as follows: "The redemption which is through Christ consists in reconciliation with God, or in deliverance from the wrath of God and from condemnation; more specifically (1) in the forgiveness of sins, *i.e.* the purification of the conscience from the feeling of guilt; (2) in deliverance from the feeling of sinfulness; hence (3) in trust in God; (4) deliverance from death, the punishment of sin, and the enjoyment of eternal life, and hope of eternal felicity;" and farther on he says: "Christ has saved men principally by what He has done and suffered. . . . The death of Christ Jesus is the central point of apostolic doctrine, and especially of that of Paul." And among the effects which he says are ascribed in the N. T. to the death of Christ, he enumerates His bearing, though innocent, the curse of the law, and thereby ransoming man therefrom. "This death," he adds, "Jesus, the blameless and sinless, endured for the sins of men, accomplishing thereby in the higher sense what the

sin-offerings of the O. T. were intended to accomplish, as a voluntary sin-offering, well-pleasing to God, as the self-offering of the High Priest."<sup>1</sup> In a work published not long before his death, De Wette expresses himself in reference to the offering of Christ as follows: "The sin-offering of Christ is a true and potent one, since He as man, in His death endured, though innocent, the punishment of sin. It thus enters into a real relation to us men and our necessities, the more especially that He has also atoned for our sins; for, from love to the human race, to deliver it from error and from sin, He undertook the strife with the sinners and the foes of truth, opposed Himself to the stream of sin, suffered its waves to go over Him, and so made the world's sins His own; and still more from this, that He endured this, not as an individual, but as one who united in Himself the most perfect human gifts and powers with the fullest love to the human race, and the most comprehensive human consciousness, so that with justice He is held as the *Substitute of mankind*." Those statements are not quoted as if they presented the best possible statement of revealed truth on the subject, but simply as indicating how to men of free and unbiassed minds the doctrine of Christ's propitiatory, sacrificial, and substitutionary work on our behalf commends itself as the doctrine undoubtedly taught by the sacred writers.



## CHAPTER XV.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### (iv.) *Theories of Christ's Sacrifice*—THE ATONEMENT.

We may now proceed on the assumption that we have sufficiently proved from Scripture the doctrine of the propitiatory, sacrificial, and substitutionary work of Christ on behalf of men. The question now arises: In what form and under what conditions may this doctrine be construed to the

<sup>1</sup> *Biblische Dogmatik*, 3rd ed. p. 256 ff.

- *Das Wesen des Christlichen Glaubens*, p. 292.



understanding as a theological dogma? What are the principles of moral truth that underlie it? What peculiarities in the relation between God and man does it contemplate, and how does it propose to deal with them? And in what form may the dogma be best enunciated so as on the one hand to render full respect to the statements of Scripture, and on the other to harmonize these with the unalterable convictions of the human reason? In short, What is the *rationale* of this doctrine?

The proposal of these questions brings before us the subject of THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST as a theological dogma, for it is by this that theologians have proposed to construe rationally or scientifically the statements of Scripture in respect of Christ's priestly work on our behalf.

In treating of this subject there are *three* questions which demand consideration. The first relates to the *Nature* of the Atonement, the second to the *Necessity* of the Atonement, and the third to the *Extent* of the Atonement. These three we are able to separate in thought; for under the first we inquire into the kind of satisfaction which was rendered by Christ as the propitiation for man; under the second we inquire whence arose the need for such a satisfaction being rendered; and under the third we inquire, For whose benefit or on whose behalf was this satisfaction rendered?—of some or of all? But, though thus separable in thought, it is hardly possible to conduct an investigation into any of them by itself and apart from the rest. For they so stand connected that our answer to one will involve our answer to the others, or presuppose it. Hence we find that among the diversities of opinion that subsist on this subject, there is hardly anything like a mingling of the opinion of one school on one of the points in question with the opinion of another school on any of the other points. The various answers to the questions all lie in parallel lines; they never cross or homologate. Thus, for instance, the advocates of an atonement of limited sufficiency hold also that the atonement of Christ was of the nature of a *quid pro quo*, a strict commercial transaction in which so much was given for so much; and with this stands inseparably connected the opinion that the necessity of this arose from the commutative justice of God. These three opinions stand in close logical connection with

each other, so that any man adopting one of them would be led in simple dialectical consistency to adopt the rest. On the other hand, if we embrace the opinion that the atonement was of unlimited sufficiency, we must exclude the idea of its being of the nature of a commercial transaction, and we must seek the necessity for it in something else than God's commutative justice. Under these circumstances it seems better, instead of pushing each of these questions separately, to take up the whole answer which each school has given to the question, What is the just theory of the Atonement?

### 1. *History of Opinion.*

As preparatory to this, it may be of advantage to take a brief survey of the history of opinion on this subject. This must be necessarily brief and cursory, touching upon only the more prominent points, and marking the successive stages of speculation, without entering into details or dwelling on minor specialities.

(1.) In the early ages of Christianity little or nothing was done towards the construction of any speculative theory on the subject of the atonement, or even towards any dogmatical expression of orthodox belief on that subject. The primitive Christians contented themselves with following closely the language of the apostles upon this subject, and seldom went beyond speaking in the most general terms of the way of salvation through Christ. "The Lord," says Barnabas,<sup>1</sup> "sustained to deliver His body into exile that we may be sanctified by remission of sins, which is by the sprinkling of His blood." "The Son of God, being Lord, and being about to judge the living and dead, suffered, that His stroke might make us alive." "Let us with intent eyes look at the blood of Christ," says Clement of Rome, "and let us see how it was precious to the Father, because being poured forth on account of our sin, it brought to the whole world the grace of repentance." "The Lord hath received us in love, on account of the love which He had for us. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, by the will of God gave His blood for us, even His flesh for our flesh, His soul for our soul."<sup>2</sup> "Let us constantly persevere

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* ch. v. c. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. ad Cor.* i. 7, 49.

in our hope," says Polycarp, "and the earnest Surety of our righteousness, which is Jesus Christ, who took away our sins in His own body on the tree."<sup>1</sup> "He gave up His own Son," says the author of the *Epistle to Diognetus* (c. 9), "as a ransom for us, the holy for the transgressors, the sinless for the wicked, the just for the unjust, the incorruptible for the mortal. What else than this righteousness could have covered our sins? By what was it possible for us transgressors and ungodly to be justified except by the Son of God alone? Oh, sweet transposition! oh, plan not to be explored! oh, unexpected benefits! that the transgression of many should be concealed in one righteous, the righteousness of one should justify many transgressors." These may be taken as specimens of the way in which the early Christians refer to the effects of our Saviour's work, and the benefits thence accruing to mankind; nor will any statements of a more precise kind be found, I apprehend, in the writings of the early Christians. In these, however, we may observe the distinct recognition not only of the derivation to men of benefit from the work of Christ, but of the vicarious character of that work on our behalf. "Every interpretation of this passage," says Dorner, speaking of the passage cited from Clement of Rome, "is forced which does not recognize in it the idea of substitution."<sup>2</sup> Some dim traces also may perhaps be found of the doctrine which, at a much later period, came to be received as the just expression of the truth on this head—the doctrine of Christ's death as a satisfaction for sin. The word "satisfactus" itself even occurs as applied to God in this connection in Tertullian's tract, *De Pudicitia* (c. 9), where, speaking of the returning sinner, he says, "He remembers his Father, God, returns to Him satisfied (*satisfacto redit*), receives his pristine robe, even that state Adam by transgression lost." In what sense Tertullian uses the term "satisfactus" here, may be determined from the usage of the term "satisfactio" in the Roman law. It meant the amends which a transgressor paid to justice, or to the person he had wronged, either by suffering the due penalty, or by giving something,

<sup>1</sup> *Ad Phil.* 8.

<sup>2</sup> *On the Person of Christ*, Div. I. vol. i. p. 98. Clark's Foreign Theological Library.

paying some fine, or doing some service, in order to escape punishment; and the injured party, or the party administering the law, was said to be thereby "satisfactus." When Tertullian, therefore, applies this term to God, he must intend to convey the idea that God, as the administrator of His law, has received some amends or compensation, such as has satisfied for man's transgression. Now, it is true, there is nothing in the passage to connect this with the work of Christ, nor does Tertullian formally intimate anywhere that he viewed the work of Jesus Christ as having made legal amends for man's transgressions. He simply says here that the sinner may now return to God as having received satisfaction for sin. At the same time, it is important to find the idea of satisfaction on the part of God so distinctly recognized as it is here; and it may be further remarked that though there is no reference here to Christ or His work, yet it is not easy to conceive to what else Tertullian *could* refer the satisfaction which God is said to have received, seeing he does not refer it to the endurance by man of the legal penalty, nor suppose that the mere act of return is the satisfaction God seeks. The "Deus satisfactus" to whom the prodigal is to return, is one whose "satisfactio," already obtained, is the prodigal's *encouragement* to return, not that which his returning is to effect. In such a case, what but the work of Christ remains as the means by which the satisfaction was effected?

A strange notion seems to have hovered dimly in the minds of some of the Fathers as to Christ's death having been a compensation to the devil for man's redemption. They seem to have thought that as a captive is redeemed by his ransom being paid to his captor, and as man is the slave of Satan, so it was to Satan that the payment was due by which man was to be set free. Thus Irenæus says: "Since the apostasy (*i.e.* the Apostate Power, Satan) unjustly ruled over us, and since by nature we belonged to God, he alienated us to an unnatural state by making us his own disciples; the potent Word of God justly turned against the apostasy itself, redeeming those things which were His own from it, not by force, as he in the beginning dominated over us."<sup>1</sup> In this passage it cannot

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Hær.* v. 1. 1.

be said that the doctrine in question is very clearly expressed ; and as Irenæus elsewhere says, when speaking of our being reconciled to God through Christ paying our debts, that “ we were indebted to none other than to Him whose law we had broken,” and explains the petition in our Lord’s Prayer, “ for give us our debts,” as referring to our transgressions of God’s precept, it is certain that if he held the notion at all that Christ ransomed us by giving satisfaction to Satan, he did not view this as a *complete* account of the effect of our Saviour’s work.<sup>1</sup> The opinion in question is more clearly affirmed by Origen. “ To whom,” says he, speaking of Christ, “ did He give His soul as a ransom-price for many ? Not unto God. To whom, then, but to the wicked one ? For he dominated over us until the ransom-price was given to him for us,” etc. ;<sup>2</sup> and again he says, “ If, then, we were bought with a price, as Paul affirms (1 Cor. vii. 23), we were beyond doubt bought from some one whose servants we were, and who proposed the price which he was willing to accept for setting free those whom he held. But it was the devil who held us, to whom we had been drawn aside by our sins. He therefore demanded as our price the blood of Christ.”<sup>3</sup> Origen appears along with this to have had some idea of Satan’s having been *outwitted* (*απάτηθεντι*) in this matter, from his imagining that he could obtain and keep mastery over the soul of Christ, and not perceiving that this was beyond his power.<sup>4</sup> All this shows how crude were the notions even of this great man on this subject ; and how far even the greatest thinkers and teachers in the early Church were from any just theory as to the purpose and effect of Christ’s death. In other parts of his writings Origen seems to regard the effect of Christ’s death as wholly *moral* ; as consisting in the moral influence which such an event was calculated to exert on man’s mind.

By others of the Fathers our Lord’s work is represented as a battle with Satan, the result of which was our rescue from his grasp ; so Gregory Nazianzen, Hilary of Poitiers, Gregory the Great, etc. The first of these repudiates with indignation —“ *φευ τῆς ὑβρεως* ” —the notion that Christ’s death was a

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Hær.* v. 16. 3 ; 17. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Comment. in Matt.* xx. 23, p. 726.

<sup>3</sup> *In Ep. ad Rom.* p. 495c.

<sup>4</sup> *Comment. in Matt.*, passage above cited.

λυτρον to the devil, and says that the λυτρον was rendered to God "on account of the dispensation (οικονομιαν) and the necessity of man's being sanctified by the human (i.e. the incarnation and passion) of God that He might deliver us, having by his power conquered the tyrant, and might bring us to Him through the mediation of His Son." <sup>1</sup>

In the writings of Athanasius we find the idea of a satisfaction to God's law, as that by which Christ's death became effectual for our salvation, brought forward. He argues that God having threatened death as the penalty of sin, was bound to inflict it on man as a sinner, and that it was only by the Logos becoming incarnate and dying for us that this necessity could be avoided. He speaks of the Logos incarnate as rendering by His death *ικανον ἀντὶ πάντων*, "a satisfaction for all;" and speaks of Him as bringing His body as an *ἀντιψυχον*, "an equivalent for life," and thereby fulfilling for all what was owing by them through His death.<sup>2</sup> In like manner, Hilary speaks of Christ's passion as being voluntary, endured in order that satisfaction might thereby be made for the penalty that was due.<sup>3</sup> And Ambrose says, "He endured death that the sentence might be fulfilled, and He might satisfy justice by the curse of sinful flesh even unto the death."<sup>4</sup> Cyrill of Alexandria teaches the same doctrine, and so do others of the later Fathers; the idea of satisfaction and sacrificial substitution becoming apparently more clearly defined and distinctly recognized as the thoughts of men were more firmly directed to this subject. It was reserved, however, for a writer at a much later period to work out this idea thoroughly and present a theory of the atonement based on principles of a juridical kind, which in substance has been the prevailing theory ever since. I refer to Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury in the 11th century, in whose treatise, entitled, *Cur Deus Homo?* there is developed the theory of the atonement of which I speak.

(2.) This remarkable man, whose name is associated in the history of our country with the cause of priestly and papal domination, of which he was the pertinacious and ever watchful advocate, was originally a monk in the Abbey of Bee in

<sup>1</sup> *Orat.* xlii. p. 691c.

<sup>2</sup> *De Incarnatione*, c. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *In Ps.* liii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> *De fuya Sac.* c. 7.

Normandy, and was elevated to the See of Canterbury in 1093. He was by birth an Italian, and possessed all the acuteness of intellect by which scholars of that nation are commonly distinguished. He brought to his new and elevated station a high reputation for sanctity as well as learning; and his life had been previously so much that of the secluded and studious monk, that we can give full credit to his professions of unwillingness to accept the honour which was pressed upon him when summoned to succeed his friend Lanfranc in the unquiet dignity from which death had relieved him. With Anselm's conduct as a churchman and politician we have here nothing to do. It is to his efforts and labours as a theologian that the theologian turns with interest and admiration.

His views of the atonement are developed in a work on the incarnation entitled, *Cur Deus Homo?* This work seems to have been commenced whilst he was at Bec, but it was not finished till some time after he was removed to Canterbury. The first book, transcribed by a Brother Ermer, was sent to his former associates at Bec in 1094. His disputes with the king and other public distractions prevented his continuing the work; nor was it till his exile in 1098 that he found the necessary time and leisure for this work. Banished by William Rufus, he retired to Italy, and there in a house belonging to one of his former pupils, John, Abbot of St. Salvator in Telesse, he quietly resumed and finished this treatise. The whole work was revised on his return to England, and transcribed by the monks at Canterbury. It made its appearance in a complete form in 1104.

The work is in the form of a dialogue, which form, Anselm says, he has adopted "*quoniam ea quæ per interrogationem et responsionem investigantur, multis et maxime tardioribus ingeniis magis potent et ideo plus placent*" (i. 1). The interlocutors are Anselm himself and the monk Boso, who occupies the place of the inquirer in this colloquy, whilst Anselm reserves to himself that of respondent ("*Boso querat et Anselmus respondet*"). He has divided it into two books, and the summary of his treatise is this: After a prologue, in which he lays down some general principles and refers to some erroneous views of the atonement, he proceeds to develop his views on the subject of satisfaction. This he defines as

not merely a rendering to God of the honour due to Him, but a doing of something which shall make up for that dishonour done to Him by sin: "Debet omnis qui peccat honorem quem rapuit Deo solvere; et hæc est satisfactio quam omnis peccator debet Deo facere" (i. 11). Without such satisfaction, he contends, sin cannot be forgiven; it is the *conditio sine qua non* of such forgiveness. He then proceeds to show that man cannot render to God this satisfaction for sin, and that unless it be rendered for him he must perish. From this he advances to show that only the God-man crucified could render the due satisfaction, and so take away the sins of the world. He thus accounts for the Incarnation, and establishes the doctrine of vicarious satisfaction as the ground of our acceptance with God. His idea is that our Lord as God-man by submitting to death rendered spontaneously an act of homage to the divine law so immense that He thereby acquired such an infinite merit, that it is sufficient to entitle all to whom He shall please to extend it to salvation. "Whom more justly shall He make heirs of a claim which He Himself does not need and of the overflow of His fulness than those, His parents and brethren, whom He sees bound by so many and so great debts wasting by want in the depths of misery, so as that they shall be exempt from what they owe for sins, and shall receive what, because of sin, they want" (ii. 19)? He thus, as he believes, has proved that the mercy of God, which seemed to have perished when only His justice and man's sin were looked at, "is so great and so accordant with justice that it cannot be thought greater or more just" (ii. 20), and has laid a firm basis on which all may be invited to approach unto God, provided they come as God has appointed (ii. 19).

Baur pronounces this theory of Anselm "a fine specimen of the dialectico-speculative acuteness of the Scholastics,"<sup>1</sup> and there can be no doubt that it laid the basis for the views which have in later times passed as alone orthodox regarding the nature of our Lord's work on our behalf. His doctrine, however, as developed by himself, cannot be accepted as satisfactory. He has, in fact, mixed two different theories as to the work of Christ which are not compatible with each

<sup>1</sup> *Versohnungslehre*, p. 189, quoted by Hagenbach, *Hist. of Doct.* ii. p. 40.



other. According to the one, sin, being an infraction of the divine honour, could be forgiven only when God was appeased by that honour being restored to Him of which sin had, as it were, deprived Him. According to the other, sin being a positive act of iniquity, by which God's rights were invaded, justice required that legal satisfaction should be rendered ere the sin could be forgiven. There are here obviously two distinct grounds on which the need of atonement for man's sin is rested—the ground of honour and the ground of justice. Now these two cannot both hold in respect of the same necessity. Honour is a personal consideration of which law takes no cognizance, an injury which therefore cannot involve any question of justice. Justice, on the other hand, is a legal consideration, and when it comes up it supersedes all considerations of a purely personal kind. It is further to be observed that on neither of the grounds adduced by Anselm can the *necessity* of satisfaction or atonement ere sin could be forgiven be demonstrated. For, if it was merely the divine honour that sin insulted, there seems no reason why God, of His grace and majesty, might not have forgiven the sinner without satisfaction, just as an earthly sovereign might magnanimously forgive a personal insult without demanding any compensation for the offence thereby done to his honour. If, on the other hand, the rule of justice as expressed by Anselm implies that man can receive from God the gift of pardon only after there has been restored to God what the sinner has taken away from Him, this principle belongs solely to the sphere of *private rights*. The question is one simply of contract or debt, in which God, the Creditor, demands of man the payment of what he owes, or an equivalent, before He will give him a discharge. But as the generous and large-hearted master in our Lord's parable forgave his servant all his debt, one does not see why God, the all-merciful and all-bountiful, might not forgive to man his debts without asking any compensation or satisfactory equivalent. Anselm therefore cannot be regarded as having solved the great problem to which he addressed himself. To him, however, belongs the merit of being the first clearly to present the problem itself, and to indicate the direction in which a solution of it is to be found.

In his own time Anselm did not find general acceptance of his doctrine, nor among his immediate successors. His principal opponent was Abaelard, whose doctrinal standpoint was such as to induce him to attach supreme importance to the merely moral aspect and efficacy of our Lord's work. Starting from this, he strenuously opposed the idea that Christ came to redeem man from the power of the devil, whose hold over men, being a mere act of usurpation, needed no redemption to loosen it. What man needed to be delivered from was the love and power of sin, and this Christ effected by assuming our nature, teaching us truth, and setting an example of true obedience even unto death. "By this," says Abaelard, "He has bound us to Himself by love, so that, inflamed by so great a benefit of divine grace, our love to Him shall not shrink from enduring anything for His sake." "Therefore," he adds, "our redemption is that supreme love in us, produced by the passion of Christ, which not only frees us from the servitude of sin, but acquires for us the true liberty of the sons of God, so that we fulfil all things by love rather than fear of Him, who hath showed to us such grace, than which, as He Himself attests, greater cannot be found."<sup>1</sup> Such language would seem to lead to the conclusion that no legal element mingled in the transaction; that redemption is effected solely by moral means, by the love of God operating so on man's soul through the work of Christ as to destroy sin in him, and with sin to obliterate its guilt. "Anselm," says Baur, "considered the last cause of redemption to be the divine justice which requires an infinite equivalent for the infinite guilt of sin;" Abaelard "held it to be the free grace of God, which by kindling love in the breast of man blots out sin, and with sin its guilt."<sup>2</sup> There are other passages, however, in Abaelard's writings which induce the conclusion that this would be to give only a partial view of his doctrine. Thus, in his *Summa Theologiae* (ch. xxiii.), he says, "Man, when he sinned, separated himself by his sin from his Lord. Therefore the Son of God came, that as a fitting Mediator He might free man from sin and infuse

<sup>1</sup> *Comment. in Ep. ad Rom.*, Bk. iii., *Opp.* p. 550, quoted by Münscher, ii. p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> Cited by Hagenbach.

into him His own love. But this He did by offering to the Father the man (*i.e.* the human nature) which He had assumed, that is, by *giving man as a price for man* (*pretium pro homine hominem dando*). Tropically this is called a price. This, therefore, is the certain and proper cause of redemption, as both the apostle to the Romans and Christ in the Gospels have taught." From this extract it is plain that in some sense Abælard held the doctrine of Christ's death being a satisfaction to God, and that the satisfaction rested on the vicariousness of His suffering for us—man is redeemed by Christ's humanity being given for man. Whilst he recoiled from the position that Christ's death was literally a price paid for man's redemption, he yet evidently felt that something more than the mere moral effect of the love displayed by Him was necessary in order to reduce the separation which sin had made between us and God. When he pronounces the giving of a price for man by Christ as the certain and proper cause of redemption, it would require an ingenuity surpassing even his to avoid his being shut up to the admission of a view of the nature of the atonement not essentially differing from that of Anselm.

The view of Anselm came to be that commonly followed in the Church—the orthodox view to which the scholastic divines generally adhered. Whilst, however, it was commonly held that Christ's work made satisfaction to God for sin, diversities of opinion arose as to the relation of the satisfaction to the guilt. The Thomists, the followers of Thomas Aquinas, held by what they had called a *satisfactio abundans*; and Aquinas himself is the first to broach the opinion that the sufferings of Christ were in all respects exactly the same as men deserved to suffer for their sins, only that these sufferings being those of a divine being, of the God-man, had a superabundant value, in virtue of which all blessings were secured to His people as theirs of right. Scotus, on the other hand, maintained that the value of Christ's death was not intrinsic, and was limited; that it was *made* of value simply by God's accepting it as an atonement for sin; and that this, its fictitious value, was measured by the actual acceptance of it by God on behalf of sinners. The controversy between the Thomists and the Scotists raged with no small fury for many

years, and still, it may be said, subsists within the bosom of the Romish Church between the Dominicans, with whom side the Jesuits, and the Franciscans. Luther and his adherents embraced the doctrine of the Thomists, and this became in consequence the prevailing view in the Lutheran Church. It is technically called "The Theory of Acceptatio," because it presumes the actual acceptance of a sufficient satisfaction for sin by God from Christ. The other view is called "The Theory of Acceptilatio,"—a term borrowed from the Roman law, and used to denote a legal fiction by which a creditor who had not really received payment in full of his claims nevertheless, when formally asked if his claims had been satisfied, admitted that they were. So the Scotists regarded the satisfaction of Christ: it was not the actual paying of our debts, nor had it any intrinsic fitness to satisfy for sin, but in so far as God is pleased of His free grace to pardon sin on account of it, it is held by Him as if it were a satisfaction for sin.

By Calvin and the Reformed Churches the doctrine of Anselm and Aquinas was received as by the Lutherans; the only difference between them being that, whilst some of the Lutherans held that the satisfaction of Christ was accomplished by His *obedientia passiva usque ad mortem*, the Calvinists contended that it was accomplished by His *obedientia activa* as well as by His *obedientia passiva*. This is a difference of some importance in itself, but it does not affect the point now before us, on which both parties were substantially agreed. "Peccata remitti propter Christum, qui sua morte pro nostris peccatis satisfecit," is the language of the Augsburg Confession; "Christus peccata mundi in se recepit et sustulit divinæque justitiæ satisfecit," is that of the Helvetic Confession. Between these two utterances there is no appreciable difference.

By the Socinians this doctrine was wholly rejected. As they repudiated the divinity of our Lord, there was for them no such problem as Anselm felt himself called to discuss in his *Cur Deus Homo?* All that they had to do was to account for the language of Scripture in reference to the efficacy of Christ's death, and the relation of that to our deliverance from sin. And this they do in the following

manner, as set forth in the *Racovian Catechism*: "In what sense is Christ said to have died for our sins or on account of our sins? In the same sense, though much fuller and more perfect, in which the victims were said to be slain for sins. To Christ, Himself innocent of all sin, our sins were the cause of death, which He endured that He might free us from the guilt of them all; and this is the effect of that death, that He might take away and abolish them in us. . . . By His stripes we are healed, for by so great love He converts us wanderers to Himself" (p. 277). "What do you think concerning reconciliation? That to us, who were the enemies of God, and alienated from Him on account of our sins, Christ Jesus has showed the way how it behoves us to be converted to God and to be reconciled to Him; and for the doing of this He has given us a strong impulse by His death, in which the love of God towards us has appeared so great" (p. 284). The ground thus assumed is obviously that of Abælard and the advocates of the purely moral effect of Christ's death. His death bears on our reconciliation with God, and furthers this simply by supplying to us a motive to obedience and love which may constrain us to be at peace with Him.

(3.) The teachings of the Socinians, instead of furthering the development of the dogma, were plainly regressive; but they had the effect of calling forth a writer to whom theological science owes not a little in this department. I allude to Hugo Grotius, who, in opposition to Socinus and his school, issued a little work, entitled, *Defensio Fidei Catholicæ de Satisfactione Christi*, in which, though professedly maintaining the doctrine of Anselm, he has so modified it as to introduce a theory of the atonement essentially different. In the theory which the Church had adopted from Anselm, the necessity of satisfaction for sin was rested on God's essential justice, or on the idea of absolute justice, to which adequate compensation must be made before sin could be remitted. To this theory Socinus objected that it rendered forgiveness impossible; for if Christ paid man's debts to God as his creditor, or if He did for man exactly what man ought to have done for himself, then was man free, and nothing remained to be forgiven. To escape from this Grotius resorted to a distinction known to lawyers between *solutio* and *satisfactio*. If the very thing

owing be paid, either by the debtor himself or by another for him, his debt is then discharged and annulled; there is no remission of it. But if not the very thing due, but something which the creditor is willing to hold equivalent to it, is rendered, then there is room for remission, for the debt remains until the creditor shall signify his pleasure to accept the equivalent.<sup>1</sup> Now this, says Grotius, is what takes place in the remission of sins. Christ has not paid the very debt which man owed, but He has done what is equivalent to this, and God graciously accepts this on man's behalf, and on the ground of it remits his transgression, pardons his sin. But in what does this differ from the "Acceptilatio" theory? In nothing thus far; but Grotius proceeds to inquire what it is that Christ has done so as to furnish what God may accept as sufficient for the forgiveness of sins. And here he contends for an intrinsic fitness in what Christ did to meet the exigencies of the case, so that it became an equivalent for man's pardon, not by the mere grace of God in accepting it, but because it was in itself adapted to that end. But how? it may be asked. In answer to this Grotius brings forward the view of God as a Governor and a Judge, and shows that in law penalty may be safely remitted to the transgressor if there be a sufficient penal example given, such as shall deter others from the commission of similar offences—such as shall uphold the authority of law and government. He thus bases man's forgiveness on the penal example of Christ, suffering for us as a victim to the rectoral demands of God. According to him, God could not remit sins without a penal example of the evil and enormity of sin; this was furnished by our Lord's obedience unto death; and thus His death becomes the necessary condition of forgiveness—that on the ground of which alone this could be bestowed.

It is easy to see that the theory thus presented is no longer the simple Satisfaction theory of the schoolmen. In this God appears simply as man's creditor, whose own sense of justice in the abstract forbids him to remit what is due; according to the theory of Grotius, God appears in His governmental

<sup>1</sup> "Solvit qui creditori pecuniam omnem numerat; satisfacit qui quocunque alio deo dedit rem placat. aut. non satisfactionem, p<sup>ro</sup> more, par est debitiæ solutione," et c. Ulpian.

character as one who is bound to inflict the decreed penalty on offences committed against the law He has to administer. In the one case, the satisfaction has to be rendered to God Himself to appease His wrath ; in the other, it has to be rendered to the rectoral authority of God so as to reconcile forgiveness of sin with the integrity of law and the stability of law. Satisfaction, in the old Church theory, was the simple payment of the debt of man by Christ ; satisfaction, in the Grotian theory, means the suffering of Christ for man as a penal example. The aspect of the one is chiefly towards something which is past ; the aspect of the other is chiefly towards something that is possible in the future : the one is therapeutic, the other prophylactic.

(4.) The opinions above described have continued to be those between which the judgments of divines have been divided in later times. Every theory of the atonement that has been advocated since the time of Grotius proceeds on one or other of the following assumptions :—*a.* That the death of Christ was a satisfaction to God's justice for man's sin ; *b.* that it was a ground or reason in the divine government on which sin could be forgiven ; *c.* that it was a fact which exerts so powerful a moral influence on the sinner who duly receives it that it draws him away from his sin, and so destroys sin and restores him to God. Every theory of the atonement which has been advocated is a modification of one or other of these fundamental principles, or an attempt to combine them.

The two great antagonist theories of the atonement are the Satisfactionist theory and the Moral theory. Each of these it will be our endeavour carefully to state and to examine, for the purpose of ascertaining whether they, or any modification of them or combination of them, can be accepted as furnishing a just view of this all-important subject. Meanwhile I may mention, whilst I am dealing with the subject historically, one or two peculiarities of opinion which are worthy of notice, though not of sufficient importance to require special examination.

Among the Lutheran divines there were not a few who held the doctrine of a double merit of Christ, one arising from His active obedience, the other from His passive endurance. In virtue of the former it was maintained that He satisfied the

law for sinners; in virtue of the latter He satisfied the divine justice for sinners; so that believers obtain through His work both acquittal and a right to spiritual blessings. “*Agendo culpam expiavit, patiendæ poenæ nostram sustulit*” (Quenstedt). “By His active obedience Christ most perfectly fulfilled in our stead the law of God, so that penitent sinners, applying to themselves by a true faith this vicarious fulfilment of the law, are deemed just before God. By His passive obedience Christ transferred to Himself the sins of the whole world, and spontaneously suffered the penalties due to them, . . . so that to those who believe in Christ the Redeemer sins are not imputed for eternal punishment” (Hollaz). But this distinction is now generally repudiated by divines as unauthorized by Scripture, as in itself futile, and as capable of being abused to erroneous conclusions.

By some Arminian divines the Scotist doctrine of *Acceptatio* is held under this form, that the work of Christ, ending in His death, was a pledge of the divine grace necessary for our repose; in other words, that the whole work of Christ was a divine accommodation to the permanent requirements of the human heart; assuring men of God’s willingness to pardon sin, and of His love to sinners, and at the same time authorizing men, inasmuch as the sufferings of Christ were endured for the purpose of liberating sinners, to regard the misery and pains of His death as destined for them, as whole some for them, and consequently that they, looking to the suffering and death of Christ, should not fear misery for themselves after this life.<sup>1</sup>

The views advanced by the Rationalists are substantially identical with those of the Socinians, namely, that the work of Christ was merely exemplary, and is efficacious for our salvation simply as it exerts a moral and persuasive influence upon us. Some philosophical divines, following the leading of Kant, regard the death of Christ as having a symbolical significance. He saw in it the ethical process of the conflict of the good principle with the evil, and the victory of the former over the latter,—a process in which the new man has to bear the sufferings of the old. “The passing out,” says he, “of the corrupt nature into the good is in itself a sacrifice,

<sup>1</sup> See Morus, *Epitome Theol. Christ.*, p. 153, 3rd ed.



and an entrance upon a long course of evils of life which comes upon the new man in the mind of the Son of God, to wit, simply for the sake of the good, but which properly are due as punishment to another, namely, the old man (for this, morally, is another)."<sup>1</sup> This is not very intelligible; but the meaning seems to be that in the victory of the good over the evil in a man there is an offering up of the old corrupt nature, a sacrifice of the old self; and that the sacrifice of Christ was a symbol of this. In this case His sacrifice really effected nothing; it was merely an illustration of what we must effect in ourselves, and is helpful to this simply as it gives some stimulus to our activity by way of example. An opinion like this is plainly rather an ingenious evasion of the question, What was the atonement of Christ? than any attempt to solve it. On this account it deserves notice simply as one of the vagaries into which men, even of the highest intellect, may be betrayed when they speculate on theological questions without submitting to the teaching of Scripture.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE ATONEMENT.

#### 2. *Principal Theories of the Sacrifice of Christ.*

In the sketch I have given of the history of opinion on the subject of the atonement, I have endeavoured to indicate the different views which have been advanced on this head, and their position relatively to each other. The two great antagonist theories are, on the one hand, that which regards the work of Christ as being designed to effect reconciliation between God and man by the offering of a legal satisfaction for man's transgression; and, on the other, that which resolves the effect of Christ's work into its moral power in moving man to seek reconciliation with God. Of these, various modifications have been advanced by different writers and accepted by theological schools of greater or less importance.

<sup>1</sup> *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen*, u.s.w., 2 Stuck.

To examine all these in detail would require more time than we have at our disposal, and therefore I shall content myself with stating the leading opinions on both sides, and offering such remarks as may serve to indicate the worth of each. After noticing some of the more recent speculations which have been advanced on the subject in this country and America, I shall endeavour to lay down those principles which seem to me to be essential to our reaching a just view on this subject, and which seem to conduct to the view I am prepared to advocate.

Beginning with those who look upon the atonement of Christ in the light of a legal satisfaction or judicial expiation, I remark that all agree in thinking that the work of Christ derives its worth from the union of the divine and the human natures in His person, and all admit that worth to be not only supreme, but infinite. There is a difference, however, between certain schools or classes of them as to the nature of the compensation rendered to the divine government and law on our behalf by Christ, His special purpose and intention in offering it, and the consequent extent to which His work was designed to be sufficient. Of these varying shades of opinion we notice the following:—

(1.) *That of the Hyper-Calvinists*,—a name which has been given, not because those to whom it is attached are regarded as having gone beyond Calvin in their doctrine, but because they carry the views of Calvin on this head to their utmost extent, and hold them with unbending rigidity.

*a.* According to them, the work of Christ was of the nature of a price paid for the release of man from penalties which he had incurred,—a price which bore a fixed and exact relation to the amount of debt which man had incurred by his sins. According to this view, what He rendered was strictly a *quid pro quo*; there was as much on the one side as on the other; the suffering obedience of the Saviour being an exact equivalent for the sins of the saved, and that not by a *solutio tantadem*, but by a *solutio ejusdem*, *i.e.* not by paying something of equal value of the same kind, but by paying the very thing that was due.

This opinion cannot be ascribed to Calvin, who expresses himself in a very general manner as to the satisfaction made

for man by Christ. "When we say," he remarks, "that favour was procured for us by the merit of Christ we mean this, that by His blood we have been cleansed, and that His death was an expiation for our sins." "This I take for granted, that if Christ satisfied for our sins, if He suffered the punishment due to us, if by His obedience He propitiated God, if, in fine, He, the just, suffered for the unjust, then salvation was procured by His righteousness for us, which is equivalent to our having merited it."<sup>1</sup> These statements are so general that they might be advanced by any one holding the Satisfaction theory.

Among Calvin's followers, however, both on the Continent and in this country, there were found some by whom the doctrine as above stated was asserted in all its rigidity. Not only was it maintained that Christ became "sponsor for those alone who by eternal election had been given to Him, . . . and them alone did He reconcile unto God," —that He did not make satisfaction or in any way die save for all and only those whom the Father had given Him, and who are actually saved;<sup>3</sup> but the opinion was broadly avowed that there was a transference of the sin of the elect to Christ, and that He actually suffered the same as they should have suffered, and thereby paid for their redemption exactly what the law demanded as the due penalty of their offences. Thus, Owen says of the satisfaction made by Christ: "It was a full, valuable compensation made to the justice of God for all the sins of all those for whom He made satisfaction by undergoing that same punishment which, by reason of the obligation that was upon them, they themselves were bound to undergo. When I say *the same*" he goes on to explain, "I mean essentially the same in weight and pressure, though not in all accidents of duration and the like; for it was impossible that He should be detained by death."<sup>4</sup> Farther on, in the same treatise,<sup>5</sup> he says, in reference to the laying of sins upon Christ, God "charged on Him and imputed to Him all the sins of all the elect, and proceeded against Him accordingly. He stood as our Surety, really charged with the whole debt,

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, ii. 17. 4, 3.

— *Form. Cons. Helvet.*, art. 13

<sup>3</sup> Witsius, *Æcon. Fæd.*, ii. c. 9, § 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Death of Christ*, Works, vol. x. p. 269.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 285.

and was to pay the utmost farthing, as a surety is to do if it be required of him; though he borrow not the money, nor have one penny of that which is in the obligation, yet if he be sued to an execution, he must pay all. The Lord Christ (if I may so say) was sued by His Father's justice unto an execution, in answer whereunto He underwent all that was due to sin." In another treatise the same great theologian gives the following as the expression of his view concerning the satisfaction rendered by Christ: "Christ paid the same thing that was in the obligation; as if in things real a friend should pay twenty pounds for him that owed so much and not anything in another kind." . . . "I affirm that He paid *idem*, that is, the same thing that was in the obligation, and not *tantundem*, something equivalent thereunto in another kind."<sup>1</sup> And farther on he says, "The assertion I seek to maintain is this: That the punishment which our Saviour underwent was the same that the law required of us, God relaxing His law as to the person suffering, but not as to the penalty suffered."<sup>2</sup>

These statements of Owen may be regarded as presenting clearly and in few words what were the views entertained by the English Puritans and early Nonconformists regarding the nature and extent of the atonement made for sin by Christ. They believed that to be in itself of infinite value; but they regarded it as limited both in design and in effect to the elect, and as being of the nature of a paying to the law of a *quid pro quo*, an enduring by Christ of the very penalty which they as sinners had deserved in order to secure their deliverance. By some the commercial character ascribed to the atonement was carried out still farther, and the idea of an actual and exact commutation of man's sins on the one hand, and Christ's righteousness on the other, was entertained and advocated. The principal representative of this school was Dr. Crisp, minister of Brinkworth in Wiltshire, about the middle of the 17th century; and it numbers the names of Chauncy, Saltmarsh, and Gill among its adherents. The republication of Dr. Crisp's works by his son at the close of the century led to his peculiar views on the subject of the atonement being commented upon by Dr. Daniel Williams,

<sup>1</sup> *Death of Christ*, Works, vol. x. c. ii. p. 438.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 447.

an English Presbyterian minister, in a work entitled, *Gospel-Truth Stated and Vindicated* (Lond. 1692), which passed through several editions, and gave rise to a somewhat violent controversy. Of the views advanced by Dr. Crisp a correct idea will be obtained from his own words, which I quote from the work of Dr. Williams. Writing of the laying of our sins on Christ, he says: "It is the iniquity itself that the Lord hath laid upon Christ; not only our punishment, but our very sin. . . . This transaction of our sins to Christ is a real act; our sins so became Christ's that He stood the sinner in our stead. . . . To speak more plainly: Hast thou been an idolater, hast thou been a blasphemer, hast thou been a murtherer, an adulterer, a thief, a liar, a drunkard? If thou hast part in the Lord, all these transgressions of thine become actually the transgressions of Christ." In another place he thus insists on the transfer of our sin to Christ and His righteousness to us: "Mark it well: Christ Himself is not so completely righteous, but we are as righteous as He; nor we so completely sinful, but Christ became, being made sin, as completely sinful as we. Nay more, we are the same righteousness, for we are made the righteousness of God; that very sinfulness that we were, Christ is made that very sinfulness before God. So that here is a direct change—Christ takes our person and condition and stands in our stead, we take Christ's person and condition and stand in His stead." These passages may serve to convey a clear view of the doctrines held by this school—a school which, though numbering among its adherents some of the best and holiest of men, has been the main support and promoter of antinomianism in this country. By the great body of the English Nonconformists these views have been and continue to be repudiated. Bates, Howe, Alsop, along with many other very decided Calvinists, joined at the time in denouncing them as unscriptural and dangerous; and in later times the vigorous pen of Andrew Fuller—not to mention less famous names—was employed in exposing them and advocating Calvinistic views apart from them. Even Dr. Owen raised his voice against them, for in one of his greatest treatises, that on the *Doctrine of Justification by Faith*, he expressly says: "Nothing is more absolutely true, nothing is more sacredly or assuredly believed by us, than that nothing

which Christ did or suffered, nothing that He undertook or underwent, did, or could, constitute Him subjectively, inherently, and thereon personally, a sinner or guilty of any sin of His own. To bear the guilt or blame of other men's faults—to be *alienæ culpæ reus*—makes no man a sinner, unless he did unwisely or irregularly undertake it" (p. 201); and again: "Our sin was imputed to Christ only as He was our Surety for a time—to this end, that He might take it away, destroy it, and abolish it. It never was imputed unto Him so as to make any alteration absolutely in His personal state and condition" (p. 203). And, on the other hand, he strenuously maintains that "notwithstanding this full, plenary satisfaction once made for the sins of the world that shall be saved, yet all men continue equally to be born by nature 'children of wrath,' and whilst they believe not the wrath of God abideth on them, that is, they are obnoxious unto and under the curse of the law" (p. 216); and again: "The righteousness of Christ is not transfused into us so as to be made inherently and subjectively ours, as it was in Him" (p. 218). From these passages it is evident that Owen was far from holding the extreme views of Dr. Crisp and his school.

The views of Owen were accepted and advocated by the great American theologian Jonathan Edwards, who, in his *Essay concerning the Necessity and Reasonableness of the Christian Doctrine of Satisfaction for Sin*, uses such language as the following: "Christ suffered the full punishment of the sin that was imputed to Him, or offered that to God that was fully and completely equivalent to what we owed to God's justice for our sins" (p. 384). "The satisfaction of Christ by suffering the punishment of sin is properly to be distinguished as being in its own nature different from the merit of Christ. For merit is only some excellency or worth. But when we consider Christ's sufferings merely as the satisfaction for the guilt of another, the excellency of Christ's act in suffering does not at all come into consideration; but only these two things, viz. their equality or equivalence to the punishment that the sinner deserved; and secondly, the union between Him and them, or the propriety of His being accepted in suffering as the representative of the sinner" (p. 389).

*b.* The arguments by which this view of the work of Christ is sought to be sustained are chiefly the following, which I take from Owen, whose masculine style of thought and exhaustive method of dealing with a subject are such as usually to leave little for any one else to add to what he advances on the side he espouses.

(*a*) Scripture expressly makes known to us the fact of a transference of punishment in respect of the subjects suffering it, but not one word is uttered respecting any change of the kind of punishment, but rather is the contrary affirmed; see Rom. viii. 32, "He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all."

(*b*) All the punishment due to us was contained in the curse and sanction of the law, that is, the penalty under which sin has brought man. But this was endured by Christ (Gal. iii. 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us"), so that He suffered the very penalty we had incurred.

(*c*) When God condemneth sin, then He condemns it in that very punishment which is due unto it in the sinner, or rather to the sinner for it. He hath revealed but one rule of His proceeding in this case. Now He condemned sin in the flesh of Christ, or of Him sent in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. viii. 3, "God sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh"). The condemning of sin is the infliction of the punishment due to sin.

(*d*) The whole penalty of sin is death (Gen. ii. 17). This Christ underwent for us (Heb. ii. 9). And to die for another is to undergo that death which that other should have undergone (2 Sam. xviii. 33). But as eternal death may be considered two ways, either as such *in potentia*, and in its own nature, or as actually; so our Saviour underwent it, not in the latter, but in the former sense (Heb. ii. 9, 14). The dignity of His Person (1 Pet. iii. 18; Heb. ix. 26, 28), which raises the estimation of punishment, makes what He suffered æquipotent to actual eternal suffering. There is a sameness in Christ's sufferings with that in the obligation in respect of essence, and equivalency in respect of attendancies, such as duration and the like.

(*e*) In the meeting of our iniquities upon Christ (Isa. liii. 6),

and His being thereby made sin for us (2 Cor. v. 21), lay the very punishment of our sin, as to us threatened, upon Him.

(f) The Scriptures describe His sufferings in such a way as to indicate that He suffered what was threatened to sin. Thus, His sufferings are called “stripes” or “wounds,” which were so laid on Him in our stead, that we are healed thereby (Isa. liii. 5 ; 1 Pet. ii. 24) ; they are described as a being sorrowful exceedingly even unto death, as a being troubled, a being in agony, etc. All these indicate that the bitterness of the death due to sin was fully on His soul. It was no less than the weight of the wrath of God and the whole punishment due to sin that He wrestled under.<sup>1</sup>

(g) The death of Christ is in different places of Scripture restricted to His people, His elect, His Church, and His sheep ; and therefore the good purchased thereby ought not to be extended to those who are not of this class, to those who are reprobates, to those who are without.

(h) For whom Christ died, He died as their sponsor, in their room and stead, that He might free them from guilt and desert of death (Isa. liii. 5, 6 ; Rom. v. 6–8 ; Gal. iii. 13 ; 2 Cor. v. 21). Evidently He changeth turns with us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. . . . Christ dying for men made satisfaction for their sins, that they should not die. Now, for what sins He made satisfaction, for them the justice of God is satisfied ; which surely is not done for the sins of the reprobates, because He justly punisheth them to eternity upon themselves (Matt. v. 26).

(i) For whom Christ died, for them He also rose again to make intercession for them ; for whose offences He was delivered, for their justification He was raised. He is an High Priest to make intercession for them for whom, by His death, He obtained eternal redemption. These two acts of His priesthood are not to be separated ; it belongs to the same Mediator for sin to sacrifice and to intercede ; our assurance that He is our Advocate is grounded on His being the propitiation for our sins ; He is an Advocate for every one for whose sins His blood was a propitiation. But Christ does not intercede for all ; He is not a Mediator for them that perish, nor an Advocate for them whose suit fails ; and

<sup>1</sup> *Of the Death of Christ*, Works, vol. x. c. iv. p. 448.



therefore the benefit of His death must also be restrained to them who are finally partakers of both.

(j) For whom Christ died, He merited grace and glory, faith, and salvation, and reconciliation with God. But this He has not done for all and every one. Many never do believe; the wrath of God remains on some, abiding on them that believe not. Now, to be reconciled to one and yet lie under His heavy wrath seem to be *ἀσυστάτα*, things that will scarce consist together.

(k) Christ died for them whom God gave to Him to be saved (John xvii. 6). He laid down His life for the sheep (x. 11). But all are not the sheep of Christ, all are not given to Him by God to bring to glory: for of those that are so given there is not one that perisheth, for He giveth eternal life to as many as God hath given Him.

(l) Those for whom Christ laid down His life are those whom the Father loved, and whom it was His good pleasure to endow with spiritual blessings. But this love and this good pleasure of His evidently comprehend some when others are excluded; so that there must be some for whom Christ did not die.<sup>1</sup>

In another of his works Owen thus argues the limitation of Christ's atoning work: "I may add this dilemma to our Universalists" [he means those who hold that Christ died for all]: "God imposed His wrath due unto, and Christ underwent the pains of hell for, either all the sins of all men, or all the sins of some men, or some sins of all men. If the last, some sins of all men, then have all men some sins to answer for, and so no man shall be saved. . . . If the second, that is what we affirm, viz. that Christ in their stead and room suffered for all the sins of all the elect in the world. If the first [viz. that Christ died for all the sins of all men], then why are not all freed from the punishment of all their sins? You will say, Because of their unbelief; they will not believe. But this unbelief, is it a sin or is it not? If not, why should they be punished for it? If it be, then Christ underwent the punishment due to it or not. If He did, why must that hinder, more than their other sins for which He died, from partaking of the fruit of His death? If He did not, then He

<sup>1</sup> *Display of Arminianism*, Works, vol. x. c. ix. p. 91.

did not die for all their sins. Let them choose which part they will." So conclusive did Owen find this reasoning, that he does not hesitate to say that "to affirm Christ to die for all men is the readiest way to prove that He died for no man in the sense Christians have hitherto understood."

c. The doctrine thus advocated has been often spoken against in severe terms by its opponents. Even Dr. Wardlaw forgets for the moment his usual suavity, and stigmatizes it as "this pitiful process of commercial reckoning, this weight and measure system of atonement." This, as it appears to me, is hardly just. The conception of a purchase as involved in the work of Christ on our behalf is one borrowed from Scripture, and therefore one which, in taking a comprehensive view of the subject, we must neither leave out of view nor explain away. It may be that Owen and his school err in making this the *exclusive* aspect under which they have contemplated the atonement; but that this is *one* of the aspects under which it must be contemplated, cannot, I think, be doubted. Instead, then, of strongly denouncing this theory of the atonement, the proper course would seem to be to accept it so far as it rests on a scriptural basis, and then to show where it is defective and objectionable. If Owen is right in restricting the atonement to the idea of a purchase, his reasoning appears to me quite unanswerable. It is here, however, that he and his party err. Whilst it is true that the salvation of believers is a redemption, a purchasing of them from sin and misery that they may be restored to God, it is not in accordance with the representations of Scripture or the facts of the case to make this the only or even the essential idea of the atonement. The objections to this are many, and apparently conclusive. You will find them stated by Dr. Wardlaw in his *Theology*, vol. ii. Lect. xxiv., and by Dr. Payne in his *Lectures on Divine Sovereignty, Atonement, etc.*, Lect. ix. The weightiest are — (a) that this view is really incompatible with a belief in the infinite value of the Saviour's propitiatory work, seeing it necessarily limits that to an equivalency with the guilt of the elect. (b) That on this view it is impossible to take, in their fair and proper sense, those passages of Scripture which state that Christ was a propitiation for the sins of the world, and that He was

sent "that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish." (c) That on this view the salvation of the non-elect becomes a natural impossibility, just as much so as it is for those to see for whom no eyes have been provided, or those to understand from whom God has withheld the gifts of intellect. (d) On this supposition the general invitations and promises of the gospel are without an adequate basis, and seem like a mere mockery, an offer, in short, of what has not been provided.

It will not do to say, in reply to this, that as these invitations are actually given we are entitled on the authority of God's word to urge them and justified in accepting them; for this is mere evasion. The question is not as to whether they are to be regarded as sincere and valid, but on *what ground* can they be so regarded? Had God merely placed in Scripture these invitations and promises without making known to us anything regarding the work of Christ on which they are based, our wisdom would have been to accept the invitation and rely on the promise without further inquiry. But seeing it is not so; seeing God has rested His invitation and His promise on the work of Christ as made known to us in His word, we are not only entitled, but bound to inquire into the relation in which the two stand to each other, that we may see how the superstructure really rests on the basis. If a skilled architect tells me that a certain building is secure I may take his word for it and inquire no further; but if he insists on showing me the foundation, and how, resting on such a foundation, the building is secure, I am bound to examine and satisfy myself that it is really so. When, therefore, God is pleased not only to give us gracious invitations and promises, but to show us the foundation on which these rest, we are bound to examine this and see whether it is broad enough to sustain the superstructure that is erected upon it. And if on inquiry we find that the basis, according to our view of it, is not broad enough for what is erected on it, the fair conclusion seems to be that we have made a mistake in our survey, and that the basis is not such as we assumed it to be, but must be broader. Accordingly, when we find that the doctrine of a limited atonement, an atonement on the principle of a *quid pro quo*, does not afford a basis broad

enough to sustain the unlimited offers of the gospel, it is surely a perfectly fair conclusion that that doctrine is erroneous, and cannot be the doctrine of Scripture. Finally, on this view the actual salvation of the elect ceases to be of grace, and becomes as much a matter of right on their part and of simple equity on the part of God as the release of a debtor whose debt has been paid by another is a matter of right and equity. If I am unable to satisfy the law, and the sovereign remits the penalty on some grounds of general jurisprudence or governmental righteousness which left Him free to give or withhold the blessing according to his sovereign good pleasure, then the reception of the benefit by me is purely of grace, and I am made thereby a debtor to grace. But if the debt which I owed has been paid, if every special claim which the law had on me has been met and satisfied, then my release is a simple matter of justice, the ruler is bound in equity to set me free, and no room is left for grace to enter.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE ATONEMENT.

#### (2.) *Arminian or Remonstrant Theory.*

Having described and briefly considered the High Calvinistic view of the atonement, I proceed now to that held by the Arminians, or, as they should rather be called, the Remonstrants. Whilst they agree with the Calvinists in maintaining the necessity of a propitiatory sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin, and in regarding the death of Christ as the offering of the sacrifice that was required, they differ from the Calvinists in their view both of the *nature* and the *extent* of the atonement thereby offered.

*a.* The following summary of the views of Arminius and his followers, especially the Dutch Remonstrants, may be given :—

(*a*) Christ, by the counsel of God, died for all and each in such a way that not only His death is *sufficient* in itself in virtue of intrinsic worth, but it was *efficiently* offered for all

and each, inasmuch as God willed that that which in itself is sufficient for all should be actually made either in the room or for the behoof of all and each, that is, of the whole human race, so that by means of it, it might come to pass that God might will for the future to act graciously towards the human race. Thus the death of Christ is the foundation of the blessing promised under the New Covenant.

(b) Christ, by His own and the Father's intention, obtained for all and each of mankind, as well those that perish as those that are saved, restitution into a state of grace and salvation, so that no one shall be, on account of original sin, obnoxious to condemnation or be condemned, but all shall be free from the guilt of that sin.

(c) Christ, by the Father's counsel, endured death for all without any certain or definite purpose of saving any one, so that, in regard to the impetration of the death of Christ, its necessity and utility might abide sound and safe and absolutely complete though the impetrated [obtained] redemption should not be actually applied to a single individual.<sup>1</sup>

(d) Christ, by His satisfaction, obtained certainly for no one salvation, or faith by which this satisfaction may be applied effectually for salvation, but only acquired for the Father plenary will and power to act with men *de novo*, to enter into a covenant, either of grace or works, and to prescribe what conditions He pleased, of which conditions the fulfilment depends on the free will of man, and so it may happen that either none or all may fulfil them.

(e) The impetration extends beyond the application, so that salvation was obtained (impetrated) for all which yet is applied to few.<sup>2</sup>

That it may be seen that this summary adequately and correctly represents the scheme of the Remonstrants, it may be proper to cite a few passages from their writings. The first I cite is from a document of the highest authority in this point

<sup>1</sup> The terms "impetratio" and "impetrare" are favourite terms with writers of this school, and from their frequent use of them their theory of the atonement is often described as the Impetration scheme or theory. The Latin word *impetrare* means to obtain by entreaty, or by any other means that are reasonable and legitimate; and *impetratio* means the obtaining of that which is sought by such means.

<sup>2</sup> See Turretine, *Instit. Theol. Elenc.*, Loc. xiv. qu. 14, § 5.

of view, the document submitted by them to the Synod of Dort. In this they thus speak: "The Redemption-price which Christ offered to His Father is not only in and by itself sufficient for the redeeming of the whole human race, but it was also by the decree, will, and grace of God the Father paid for all men and for each man; wherefore no one is by an antecedent decree of God definitely excluded from participation in the fruit of Christ's death. Christ, by the merit of His death, hath so far reconciled God the Father to the whole human race, that the Father can and will, on account of His merit, saving His justice and veracity, enter into and confirm a new covenant of grace with men, sinners and obnoxious to condemnation."<sup>1</sup>

The next passage I extract is from the *Theologia Christiana* of Philip Limborch, one of the clearest and ablest writers of the Remonstrant school. "Our opinion is this: That the Lord Jesus Christ was a true and proper sacrifice for our sins; enduring the severest agonies and the accursed death of the cross, and, after He was raised from the dead, entering with His own blood the heavenly sanctuary, and there presenting Himself before the Father; by which His sacrifice He propitiated the Father justly offended by our sins, and reconciled us to Him. He thus bore for us and in our place a most heavy affliction, and so turned away from us the punishment which we had merited." And then, in reply to the question, What was it that Christ suffered in our stead? Was it the punishment we had merited by our sins? he replies in the negative, and maintains that what Christ endured was grievous misery and a bloody death, which was instead of the punishment that should justly have been borne by us: "not," he adds, "because properly we had merited precisely the same in kind, for we had merited a much heavier penalty, even eternal curse; but because He, the innocent One, spontaneously

<sup>1</sup> "Pretium redemptionis, quod Christus Patri suo obtulit, non tantum in se et per se toti humano generi redimendo sufficiens est, sed etiam pro omnibus et singulis hominibus ex decreto, voluntate, et gratia Dei Patris per solutum est; eoque a participatione fructuum mortis Christi nemo antecedente Dei decreto precise exclusus est. Christus merito mortis sue Deum Patrem universo generi humano hactenus reconcilavit, ut Pater propter ipsius meritum, salva justitia et veritate sua, novum gratiæ Fœdus cum peccatoribus et damnationi obnoxiiis hominibus inire et sanire potuerit et voluerit."

took this on Himself, and was a sacrifice to God the Father, so well-pleasing that He is thereby moved to receive us into favour." He goes on to say that the efficacy of Christ's work depends not on His having suffered the same kind or amount of penalty that we had incurred, but because, according to the divine will (*pro arbitrio divino*), suffering was laid on Him, who was to be the victim, and that efficacy, as exacted from Him, removes from us the penalty of sin, is pleasing to God, expiates our sins, and obtains for us the remission of them, the same as if it had been of the same kind as that which we had merited. "In this sense," he continues, "Jesus Christ may be rightly said to have been punished in our place, inasmuch as He bore the greatest mental pangs and the accursed death of the cross for us, which is of the nature of a vicarious punishment for our sins. And in this sense He satisfied the Father for us, and may be said to have merited righteousness for us, inasmuch as He made satisfaction, not indeed to the rigour of divine justice, but to the will of God, who is just as well as merciful, and performed all things which are necessary to our reconciliation with God." Farther on, in answer to the question, "Did Christ not only make satisfaction for us, but also merit faith and regeneration for us?" Limborch replies: "He merited, that is, He obtained and effected, that God should suspend His wrath, concede to us a season of grace, call us to faith and regeneration, and extend to us all the helps of grace by which we may be enabled to yield to the divine call; but faith and regeneration themselves He did not merit for us. Had He done so, God could not have demanded faith of us under threatening of death; in that case He would have been bound by the power of Christ's merit to effect that in us by omnipotent energy; and so faith would not have been a duty binding on us, but the work of God alone."<sup>1</sup> In another place Limborch says, in reference to the extent of Christ's propitiation, "Christ, by the decree and intention of the Father, has died for all men and every individual, so as to obtain for them grace and the remission of sins, no one being specially exempted."<sup>2</sup>

Another eminent divine of the same school is Courcelles or Curcellæus, who subsequently became an Arian. He thus

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Christ.* Bk. III. ch. xx.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. IV. ch. iii.

states the substance of the Remonstrant doctrine concerning the work of Christ: "Christ did not, as is commonly thought, satisfy by suffering all the pains which we had merited by our sins; for, 1st, This does not appertain to the nature of a sacrifice, since sacrifices are not payments of debts; 2ndly, Christ did not suffer eternal death, which is the due penalty of sin, for He hung only a few hours on the cross, and on the third day rose from the dead. Nay, even though He had endured eternal death, it does not appear that He could have made satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, for this would have been only one death, which could not have been equivalent to all the deaths which men had merited by their sins."<sup>1</sup>

Equally explicit are the statements of Arminius himself on this head: "The immediate effect," says he, "of the death and passion of Christ is not the actual taking away of sins from any one, not the actual remission, not the justification, not the actual redemption of this one or the other. It is the impetration from God of remission, justification, and redemption, by which it is brought about that God now can remit to men sinners their sins, since His righteousness being satisfied no longer opposes." -

From Corvinus, another eminent Remonstrant divine, the following sentences also may be cited as presenting in a condensed form the views of that school:—"A potential and conditionate reconciliation, not an actual and absolute, has been obtained by the death of Christ." "I believe it might have come to pass that the death of Christ might have had its end though not any man had believed." "Though the death and satisfaction of Christ have been accomplished, yet it might come to pass that none should be saved in consequence of none fulfilling the conditions of the new covenant."

These extracts may suffice to show from the writings of the most eminent of the Arminian or Remonstrant divines what was their view of the nature and extent of Christ's atonement. They regarded His death as a satisfaction to divine justice only in so far as it furnished the ground on which God as a righteous God could forgive sin; and they held it as not

<sup>1</sup> *Rel. Christ. Instit.*, v. 19, 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Antiperkins*, p. 76.



securing salvation to any, but simply as placing salvation within the reach of all. There is some confusion and some variety in their statements regarding the kind of satisfaction that was rendered by Christ to the divine justice, but they all agree in repudiating the notion that it was of the nature of a *quid pro quo*, of an equivalent, either *ejusdem* or *tantidem*, rendered by Christ for the sins of any portion of the human race. That Christ's death merited something for man they held, but what it merited was not salvation for any, but the potentiality of salvation for all.

b. The arguments by which this view is chiefly sustained are these:—

(a) Scripture expressly declares in many passages that Christ died for all men. Those who take the hyper-Calvinistic view, it is true, endeavour to get over this by saying that "all" in these passages is not the all of totality but the all of distribution, and means "men of all sorts," Jews as well as Gentiles. But to this it is replied that the word "all" can be taken distributively only when it is used of something of which there are different species; when it is used of that of which there is only one species it is used only collectively; and as there is but one species of man, "all men" must mean not "every kind of men," but "all men collectively," the whole of mankind.

(b) Scripture expressly states that Christ's work had for its object the saving of the world, the taking away of the sins of the world, and such like, which is incompatible with any limitation of those on whose behalf or for whose benefit He acted and suffered. To avoid this conclusion it has been urged by Calvinists that in such passages "world" means the "elect world;" but such an evasion cannot be permitted, because *a.* this limitation of the meaning of the word is arbitrary and unauthorized; *β.* it cannot be shown from the usage of Scripture that the elect can be properly designated by the term "world;" and *γ.* in one of the most remarkable passages in which the term is used in connection with the design of our Lord's advent and work (John iii. 16), the "world," for whose behoof God in His love sent His Son, is expressly distinguished from those who shall be saved through faith in Him; and as the former includes the latter,

the "world" here can only mean mankind at large, of whom those that believe and are saved form a part.

(c) Our Lord said that He had come into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. As the language here is indefinite, it is best understood of men generally; at least, it is doing violence to such a statement to interpret it as meaning that Christ came into the world to seek and to save only a select portion of those that were lost.

(d) In Rom. xiv. 15 the apostle says, "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died;" and in 1 Cor. viii. 11 the apostle, in an analogous passage, speaks of a brother for whom Christ died "perishing." Obviously, therefore, the apostle contemplated the possibility of some for whom Christ died perishing or being destroyed; and, consequently, Christ's death must have had respect to others than the elect who shall be saved.

(e) Scripture calls on all men to believe in Christ, and represents this as an imperative duty. But to believe in Christ is to believe in Him as a Saviour, and we can believe in Him as a Saviour only as we regard His propitiatory work as valid for our salvation. Now it is valid for our salvation only as He died for us. But if Christ did not die for all men, then since it has been revealed to no one that he is among those for whom Christ died, it is impossible for any one to determine that Christ has died for him. Hence, when any man has Christ preached to him, he cannot be sure that he is warranted to believe in Him, and so he would be both bound to believe and yet not bound to believe, which would be absurd.

(f) If Christ did not die for all men, no one can be condemned for unbelief. For as no one can be bound to believe what is not true, those for whom Christ did not die cannot be bound to believe in Him, and consequently cannot be condemned for unbelief though the gospel is preached to them, which is clearly against Scripture.

c. Such are the arguments commonly adduced by writers of the Remonstrant school in support of their view of the nature and extent of the atonement. Some of them may be set aside at once as of no weight. (a) Thus, when it is argued that faith in Christ means faith that He died for us,

and that such faith cannot be demanded of all men except on the assumption that He died for all, it is overlooked that the warrant for faith is not our knowledge of what Christ did, but God's assurance that on the ground of what Christ did all who believe on Him shall be saved. A man may have no knowledge at all of what Christ did on our behalf, and yet if he be made acquainted with the divine assurance that whosoever believeth in Christ shall be saved, he is bound to believe in Christ, and is verily guilty if he does not believe. It is a mistake to suppose that faith in Christ means faith that He died for me. Faith in Christ means faith in the sufficiency of His work to save all who put their trust in Him; and as we have this confidence not from any theoretical view we may have of the nature and extent of His work, but simply from God's sure word of promise, it matters not to this whether we believe that He died for all men or only for the elect. I may have some difficulty in seeing how God can make to all men such an offer if the atonement made by Christ is not sufficient for all; but if I am sure God has made the offer, that is my warrant for accepting it; on that ground I am bound to accept it, and I shall justly be held guilty if I do not accept it on that ground. All the arguments, therefore, urged by the Remonstrants in support of their views, on the assumption that only upon them can faith in Christ be urged on all men and demanded of them as imperative, fall to the ground.

(b) Of more weight are the arguments adduced by the Remonstrants from the statements of Scripture as to the relation of Christ's work to the world and to men universally. It seems impossible to reconcile such statements with any view of the atonement which would limit its sufficiency to any portion of the human race to the exclusion of the rest. If He came into the world to give Himself a ransom for all, if He came to seek and to save the lost, if He was sent that whosoever believeth on Him should be saved, and if He was a propitiation for the sins of the world, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that in some sense His death was designed and fitted to secure a benefit that should be coextensive with the wants of the race and free to all the sons of men. But whilst the Arminian scheme does justice

to these statements of Scripture, there are others which it either overlooks or sets aside. If Scripture tells us that Jesus Christ gave Himself a ransom for all, it also tells us that He gave His life a ransom for His sheep; if it tells us that whosoever believes shall be saved, it also tells those who are saved that they are "bought with a price," that they are "redeemed by the blood of Christ," that they are His "purchased possession," and that He gave Himself for them in a sense in which He did not give Himself for all; and it tells us that if God sent His Son to be a propitiation for the whole world, it also tells us that there are some of the human race whom the Father hath "given" to the Son, whom He had "chosen" unto salvation before the foundation of the world, and to whom, therefore, His Son could not but have had a special reference in the making of atonement for sin. Indeed, if we accept the Scripture doctrine of election at all, we must suppose that Christ had a special intention of saving the elect in the offering of Himself as a sacrifice for sins. But more of this afterwards. I make these remarks at present merely to indicate that if we would have a theory of the atonement that shall be in accordance with *all* the declarations of Scripture, we can as little accept that of the Remonstrants as we can that of the High Calvinists.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE ATONEMENT.

#### (3.) *Moderate Calvinistic Theories.*

We have seen that neither the theory of the High Calvinists nor that of the Remonstrants can be adopted as a complete theory of the atonement, or as fully in accordance with Scripture statements. At the same time, it is manifest that on both sides there is something to be said—that neither is wholly wrong nor wholly unsupported by Scripture. This induces the conclusion that neither view is to be wholly

rejected; and begets the hope that a careful and candid consideration of the reasons on both sides, and especially of all the statements of Scripture bearing on the subject, may conduct us to some medium or eclectic course between the two, where, by rejecting the errors of both and incorporating what is true in both, we may arrive at a satisfactory theory of the whole subject.

Of the attempts which have been made towards this there are two, not widely differing from each other at first sight, but which are nevertheless in reality sufficiently distinct to divide their respective supporters into two schools, between which controversy has sometimes been conducted not without acerbity. On both sides the distinction enunciated by one of the ancient Fathers, viz. that Christ made satisfaction *sufficienter* for all, but *efficienter* only for some, is accepted; though some, with Dr. Wardlaw, would prefer to say that the atonement was a remedy of universal sufficiency but of limited efficiency, thereby avoiding the ambiguity connected with the phrase "to make satisfaction," which does not mean the same thing in the High Calvinist and in the Remonstrant theology. Both also agree in holding that the efficiency of Christ's redemption is determined by the electing purpose of God. But they differ in this, that the one party hold that God having of His sovereign grace determined to save a certain number of the human race, did devise the atonement as the means of attaining that end; whilst the other party hold that God having in His rectoral capacity devised the atonement as a means of reconciling His mercy and His righteousness, did as a Sovereign determine to limit the universal remedy in the application of it to such only as it was His good pleasure to bring unto salvation. The former of these views has found advocates in Witsius and in Turretine among earlier, and in Marshall, Symington, Cunningham, and Candlish among more recent theologians. The latter view is that advocated by Cameron, Amyrant, R. Baxter, Fuller, Williams, Dwight, Wardlaw, Payne, and others.

a. I select a few passages from writers on both sides that you may have in their own words a statement of their views.

Witsius: "We hold that the obedience and suffering of

Christ, in themselves considered, are, on account of the infinite dignity of His Person, of such worth that would they suffice for the redemption not only of all and each of mankind, but of many myriads more, provided it had pleased God and Christ that He should have been surety and made satisfaction for them. . . . The obedience and sufferings of Christ were of such price that all men without exception coming to Him might obtain perfect salvation in Him. . . . Nevertheless, Christ by the will of God and His own purpose (or intention) did not act as a surety nor make satisfaction nor in any way die for any but all and only those whom the Father gave to Him, and who are actually saved.”<sup>1</sup> In another place the same writer says, “For the elect the Lord Jesus impetrated by His satisfaction immunity from all misery and a right to eternal life, through the application of His satisfaction to them in effectual calling, regeneration, sanctification, conservation, and glorification. . . . It appears clearly [from such passages as Matt. xxvi. 28; Gal. i. 4; Tit. ii. 14; Eph. v. 25-27; 1 Tim. i. 15] that the effect of the satisfaction of Christ was not the bare possibility of the remission of our sins and our reconciliation with God, and finally our salvation, of which blessings it could not be that the elect should remain without the enjoyment unless Christ be regarded as having in vain made satisfaction to the Father.”<sup>2</sup>

Turretine: “The common opinion of the Reformed is that Christ was of the mere goodwill (*ευδοκία*) of the Father destined and given to be a Redeemer and Head, not to all men, but to a certain number of men constituting through the divine election His mystical body; and for these alone Christ, fully conscious of His own calling, in order to fulfil the decree of election and the counsel of the Father, willed and determined to die, and to the infinite price of His death to add the most efficacious and special voluntary intervention of substituting Himself for them.” He then goes on to say that “the question is not as to the value and sufficiency of Christ’s death, which is admitted to be of infinite value, and sufficient for the redemption of all, but as to the counsel of God in giving His Son, and the intention of Christ in dying, whether

<sup>1</sup> *De Econom. Fœderum*, Bk. II. ch. ix. § 2, 4, 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bk. II. ch. vii. § 2.

this had respect to all men so as to obtain salvation for them or only to the elect.”<sup>1</sup>

There is some slight indistinctness in these statements, arising from the writer's not clearly distinguishing between the design of the atonement in itself and the intention of Christ in making it; but there can be no doubt that what they intended is that the atonement was designed in and by itself to secure the salvation of the elect, and that it has effected that design, though of value sufficient to have secured the salvation of all had it been designed for this.

That this is the view adopted by more recent theologians of this school may be made very apparent by one or two citations.

The first I take is from the work of the late Dr. Marshall of Kirkintilloch, on *The Atonement*. In reference to the work of Christ he lays down the proposition that “For all men, for sinners in general, the Saviour died. . . . He died in their nature, He died in their stead, He died doing honour to the law which they had violated, making reparation to the justice they had provoked, bearing the curse to which they were subjected, suffering the death to which they were doomed. In other words, He died removing every legal obstruction that lay in the way of their obtaining life, rendering it consistent with the holiness and justice of the Most High, with the security of His government, with the claims of His law, to justify and save them, provided they should believe” (pp. 70, 71). Was then the atonement made for all men? No, says Dr. Marshall; it was “a purpose to save coupled with the providing of a general remedy in order to carry that purpose into effect,” and those whose salvation the atonement thus contemplated are “Christ's own people,” the elect. It follows from this that the atonement, though of infinite worth, was in reality made only for the few, and this the writer expressly affirms again and again throughout his book in such utterances as these: “Christ came to redeem a select number who had been chosen to life;” He came “to save the objects of the Father's choice;” “the object of whatsoever He did or suffered while in the world is sufficiently defined; it had reference, strictly speaking, not to all men, but to some only.”

<sup>1</sup> *Instit. Theol. Elenc.*, Loc. xiv. qu. 14, § 8 10.

If in other places of his book Dr. Marshall writes as if he held that the atonement was limited, not in itself, but only by the divine purpose as to its application, this must be put to the account of a certain confusion of thought or inaccuracy of statement on his part. As his object in writing his book was to prove that "Christ died for some men and not for all," he must, in fairness, be held as maintaining that the limitation of the atonement was in itself, in that it was designed and made only for the elect, not merely the purpose of God as to the application of its benefits.

One of the ablest defenders of this view of the atonement was the late Dr. Symington of Glasgow. From him I take the following statements: "Christ died, satisfied divine justice, and made atonement only for such as are saved." "The death of Christ is regarded as a legal satisfaction to the law and justice of God on behalf of elect sinners." "We hold by the view that the sufferings of Christ are to be regarded in the light of a moral satisfaction to the law and justice of God, which would have been requisite had there been but one sinner to be saved, and had that sinner had but one sin; and which would have been adequate had the number to be saved been to any conceivable extent greater than it is."

The same substantially is the view of Dr. Candlish. Whilst, on the one hand, he asserts "the universality of the Son's mediation, which has regard to man as such, without excepting any portion of the race;" he, on the other, maintains that "in the strict and proper sense, Christ was really, truly, and personally a substitute in room of the elect, and in room of the elect only."

These extracts may suffice to give you a just view of the doctrine of the school to which the writers belong, regarding the nature and extent of the atonement. In their view there was no exact equivalence between the sufferings of Christ and the sufferings due to the elect, nor was the death of Christ merely the price paid for the salvation of a certain number. His work possessed infinite value, and His sufferings and death rendered to the justice of God a satisfaction adequate to the salvation of all mankind; but what Christ did and suffered was not designed to effect the salvation of more than a certain



number, and for them and them only He acted as a substitute and surety. Though the atonement was of boundless sufficiency its efficiency is limited, inasmuch as by the divine decree it was made only for the elect.

b. Passing on to the other view to which I have referred, I select the following statements of it from writers of eminence:—

Dr. Edward Williams: “Here it is proper to notice the *design* of God in the appointment of an atoning sacrifice. And for illustrating this important point it appears to me of great use to recollect the twofold character of God, that of an equitable governor and that of an arbitrary dispenser of benefits; in other words, a Judge and a Sovereign. In both characters God is supreme, having none above Him, in what ever capacity He acts. . . . As it is evident from the whole tenor of Scripture, and from the nature of the case, that God acts in these twofold characters towards His rational creatures, it follows that it is worthy of Him to have corresponding designs. Let us apply this to the work of Christ and the price of redemption. As a Governor, I humbly conceive, His design in this great and glorious medium of happiness was to lay an adequate foundation for every human subject of His government on which he may hope for the favour of God; and on which he may seek remission of sin, justification, holiness, happiness,—in one word, *salvation*,—on the terms prescribed; terms worthy of God and our rational nature. But, on the rejection or neglect of these terms, the sinner has no one to blame but himself, and the Supreme Ruler will appear clear and glorious when He judges and condemns him for neglecting so great salvation.

“But when we consider the design of God in the character of a Sovereign, we may regard the same object, the invaluable price of redemption, as an adequate foundation for actually redeeming from all evil those who are eventually saved; and for imparting to them the influence of the Spirit, whereby they comply with the terms proposed, and enjoy the promised blessings. As God does nothing without design and without an adequate ground for it, and as forming a vital union with Christ, a spiritual renovation by the Holy Spirit, upholding the soul in the midst of temptations and formidable dangers,

and finally investing soul and body with eternal life and glory, are the acts of His sovereign pleasure ; His design, I apprehend, in substituting the atoning sacrifice, was to lay a suitable basis for these acts.”<sup>1</sup> According to Dr. Williams, then, the design of the atonement was not the securing of the salvation of the elect, but the laying of a sufficient basis or foundation on which salvation in all its fulness might be offered to and bestowed on men.

Dr. Payne: “ I believe in the unlimited, universal, infinite sufficiency of the atonement of Christ. . . . I believe it was the intention of God, as *the Moral Governor*, in giving His Son as a sacrifice for sin, to provide a remedy commensurate with the disease. I believe, on the other hand, in the limited application of the atonement. I believe it was the intention of God, *as a Sovereign*, to render the remedy effectual by special and sovereign influence in the case of certain individuals *only* who are affected by the general disease, so that the intention of God as a *Sovereign* and as a *Ruler* in reference to the atonement is different, the one being general, the other particular.”

“ Contemplating the whole human race as condemned, Jehovah did not determine to inflict punishment on some and to pardon others, but to provide a sacrifice of infinite worth by which every obstacle to the bestowment of mercy might be removed ; and then, as Moral Governor or Judge, to offer pardon to all who might choose to accept it, in the only manner in which it could be bestowed. . . . Jehovah, however, while as a Moral Governor He exhibits mercy to all, as a Sovereign imparts, in the case of many, a disposition to embrace it, and thus secures their salvation. ‘ The others He leaves to their own free agency.’ . . . With reference to those whose wills He influences by sovereign goodness to receive it, He previously determined to do so.”<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Wardlaw: “ The third view holds the atonement to have been a general remedy with a particular application, a vindication or display of the righteousness of God such as to render forgiveness consistent with the perfection of the divine character ; leaving the Supreme Governor and Judge

<sup>1</sup> *Moderate Calvinism defended*, pp. 187-189.

<sup>2</sup> *Lectures on Divine Sovereignty*, etc., pp. 210, 227.

in the free exercise of the mercy in which He delights, to dispense it according to His sovereign pleasure more or less extensively.”<sup>1</sup>

Something like this view seems to have been held by the great theologian of the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas, for he sets forth his opinion in the following views: “The merit of Christ as concerning its sufficiency belongs to all, but not as concerning its efficacy; which happens partly by reason of free will and partly by reason of God’s election, whereby the effects and virtues of Christ’s merits are mercifully bestowed on some, and by the just judgment of God withheld from others.”

These statements will put you in possession of the two schemes or modes of representing the atonement adopted by moderate Calvinists. Apparently, the difference between the two is very slight, but it is such as to occasion a marked diversity of statement, and it has been the cause of considerable controversy. You will find a very able discussion of the question in Turretine’s *Institutio Theologiæ*, vol. ii. p. 495 ff., Loc. xiv. qu. 14. Some years ago an animated discussion of it took place between Dr. Symington of Glasgow and Dr. Wardlaw; the former in a work on the Atonement, and in the pages of the *Scottish Presbyterian Magazine*; the latter in his *Discourses on the Atonement*, especially the preface to the second edition, and in his lectures on *Systematic Theology*, published since his death. Dr. Payne also took part in the discussion, especially in his pamphlet containing strictures on Dr. Marshall’s work on *The Atonement*, published under the designation of an “English Congregational minister.”

c. Having placed before you the statements of writers on both sides, I would now proceed to place out distinctly the questions really at issue between them; and then to offer a few hints bearing on a just solution of the whole. For the sake of brevity and distinctness we shall call the one the advocates of a definite, the other the advocates of a general atonement. The questions at issue between them are these,—

(a) Is the atonement, both as to its general design and as to its special application, to be traced wholly to the sovereign love of God, or must we distinguish between God as a Ruler

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 445.

and God as a Sovereign, and refer the design of the atonement to Him in His rectoral character, and the application of it to His sovereignty?

(b) Whether are we to regard God as determining to save sinners of the human race, and in order to this devising the atonement as the method of attaining this, or to regard Him as devising the atonement as a method of making satisfaction for sin, and then determining the application of it beneficially to a limited number of the human race? Or, to put it in another form and more briefly, Did the devising of the atonement precede, or did it follow in the order of nature, the purpose of God to save a certain portion of the human race? Or, to put it still otherwise, Was the atonement devised by God in order to carry out and secure His purpose in election, or was that purpose formed in order to give effect to the atonement?

(c) Was the atonement made for sin or for sinners? in other words, Was it designed to remove the obstacles which man's sin put in the way of the salvation of any, or was it designed to secure the actual salvation of certain individual transgressors?

(d) Now, in answer to these questions, the one party says, "The atonement is wholly to be referred to the sovereign love of God; He determined to save a people chosen for Himself, and in order to this, that His grace in extending to them salvation might be compatible with the claims of His government, the demands of His law and the glory of His own character, He devised the scheme which was accomplished by Jesus Christ, incarnate God, by whose obedience unto death a full compensation has been made for the transgressions of those whom God purposed to save, and their redemption secured as the reward of the Saviour's obedience and suffering—the atonement being not so much for sin as for sinners."

The answer of the other party would run somewhat thus: "The atonement of Christ was made for sin, to remove it out of the way of man's acceptance with God, not directly and properly for sinners; it is to be traced to the rectoral love of God, who sought the salvation of man in connection with the manifestation of His perfect regard to holiness and rectitude;

having this in view, He devised the atonement as a means of manifesting His righteousness; and this being accomplished, He as a Sovereign was free to apply the benefits of the work thus done to as many of the human race as He was pleased to choose."

d. Such, in substance, are the views of these two branches of the Moderate Calvinistic School as to the nature and extent of the atonement. I would now proceed to offer some observations bearing more precisely on the decision of the question now before us.

(a) It is admitted on both sides that the worth of Christ's sacrifice is all-sufficient, is of infinite sufficiency, but that it is determined in its actual efficiency by the purpose of God. That purpose having reference to the actual saving of a limited portion of the human race, limits the efficiency of that which in itself is of unlimited sufficiency. Now, without speculating upon the *order* in which the divine purposes are formed, which would be venturing, as we believe, into a sphere beyond our reach, we may competently propose such a question as this, "Did God in forming the scheme of atonement intend and purpose to save men thereby, or did He not?" This is a practical question, and we shall find much turns upon it. For, if God did not purpose to save certain men when He purposed the atonement, how came He to constitute His Son a Priest, a King, a Head, a Surety in the covenant of redemption? These are all *relative* terms, for there can be no priest without parties for whom he acts as a priest, no king without subjects, no head without a body, no surety without persons for whom he stands surety; so that unless God in appointing His Son to these offices appointed also those of the race of men for whom He was to act in these offices, the appointment was vain and unworthy of God; it was, in short, a mere empty name. But, if God in appointing Christ to these offices appointed also those for whom He had to act, then He must have intended to save thereby certain individuals of the race, and the saving of them must have entered as an essential and integral element into the design of the atonement. In this view the appointment of the atonement and the determination of those to whom its benefits should be applied, cannot with any propriety

be thought as separate and consecutive acts or purposes, but must have formed one purpose in the divine mind.

(b) It may tend to test this question in the light of Scripture if we follow the plan I am about to suggest. The old divines were wont to speak of the death of Christ viewed *τελικως* and the death of Christ viewed *εκβατικως*, meaning by the former the death of Christ viewed in relation to its *design* or *intention*, and by the latter the death of Christ viewed in relation to *what it actually accomplishes*. Now, suppose you take these two words as headings of distinct columns, and under the former place all the passages of Scripture which announce the *purpose* of Christ's death, and under the latter those which simply describe the *result* or *effect* of Christ's death, or the consequences actually flowing from it, you will, I venture to say, find that under the former you have got those passages which are of a more special kind, and under the latter those of a more general kind. There may be one or two passages of a doubtful character, but in the main I believe this will be the result of such a classification. Now, assuming this to be the case, the conclusion to which we are thereby conducted is that the specific, purposed design of Christ's death was the salvation of His own people, those whom the Father had given Him; and that the aspect which His work bears to the world at large is *ecbatic*, that is, we have not here its main and primary design, but a result accomplished simply in passing, as it were,—a collateral and incidental effect of Christ's work, not that which it was primarily purposed to secure.

(c) We shall be conducted to the same conclusion if we look at the subject in the analogy which it bears to other of God's works. It seems to be a rule of God's operation to make what He appoints for some main end subservient at the same time to several collateral and more general ends. Man, in the narrowness of his resources and wisdom, has to make a new contrivance for each new end he wishes to attain; whereas God by one single scheme or arrangement accomplishes several, it may be many ends. We see this in the kingdom of nature, where the sun, for instance, appointed specially and primarily to give light to the planets, is made to subserve a vast variety of other ends in the economy of

nature. We see it in the moral world, where relations instituted directly for the attainment of one end are made subservient to several other ends. We see it in the miracles wrought by our Lord, the main design of which was to establish the divinity of His mission, but which He made to answer other and more general ends connected with His mission and work. Now, this being a pervading characteristic of God's working, analogy would lead us to expect the same in the greatest of all His works; in other words, we should expect to find the work of Christ having one main specific design, but made to answer other collateral designs in the divine administration. But this expectation will be fulfilled if we regard the atonement of Christ as designed primarily and specially to secure the salvation of those given unto Him by the Father, whilst as a scheme of infinite wisdom it at the same time serves many other ends; whereas, if we regard it as a general provision admitting of special application, we put it out of analogy with God's mode of operation in other manifestations of His power and wisdom.

(*d*) It must be admitted on all hands, on the express testimony of Scripture, that Jesus Christ appeared, acted, suffered, and merited as a substitute for men. This is a truth which we must be careful to preserve, for it is one inseparably connected with the doctrine of atonement; one, therefore, which cannot be overlooked or diluted without materially injuring or enfeebling that doctrine in our conception and representation of it. But for whom, let us ask, was Christ a substitute? Here there are only two suppositions that can be made: either He acted and merited as a substitute for all men, or He acted and merited as a substitute only for His own. The former of these suppositions is negatived by the fact that all men are not saved; for, as the idea of substitutionary acting involves that all for whom the substitute acted are held as acting in him and consequently as enjoying all he has acquired, we cannot suppose it possible that Christ should have thus acted for all men and yet any man should fail of that for which Christ acted and which He merited. But if we adopt the latter supposition, that it is only those who are actually saved, only those who are Christ's own people, for whom He acted as a

substitute, then we cannot but believe that in His acting He had special and primary respect to them, and that God in appointing Him to act as a substitute must have had special reference to their salvation as the end to be secured by Christ's work.

(c) The same conclusion is reached from the representation of the sufferings of Christ being a price paid for the salvation of men. Here it is persons alone who can be thought of as the object of the Saviour's work, and the question arises, Who are the persons whom He hath bought with a price or redeemed by His blood? And, in answer to this, we can have no hesitation in saying, Those only who are actually saved by Him. For it is worthy of notice that the Bible never says that Christ redeemed, or purchased, or gave a price for the world or all men. Where such phraseology is employed, it is always in reference to persons who are viewed as actually in Christ and enjoying the benefits of His salvation. There is one passage, indeed, which may seem to present an exception to this, 1 Tim. ii. 6, where the apostle says of Christ, *ὁ δους εαυτον αντιλυτρον υπερ παντων*. But this is by no means decisive, because the use of the preposition *υπερ* here leads to the conclusion that what the apostle says may be simply that Christ gave Himself as a ransom-price *for the benefit or advantage* of all, not that He bought or redeemed all by giving Himself for them, but that in giving Himself He designed that an advantage should thence accrue to all. And that this is His meaning is rendered probable by the fact that the apostle adduces this statement in support of his injunction that prayer and thanksgiving are to be offered for all men, this being an advantage to which all are entitled, seeing that Christ redeemed His people, not merely for their own benefit, but for the benefit of all, that through their redemption the world might be advantaged, as by other things so specially by their prayers. At any rate this passage, I believe, stands alone as even seeming to teach that Christ gave Himself for all men as a ransom-price. In every other case the idea of a purchase is connected only with the people of Christ, those actually saved through Him. It is His sheep for whom He as the good Shepherd gave His life; it is His Church for which He gave



Himself; it is His saved ones, as His purchased possession, whom He hath redeemed by His blood. This is the general tenor of Scripture representation, and we are bound to accept it as setting before us a real fact. But if Christ has bought, purchased, or redeemed His people, then their salvation must have formed a special end to be secured by Him in what He did as the Redeemer. As a conscious and intelligent Agent, He knew what He was giving Himself for; and as that was the purchasing of a people for Him to be His peculiar people, it seems to follow inevitably that this must have been the design of His atonement; and if the design, the *main* design, seeing it is the thing actually secured.

(f) Those who advocate the doctrine of a general atonement are accustomed to lay stress on the distinction between an act and its intention as applied to the work of Christ. "God," says Dr. Payne, "created the world to show forth His glory; but the act of creation was one thing, the design of that act another. Christ made atonement to lay foundation for a great system of moral government, to open the door of mercy to all men, to furnish an honourable and safe ground on which pardon might be imparted to all men on their repentance and faith; and again to bring many sons to glory. These, among others, were no doubt *objects* sought to be accomplished by the atonement. The Saviour *intended* to secure them, and therefore they will be secured. But in this case, as in the former, the atonement was one thing, the intention another. The purpose to save the Church by His death no doubt accompanied the atonement in consequence of the eternal election of its members to life everlasting; but it was something extraneous to the atonement. It was an adjunct merely—not constituting its essence or nature. It was not necessary to the validity of the atonement. It did not give it sufficiency, but it secured its efficiency." This passage seems to me full of strange statements. Dr. Payne seems to think that it was the purpose of Christ that gave validity to the atonement. Now this no advocate of a definite atonement has ever, so far as I am aware, maintained. But if this were assumed it would be utterly fatal to Dr. Payne's position; for as the only purpose we know that Christ had in making atonement was the saving of His

Church, the whole validity of the atonement must rest on this purpose. How strange, also, is it to say that the only thing which is by the atonement effected was not that which it was essentially fitted and designed to effect, but was an adjunct merely—something that might never have happened at all, and yet the validity of the atonement have remained unaffected? But, not to dwell on minute criticisms, let us come at once to the distinction on which Dr. Payne lays so much stress—the distinction between an act and its intention, *i.e.* of course, the intention of the agent in doing it. The distinction is obvious enough, and in relation to the work of Christ it is one which every one can make. We all know what Christ did; He suffered and He died; and we can all be sure that He had a purpose, an intention, an end to secure in this. What, then, was this intention? Dr. Payne says it was the securing of a great many objects, and among the rest the salvation of the Church by the furnishing of an honourable and safe ground on which pardon might be imparted to all men. We say that the intention of Christ was immediately and directly to save His Church, and that in order to secure this along with certain collateral and secondary ends, He paid a price which not only satisfied God's justice for them, but being of infinite value is sufficient for the salvation of all. Now this is a mere statement of the case: What is to decide between the two positions? I answer, Dr. Payne has himself furnished us with a valid criterion by which our decision may be determined. "It is important to observe," he says, "that the decrees of God are exactly co-extensive with the acts of God. They reach as far as the latter, but they do not go beyond them. God does what He decrees, and decrees what He does."<sup>1</sup> Now, what Dr. Payne says here so justly of the decrees of God we may say of His purposes or intentions, which are not really different from His decrees. What He intends He does, and what He does He intends. The act and the intention are co-extensive; and we can be sure of the divine intention only from the divine act. Now, to apply this to the question before us: What we are sure of is the salvation of Christ's own people; this is what He really does by His atone-

<sup>1</sup> Lectures on *Divine Sovereignty*, etc., p. 36.

ment; and we may infer, therefore, with confidence, on the principle Dr. Payne has laid down, that this was His design, purpose, or intention in what He did and suffered. We hold it therefore more correct to say that Christ came to save His Church, and that in order to secure that He offered a sacrifice of infinite worth adequate to atone for the sins of all men, than to say Christ came to open a door by which all men might be saved, and that He took advantage of this, or made application of it, for the salvation of His own people.

I may observe, further, that it seems to me impossible, for any practical end, to regard the work of Christ apart from His design or intention in that work. The two are inseparably connected in the whole conception of the atonement. Apart from His purpose and intention in suffering and dying, His death and sufferings are mere isolated facts that have no special significance. It was His purpose by His suffering and dying to save men, to purchase a people for Himself as His peculiar possession, that gave these mere historical facts a significance as effectual for the redemption of men. We cannot therefore, as it appears to me, think the atonement apart from our Lord's intention in making it; and therefore to call on us to lay stress on the distinction between what Christ did and His intention in doing it, is to invite us to make a distinction sufficiently obvious, but in this case of no practical value.

(g) Once more, I would observe that on the doctrine of an indefinite or universal atonement it is not easy to see what necessity there is for the *continuous* exercise of Christ's agency on behalf of His people. If what Christ has done be simply to open a door by which all may enter in, of what further use can He be to us, or what further need have we of Him? The door is opened; we have only to enter in, grateful to Him who has done so much for us, but not requiring His aid any more. I need not say how far this is from according with Scripture statement concerning Christ's offices and work, and our constant dependence on Him. Not only is it through Him that we have access to the Father, but in Him and with Him. He must take us by the hand and bring us unto God, and it is only as He holds us and helps us and pleads for us

that we can continue in the path of salvation. With all this the doctrine of a definite atonement accords. According to it, Christ in dying for men had special reference to the purchasing for Himself of a peculiar people, comprising all that the Father had given unto Him, the rescuing of the scattered members of His own Body that He might reform them again into a glorious Body, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing," and the bringing unto God of His lost children, presenting them with acceptance unto Him, and making continual intercession for them so as to save them unto the uttermost. We are thus brought to realize Christ's continual agency on our behalf, and our constant need of Him as alike the author and the finisher of faith.

(*h*) For these reasons, which I have rather hinted at than fully unfolded, I am constrained to adopt the view, of which I consider Turretine the best expounder, viz. that the work of Christ, though of infinite value and having many important ends to answer in the divine administration, was yet in its original purpose and main design intended to secure the redemption of Christ's own people, given unto Him by the Father, and who are His purchased possession, His special treasure, the sheep of His pasture, the members of His Body. Indeed, I cannot see how any one retaining the doctrine of election and of effectual calling can well abide in any other conclusion. Where these doctrines are denied, and where it is held that the door being opened it remains simply with each individual to enter or not as he pleases, and that Christ simply accepts those who so please, it is obviously only consistent and proper to deny that Christ had or could have any special intention of saving one more than another in what He did and suffered. But where it is held that God has purposed from all eternity to save a certain portion of our race, through the work of Christ, and that these He will certainly save through the operation in them of His Holy Spirit, by which they are in time brought to Christ, it seems to me impossible in consistency to deny that Christ must have specially intended that this purpose of God should take effect through His sacrifice, and consequently that in offering that sacrifice He specially designed thereby to save His people.

At the same time, as I have said, I do not see that it is of

very great moment practically which of the two views we have been considering we adopt. On either view we may make a free offer of salvation to all men on the ground of the all-sufficiency of Christ's work in the assurance that whosoever accepts that offer and embraces Christ shall be saved; whilst, at the same time, there must ever be present to our minds the conviction that, unless to those who are chosen of God unto salvation, and into whose hearts He will send His Holy Spirit that they may believe and be saved, these offers will be in vain. As Dr. Pye Smith has observed, "The gracious decree of election and the designs of redemption must be in perfect unison. But whether the relation of the former to the latter immediately regards the original *performance* or the successive *application* of the Saviour's mediatorial work does not, I acknowledge, appear to me to be a question very necessary or profitable, or that it is clearly solved in the divine oracles; and where they are silent it is our wisdom to remain so like wise."<sup>1</sup> In this I wholly agree, only when men will not remain silent on such questions one is forced to consider whether what they say is just and true or not.

*c.* Holding the twofold aspect of Christ's work, I would now, in a series of propositions, state briefly how this may be distributed or placed out.

(*a*) The work of Christ had a general and a special design.

(*b*) In the former, it has respect to all men, and God's dealings with them; in the latter, it has respect to the elect from amongst men, and God's dealings with them.

(*c*) The former respects God as the Moral Governor of all; the latter respects God also as the gracious Father of His people.

(*d*) The former respects the covenant of grace under which God deals kindly with the world at large; the latter respects the covenant of redemption in which God hath engaged to give His Son a reward for His obedience unto death.

(*e*) In virtue of the former, God continues to the race providential blessings forfeited by sin as well as the benefits of Christianity in its outward influences and social bearings, and in the free offer to all of spiritual blessings; in virtue of the latter, God confers upon those whom He hath chosen of

<sup>1</sup> *Four Discourses*, etc., pp. 72, 73, 2nd ed.

His own good pleasure, faith, repentance, pardon, justification, sanctification, and eternal life.

(*f*) In virtue of the former, all men may be freely invited to come to Christ, because there is sufficiency in His atoning work to meet the case of all, and procure salvation for all if they will accept it, and men may be urged to this acceptance by a consideration of the blessings which already they in common with others enjoy through Christ; in virtue of the latter, believers may be exhorted to gratitude, confidence, and obedience. To men generally the preacher may say with all confidence, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;”—to believers in Christ they may say, Christ loved you, and gave Himself for you; wherefore, “Glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits, which are His.”

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE ATONEMENT.

#### (4.) *Recent Theories of the Sacrifice of Christ.*

I have dwelt at some length on the two great antagonistic theories of the atonement, the Calvinistic in its different forms, and the Arminian or Remonstrant, because these have been most extensively embraced, the one or the other, in the Church; because for both the authority of Scripture may be pleaded; and because to one or other of them, as the ultimate type, all theories of atonement which do not wholly abnegate the very idea of atonement may be referred. Of late years a number of other theories have been promulgated, and have met with more or less acceptance both in this country and in America. Though these cannot with propriety be classed as theories of the atonement, for they virtually set aside that concept, and in the majority of instances are to be regarded rather as rationalistic speculations than as expositions of Scripture doctrine; yet, as they profess to show the relation of Christ's work to man's redemption, it may be proper to

take notice of them in connection with the subject of which we have been treating.

a. I may pass over with slight mention the Socinian theory, which resolves our Lord's work into the mere furnishing of an *example* for men to follow so as to be saved ; for in this theory the idea of atonement wholly disappears, and the salvation of man is made to depend solely on his following the good example set him by Christ. There was no propitiation made for man's sins by Christ, no reconciliation effected by Him between God and man. There was simply a pattern of holy obedience and pious living exhibited, by the following of which man may secure the divine approbation and inherit eternal blessedness. I need not point out how utterly this theory ignores the most express declarations of Scripture as to the nature and design of our Lord's work on earth, taking no note of that on which our Lord Himself and His apostles lay special stress, viz. the giving of His life for the sheep, His offering Himself as a sacrifice for sin, the shedding of His blood, His death upon the cross ; and resolving the whole of His work into the example which He set in His life of virtue and piety for men to follow. It may be observed, also, that this theory is burdened with the difficulty of accounting for our Lord's peculiar depression and distress under the afflictions which came upon Him. Whence that exceeding and deadly sorrow under which He sank at the prospect of His final sufferings ? whence His agony in the garden, and His almost despairing wail upon the cross ? Many of His followers, called to suffer for His name, have displayed not only calm fortitude, but triumphant exultation under the severest sufferings and in the prospect of death. Whence this difference between them and Him whom they professed to follow ? Were they strong and brave, while He was feeble and timorous ? To suppose this would be to pronounce His example imperfect, and to say that He failed in that which, according to this theory, was His sole work on earth. It is only by admitting what this theory rejects, viz. the *peculiar* character of our Lord's obedience and sufferings, as bearing the sins of men and suffering in their stead, that the fact referred to can be accounted for. When He, though Himself sinless, appeared standing in the room of sinners, He bore "a

weight of woe such as has never been undergone by human martyrs, inasmuch as He bore the imputation to Himself of that accursed thing which He cannot look upon without abhorrence.”<sup>1</sup>

b. Another theory of the nature and design of Christ's work on earth is that He came to reveal to men the Father, to present to them in His own person and acting a true representation of the character, perfections, and working of God, and thereby at once to satisfy the longings of the human heart after God, and to win men to God by the manifestation of the beauty of His character and the greatness of His love to His creature, man. Now, it must be admitted that in this there is no small portion of truth, and truth that is very precious and important. That Christ came to reveal to us the Father, Scripture expressly states: “No man,” says John (i. 18), “hath seen God at any time: the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared *Him* (ἐξηγήσατο);” and that He was in Himself a revelation or manifestation of God we have His own words to assure us, for said He on one occasion, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John xiv. 9); and His apostles, in various forms of phraseology, assure us of the same thing, telling us that He was the image (εἰκὼν) of the invisible God, the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, God manifested in the flesh (2 Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 3; 1 Tim. iii. 16). It is also a truth that it is by the manifestation of God's love to men by Christ that they are drawn to God and brought to be reconciled to Him and to serve Him. But it is also a truth that it is by the *propitiatory* work of Christ that these other truths are chiefly illustrated and acquire their power to influence men and draw them to God. It was not by His doctrine or in His person alone or chiefly that our Lord revealed to men the Father, and showed God's love to man; it was by taking upon Him our sins and making propitiation for sin, by becoming our substitute and suffering on our behalf, by His being given up by God that He might by His obedience unto death atone for our transgressions, and open a way through which the mercy of God might be extended to us and we be reconciled to Him. On this Scripture is most explicit

<sup>1</sup> Crawford, *Doctrine of Atonement*, p. 158.



(Rom. iii. 24–26, v. 8, 10 ; 2 Cor. v. 18, 21 ; Col. i. 19, 20 ; 1 John iv. 9, 10). The testimony of these passages is clear and emphatic. They tell us that it is by the expiatory sufferings and death of Christ that both the righteousness and the love of God are declared or made manifest to us ; that it is through them that God is seen to be just whilst He is justifying the ungodly and remitting the sins of the sinner ; that it is by Christ's death, by His blood shed on the cross, that we are justified, reconciled to God, and saved ; that it is by Christ's dying for us that God's love is commended to us ; that it is by His sending His Son to be a propitiation for our sins that God's love to us is so displayed as to constrain us to love Him in return. Any representation, therefore, of the nature and design of our Lord's work on earth which denies or takes no note of the propitiatory character and effect of His manifestation and acting, stands convicted, in the face of such passages, of being not only wholly inadequate as a representation of what Scripture teaches, but of being a gross misrepresentation of the whole matter. But this is not all that may be said of this representation. Supposing that the sufferings of our Lord had no vicarious character and no propitiatory design,—suppose they were not intended to secure for men as sinners substantial benefits in the pardon of their sins and reconciliation to God,—in what way, we may ask, is the love of God to us manifested by these sufferings, as the apostles say it is ? If God gave up His Son to the death that we might be saved through Him, His love to us is thereby conspicuously displayed. But if the death of Christ had no such end in view, and has no direct bearing on that end, wherein lies the manifestation by it of God's love to us ? If I send my son on a long and dangerous journey to bring relief to some sufferer who has no claim on my benevolence, no person will doubt my regard for the party so benefited ; but if I send my son on such a journey, not to confer on the sufferer any real or direct benefit, but merely to assure him and those around him of my interest in him and regard for him, can any one suppose that the mission would be other than fruitless, that any relief would come thereby to the sufferer, or any real conviction be conveyed to him of my regard for him ? If, then, the sufferings and death of Christ

were not the means by which the benefit of salvation was to be secured for man, there is no evidence furnished by these of God's love to us, and no incitement furnished by the contemplation of them to us to love God and serve Him in return. There is nothing here to draw us to Him or to constrain us to yield ourselves to Him. On the contrary, is there not something rather to repel us from Him, and to harden us in our rebellion? For if the sufferings of Christ were not for a great and important end which could not otherwise be reached, what are we to think of God, by whom they were not only permitted, but appointed? Or what inducement is there to yield ourselves to God and return to Him in love and obedience, when we see Him subjecting His own Son, the most perfectly holy being that ever lived on earth, and whose love to God was such that it was His meat and His drink to do God's will, to the most painful sufferings for no adequate end? No one, we may say, would ever be drawn to repentance and to piety by such a representation; rather would a contrary effect be produced. For, as has been justly remarked by Henry Rogers, "His sufferings have a double aspect; they affect our apprehensions of Him who appointed them no less than of Him by whom they were endured, and give us but little encouragement to trust in the equity and benignity of the divine administration which thus visits perfect innocence with deeper woes than the foulest guilt in this world was ever subjected to."<sup>1</sup>

c. I pass on to the consideration of another theory of the atonement, that propounded by the late Dr. McLeod Campbell in his work entitled, *The Nature of the Atonement, and its Relation to Remission of Sin and Eternal Life*. In this work there is much that is very valuable as illustrating the effect of Christ's work in the deliverance from sin of the believer in Him, in his restoration to God's favour and likeness, and in his establishment in holiness and blessedness; but in respect of the nature of that work and its relation to these results, the author has advanced a theory which is utterly unsatisfactory, which is in itself vague and confused, and which is not sanctioned by the teachings of Scripture. In dilating on the work of Christ as revealing to us the Father, as bringing man

<sup>1</sup> *Greyson's Letters*.

into the relation of sonship with God, and as securing for man an interest in Christ's intercession, Dr. Campbell pursues a course in which he will be readily and rejoicingly followed by all who regard these as in any way the result of Christ's acting and suffering. But when he comes to the question, What was it in the work of Christ which caused it to have this effect? what was it that made it possible for such results to flow from it? he takes a course in answering it which neither Scripture nor sound reason will be found to justify. His answer is, that Christ atoned for man's sin by making it His own, by offering up to God a perfect confession of that sin, and by a sincere and adequate repentance making expiation for it. Dr. Campbell regards our Lord as having by His incarnation identified Himself with the human race, and, as a natural consequence of this, feeling "the pressure of human sin as a pressure on His own spirit." The suffering He thus endured was in its intensity proportionate to the alienation of His nature from sin. Thus pressed and suffering, He made a perfect confession of sin, "a confession which must in its own nature have been a *perfect Amen* in humanity to the judgment of God on the sin of man," "an Amen from the depths of the humanity of Christ to the divine condemnation of sin," "a response to the divine wrath against sin which has all the elements of a perfect repentance in humanity for all the sin of man, a perfect sorrow, a perfect contrition—all the elements of such a repentance, and that in absolute perfection—all excepting the personal consciousness of sin; and by that perfect response in Amen to the mind of God in relation to sin, is the wrath of God rightly met, and that is accorded to divine justice which is its due and could alone satisfy it."<sup>1</sup>

(a) It will be seen from these statements that Dr. Campbell does not, as in the theories already examined, virtually set aside the atonement, but holds that a real expiation was made by Christ, and due satisfaction rendered by Him to the divine justice for man's sin. When, however, he resolves this into the confession of sin by Christ identified with humanity, he assumes a position which is utterly untenable. For it rests on assumptions which are simply unintelligible. How can one man be *identical* with the race? That one man may

<sup>1</sup> P. 134 ff.

*represent* any number of other men, may act for them, may suffer as their substitute, may bear their obligations, and deliver them by paying a ransom price for them, are propositions perfectly intelligible. But that one man can be the same as another man, or as concrete humanity, is what no one can conceive. Dr. Campbell, it is true, tells us that it is not "a personal identity" which he affirms as existing on the part of Christ with mankind. But an identity which is not personal is in the case of persons no identity at all. There may be an identity of nature, such as Christ had with mankind when He took on Him our nature, but an identity of nature does not imply an identification of any being with all the beings possessing that nature, else might any one man be identified with the whole race of men. There is an identity of relation such as an advocate has to the person for whom he appears, or the substitute has for the person in whose place he stands; and in this respect Christ may be said to be identified with those for whom He suffered here, and for whom He intercedes above; but this is precisely that doctrine of the substitutionary and vicarious character of His work which Dr. Campbell is anxious to set aside. Discounting these two senses in which Christ may be said to be identified with the human race, there remains no other in which this can be affirmed of Him that is intelligible. This fundamental assumption of Dr. Campbell is a mere collocation of words without meaning—*vox et præ-*

Not less objectionable is his other fundamental assumption, that Jesus Christ made confession of man's sin to God with deep contrition and sincere repentance. Not only is this affirmed without the slightest authority from Scripture, but the assertion is in itself meaningless. For how can one being repent of the sins of others? How can a sinless being have any such consciousness of guilt as would fill him with poignant anguish and constrain him to prostrate himself before God in abasement and heart-broken contrition? How can one turn from that which he never followed, which he never loved, which he never knew? A representative may indeed confess the sin of his client, as is done not infrequently in our courts of law, when an advocate acknowledges the criminality of the person for whom he appears, and expresses his sorrow for

what he has done. But in this case it is not the advocate who really makes confession, or who has any contrition on account of what has been done; it is the transgressor himself who confesses and is contrite, and the advocate simply conveys a message from him to this effect to the judge. Even so the Lord Jesus, as our Advocate with the Father, may take our confessions and petitions and present them for us to God. But the confessions and petitions must be ours; to say that He confesses our sins as His own, and is contrite because of them, is simply absurd.

(b) Even supposing these fundamental assumptions to be conceded, supposing that Jesus Christ was so identified with the human race that their sin became His, and in His deep sympathy with them that His confession of that sin had "in it all the elements of a perfect contrition and repentance on account of" it, the question arises, How can this be regarded as furnishing an expiation of that sin? If, indeed, it be admitted that Christ suffered as *a substitute for sinners*, it might without absurdity be said that of His sufferings part at least arose from His profound sympathy with those whose sins He bore. But Dr. Campbell will not allow that in any sense Christ's sufferings were vicarious or substitutionary; throughout his book this doctrine is repudiated, and that with much earnestness and emphasis. How, then, we are entitled to ask, did our Lord's sufferings make expiation for man's sin? How can His "perfect contrition and repentance on account of our sins" be held as making atonement for sin? To this I find no better answer from Dr. Campbell than that this suffering of Christ furnishes the most potent inducement to true contrition and repentance on the part of the sinner. But here the idea of expiation or atonement is wholly lost sight of. The sufferings of Christ do not expiate sin; they simply furnish a powerful inducement to the sinner to forsake sin, and with penitent and contrite heart to confess it. Either, then, the sinner's repentance makes the atonement, or there is no atonement made at all. Dr. Campbell thus unwittingly gives up into the hands of the Socinians that cause for which he seems to contend.

(c) If the sufferings of Christ were not propitiatory, if they were not designed to procure for us directly pardon and blessing

from God, how can they be regarded as commending God's love to us? The declaration of the apostle, that "God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8), is full of meaning and force if by Christ's dying for us we understand His dying in our stead as our substitute, or His dying for our behoof as our benefactor. But if His death were not designed and fitted to procure benefit to us, it is impossible to see how His dying in any way showed His love for us, or how God's giving up His Son to die for us in any way commends His love to us; or, indeed, in what sense Christ's death was for us at all. And this leads me to another remark on this theory, viz. :—

(*d*) That on this theory it is impossible to account for our Lord's dying or being subjected to physical suffering at all. Be it observed the outward privations, sufferings, and death which our Lord endured formed no part, according to Dr. Campbell's view, of His expiatory suffering. That lay solely in the mental anguish that oppressed Him when, as identified with the sinful race of man, He confessed sin with contrition and penitence. All that came on Him in the way of suffering besides this was superfluous and unnecessary, so far as His redemptory acting was concerned. But our Lord Himself and His apostles emphatically declare the very contrary of this. According to them, it was His giving His life a ransom for many, His laying down His life for the sheep, His bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, His being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, His redeeming us to God by His blood, His offering Himself as a sacrifice for us, His shedding His blood for us, that formed essential elements in His expiatory work whereby He obtained redemption for us. But of these Dr. Campbell's theory takes no account; they had no direct relation to the atonement which Christ made; they only served to show His abiding trust in God and determined submission to His will; so far as the atonement itself was concerned, they might have been dispensed with. Who can accept this as an adequate explanation of the New Testament statements respecting the work of Christ? Surely nothing can be more certain than that according to these the personal sufferings of our Lord, terminating in His death upon the cross, were essential and indispensable elements in that

work by which He made our peace with God and procured the remission of our sins.

d. From the consideration of Dr. Campbell's theory we may pass by an easy transition to consider that of Dr. Bushnell of America; for in many respects the two are identical. It is difficult, indeed, to ascertain precisely what Dr. Bushnell's view of the atonement is; for he has discussed the subject in two separate works which do not wholly agree with each other, and the perusal of which leaves on the mind the conviction that the author had not thoroughly excogitated the subject, but was rather feeling his way tentatively to some clear, consistent, and well-founded theory. It is certain, however, that he agrees with Dr. Campbell in regarding our Saviour as identified with humanity, and as, by His deep sympathy in penitence and suffering under the load of sin with mankind, making propitiation for the sinner. He agrees also with him in thinking that it is by the moral power alone of Christ's work and suffering that man is to be brought to God and saved. The peculiarity of Dr. Bushnell's theory lies in the view he presents of what it was in our Lord's sufferings that gave them their propitiatory efficacy. On this point he advances the strange notion that it was by putting Himself to pain and cost that God overcame His offended sentiment and alienated feeling towards man as a sinner, and so was able really to forgive his sin. He lays it down as a postulate that there can be no real forgiveness so long as the hurt feeling lingers in the mind of the injured party; and he argues that the way to get rid of this feeling and be in a condition heartily to forgive the offender, is to be at pains and cost to do the offender some benefit. "Let him," says he, speaking of a man who has been offended by his fellow-man, "find how to plough through the bosom of his adversary by his tenderly appreciative sympathy, how to appear as a brotherly nature at every gate of the mind, standing there as in cost, to look forgiveness without saying it, and he will find, however he may explain it or not explain it, that there is a wonderful consent in feeling somehow, and that he is perfectly atoned—at-oned—both with himself and his adversary."<sup>1</sup> Applying this by analogy to God, Dr. Bushnell contends that God could

<sup>1</sup> *Forgiveness and Law*, p. 42.

only by an act of self-sacrifice for man's benefit obtain from Himself hearty consent to be at one with the sinner, and grant him full forgiveness. He maintains also that forgiveness is obtained only when sin has been remitted; and he regards the remission of sin as being, not the cancelling of guilt or the pardoning of sin, but the removal of sin itself from the man; in other words, the renovation of his whole nature in righteousness and holiness, so that forgiveness, instead of being at the beginning of the believer's course, is not obtained until that course is completed, and is the consummation of his salvation. On this strange theory it may suffice to make but one or two remarks.

(a) It does not say very much for Dr. Bushnell's scholarship that he should explain the remission of sins as meaning the deliverance of the soul from the love and power of sin. The word *ἄφεσις* means the letting go of something that is held or bound, and is in this sense used in Luke iv. 18 in reference to the letting go of prisoners or captives. The phrase *ἄφεσις τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν* or *παράπτωματων* occurs thirteen times in the N. T., and in every case refers to the letting go of the sins which were held against the sinner, *i.e.* the removal of his guilt by forgiveness. In the English Authorized Version it is generally translated by forgiveness of sins.

(b) It is part of Dr. Bushnell's representation that the Greek word *δικαίω*, usually rendered by *justify*, means to make righteous or morally good. But though the word occurs very frequently in the N. T., no instance can be produced in which it has certainly this meaning, whilst in every instance the judicial sense of declaring righteous, absolving from a charge or clearing from guilt, may be fitly understood, and in the majority of instances no other sense can be understood or supposed. Here, again, Dr. Bushnell's philology and exegesis are clearly at fault.

(c) A still more serious objection to his theory is that it wholly mistakes the nature of that which needed to be removed ere sin could be remitted and God and the sinner reconciled. According to him, sin is simply an offence against God, and its effect is to alienate God from the sinner and to produce in the divine mind a feeling of hurt and injury, which



has to be removed ere God will receive the sinner into favour. By man's sin God's "integrity is hurt, His holiness offended, His moral taste disgusted. He is alienated, thrown off, thrust back into separation by the whole instinct of his moral nature."<sup>1</sup> So Dr. Bushnell represents the case. But is this how the Bible represents it? Are we not taught there that sin is the transgression of law, that where there is no law sin is not, and that it is not because there is hurt feeling in the mind of God that He stands aloof from man, but, on the contrary, that it is because the broken law demands reparation and the public justice of God demands satisfaction ere the sinner can be received into favour, that God's love to man is hindered, as it were, from showing itself until such reparation has been made and such satisfaction rendered? The Bible does not represent God as *personally* at enmity with man; on the contrary, it represents Him as pitying the sinner, as loving the world, and as commending His love to men while yet sinners by providing such an atonement for sin as shall reconcile the showing of favour to the sinner with the claims of His government and law. The enmity of God to the sinner is purely *rectoral* and *judicial*. There is no wounded feeling in His mind that requires to be overcome and appeased ere He can sincerely pardon the offender. He is propense to mercy; He delighteth to be gracious; He is Love. And were it not so, one does not see how there could have been any provision for man's salvation at all. Apart from this, what was there to prompt the Almighty to seek the restoration to His favour of those who had insulted and offended Him? So long as the "hurt feeling" of which Dr. Bushnell speaks remained in the divine mind there could be no desire on the part of God to be at peace and amity with man. Either this feeling must die out of the mind of God, or the alienation and separation must continue for ever. But if this feeling was really in the mind of God it could not simply die out of its own accord, for God is not like us, liable to fluctuations of feeling or change of mental condition; the feeling would abide, and no step would be taken by God towards reconciliation with the race whose conduct had excited that feeling in Him. On Dr. Bushnell's hypothesis,

<sup>1</sup> *Forgiveness and Law*, p. 41.

then, instead of there being on the part of God the initiation of a movement towards reconciliation with the sinner, there could have been no such movement at all; the enmity must have continued for ever, and salvation been a boon for ever denied to man.

(d) It will be observed that Dr. Bushnell inverts the *ordo salutis* by making forgiveness consequent on the deliverance of the soul from the love and power of sin. He thus represents sanctification as preceding justification; according to him, the latter is obtained only when the former is complete. How opposed this is to the teaching of Scripture, and how utterly subversive of the whole scheme of divine truth as there revealed to us, I need not stop to point out. I may remark, however, in passing, that Dr. Bushnell's representation of the order of salvation remarkably coincides with that of the Romanist divines, and against which Evangelicals have from the first protested. According to the Romanist doctrine, justification is a progressive work, beginning in the remission of original sin by baptism and the implantation of a renewed nature, or the infusion of grace, into the soul, and proceeding as the man advances in holiness, sin being remitted as it is renounced and removed, and ending in the final remission of guilt when the man is wholly sanctified, this being the completion of justification. In like manner, Dr. Bushnell teaches that it is as man is freed from sin that his sin is remitted, and only after the man is wholly purged from sin, that is, after his sanctification is complete, that he is pardoned and justified. Dr. Bushnell does not, it is true, homologate the Romanist doctrine, that by forsaking sin, becoming holy and doing good works, men acquire a *meritorious right* to justification; but in other respects his doctrine very much coincides with theirs. The Romanist doctrine, however, has one advantage over that of Dr. Bushnell, in that in it the *ordo salutis* is so far preserved that remission of sin, in the sense of pardon and cancelling of guilt, so far as that lies on man from his connection with Adam, is held as *preceding*, in the order of nature, the infusion of grace or the sanctification of the soul; whereas, according to Dr. Bushnell, salvation begins, not in pardon and legal acquittal, but in the turning of the man to God so as to be at one with Him, and so as to enter on a

course of progressive sanctification. And this leads me to another remark on Dr. Bushnell's theory, viz. that it takes no account of the moral impossibility of a man's being turned to God so as to be at one with Him, so long as he feels himself to be an unpardoned sinner and to have the load of guilt resting upon him. Dr. Bushnell emphatically asserts that the great end and design of Christ's work was to bring God and man to be at one. But how is this union to be effected so long as man's sin is unforgiven? Can God be at amity with a creature who lies under the ban and sentence of His law, whom that law has condemned, and over whom hangs the penalty which God Himself has denounced against sin? Is the actual removal of sin "possible (to use the words of Rothe) except on the supposition that God has previously entered into amicable relations with the sinner by the forgiveness of sin"?<sup>1</sup> Must not the first step, therefore, on the part of God towards reconciliation and amity be the delivering of the sinner from the doom he has incurred by his being pardoned and legally justified? And is not this also the first step by which man is to be inclined towards reconciliation with God? What is it that most estranges man from God? what was it that made Adam shrink from God and hide himself from His presence amid the trees of the garden? What is it that makes the name of God a name of terror and dislike to the sinner? Is it not the consciousness of guilt, the sense of condemnation, the conviction that the sentence of God lies upon him because of his sin? Until that be removed, man must ever stand aloof from God in enmity and dread, hating Him, and fearing nothing so much as the being brought into His presence. But how is this dire obstacle to man's reconciliation with God to be overcome, save by man's being assured that God stands ready to forgive him all his transgressions, to cancel all his guilt, and to receive him as pardoned and justified into His favour? Let this gospel be preached to men, and an effectual step will be taken towards drawing them to be at one with God. This gospel, however, Dr. Bushnell does not preach. He says to the sinner, "Come and be at one with God. See how good and excellent He is. See how He cares for you, how He pities

<sup>1</sup> *Der Erste Br. Johannis praktisch erklärt.*

you, how He loves you, now that the hurt feeling your sin produced has been removed from His mind. Come to Him, and be obedient, and follow after holiness and get rid of sin, and then, when all your sinfulness is gone, you will find all your guilt cancelled and forgiven." Such an appeal, it is to be feared, will be of little effect. Not until God's love to the sinner is exhibited in the offer to him of pardon and acceptance as a free gift on the ground of Christ's propitiatory and atoning work, will his heart be made contrite, his aversion to God overcome, his doubts of God's grace be dispelled, and his whole inner nature be captivated and drawn to God and to holiness.

(c) In fine, Dr. Bushnell by representing the influence exerted by Christ on man as operating *directly through ordinary channels*, in the same way as one man may operate morally upon another, virtually denies the necessity of a divine influence on the heart in regeneration and sanctification. That there is a great moral influence, arising from Christ's work on man's behalf, by which man is drawn to holiness and goodness, is most clearly taught in the N. T.; but it is also with equal clearness taught there that this influence is *supernatural*, that it is through the agency of the Holy Spirit that the new, the divine life is initiated and sustained in the soul, and that it is only as that divine Agent takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us that we are made to feel the constraining power of Christ's love or the attractive power of His cross. What were Dr. Bushnell's views of the agency of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of sinners I do not take it on myself to say; but the effect of his teaching in respect of the influence of Christ on the soul in promoting salvation seems to me to set aside, if not wholly to impeach, this doctrine of the N. T. as needless and superfluous.

There remain only two recent theories of the atonement that deserve any notice, and that chiefly because of the men by whom they have been advanced and advocated. The one of these is that of the late Frederick Denison Maurice, preacher at Lincoln's Inn,<sup>1</sup> and the other that of the late Frederick W. Robertson of Brighton.<sup>2</sup> After the remarks

<sup>1</sup> In his *Theological Essays*.

<sup>2</sup> In his *Sermons*, 1st series.

already made it will not be necessary to dwell at great length on either of these.

c. Mr. Maurice, though a great master of language, is by no means a perspicuous writer; at least, he often fails to convey to the reader a clear apprehension of his opinions,—probably because he had not always a very definite conception in his own mind of what he meant to teach. In regard to the work of Christ he seems to have held two views not, indeed, irreconcilable with each other, yet so diverse that they may be regarded as presenting that work under two totally different aspects, and suggesting two entirely different theories regarding it. One of these views is that which proceeds on the supposition of an identification of Christ with humanity, and is substantially the same as that which we have considered. On this, therefore, we need not delay. The other view is that the work of Christ was one great act of self-sacrifice on His part, performed and endured, not for the purpose of making expiation for man's sins, but simply "to illustrate the principle of self-sacrifice as due from all God's intelligent creatures to Him who made them, and as constituting their true dignity and excellence as moral beings."

(a) Now, it will be seen that this representation proceeds on the assumption that self-sacrifice is in itself, and apart from any end to be answered by it, a right thing, and what will be acceptable to God. But is this true? Is mere self-sacrifice of any moral worth? Is God pleased with mere self-inflicted suffering on the part of any of His creatures? If so, we must think of Him as the worshippers of Baal thought of their god, whom they sought to propitiate by cutting themselves with knives and lancets till the blood gushed out (1 Kings xviii. 28); or as the ignorant Papist imagines, who thinks it a meritorious thing, and a thing with which God will be pleased, when he wastes himself with penance and mortifications, or lacerates his body with the scourge.

But it is not so. Self-sacrifice derives all its value from the end for which it is endured. If that end is good, and if in order to attain it I must mortify my own inclinations, give up my own ease, relinquish my own interests, and undergo

toil, privation, and suffering, then is such sacrifice of self required, and to render it would be for me a thing right and commendable. But if there be no good end in view to be attained by the sacrifice, then is such sacrifice a mere idle and profitless expenditure to which no obligation calls, and which, instead of being pleasing to God, will be condemned by Him, and if offered to Him will be repudiated by Him, saying, "Who hath required this at your hand?" (Isa. i. 12).

That the work of Christ was a great act of self-sacrifice no one can doubt; and that it was acceptable to God the Bible distinctly tells us. But was it so simply as sacrifice? Did it not derive all its worth and all its acceptability from its being the necessary means to a great and good end? And what was that end? The apostle tells us what it was in the same breath with which he announces that the sacrifice was acceptable to God. "Christ," says he, "hath loved us and given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour" (Eph. v. 2). There it is: the offering of Christ went up to God as a sweet-smelling savour, not because it was a mere sacrifice of self, but because it was a sacrifice *for us*. It had a great end to answer; it was not a mere exhibition of patient endurance; it was a means to an end; and as that end was one which God desired, the sacrifice offered to attain it was pleasing and acceptable to Him. And in what respects Christ gave Himself for us He Himself tells us when He says, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28). Here all is plain and consistent. Man was doomed to death because of sin; God desired the redemption of His creature from that doom; Christ gave His life as the ransom-price for man; and with this sacrifice God was well pleased because it secured the end which He desired. But, take away from Christ's work its vicarious and substitutionary character, and His sacrifice becomes a mere empty show, with which it is inconceivable that God, to whom all vain oblations are abominable, should be pleased.

(b) But, it may be said, Mr. Maurice does not represent the sacrifice of Christ as having no end in view to be secured by it; on the contrary, he holds that it had a good end in

view, viz. the “illustrating of the principle of self-sacrifice as due from all God’s intelligent creatures, and as constituting their true dignity and excellence as moral beings.” I understand by this that our Lord’s work had for its end the showing to man what self-sacrifice really is, and so setting an example which man, if he would attain his true dignity and excellence, ought to follow. Now, on this it may suffice to remark — *a.* That on this view the work of Christ is resolved into the mere setting of an *example* to men which they are called to follow. Mr. Maurice’s theory is therefore merely a modification of the Socinian view to which we have already adverted, and is exposed to the censure which that view must receive from all who accept in their proper meaning and import the statements of Scripture respecting the nature and design of our Lord’s work. But *β.* this view is not only unscriptural, but it is absurd. For what does it suppose Christ’s example to be designed to teach us? Apparently the duty of submitting to pain, suffering, and death in order to teach others to submit to the same! Christ, it is said, sacrificed Himself that He might give an example to men of self-sacrifice. This was the object or end of His sacrifice. This, therefore, must be the object or end of our self-sacrifice if we are to follow His example. To follow the example of Christ is to do as He did. But if He suffered merely to induce us to submit to suffering, then to do as He did we must submit to suffering in order to induce others also to submit to this. And thus we are brought to the conclusion that the grand design of the sufferings and work of our Lord was to originate an interminable series of sufferings and sacrifices on the part of men for no special end beyond the sustaining and extending of the series. This is surely absurd. One can understand the apostle, and perceive the force of his argument, when he says, “Hereby we have known love, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John iii. 16). Obviously, if Christ laid down His life for us as our ransom, and His example be binding on us, we are called, if need be, to ransom our brethren even at the expense of life. This is intelligible and reasonable. But if Christ’s death had no such intention and effect, and was

merely to induce us to die that we may induce other men to die, and so on *ad infinitum*, a representation is given of this great event which is little short of ridiculous.

*f.* I pass on to consider the view advanced by Mr. Robertson of Brighton. Mr. Robertson was a distinguished preacher, and his published sermons, taken down from his lips, may be regarded as models of pulpit address, so far as construction, method, and style are concerned. The sentiment also is in general sound and scriptural, and many forcible and impressive enunciations of Christian truth, as well as enforcements of Christian duty, are to be found in them. But Mr. Robertson was an orator rather than a theologian, and his sermons give unmistakable indications that neither by habit of mind nor by training and study was he specially fitted to discuss theological questions. When he comes upon such his thinking is apt to be loose and incoherent, and his utterances perplexingly vague.

His theory of the atonement, so far as I can make it out, is somewhat this. In a world where evil predominates a good man will necessarily come into conflict with it, and in this conflict he must suffer, and only by suffering can he overcome the evil. Jesus Christ, as a partaker of humanity, came into this conflict when here on earth, and in this He suffered, and could not but suffer. "He came (says Mr. Robertson) into collision with the world's evil, and bore the penalty of that daring. He approached the whirling wheel, and was torn in pieces. Such is the law which governs the conflict with evil. It can be crushed only by suffering from it. The Son of Man, who puts His naked foot on the serpent's head, crushes it; but the fang goes into His heel." Now, in this conflict and suffering Christ may be said to have borne our sins in much the same way as the Jews of His day are said by Him to have borne the sins of their fathers, by allowing their deeds, and having the spirit which led to these. On this extraordinary theory, which I have endeavoured, as much as might be, to state in Mr. Robertson's own words, I make the following strictures:—

(*a*) It may be noted as an instance of Mr. Robertson's loose and incoherent way of thinking on such subjects, that whilst in one sentence he says our Lord was torn in pieces



by the whirling wheel of evil, in a sentence immediately following he says our Lord crushed the serpent's head. Both these cannot be true. If our Lord was torn to pieces by the whirling wheel of evil, then the serpent working in that wheel must have crushed Him; and if it was only the fang of the serpent that went into His heel, it is extravagant to speak of His being torn to pieces by the wheel of evil, which is only another name for the serpent's fang. This, however, is not a matter of much importance; it is worth noticing, however, as illustrating the habit of Mr. Robertson's mind, and the evil in discussions of this sort of allowing rhetoric to usurp the place of logic.

(b) Mr. Robertson represents the sufferings of our Lord as those which came on Him necessarily in His conflict with evil. There was therefore nothing extraordinary in these sufferings. They came on Him as they might come on any of us in conflict with the evil that is in the world. But is this how the Bible represents these sufferings? Are we not taught there that these sufferings were wholly peculiar and extraordinary? that they came on Christ not by any natural incidence, as suffering may come on a man who goes counter to any natural law, but were laid upon Him by God as a penalty He had to endure? and that instead of being the mere accidents of a good life in an evil world, they were purposely planned, appointed, and endured as the means towards a great end? All this Mr. Robertson overlooks or denies. He overlooks also the fact that the sufferings of Jesus Christ were voluntarily endured. They came upon Him, not because He could not avoid them, not because they were the inevitable consequences of His coming in contact with evil, but simply because He willed to suffer because He chose to drink the bitter cup that was put into His hand by the Father, and was obedient even to death in order that thereby He might achieve a result which could not otherwise be achieved. Nothing can be more certain than that had Christ willed not to suffer, all the powers of evil would have been impotent to touch Him. "Therefore," said He Himself, "doth the Father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and

I have power to take it again" (John x. 17, 18). It is true in a sense His sufferings were necessary. It is true that it was not possible that the cup should pass from Him except He should drink it. But that was not because He might not have put it aside had He willed, but because His drinking it was necessary to the work He had undertaken to accomplish. To have refused the suffering would have been to desert the work and leave unattained the end for which He came into the world. This our Lord could not do, and therefore it became necessary for Him to suffer. But, save in this respect, His sufferings were not inevitable. To represent Him "the immaculate and divine Redeemer, as subject, like frail and fallen mortals, to an incapacity of overcoming the world's evil without Himself suffering from it," is indeed not only unwarranted, but extravagant and absurd.

(c) When Mr. Robertson asserts that "the law which governs the conflict with evil" is that "it can be crushed only by suffering from it," he lays down a position which neither reason nor experience will authenticate. In regard to physical evil every one knows that it is not by suffering from it, but by alleviating the suffering which it inflicts, that it is to be overcome. And it is the same in regard to moral evil. The apostle exhorts Christians to overcome evil by their good; and this is the grand panacea by which evil is to be cured, the weapon by which chiefly it is to be overcome. As a supply of good food will best allay the evil of hunger; as rest and genial slumber will more than anything else overcome the evil of fatigue; as wholesome diet, kindly nursing, even more than medicine, will meet and vanquish disease; as soothing unguents will most readily appease the pain of a wound,—so moral goodness, displayed in fitting acts, will prove the most effective and the most certain conqueror of moral evil. And if this be true in regard to us, whose good must ever be more or less imperfect, shall it be said that it could not have held in regard to Him whose goodness was absolute and all-commanding? But, even supposing that in respect of creatures such as we are, frail and fallen, it is a law that evil can be overcome only by suffering from it, can this law be held to bind Him, the Holy One of God, whose resources are infinite, whose power is Almighty, and

whose word could annihilate all being but His own? Surely had His mission been merely to overcome and subdue evil in the world, we may believe He could have accomplished this without suffering from it. But

(d) It is altogether a misconception of the end and purpose of our Lord's mission and work to represent this as the overcoming of evil. According to the express declarations of Scripture it was to take away sin, not to overcome evil, that He came into the world. These are not the same. Sin may be taken away, guilt may be cancelled, whilst moral evil remains. It is true that the *ultimate* effect of our Lord's work is the subjugation of evil and its entire removal from the soul of man; but this is not the primary and immediate effect of that work, nor was this what our Lord came into the world immediately to accomplish. He came to take away sin as guilt, to be a propitiation for the sins of the world, and thereby to open a way by which sin might be forgiven and a divine power be communicated to man by which he should be delivered from the power of evil and enabled wholly to overcome it. Not without this power is evil to be overcome; but this power is communicated only where sin has been forgiven and guilt cancelled. To represent our Lord's mission and work as having for their end properly and directly the overcoming of evil, is to confound His mission and work with the mission and work of the Holy Spirit. The just view and the correct statement is that Christ came to take away sin that the Holy Spirit might be given to renew, purify, and sanctify men's hearts, and so overcome evil and put it out of the world. "Christ," says the apostle, "hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us . . . that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. iii. 13, 14). First, redemption through one who has suffered for us, then the gift of the Holy Spirit to sanctify and renew us. This is the proper order, and only by keeping this in view can we have a just conception of the design and effect of our Lord's mission and work.

(e) Once more: How, on Mr. Robertson's theory, can it be seen that the sufferings of Christ were conducive to our deliverance from evil? How come they to have any effect

in this direction? Here Mr. Robertson leaves us wholly in the dark. What he says on this point is to me simply unintelligible. The only meaning I can extract from his words is that Christ bare our sins, had our sin imputed to Him in the same way as the Jews of His day bare the sins of their fathers, that is, by imitating their example and being of the same spirit with them. "Separate acts of sin," he says, "are but manifestations of one great principle. It was thus that the Saviour looked on the sins of His day. The Jews of that age had had no hand in the murder of Abel or Zacharias, but they were of kindred spirit with the men who slew them. Condemning their sin they imitated their act. In that imitation they 'allowed the deeds of their fathers;' they shared in the guilt of the act which had been consummated, because they had the spirit that led to it." The obvious inference from such language is that Christ bare our sins by imitating our acts of sin, by allowing our sinful deeds, by being of the spirit which leads us to commit sin. But so horrible a conclusion could not be that which Mr. Robertson wished his hearers to draw; and indeed he goes on in the next paragraph to give a totally different representation of how it was that Christ bare our sins. "It is in this way only," he goes on to say, "that you will be able with any reality of feeling to enter into the truth that your sins nailed Him to the cross: that the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," etc. "In *this* way?" In what way? In the way in which the sins of the murderers of Abel and Zacharias were laid on the Jews of Christ's day? By no means, but in a way as nearly as possible the converse of this, viz. by our being of the same spirit as the Jews who despised, persecuted, and slew Christ, and imitating in spirit their deeds. "My sin and your sin," he exclaims, "the sin of all, bears the guilt of the Redeemer's sacrifice." So it comes to this: There was guilt in the sacrifice of Christ; that guilt was the guilt of the Jews who slew Him; and that guilt becomes ours when we are of the same spirit as they were, and act in effect as they acted. The Jews of our Lord's day bore the sins of their fathers by indulging their spirit and imitating their example, and we bear the guilt of the Jews who maltreated and crucified Christ when we

indulge their spirit and follow their example. And this, according to Mr. Robertson, is Christ's vicarious sacrifice—His suffering for our sins! Out of this imbroglio I confess I cannot see my way: *Davus sum, non Ædipus*.

But suppose we take that part of Mr. Robertson's statement which is intelligible, though, as we have seen, not in accordance with truth and fact,—suppose we admit that the sufferings of our Lord were the necessary and inevitable result of His being brought in collision with the evil that is in the world, the question arises, How were these sufferings beneficial to us? In what way is the conflict which He endured conducive to our advantage? To this inquiry Mr. Robertson has no satisfactory answer to give; indeed, he gives no answer to it at all. Had he said, Christ suffered thus as a propitiation for our sins, he would have given an answer so satisfactory that it would have more than compensated for all the defects and errors of his general representation. But this he does not say; rather, this he denies and repudiates. Or had he said, Christ endured this conflict that He might vanquish Satan, and so utterly destroy sin that it should no longer be found among men, he would have advanced what was at least intelligible, however contrary to reason and Scripture. But this he does not say. From the general purport of his utterances we may infer that he regarded the sufferings of Christ as of advantage to us, as commending to us the love of God to man the sinner, and as also showing to us the evil and misery of sin. But here the question will again arise, *How* do the sufferings Christ endured manifest to us the love of God? To this those who hold the doctrine of a vicarious propitiation effected by Christ can give a ready and satisfactory answer, for they can say the giving up by God of His Son to suffering and death in order to atone for man's sins, is the greatest and most affecting proof of God's love that has been or that can be afforded to us. But where the propitiatory design and effect of Christ's sufferings are denied, this answer, of course, cannot be given. What answer, then, has Mr. Robertson, who denies this, to give? Absolutely none. "He makes no attempt," as Dr. Crawford has remarked, "to show how it comes to pass that this self-immolating conflict of the Lord Jesus should have *greatly contributed to our benefit*, as the

Scriptures emphatically declare it to have done above every other provision of divine love. . . . If," the same writer goes on to say, "His sufferings be not the appointed means by which pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace are obtained for such as put their trust in Him; if they be regarded only as the necessary result of His own personal contest with the evil agencies that were opposed to Him; if they have not so crushed the world's evil as in some effectual way to rescue or redeem us from it,—then I am unable to see any such inestimable good to men of all nations and of all ages arising from them as can justify the scriptural representations given of them, as of all tokens of divine love incomparably the most wonderful." <sup>1</sup>

The other idea, that the sufferings of Jesus Christ were endured for our benefit as illustrating the evil and misery of sin, and so tending to persuade us to forsake and renounce it, may be dismissed with very brief notice. For what is it that is presented to us in these sufferings? Not the case of a wicked man enduring the consequences of his iniquity or the misery attendant on sin, but that of a good man, a perfectly sinless and holy man, enduring unequalled calamity and suffering, not a little of which came upon Him *because* of His very goodness and holiness. This, unexplained by the fact that it was as the substitute of sinners, and bearing their sins in His own body, would naturally be held to show, not the evil and misery of sin, but the evil and misery of goodness, and so far from furnishing an inducement to men to forsake sin and follow after holiness, would rather tend to fortify them in iniquity, and make them shun goodness. Thus viewed, the effect on men of the contemplation of our Lord's sufferings would be anything but beneficial. Instead of stimulating and encouraging to a conflict with evil, it would have rather the opposite effect. "If," as Dr. Crawford says, "the immaculate Jesus—the only-begotten Son of God—must needs, when engaging in such a conflict, be subjected to humiliations the most abasing and sufferings the most excruciating, we have cause to fear that ordinary men may find in His example *quite as much to daunt and check as to encourage them*; and that they may so read the history of His afflictions

<sup>1</sup> *Atonement*, p. 341.

as to learn from it that their best policy is to refrain from all contact with 'the cockatrice by whose envenomed fang He was so sorely pierced,' and from all collision with 'the whirling wheel,' by approaching which too nearly He was torn in pieces." <sup>1</sup>

In taking a retrospective glance at the representations of the nature and effect of the work and sufferings of Christ which we have been considering, it cannot fail to occur to you that though I have spoken of these as theories of the atonement, they are not properly so designated. A theory (*θεωρία*) is a survey or conspectus of all the phenomena to be explained in their connection with each other, and their relation to some general fact, or truth, or principle under which they are comprehended. A theory of the atonement, therefore, must first of all present a full and accurate collection of all the utterances of Scripture on the subject, and from these, by a careful induction, the general proposition is to be deduced which expresses the meaning and purport of these. To reverse this process and first to assume a general proposition, and then to seek support for it from Scripture, is to put forth a speculation, and not to offer a theory. And this is what all the writers whose opinions we have been considering have done. They offer their representation, not as what they have by a process of induction drawn from Scripture, but as a hypothesis which they have fallen upon, and which they think will suffice to explain the facts. By some of them no note is taken of what Scripture says on the subject at all, while others simply quote Scripture, and endeavour to show that it may be so interpreted as to support their views. In neither case is the course followed a right one. The atonement is a purely scriptural dogma. We know nothing on the subject except what we may learn from Scripture. To ignore Scripture, then, in our investigation is simply to lay aside the only light that can guide us, and to try to find our way in the dark; and first to form our hypothesis and then come to Scripture to find support for it, is nothing better than to try to gain credit to an invention of our own by making Scripture ancillary to it. In the former case we refuse the

<sup>1</sup> *Atonement*, p. 342.

only competent guide; in the latter, we are in danger of making the guide bend to our directions, so as to follow us where it ought to lead.

It is to be observed also that all these so-called theories proceed upon an entire misconception of one of the main facts of the case, the fact of sin. It was to take away sin that Jesus Christ came into the world and suffered; and we can consequently understand aright the design and nature of His work only as we rightly apprehend the nature and character of that which He came to take away. What, then, is sin? With these writers it is nothing more than moral evil, a thing morally odious, and which brings physical evil in its train. No wonder, then, that they do not see the need for an expiation ere sin can be taken away. It is possible to remove moral evil in many ways without this. It may be removed by sound doctrine, it may be removed by good example, it may be removed by earnest entreaty, it may be removed by touching and pathetic appeals. But it is not thus that Scripture represents sin. Whilst asserting its moral evil, it is primarily *as a transgression of law*, entailing guilt and condemnation on the transgressor, that Scripture represents it. It is not merely *κακία* and *ἀσεβεία*, it is primarily *ανομία* and *παράβασις του νομου* (1 John iii. 4; Rom. ii. 23). Now, where this exists it can be taken away only by expiation. Law cannot remit its claims otherwise. Here, therefore, is the *πρωτον ψεύδος* of all these so-called theories; their authors stumble at the very threshold by misconceiving the foremost part of the case. Their first step being wrong, their whole course must of necessity be wrong, and their conclusion far from the truth.



## CHAPTER XX.

## THE ATONEMENT.

*3. Principles upon which a Theory of the Sacrifice of Christ may be constructed.*

The survey we have taken of opinion on the subject of the atonement has brought before us three distinct classes of dogmatic conclusions as to the nature of this transaction. There is (1) the opinion which concludes that the atonement was of a legal or forensic character, intended to satisfy the demands of the divine justice, and thereby remove the legal obstacles which prevented man's reconciliation with God. There is (2) the opinion which concludes that the atonement was wholly of a moral character, intended to operate upon man rather than to affect the divine administration, and by removing man's hostility to God to effect his return to his Father in heaven in peace and holiness. And there is (3) the opinion which concludes that the atonement was wholly of a symbolical character, intended merely to shadow forth certain important religious truths or spiritual facts. Of these classes we may safely discard the last without any special examination, inasmuch as, instead of attempting to solve the problem, it simply evades it, and answers the question, What is the nature of the atonement? by virtually denying that there was any atonement at all. For it would only be an abuse of words to apply this term to a mere sacrament or symbol of religious truths. An atonement is a device or operation of some sort by which parties at variance are made one; but a symbol is merely a method of reminding us of truth already known; it announces nothing new, nothing unknown apart from it, and, consequently, can effect no result that might not have been effected without it. To call the work of Christ, then, a mere symbolical representation of religious truth, is to deny that it had any effect which might not have been produced by that truth itself forcibly presented. A symbol of truth can never do more than the truth of which it is a symbol could do; and, consequently, if the work of Christ was

merely a symbolical representation of religious truth previously known, it could have no more influence in reconciling God and man than that truth had had. It was only a new lesson of the old truth, more impressive, perhaps, than former lessons, but not in kind differing from them. It is obvious that a theory of this sort, instead of affording any explanation of the atonement of Christ, simply explains it away—sublimates it into empty vapour, leaving not even a *caput mortuum* behind.

Discounting this class of conclusions, we have to consider the two former. As to the first, we have seen that it is resolvable into two distinct and really different theories, according as the satisfaction rendered by Christ is regarded as demanded by the inherent justice of God, or as demanded by the administrative justice of God; in other words, according as the atonement of Christ is viewed as a paying to God of man's debt incurred by sin, or as a penal example endured for man's behoof, that on the ground of it sin might be forgiven without any harm accruing thence to the divine government. We have thus had in reality three theories of atonement to consider, which may be thus designated: (1) The simple satisfaction theory; (2) the rectoral or governmental theory; and (3) the purely moral theory.

Now, I am unwilling to believe that our choice lies necessarily *between* these three—that if we take the one we must reject the others, for I cannot help regarding each as incomplete, if not liable to serious objections, by itself, and that the whole truth will be found in a judicious combination of them all. Such a combination we should, I think, attempt to make in offering a theory of the atonement; and having examined, as far as time would admit, some of the leading theories in each of these schools, and showed wherein they seemed to me partial or erroneous, I would now place before you a succinct exposition of the principles on which, as it appears to me, a theory of the atonement may be formed.

This I shall do by enunciating and briefly illustrating a series of propositions.

(1.) God, as the Moral Governor of the universe, must always act in a manner perfectly consistent with Himself and with that government which is but an expression of Himself. This follows, as a necessary consequence, from the perfection

of God. As the infinitely wise, holy, and true God, He can find the only worthy end of His acting in Himself, and in pursuing that end He can never act otherwise than in harmony with Himself. Hence the Scriptures ascribe to Him perfect righteousness and holiness, by which we are not to understand equity and moral purity so much as the perfect propriety, so to speak, of all God's manifestations of Himself to His creatures—the entire consistency of all that He says and does with His own perfect and ineffable nature.

(2.) God having denounced sin as utterly abhorrent to His nature and as a transgression of His law, must ever act so as to preserve intact His consistency in this particular, *i.e.* so as to manifest His own abhorrence of sin, and to uphold the stability and honour of His government, under which it is forbidden. He must ever appear as hating sin, as seeking to deter His intelligent creatures from committing it, and as maintaining with inflexible rigour the prescriptions and the sanctions of His law directed against it. Hence He must not only denounce it, but punish those who commit it, and so place Himself in a position of hostility in relation to such. We find, accordingly, in Scripture that He is continually represented as standing in this relation to sinners of the human race (Rom. i. 18; Eph. v. 6; Ps. vii. 11; Ezra viii. 22; Ps. lxxv. 8, ix. 17; Matt. x. 28). Such plain and repeated statements of Scripture it is in vain to attempt to explain away. It may, indeed, be conceded to reason that when “anger” and “wrath” are imputed to the Almighty, we are not to take the words in their *literal* meaning, as if God could be subject to the passions which are in us designated by these words; but if from this it be argued that they mean nothing at all as applied to God beyond indicating that sin is contrary to Him, we must protest against the conclusion as alike opposed to sound hermeneutics and to the analogy of Scripture. The only safe way of expounding these and similar anthropopathisms is by analogy; and the analogy here plainly is, that as wrath and anger on the part of man lead to the inflicting of suffering on those who are the objects of these passions, so God, as the enemy of sin, will certainly inflict punishment on those who are guilty of it,—a sentiment which is strictly in accordance with the whole

tenor of Scripture concerning the bearing of present transgression on future suffering. We may add that this is also in full accordance with the teaching of natural reason on the subject of retribution. The conscience of every man teaches him that the sin he commits now will appear against him another day, and bring upon him the penalty denounced by the divine law against all who transgress it. Indeed, if it were not so, why should conscience be felt to impose upon us an *imperative obligation*? and why should we feel that conscience betrays its trust and fails to fulfil its office when it does otherwise than rebuke us for sin and warn us of retribution? The affirmation of this rests on the belief in a Just and Holy Ruler, to whom sin is odious, and who will reckon with the sinner; and the force with which the affirmation comes home to every man's bosom is proof sufficient of the accordance of natural reason with Scripture on this important point. Nor is the voice of history silent here. Rather does it in loud and thrilling tones proclaim the presence and continual presidency of a righteous and sin-hating Ruler in the universe. Among the many lessons which history teaches, none is uttered with greater force than this, "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. xxxii. 23). Universal experience assures us that moral evil always brings with it its own punishment sooner or later, in one form or another. An ever-watchful Nemesis dogs the steps of the successful criminal, and at length vindicates by his punishment the law he has broken. Whatever pleasures may accompany the commission of evil, whatever advantages may for a season appear to accrue from it, and however long the transgressor may seem to enjoy impunity, the Avenger is sure to come at last, and then, like the cup of the drunkard, the pleasant or profitable sin "biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. xxiii. 32).

(3.) Whilst God is thus under an obligation arising from the perfection of His own nature to denounce sin, and, as a Ruler, to pronounce sentence of punishment on those who by sin have incurred the penalty attached to the prohibition of it, He is no less under obligation from the perfection of His nature to pity and compassionate the sinner. For God is not only pure and true, He is also and not less merciful and

loving; and having created man for Himself, and for reasons entirely in Himself, He can never cease to regard with interest and affection the being He has thus spontaneously formed. That it is so, the page of nature, no less than the page of written revelation bears ample witness. While the Scripture proclaims Him to be the "Lord God, merciful and gracious," who, though "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who cannot look upon sin," yet "willeth not the death of him that dieth, but that he should turn from his wickedness and live;" the voice of nature no less explicitly attests His benevolence and beneficence to the children of men. He has never at any time left Himself without a witness in this respect; doing good unto all men; giving them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons; filling their hearts with food and gladness. The entire world is full of His goodness; "air, earth, and sea teem with life," and life to most creatures is but joy. Whilst, therefore, conscience, acting on the assumption that God is just, threatens the sinner with punishment, the aspect of God's unwearied goodness awakens hope that in some way mercy may yet reach him so as to deliver him from the penalty to which his sins have exposed him. The very fact that God by His providence preserves the race of men in spite of themselves (for the tendency of sin is to enfeeble, diminish, and ultimately to destroy the race), and continues to bestow blessing upon them, notwithstanding continual rebellion against Him, is of itself sufficient to suggest the probability and beget the hope that in some way God will appear for the restoration of mankind, such as shall be in harmony with the perfection of His character and the glory of His administration. "Mankind," says Dr. McCosh, "seems to be a race fallen but not a race abandoned,—a race which cannot rise of itself, but a race which seems to be kept with care because it is yet to rise." In illustration of this, he refers to the appearance of Judea as a land over which the divine judgments have passed, but which, at the same time, appears as if it were just waiting for the promised renovation. "Does it not look," he continues, "as if, after the same way, there were among the ruins of our nature some materials which God is keeping with care that He may rear a new fabric?"<sup>1</sup> Man, in point of fact, has

<sup>1</sup> *Method of Divine Government*, p. 487.

always cherished such a hope. If he looks back with regret to a golden age that has long since passed away, he consoles himself with the prospect, more or less definite, of a grand restoration of the race to be achieved by some divine interposition on its behalf. The sentiments to which Virgil has given such striking utterance in his *Pollio*,<sup>1</sup> find their counterpart in the legends of the Persians concerning the destruction of Ahriman by Ormuzd, and the consequent bestowal upon the earth of all the blessings of peace, plenty, and unity; in the legend of the *Zendavesta* concerning the restoration of the reign of righteousness and true godliness in the last days; in the Egyptian belief in the victory of Osiris over Typhon;<sup>2</sup> and even in the northern legends concerning that new earth, "most lovely and verdant," which, after the battle of the gods, shall arise out of the sea, and on whose "pleasant fields the grain shall grow unsown."<sup>3</sup> These beliefs may probably be traceable to some primitive tradition as their source; but they could hardly have survived had not the experience of the race fallen in with the anticipations they embody.

(4.) These anticipations, however, can never acquire any firmness or precision, or rest on any solid basis of conviction anterior to actual experience of what God will do for man's recovery. Man, preserved amidst conscious unworthiness and experienced degradation, may have a hope that *some* way will be employed by God for his final recovery; but, previous to experience, he can never discover in *what* way this shall be done. Butler has remarked that though we may, from a knowledge of the character of God, arrive at a conclusion as to the ends which God will secure, "we are not competent judges what is the proper way of acting in order the most effectually to accomplish these ends."<sup>4</sup> This remark may be applied to the case before us: we may conclude, with considerable confidence, that God will interpose for man's deliverance, and we may be sure that if He does, it will be in a manner honourable to Himself; but we can go but a very little way

<sup>1</sup> Eclogue iv.

<sup>2</sup> See Tholuck's *Guido and Julius*, Appendix 4.

<sup>3</sup> See *Prose Edda*, ch. liii., in Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, p. 457, Bohn's edit.

<sup>4</sup> *Analogy*, Pt. I. c. vii.

in determining the grounds upon which He must proceed in this, and we are utterly in the dark as to the method by which, upon these grounds, He shall accomplish the end designed. In fact, the two aspects of the divine character at which we have glanced, when viewed in their relation to man as a sinner, land us in what (to use the language of Kant) is called an antinomy of reason, similar to that which emerges when we contemplate the liberty of man as a free agent in connection with his subjection to the law of causation, or human responsibility in connection with divine ordination. In cases of this sort we have no contradiction, but only a law over against a law, both of which may be true, and neither of which excludes the other. In a contradiction we have two propositions which mutually destroy each other, and one of which must therefore be false; in an antinomy we have two propositions, both of which can be shown to be true, and which, though we cannot see *how* they are to be reconciled, yet do not so destroy each other as to oblige us to conclude that they never can be reconciled. In short, in the one case our reason tells us that they are irreconcilable; in the other case we simply acknowledge that our reason does not enable us to see how they are to be reconciled. Now, such an antinomy of reason emerges in the case before us. Both aspects of the divine character can be proved to be true, and neither of them contradicts the other. If we see reason to believe that God is under obligation to punish sin, we are not thereby constrained to deny that He is also under obligation to compassionate the sinner and seek his deliverance from the penalty he has incurred.

Impatience of this antinomy has led men to cast out of view one or other of the propositions of which it consists, and by this means to arrive at a solution of the problem which has served for the time to satisfy their minds. But such an expedient is neither reverent nor wise; for whatever pronounces on God's doings from a wilfully partial view of His character is insulting to Him, and we had much better remain with a problem unsolved than resort to means which solve it only in appearance, and thereby leave us with a deception.

(5.) Though it may not be competent for us to determine the way in which the exercise of the divine mercy to man is to be reconciled with the divine abhorrence of sin and God's

rectoral obligation to uphold the penal sanctions of His own law, and the stability of His government as involved therein, it is yet possible for us to fix on certain conditions without which such a reconciliation cannot be affected. *a.* We can, for instance, lay it down as certain in whatever way the divine mercy may find access to us so as to exempt us from the condemning sentence of the law which we have broken, it must be in such a way as shall preserve entire and untarnished the honour and authority of that law, and maintain the character of God as a holy and sin-hating Being. Natural reason and universal experience agree to assure us that if mercy be exercised towards a transgressor so as to diminish the authority of law, a greater injury is done to the interests of the community than was inflicted by the transgression itself, or than could be inflicted by the severest penalties endured by the transgressor. This holds true in reference to the divine no less than in reference to human governments. In whatever way, then, provision may be made for the remission of transgression, it must be by means of some arrangement which shall preserve intact the authority of God's law and the glory of God Himself as the author and administrator of that law.

*b.* Having arrived at this conviction, it will naturally occur to the inquirer, as a second condition of safe interposition for the deliverance of the sinner, that some adequate compensation shall be made on behalf of the sinner, such as shall uphold the authority of law, and shall show that God in forgiving sin is not indifferent to its evil, or regardless of the honour of that law of which it is a breach. It must be manifest that, as the object of punishment is simply the upholding of the authority of law, and thereby deterring from a repetition of the offence without which anarchy would ensue, if this end can be attained by an adequate compensation being offered for the offence, the way is opened for the safe and honourable exercise of mercy towards the offender.<sup>1</sup> In human affairs it may sometimes happen that the means are preferred to the end; but under the wise and perfect government of God no such mistake can

<sup>1</sup> See the admirable enunciation of the true theory of punishment by Plato in his *Protagoras*, p. 324.



happen; there the end must ever be held to be of primary importance, and if that end be secured by means not in themselves dishonourable or wrong, all is done that is requisite.

Here I will take the opportunity of remarking that, in my judgment, the question of the atonement, as a question in theology, has been somewhat involved in obscurity and needless complication by being treated as if it were a question properly of *Justice* or *Equity*. When one clearly apprehends the idea of justice, it must be felt that with it *atonement* can have nothing to do. Justice means simply the allotting to each one his *jus* or *right* according to law; in other words, giving to every one his *due*. This either has respect to the giving to a man of what is justly his own, such as the payment of a debt to a rightful creditor, or the allotment to an individual of property to which he is entitled; or it has respect to the bestowal on each of the praise or the punishment which the law under which he lives decrees to be deserved by him. Under the former aspect justice is commutative; under the latter it is forensic or distributive. Now, under neither of these aspects can justice contemplate or recognise atonement. Forensic justice has respect to a judge, and a judge as such can neither forgive transgression nor mitigate the penalty thereby incurred without violating the requirements of his office. Commutative justice has respect to the giving to a man of his own, and takes no cognizance whatever of such matters as transgression and remission. The remission of something duly incurred belongs to the department of government, not to that of equity. It is a question not of right but of prudence and propriety that arises when it is proposed to show mercy to the guilty. When, then, we speak of the remission of sins by God, it will tend to clearness and accuracy if we abstract from the notion of justice altogether, and instead of regarding God as a Judge regard Him as a Sovereign with whom is the prerogative of mercy,—a prerogative He is free to use subject to only one condition, viz. that it be so used as not to dishonour Himself or weaken the authority of His own law. The question is not, How can God be just while pardoning the guilty? but, How can He pardon the guilty so as to act worthily

of Himself as the righteous Lord and Governor of the Universe? <sup>1</sup>

(c) A third condition which will occur to the inquirer as necessary to the deliverance of a sinner from the penal consequences of his sin, is that if adequate compensation is to be rendered to the divine government for his transgression, that can be done only through the vicarious agency of another. Natural ethics and common sense can teach us that man as a sinner can of himself offer no adequate compensation to the law which he has broken. His mere penitence and grief for having transgressed can never compensate for his having done so; the law remains broken and dishonoured, let him deplore his breach of it as much as he can. Nor can any work of supererogation, *i.e.* merit beyond what God requires of him, compensate for former transgressions, because, as man can never go beyond what the law of God requires, any good he may do in the future can never make up for shortcoming and transgression in the past, seeing it is at the utmost only what he was bound to do. It is clear, then, if compensation is to be rendered to God's government for man's sin, that compensation must be rendered by another; in other words, the atonement must be a vicarious one. Nor does such an idea at all shock the natural reason of man; for in all ages and among all peoples the idea of vicarious suffering for sin so as to exhaust the penalty and procure remission has been recognized and acted on. The cases of Zaleucus, of Codrus, of Decius, might be cited from ancient history in support of this; and it is involved in the whole system of Gentile sacrifice as illustrated in former lectures.

An inquirer may thus arrive at an apprehension of the great principles upon which any scheme for man's redemption must be based; and having reached this conclusion, he would be prepared to receive on grounds of theoretical assent the doctrine of a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of man.

<sup>1</sup> The word *δικαιος*, frequently translated "just" in our version, does not properly answer to the idea usually conveyed by that term. Derived from *δικη*, which signifies "right," whether in the abstract or as established by law, *δικαιος* means either one who is absolutely righteous, or righteous according to law or usage. As applied to God "it signifies the perfect coincidence subsisting between His nature, which is the standard for all, and His acts." Cremer, *Bib. Theol. Lex.* p. 171, Eng. tr.

We may even presume that he would advance a step beyond this, and be able to determine with some degree of precision the necessary qualifications of one who should act as the propitiating mediator between God and man. He might, for instance, see that the substitute must be such as the supreme authority approves; that what is done by the substitute must be sufficient to show that the power which exercises mercy is not indifferent to the claims of law; that it must be of sufficient worth to command attention and render impossible the repetition of it; that there shall be an identity of nature between the substitute and those for whom he appears; that there shall be no force used to constrain the substitute to his propitiatory work, but that he shall be perfectly free, an unfettered and unconstrained voluntary agent; and that no permanent or irreparable injury should accrue to the substitute from what he does on behalf of those for whom he appears, as it would be manifestly unrighteous that in order to exempt the guilty from deserved punishment an irreparable evil should fall upon one who is himself innocent.

(6.) Now in the person and work of Jesus Christ, as made known to us in the Bible, we find all the conditions of a valid atonement fulfilled, and all the qualifications required in a sufficient Mediator combined, so that His work, intended to reconcile the exercise of mercy with righteousness, and to manifest that in receiving, and pardoning, and blessing sinners on the ground of that work God acts in harmony with Himself, effectually and fully answers that end.

It thus appears that the work of Christ answers both the great ends that require to be answered before man can be reconciled to God. By His obedience unto death He has made compensation to the law and government of God for our offences, so that it becomes consistent with the perfections of God as the righteous Lord and the Moral Governor of the universe to forgive sin; and He has brought to bear upon man a mighty moral power calculated to captivate and subdue man's inner being, and to bring Him to seek restoration to God, and at the same time to desire with all His soul to be conformed to the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. Christ thus fulfils His great office as the Mediator

between God and man ; as the Redeemer by whom man is recovered for God, and as the Reconciler by whom earth and heaven are brought again into one.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE ATONEMENT.

#### 4. *The Moral Influence of the Sacrifice of Christ.*

Hitherto we have been engaged in considering the work of Christ in its relation to God and to divine government and law. We have seen how by His obedience unto death our Lord made satisfaction for man's sin, and thereby opened a way by which the mercy of God could flow forth upon man without any impeachment of the divine equity or any detriment to the divine administration. As the design of Christ's work, however, is to effect reconciliation between God and man, and as this cannot be brought about without man's being inclined to be at peace with God and without his being brought into harmony of mind and character with God, the work of Christ must have a certain effect in this direction also if its grand design is to be realized. It is necessary, therefore, that we should view the atonement of Christ in its relation to man as well as in its relation to God. We have seen its fitness to remove the legal obstacles that stood in the way of the righteous Lord showing mercy and kindness to the transgressors ; we have now to inquire into its fitness to move man towards God and to bring him into harmony with God.

Now, it cannot have escaped the notice of any attentive reader of Scripture that the N. T. writers frequently and emphatically intimate a connection between the work of Christ and man's being brought to God as a renewed obedient and willing subject, and they at the same time intimate that Christ's work, culminating in His death, has a peculiar and special fitness to affect this result (1 Pet. iii. 18 ; Eph. ii. 13, 16 ; Col. i. 21 ; Gal. i. 4 ; Tit. ii. 14 ; 1 Pet. ii. 24). By

statements like these we are clearly taught that the death of Christ upon the cross was designed to bring men from a state of enmity against God to a state of reconciliation and amity with Him, and to recover man from a condition of sinfulness and moral impurity to a condition of holiness and moral goodness. They also clearly intimate that the death of Christ possesses a fitness to effect this on men.

We are thus brought face to face to the question, Whence arises this fitness? What is there in the death of Christ that is fitted to draw men to God, to induce them to forsake sin, to follow after holiness, and to be zealous for good works? I can only offer a few hints by way of answer to these questions.

(1.) I observe that the work of Christ is fitted to exert a powerful moral influence upon men by its accordance with man's deepest moral convictions. Through it salvation becomes not a mere gracious and kindly act on the part of God towards man, but an act which is as righteous as it is gracious, as approvable to man's moral sense as it is gladdening to his heart. Were it not so it would be impossible to effect a real reconciliation of man to God on the basis of it. Man, conscious of sin, condemns himself; he feels that he deserves to suffer because he has transgressed a law which he *ought* to have obeyed, and that consequently were he to be forgiven while his guilt remained uncanceled a wrong would be done, and the moral order of the universe infringed. Even were it possible, then, for man to be pardoned without an atonement, it would be impossible to reconcile such forgiveness with the man's own sense of rectitude, or to convey to the man's own mind a sense of security and satisfaction in the pardon he had received. The laws of man's moral constitution forbid the possibility of his being really blessed or really at peace with God, unless his pardon and restoration to God be secured in such a way as his own conscience in its free action will approve. What satisfaction could a man have in pardon if he felt and knew that he ought not to have been pardoned? By what possibility could an intelligent being like man yield himself to a moral government and to the service of a moral system which he knew had in his own case been made to suffer wrong, and under which immorality such as his had been overlooked or

treated with indifference? Or by what process could veneration and adoring love towards God be sustained in a mind that could never forget how God had set aside the claims of His own law and treated with unbecoming leniency the impious rebellion against His government of His creatures? For man's own sake, then, and for the reality of His salvation, as well as for the honour of God and the stability of His law, was the work of Christ necessary ere sinners could be saved. By means of it salvation is brought to man on terms that meet the demands of his moral constitution, for by it it is made apparent that God is righteous to forgive sins as well as merciful and gracious. Man sees that mercy comes to him in the way of righteousness, and that he can obtain grace without any injury to law. His conscience thus approves what his desire of happiness prompts him to embrace. He sees how justice and judgment still surround and still support God's throne, while from beneath that throne mercy flows forth in a copious stream to gladden and to bless our sinful race. He is thus brought to be at peace with God on grounds which he sees to be real and enduring; and so with the consent of his whole higher nature, his intellect and his conscience, he is reconciled to God and restored to His service.

(2.) The work of Christ is fitted powerfully to influence man for good by the view which it gives of God,—a view fitted at once to impress and to attract, to fill with reverence and awe, while it inspires confidence and love. “Such a view of the Divine Being,” says Dr. Wardlaw, “is presented in the cross as is precisely calculated to inspire and to maintain (to maintain, too, with a power which will increase in influence the more closely and seriously the view is contemplated) the two great principles of a holy life, the *love* of God and the *fear* of God; filial attachment, freedom, and confidence, combined with humble reverence and holy dread.”<sup>1</sup> In connection with this God appears as “a just God and a Saviour,” immaculate in holiness, inflexible in righteousness, unchanging in faithfulness, and at the same time full of compassion, delighting in mercy, and propense to bless. Such a view of God is fitted to impress powerfully the mind of the

<sup>1</sup> *Discourses on the Soc. Cont.*, p. 236.

sinner, and to impress him in the way most calculated to bring him to God and bind him to God's service. A God only just and holy, the sinner shrinks from and regards with aversion and dread: a God simply benevolent and kind fails to inspire respect or to command obedience. It is only when we see God as too righteous to connive at any transgression of His law, as too holy to look without abhorrence on sin, and at the same time as too gracious and loving not to regard with compassion the sinner, and be ready to pardon and to bless the transgressor so soon as that can be done in accordance with the claims of right and the authority of law,—only then that the mind is rightly affected towards God, and we are brought at once to worship and to love God; to draw nigh to Him with the confidence of children, while at the same time we feel our infinite distance from Him, and stand in awe of His word. Such a view of God the doctrine of the cross supplies, and it alone; and by supplying this brings a mighty moral power to act upon man for his salvation.

(3.) The view which the work of Christ presents and presses on us of the love of Christ is calculated powerfully to affect the heart, and to lead to salvation. In the gospel Christ appears as out of pure love for man submitting to lay aside His divine glory for a season to become partaker of our nature, to bear our sins in His own body, to suffer and to die for us as a sacrifice for sins, that thereby atonement might be made for our transgressions, and we might be made partakers of eternal life and blessedness. Such love, as it is supreme in excellence and boundless in extent, cannot be contemplated by those who are the objects of it without touching man's deepest affections, and prompting him to yield himself wholly to Him by whom such love has been displayed. Love like this cannot but attract, cannot but subdue hostility, cannot but impel to devotedness and service. Men may shut their eyes to it, may refuse to receive the record of it, may treat that record as an idle tale or a devout imagination; but no man can regard it as real, and seriously contemplate it, without feeling more or less of that constraining power which the apostle says it had over him, and being led by it to live, not unto himself, but to Him by whom this love was showed.

Love like this draws out all the noblest affections of the heart, lays hold on the inward springs of action, brings under subjection to itself all man's active energies; and thus it causes the power of Christ to rest upon men, drawing them away from all iniquity, and impelling them to live supremely to Him who gave Himself for them, that He might "purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 14).

(4.) The doctrine of the cross is fitted to exert a powerful moral influence on man by the view it gives of the evil of sin and the necessity of holiness.

The first step towards a real and permanent moral reformation is the acquiring a just sense of the evil of sin, and of the beauty, excellency, and desirableness of holiness. So long as men think of sin as a slight evil, so long as they count it, if not altogether venial, yet not deserving of severe condemnation and punishment, they will not be moved earnestly to desire deliverance from it, nor will they seek to be restored to any high degree of moral purity and holiness. It is when sin is made to appear exceeding sinful, when it is seen to be utterly abominable as well as pernicious, and when goodness, virtue, holiness are perceived to be not only what man ought to seek after, but what he must attain if the true dignity of his nature and his highest felicity are to be reached,—it is then that he begins with full purpose of heart to seek deliverance from sin, both in its guilt and in its power, and to follow after holiness. But where shall the evil of sin and the excellency of holiness be so strikingly exhibited as they are by the work of Christ? Where has God's abhorrence of sin been so strikingly manifested as in His demanding so costly a sacrifice ere sin could be forgiven? Where is the exceeding evil of sin so impressively and affectingly seen as in the sufferings of the Son of God, in His humiliation, His agony, His death as the propitiation for sins? Where shall we look for such a demonstration of the exceeding value of holiness as is furnished by the price which the Son of God paid in order to redeem men from iniquity and recover them to holiness? And what, therefore, is more fitted to inspire men with a hatred of sin, to awaken in them an earnest desire to be wholly delivered from it, and to impel them with all their



heart and soul to endeavour after moral goodness and holiness, than a realizing view of the work of Christ as the Saviour from sin?

“To walk without God in the world,” says Mr. Thomas Erskine, “is to walk in sin; and sin is the way of danger. Men had been told this by their own consciences, and they had even partially and occasionally believed it; but still they walked on. Common arguments had failed; the manifestations of the divine character in creation and providence, and the testimony of conscience, had been disregarded. It thus seemed necessary that a stronger appeal should be made to their understanding and their feelings. The danger of sin must be more strikingly and unequivocally demonstrated; and the alarm excited by this demonstration must be connected with a more kindly and generous principle, which may bind their affections to that God from whom they have wandered. But how is this to be done? What more prevailing appeal can be made? Must the Almighty Warner demonstrate the evil of sin by undergoing its effects? Must He prove the danger of sin by exhibiting Himself as a sufferer under its consequences? Must He who knew no sin suffer as a sinner, that He might persuade men that sin is indeed an evil? It was even so. God became man and dwelt among us. He Himself encountered the terrors of guilt and bore its punishment, and called on His careless creatures to consider and understand the evil of sin by contemplating even its undeserved effects on a Being of perfect purity who was over all, God blessed for ever. Could they hope to sustain that weight which had crushed the Son of God? Could they rush into that guilt and that danger against which He had so pathetically warned them? Could they refuse their hearts and their obedience to Him who had proved Himself so worthy of their confidence?—especially when we consider that this great Benefactor is ever present, and sees the acceptance which this history of His compassion meets with in every breast, rejoicing in those whose spirits are purified by it, and still holding out the warning of His example to the most regardless.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Remarks on the Internal Evidence for the Truth of Revealed Religion*, p. 65 ff., 4th edit.

The work of Christ is thus fitted to exert a great moral power drawing men unto God, attaching them to Him, binding them to His service, and constraining them to the pursuit of all goodness. Be it observed, however, that it derives this fitness and this power supremely, if not wholly, from its being a work of propitiation. Apart from this, there is no such manifestation of God's righteousness and majesty and purity, and no such exhibition of His love, or of the love of Christ to man, as is fitted to move and attract the sinner to God, and constrain him to obedience and virtue. It is only when, in connection with the atonement of Christ, God appears as the Just God and the Saviour, the Friend of sinners, yet sin's eternal foe, that He is presented to us so as to lay hold on man's whole moral nature, and bring him in the entireness of his being into true union with God and sincere devotedness to Him. "A pardon without a sacrifice" (to quote again from Mr. Erskine) "could have made but a weak and obscure appeal to the understanding or the heart. It could not have demonstrated the evil of sin, it could not have demonstrated the graciousness of God, and therefore it could not have led men either to hate sin or to love God."<sup>1</sup> Abstract the atonement from the work of Christ, and it becomes nothing more than an example of piety, sincerity, and fortitude, such as many of His followers have exhibited, but which has no power in itself to constrain any one to follow it.

This may suffice to show how vain must be the attempt to resolve the effect of Christ's work into the mere moral power of it over men's minds apart from its sacrificial character. All the moral theories, as they have been called, of the atonement fail in this, that not only do they take no just account of the actual facts of the case, and ignore or set aside the statements of Scripture upon the subject, but they evert the foundation on which alone they themselves could securely rest. Take, for instance, the theory of Abelard, who may be regarded as the first to propound a moral theory of the work of Christ, either as propounded by himself, or as set forth by any of his followers in recent times. According to Abelard, who does not, however, state his views very clearly, or always preserve

<sup>1</sup> *Remarks, etc.*, p. 72.

consistency in his statements, "we are justified and reconciled to God in the blood of Christ, because by this singular grace exhibited to us, in that His own Son assumed our nature and in Him, instructing us by word and by example, He persisted even unto death, He bound us by love to Himself, so that, inflamed by so great a benefit of divine grace, true love shall not fear to endure anything. . . . Our redemption, therefore, is that supreme love in us through His passion which not only frees us from the servitude of sin but procures for us the true liberty of the sons of God, so that we fulfil all things by love rather than by fear of Him who exhibited to us so great grace than which greater could not, as He Himself attests, be found."<sup>1</sup> Abælard thus "held it to be the free grace of God which, by kindling love in the breast of man, blots out sin, and with sin its guilt."<sup>2</sup> This view has lately found an expositor and advocate in Mr. Maurice, though he has mixed it up with a theory of his own regarding the identification of Christ with humanity, "who," he says, "bore in the truest and strictest sense the sins of the world, feeling them with that anguish which only a perfect and pure and holy being, who is also a perfectly sympathizing and gracious being, can feel the sins of others."<sup>3</sup> Now, in all this there is a great deal of truth. It is a precious truth that it was the love of God which prompted the mission of His Son into our world; and any theory which overlooks this, or would make the work of Christ appear as prompted by a mere desire on the part of God to vindicate His law and manifest His righteousness, must be regarded as defective and erroneous. It is true also that by sending His Son to procure our salvation, God has, as the apostle expressly testifies, "commended" His love unto us in the strongest possible way, and that the effect of this on the mind of him who realizes it is to draw him away from sin unto God. It is true, also, that our Lord having assumed our nature, did in that nature feel an unspeakable anguish from the bearing of our sins. But when this is offered as an adequate explanation of the atonement and sacrifice of Christ,

<sup>1</sup> *Comment. in Epist. ad Romanos*, lib. ii., Opp. p. 553, quoted by Hagenbach, ii. p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Baur, *Versohnungslehre*, p. 195, quoted by Hagenbach, ii. 41.

<sup>3</sup> *Theological Essays*, p. 141.

we must reject it as both contrary to Scripture and unreasonable in itself. It is contrary to Scripture, for in those passages which most clearly and emphatically assert that the work of Christ had its origin in the love of God, and that by it God's love is manifested and declared, it is to the expiatory and propitiatory effect of that work that our attention is directed as that by which this love has reached its object, and by which it has been displayed. "Herein," says the Apostle John, "is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10; see also Rom. v. 8). "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour" (Eph. v. 2). Besides, as Scripture so plainly states that it was by giving Himself for us, by bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, by becoming a curse for us, by shedding His blood for the remission of sins, by putting away sins by the sacrifice of Himself, that Christ finished the work which God had given Him to do, and accomplished the work of our redemption, we must either shut our eyes to these declarations, or unfairly explain them away before we can regard the sufferings of Christ as meant to assure us of the love of God to us apart from their efficacy in procuring for us pardon and acceptance with Him. And as this theory fails when brought to the test of Scripture, it no less fails when tested by reason. For the fact being that the sufferings and death of Christ were not accidents that befell Him, but purposed and appointed parts of that by which He was to accomplish His work, the question arises, How could this work so manifest to man the love of God as to move man towards God? If we assume that these sufferings were necessary in order to make atonement for men's sins, it is easy to see how Christ, in voluntarily submitting to them, showed the greatness of His love to men, and how the greatness of God's love to men was manifested in His giving up His Son to such suffering in order that, atonement being made, man's sin might be forgiven and man restored to the divine favour. But abstract from this and view the sufferings of Christ as merely something that came upon Him in the course of His career, but had no special bearing on the attainment

of the end for which He came, and it becomes impossible to see how, in His life and work, there was any more a manifestation of divine love than is furnished by the life and work of any good, devoted, and suffering teacher or martyr to the truth. "Assuredly," as has been well said, "*His sufferings* cannot, in themselves considered, be held as illustrating the nature of that invisible God who is necessarily exempt from human sorrows and infirmities. And apart from their efficacy in securing the remission of sins, they tend to obscure, instead of heightening, any evidences of His Father's love which He has otherwise exhibited to us. For it might be not unnatural to conclude that the very circumstance of the most beneficent person who has ever appeared on earth being at the same time more than others a man of sorrows—afflicted not only with bodily sufferings the most severe, but with inward and spiritual agonies the most excruciating (and that, too, although, being perfectly immaculate, He neither deserved nor required chastening on His own account)—was an indication that the great God who thus visited Him was much more disposed to frown than to smile on all the sympathy and kindness He displayed towards us." <sup>1</sup>

Manifestly, therefore, it is only as we view the work of Christ as propitiatory, and intended to procure for man salvation by rendering satisfaction for his transgressions, that it can illustrate for us the true character of God, or attract us to Him by the manifestation of His love. We learn the greatness of God's love from what we see that He has done for us; and in the gift of His Son to die for us, and thereby to make atonement for us, we see the greatest manifestation of His love to man, and it is thence we learn most of all that God is love. "What greater cause," says Augustine, "had the advent of the Lord than that God should show His love in us, in that whilst we were yet enemies Christ died for us? But this to this end, that we should love one another; and as He gave His life for us, so we should lay down our life for the brethren; and if before it grieved us to love God, it should not grieve us now to return to love Him, since He has first loved us, and spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all.

<sup>1</sup> Crawford, *Doctrine of Holy Scripture respecting the Atonement*, p. 288.

For there is no greater invitation to love than to precede in loving."

### 5. *Summary of Inferences respecting the Atonement.*

We are now prepared, in conclusion, and by way of inference from the preceding train of remarks, to give a categorical answer to the three questions which at the outset we stated every theory of the atonement is required to answer.<sup>1</sup>

(1.) What is the *nature* of atonement? The reply to this is, That it is an expedient of divine contrivance for the purpose of reconciling man to God by, on the one hand, so compensating to the law and government of God for man's sin as to render it compatible with God's perfection to forgive the sinner and receive him into favour; and by, on the other hand, so appealing to man's moral and spiritual affections as to overcome his native and habitual enmity to God, and draw him in love, penitence, and submission to seek pardon and acceptance with God.

(2.) Whence arose the *necessity* for this atonement? The reply is, It arose partly from the perfection of the divine nature, and partly from the moral condition of man;—from the perfection of the divine nature, which rendered it impossible for God to forgive sin, except in such a way as should attest His continued abhorrence of sin and uphold the sanctions of His law, by which sin is denounced and forbidden; from the moral nature and condition of man, which render it impossible that he can be really reconciled to God except by means which appeal to his intelligence, touch his emotions, satisfy his conscience, and inspire him with love to God, whose love to man the provision made by Him for man's recovery has so conspicuously displayed.

(3.) For *whom* was the atonement made? or, For *whose benefit* was the propitiatory work of Christ intended? To this I would reply by distinguishing the question into two: *a.* For whose benefit is the atonement made by Christ *sufficient*? *b.* For whose benefit was the atonement of Christ *designed*? These questions demand different answers. To the former

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 85.

my reply would be : The atonement of Christ, being of infinite value, is adequate and sufficient for the benefit of all men, without exception. To the latter I would reply : The atonement of Christ was designed and intended to benefit those only who are, by means of it, actually saved and brought to God. It is a remedy of universal sufficiency, but of limited efficiency ; and this limitation, as it is certainly actual, was also intentional and designed. The merit of Christ as the propitiation is boundless, but the actual reconciliation effected by Christ is not only partial, but was designed and purposed to be so. When I speak of benefit, I mean in this connection the special benefit of salvation. As there are collateral benefits to mankind from Christianity, even where it is not embraced, so there may have been benefits of an outward and temporal kind designed to be secured to the race by the work of Christ. But as respects the great and primary benefit, that of eternal salvation and reconciliation to God, the work of Christ was designed and intended only for the benefit of those whom the Father had given to Him. Of them and them only was He the substitute ; for them and them only did He give Himself, that He might redeem them as His peculiar property, and obtain them as His purchased possession.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### PRIESTLY FUNCTIONS.

##### ii. THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST.

Having considered the first part of Christ's sacerdotal acting, the offering of sacrifice or oblation, we come now to the second part—the making of intercession.

(i.) Under the ancient dispensation the priest, besides offering for the sins of the people, had to make intercession for them. For this purpose he, on the great day of atone-

ment, went within the vail and appeared with the blood of the sacrifice before the mercy-seat, the *capporeth* or covering of the ark of the covenant, over which was the Shekinah, or visible manifestation of the divine presence. He appeared there as presenting unto God the sacrifice which had been offered. The slaying of the victim was the sacrifice, but this had to be presented to God and accepted by Him before the act could have any validity. The blood of the victim was shed, and this it is declared was given to them upon the altar to be an atonement for their souls (Lev. xvii. 11). As the blood was the life, so it was shed that life might be given for life. In this consisted properly the atonement. But this atonement had to be presented and formally accepted by God before it could be of any avail for the pardon of transgression, before it could be really effectual for the souls, *i.e.* the life of the offerers. In order to this, therefore, the high priest, after he had slain the victim, carried the blood within the vail and presented it before God. By this he made intercession for the people. Whether he used any words, whether he made prayer to God for the people, we do not know. The probability is that he did not. The mere presentation of the blood would be sufficient. We know that there may be intercession without words. It is recorded of one of old that when accused before the judges, and about to be condemned, his brother, who had been maimed in fighting his country's battles, effectually interceded for him by simply exhibiting before the judges his wounded limb.<sup>1</sup> So, as has been well said, "If a general who had fought the battles of his country, and had received many a wound, were presenting a petition to his sovereign on behalf of any of his offending subjects, what could be more effective intercession than the silent baring of his bosom and pointing to his scars?"<sup>2</sup> We know that we ourselves may plead with others without words—that we may plead with God "with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26). The high priest, therefore, may have accomplished his act of intercession by simply appearing in the presence of the Shekinah, and in awed silence presenting the sacrificial

<sup>1</sup> Ælian, *Varia Historia*.

<sup>2</sup> Wardlaw, *Systematic Theology*, ii. 633.



blood; and this was probably the case. At the same time, that prayer was *virtually* offered by him was symbolized by his having to “take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail;” and this incense he was to burn “before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense might cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony” (Lev. xvi. 12, 13). The burning incense, diffusing around its fragrant vapour, was the accredited symbol of prayer, as we learn from several passages of Scripture (Ps. cxli. 2; Rev. v. 8, viii. 4).<sup>1</sup> This being the meaning of the burning of incense, we find it was customary for the priest to burn it before the Lord; and whilst he did so the multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense (Luke i. 9, 10). This was done continually morning and evening, when the people went up to the temple to pray; but on the great day of atonement, when the most solemn representation was made of the sacrificial act, the entrance of the high priest within the vail was accompanied with the burning of incense to symbolize his intercession for the people with God on the ground of the oblation which he offered.

(ii.) Now, as intercession formed so important a part of the functions of the high priest of old, our Lord Jesus Christ, as the true High Priest of His Church, is also represented as making intercession in heaven for His people. As the high priest of old entered with sacrificial blood into the most holy place and appeared there for the congregation of Israel, so the Lord Jesus Christ, having offered Himself on the cross as a sacrifice for sins, hath entered into heaven with His own blood, and there appeareth in the presence of God for us (Heb. ix. 24). He there continues His priestly office, making intercession for His people, “a minister of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man.”

1. The fact of our Lord's intercession is made known to

<sup>1</sup> Comp. also the numerous passages in the O. T. where the burning of incense is the synonym of offering worship and making prayer, such as 1 Kings xi. 8; 2 Kings xx. 17, xxiii. 5; Jer. i. 16, vii. 9; Hos. xi. 2, etc. Comp. also the Latin *thura rogare*, for *per thura precari*, and the use of *thura* for *verba precantia*.

us by various statements of Scripture. As by the prophet of old the Messiah was described as bearing the sin of many and making intercession for the transgressors (Isa. liii. 12), so in the N. T. Jesus Christ, who bore our sins in His own body on the tree, is represented as making intercession for men in heaven. This is expressed in various forms of phraseology. In Rom. viii. 34 the apostle says, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." The word here used by the apostle is *εὐτυγχάνει*, and the same word is used in Heb. vii. 25. This verb means primarily to light upon anything, to fall in with, or to meet any one; hence to approach one for the sake of conference, to make application for anything (as in Acts xxv. 24, where Festus says to King Agrippa, "The multitude of the Jews *εὐετύχουν* μοι, have applied to me," or, as in the A. V., "have dealt with me"); hence to entreat or make prayer, either for the obtaining of benefit or the averting of calamity. As used in the passages cited, it implies that the Lord Jesus Christ as the great High Priest of His Church approaches to God and makes request for the salvation of His people and their deliverance from condemnation. As in His intercessory prayer when on earth He said, "I pray for them which Thou hast given me," so in some sense still in heaven He prays for those who are His own.

To the same effect is the representation in Heb. ix. 24: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," literally, "to appear to the face, or before the face, of God on our behalf" (*εμφανισθῆναι τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*). The Lord hath gone into heaven, and there appears before God as concerned for the welfare of His people, and to plead with God on their behalf. It is not, therefore, in any secret or invisible way that He obtains blessings for His people, but in open, apparent, official acting on their behalf as their great High Priest in the heavenly temple.

It is in accordance with this that our Lord is said to be our Paraclete with the Father: "If any man sin," says St. John, "we have a Paraclete with the Father, Jesus Christ the

righteous" (1 John ii. 1). In the A. V. the word "advocate" is used as the rendering of *παράκλητος*; and in John xiv. 16, xv. 26, xvi. 7, where the same word is used, it is rendered "Comforter." But neither of these words conveys exactly the meaning of the original word. That word primarily means one who is called to stand beside a person and render him help, and it is in the wide sense of a *helper* that it seems to be used both of Jesus Christ, and by Him of the Holy Ghost. As guilty sinners, we need the help of Christ to avert from us the righteous displeasure of Him against whom we have sinned; as those who are destitute and unworthy, we need His help to procure for us blessing; as those ignorant and prone to error, we need a helper to instruct and guide us; as liable to trouble and sorrow and affliction, we need a helper to comfort and cheer us; in short, as those who are in a condition of weakness, imperfection, and sin, we need one to come to us and stand by us, and undertake our case, and procure for us what we need so as to be safe and happy; and this Christ is to His people in Himself and through His Holy Spirit. It is on this account that He calls Himself, and is called by His apostle, our Paraclete. Whilst on earth He was the Paraclete—the helper, the teacher, the guide, the comforter of His disciples; and hence He speaks of the Holy Ghost as *another* Paraclete whom He should send, thereby implying that He Himself had been a Paraclete to them; and now that He is ascended to heaven and is with the Father, He is still the Paraclete of His people, their Helper in every time of need. As it is in connection with sin that the apostle in 1 John ii. 1 calls Christ the Paraclete of His people, we must understand this as having reference to His agency in procuring for them that deliverance from sin which shall enable them as the sons of God to live without sin and to rejoice in a full forgiveness. And this help our Lord brings to them by acting as their intercessor with the Father.

2. These passages leave us in no doubt as to the *fact* that in some sense our Lord intercedes with God the Father for men. But when we come to ask in *what* sense this is to be understood, in other words, to inquire into the *nature* of Christ's intercession, we find that there is very little to be

said. Of one thing we may be certain, that the intercession of Christ in heaven is not of the nature of a pleading with or entreating of God on behalf of the saints. If our Lord offers prayer to God for His people, we may be sure that it is very different from such prayer as we have to offer, or even from such prayer as our Lord Himself offered while on earth. The prayer, indeed, which He offered to the Father before He was betrayed, and which is recorded in John xvii., may be regarded as affording a view in the general of Christ's intercession for His people; but in the manner and form of it we cannot regard it as illustrating the method of His intercession now that He is in His kingly glory at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. We do not need to suppose that He uses words at all. As we have seen, there may be intercession without words; and it seems more in accordance with the dignity of our Lord's position as exalted Mediator that we should regard His intercession for His people as substantially the constant presentation of Himself before God as their High Priest, by whose sacrifice atonement has been made for their sins, and on the ground of whose merits blessing may be bestowed upon them though unworthy. Calvin<sup>1</sup> has in a few words set forth all that can be said with safety on this subject. "Let us not dream," he says, "that He [Christ], prostrate at the Father's knees, prays as a suppliant for us, but let us with the apostle understand that He so appears before the face of God that the virtue of His death avails for a perpetual intercession for us; and that He, having entered the heavenly sanctuary alone, presents the vows of His people who stand afar off in the outer court." So also John Owen says, "Now, in heaven, the state and condition of Christ admitting of no oral or formal applications, and the ground, reason, and argument of His intercession being finished and past, His intercession as the means of the actual impetration of grace and glory consists in the real presentation of His offering and sacrifice for the procuring of the actual communication of the fruits thereof unto them for whom He so offered Himself. The whole matter of words, prayers, and supplications, yea of internal conceptions of the mind formed into prayer, is but accidental unto intercession,

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, lib. iii. cap. 20, § 20.

attending the state and condition of Him that intercedes. The real entire nature of it consists in the presentation of such things as may prevail in the way of motive or procuring cause with respect unto the things interceded for. And such we do affirm the intercession of Christ as our High Priest in heaven to be.”<sup>1</sup> We must beware, however, of going the length to which some have gone, of affirming that there is nothing in the nature of *asking* in our Lord’s intercession. In some sense, though we do not say how, there must be in His intercession, to make it intercession at all, “a putting up,” as Owen expresses it, “a requesting and offering unto God of His desires and will for the Church, attended with care, love, and compassion.”<sup>2</sup> But whilst we avoid this extreme, we must equally, if not with greater earnestness, avoid the opposite extreme into which some have been betrayed, that of too curiously and minutely specifying the characteristics of our Lord’s intercession. In this respect the divines of the Lutheran Church have chiefly erred; for they insist that “the intercession of Christ is not only real, but also vocal and oral.” With this, however, all the Lutheran divines are not chargeable. Brentius, for instance, says, “Whether that intercession be verbal, and consist in words and prayers made either by the mind alone or also by the voice, or whether it be real only, and consist in this, that Christ by force of His merit and satisfaction formerly rendered, and prayers long ago made, moves God to remit our sins, it is not needful to define.” This is true; surely it is enough for us to know that Christ does intercede for His people, that His intercession is carried on by Him in heaven, that it is a continual intercession, that it is effectual, so that through it all the benefits of Christ’s mediation are secured to believers, and that this efficacy depends on that oblation which Christ offered when “He gave Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour” (Eph. v. 2). This intercession Christ as God-man ever lives to make. It is the main end of His mediatorial reign. It is that by which He secures the final salvation of His people. Hence, says

<sup>1</sup> Works, xix. p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Owen, *Exposition of the Hebrews*, vol. v. p. 541; Works, xxii., Goold’s edition.

the apostle, "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. v. 10). His sacrificial death laid the basis of our reconciliation in which salvation has its commencement. His life, devoted to making intercession for us, secures that that salvation shall reach its consummation. Because He thus liveth to make intercession for us, "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him" (Heb. vii. 25).

3. A question has been raised whether in any sense Christ can be said to make intercession for those who are not His people by faith in Him. That He intercedes for believers is admitted, but are they alone the objects of His intercession? By the Lutheran divines the answer given to this question is that whilst Christ in a special manner intercedes for those who are His own, He also intercedes for all men to the effect that they are not destroyed, and have the gate of divine mercy still open to them.<sup>1</sup> For this there does not appear to be any real authority in Scripture. It is indeed true that it is in virtue of Christ's sacrifice and atonement that the race of sinners is preserved on the earth, that men are surrounded with divine bounties, that the gospel is preached to men freely, and that the offer of salvation is open to all. But that Christ in any sense intercedes for those who do not accept His salvation, is neither taught in Scripture nor is it compatible with the conditions of His intercession. It is as a Priest that He intercedes, and, consequently, it can only be for those who accept Him as a Priest that His intercession can be made. As He is willing and able to save all who will come to Him, but actually saves those only who do come; so He is willing and able to make intercession for all; but He actually does intercede only for those who, as the apostle expresses it, "come unto God through Him." Our Lord Himself seems very clearly to indicate this when in His intercessory prayer before His crucifixion He says to the Father, "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for

<sup>1</sup> Thus Hollaz divides the intercession of Christ into *intercessio generalis*, "qua orat Christus patrem pro omnibus hominibus ut salutaris mortis sue fructus illis applicetur," and *intercessio specialis*, "qua orat pro renatis et electis ut in fide et sanetitate conserventur utque crescant."

them which Thou hast given me : for they are Thine." That at His crucifixion He should have prayed God to forgive His murderers, shows the greatness of His benevolence and grace ; but to adduce this, as is commonly done by the Lutherans, as a proof that He now in heaven pleads on behalf of all men, the unbelieving as well as the believing, is simply absurd.

4. As Jesus Christ makes intercession for His people, so He alone is their intercessor with God. Believers on earth may make intercession for others, and are enjoined in Scripture to do so ; but this only means that they may ask in prayer good for others, and their asking can become effectual only as their prayers are presented and sustained by the great and only Intercessor in heaven. That the saints in heaven can become intercessors on behalf of those still on earth, is one of the many delusive and pernicious doctrines by which the Church of Rome in its "deceivableness of unrighteousness" misleads men to their destruction. Such a doctrine is not only without a shadow of support from Scripture, but it is opposed to all that Scripture teaches bearing on the subject. It is opposed to the plain and direct utterance of Scripture that there is but "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus ;" and it is derogatory to the honour of Christ as Mediator, for it supposes that He is either unable or unwilling to intercede for all His people, but must be helped in this by angels and saints in glory. It is opposed to the clear teaching of Scripture that God alone, and Christ as God, can hear prayer, and it leads directly to idolatry ; for those whose intercession is asked come to be necessarily invested in the mind of the suppliant with divine attributes. It is contrary to Scripture, inasmuch as it teaches that departed saints can, on the ground of their own merits, procure blessing for others from God, whereas Scripture teaches that no man, whether on earth or in heaven, can ever acquire such merit, all blessing being solely the gift of Divine Grace. On the minds of those who receive this doctrine it cannot have any other than a debasing effect. It leads to superstition and senseless credulity ; it lowers the standard of devotion ; it leads the mind away from God ; it tempts to trust in an arm of flesh, and thus takes men away from Him who is the alone Saviour

to trust in lying vanities, and thereby to forsake their own mercy.

Calvin, after discussing this subject at some length, thus sums up the whole: "Since the Scripture commends to us as the chief head in the worship of God that we should invoke Him, it is not without manifest sacrilege that prayer is directed to others. Whence also in the Psalms it is said (Ps. xliv. 21), 'If I stretch forth my hands to another God, shall not God require this?' Moreover, since God will be invoked only from faith, and expressly commands prayers to be framed exactly according to His word, and since faith, founded on the word, is the mother of right prayer, in so far as it departs from the word there is of necessity a corrupting of prayer. But, as has been shown, if the whole of Scripture is consulted, this honour is there vindicated to God alone. As respects the office of intercession we see that it is peculiar to Christ, and that no prayer is pleasing to God unless what He, the Mediator, sanctifies. And though believers may mutually offer prayer for the brethren, this in no wise derogates from the sole intercession of Christ, because all, leaning on that, commend as well themselves as others to God. Further, we have shown that ignorantly is this arrogated to the dead, to whom we nowhere read that they pray for us. Scripture frequently exhorts to mutual exchanges of this duty; but of the dead not so much as a syllable. Nay, James, joining together these two, that we confess our faults one to another and pray one for the other, tacitly excludes the dead. Wherefore, to condemn this error this one reason is sufficient, that the beginning of fitting prayer springs from faith, but faith is from the hearing of God's word, where there is no mention of [this] counterfeit intercession; so that superstition has brought in for itself patrons who have not been divinely given. . . . Moreover, this superstition has sprung from distrust, because they have either not been content with Christ as intercessor, or have spoiled Him altogether of His honour. And this latter is easily evinced from their effrontery, because in controversy they use no stronger argument than that the aid of the saints is needful for us because we are unworthy to have free access to God. This indeed is most true, but we gather from this that



they leave nothing for Christ, since they deem His intercession of no avail, unless George, or Hippolytus, or like phantoms be added.”<sup>1</sup>

As may be supposed, the Rationalists and Unitarians, denying the proper deity and propitiatory work of Christ, endeavour also to explain away His intercession. Whilst they all agree in maintaining that Christ neither intercedes for men in any proper sense of the term, nor is the medium through which our prayers find access to and acceptance with God, they do not all agree as to what the intercession of Christ really is. They all say the expression is figurative and metaphorical; but as a metaphor or figure must mean something, when they come to say what this means their language becomes very vague and their conclusions somewhat diverse. Some of them resolve the intercession of Christ into a mere expression of His *love* to men. Thus Wegscheider says, “Putting aside Judaic allegories and anthropopathic imagery, it is enough to remember that by the utterances of the sacred writers which affirm Christ to be an intercessor, there is signified in a sort of symbolic way that most tender love with which Jesus Christ always embraces His own.” - The more common opinion is that by the intercession of Christ is meant the exercise of that power with which He is invested in some way for the benefit of His people. In this way the intercession of Christ is made to be a part of His work as King and Head of His Church, and both are detached from any connection with His work as a Priest. But if this were all that is meant by Christ’s making intercession for men, why should the N. T. writers have made use of this expression? As they write distinctly enough of Christ’s authority and power, why resort to such a dubious and misleading form of expression if they mean by His intercession nothing more than the exercise of His power? It will not do to say that the verb *εντυγχάνειν* is a word of very general signification, for whatever extent of signification it bears it can never be extended so as to denote an exercise of power on behalf of any one; it always means (save when used in its primary sense of lighting upon, with which we have nothing to do) to act by way of application or entreaty

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, lib. iii. cap. 20, § 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Instit. Theol.*, § 143.

to some one for something, or on behalf of another, or against another. As used by the apostle, it can only mean to intercede for; and as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews connects the intercession of Christ with His unchangeable priesthood, and the exercise of that in heaven for the salvation of His people, we can come to no other conclusion in fairness of interpretation than that He there as a Priest, on the ground of His sacrifice, pleads for the salvation of those that come unto God through Him.

The intercession of Christ for His people is, then, a great reality. The mode may surpass our knowledge, but of the fact we have the best assurance, and it is one fitted to convey the highest encouragement and the most abiding comfort to the believer.

“Christus orat pro nobis ut sacerdos; orat in nobis ut caput nostrum; oratur a nobis ut Deus noster. Agnoscamus ergo et in illo voces nostras et voces ejus in nobis” (Augustin).

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE MEDIATORIAL WORK OF CHRIST.

#### II. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST.<sup>1</sup>

Our Lord was appointed to communicate the mind of God to man. According to God's gracious and eternal purpose, the truth whereby men are to be restored and sanctified was to be made known to them through the Mediator. This function our Lord discharged *mediately* and *immediately*; the former, as He was the source of knowledge and authority to the prophets and apostles, in whom spake “the Spirit of

<sup>1</sup> [Although it was part of Dr. Alexander's plan to consider in succession the mediatorial offices of Christ as Priest, Prophet, and King, no lecture or lectures on the prophetic office of Christ have been found among his papers. In order, however, to give formal completeness to his course of teaching on the mediatorial work of Christ, the paragraph given above is extracted from his article on ‘Theology’ in the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.—ED.]

Christ ;" the latter, as He Himself appeared, and taught men the will of God. In regard to this, He spoke of Himself as the Light of the World (John viii. 12), and forbade His disciples to be called rabbi or master, seeing One was their Teacher and Master, even Christ (Matt. xxiii. 8, 10 ; comp. Deut. xviii. 18 ; Luke xxiv. 19 ; Heb. i. 1). Jesus as a Teacher did not propagate the doctrines of any sect or school, nor did He utter speculations of His own ; He came to make known to men the doctrine of God (John vii. 16). "Doctor doctorum Christus, cujus schola in terra et cathedra in cœlo est," says Augustine. The divinity of His mission, and, by implication, the truth of His doctrine, our Lord proved by His miracles and prophecies.<sup>1</sup>

### III. THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.

From the consideration of the priestly office and work of Christ we pass on to that of His office and work as King.

i. Christ's kinghood stands in close relation to His priesthood. It was not merely *after* His humiliation and obedience unto death, whereby He fulfilled His priestly function in making atonement for His people, but *because* of this that He entered on His royal dignity as mediatorial King. "Ought not the Christ," He Himself said to His disciples, in reference to the suffering which He had accomplished at Jerusalem, "to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" (Luke xxiv. 26. See also Rom. xiv. 9 ; Phil. ii. 8-10). If our Lord was, and claimed to be, a King before the consummation of His sacrificial work, this was by anticipation, just as He was a Priest by anticipation before He came into our world ; but as it was in His obedience and sufferings unto death that His priestly office took effect, so it was in these that His kingly office had its ground and reason. He was exalted to be a King because He had finished the work which the Father had given Him as a Priest to do.

<sup>1</sup> See Neander, *Life of Jesus*, Bk. iv. part ii. ; Reinhard, *Versuch über den Plan Jesu*, etc., 5th edit., Wittenberg 1830 ; Alexander, *Christ and Christianity*, part ii. chap. 4.

And as the kingship of Christ thus rests on His priestly work, so, on the other hand, it is through His kingship that His priesthood secures its ultimate end. For His priesthood contemplates not only the removal of the obstacles which lay in the way of man's restoration to God by making atonement for man's sins, but also the actual bringing of man to God, the complete and final redemption of the sinner from all sin and evil, so that he shall be made one with God in holiness and blessedness; the bringing of that Church which He loved, and for which He gave Himself, through a process of sanctifying and cleansing so as that He shall "present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing" (Eph. v. 27). And this Christ as King secures. He has been exalted for this very end (Acts v. 31; Eph. i. 20, 23). As exalted Lord and King He has all power given to Him; and by this power He can secure all the ends of His priestly office and work. In virtue of this He sent forth His apostles to preach the gospel to every creature, and encouraged them by the assurance that He would be with them to the end. As King He sends forth His Spirit to turn men unto Him, and to carry on the work of sanctification in those that believe in Him; just as it was that being exalted by the right hand of God and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He shed forth those influences by which His apostles were enabled to perform miracles in His name (Acts ii. 33). As He is the Author, so is He the Finisher of faith; and it is in virtue of His kingly power that He both brings men into the Christian course, and enables them to pursue it so that He shall obtain that for which He endured the cross despising the shame, the joy of bringing of many sons unto glory. Our Lord's kingly office is thus closely connected with His priestly office; and hence, when the prophet saw Him in vision, he saw Him as a Priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace was to be between them both, *i.e.* the plan of man's redemption was to be accomplished through the union in the person of the Messiah of the two offices of Priest and King (Zech. vi. 13).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Hengstenberg, *Christology*, vol. iii. p. 358. Clark's Foreign Theological Library.

This is not the only passage in which the kingly dignity of the Messiah is represented in the O. T.; on the contrary, it is as a King that He chiefly appears in the writings of the ancient prophets. By one prophet He is expressly called Messiah the Prince (מָלִיךְ, Dan. ix. 25); His throne is said to be for ever and ever (Ps. xlv. 6); the government is upon His shoulders (Isa. ix. 6); God has set Him as His King on His holy hill of Zion (Ps. ii. 6); and of the increase of His government and peace it is declared there shall be no end (Isa. ix. 7). So prominent, indeed, is this representation in the ancient Scriptures that it arrested the attention of the Jews to the neglect of other representations of the Messiah, and led to the almost universal expectation among them that when the Deliverer out of Zion should come, He would appear in all the pomp and majesty of a great world-king.

In the N. T., if it is the priestly office and work of Christ that is most prominently presented, there is no lack of references also to His kingly office and work. He Himself, when before Pilate, asserted His kingship, adding, "to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the Truth" (John xviii. 37). When He made His triumphal entrance into Jerusalem the multitude "took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him, and cried, Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord;" and this, the evangelist tells us, was in accordance with what is written in ancient prophecy, "Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh," etc. (John xii. 13, 15; comp. Matt. xxi. 8, 9; Mark xi. 9, 10). Our Lord spoke much of that kingdom which He had come to establish on the earth, the kingdom of heaven and of God, the reign of truth, holiness, and peace in the inner nature of man; see Matt. xiii. 31-52; Luke xiii. 23-30; Luke xvii. 20, 21, xix. 11 ff.; John iii. 3; Acts i. 3, etc. His apostles were sent forth to preach the gospel of the kingdom, and they faithfully fulfilled their commission, everywhere "preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ," and, as occasion served, "disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God," or "expounding and testifying the kingdom of God"

(Acts viii. 12, xix. 8, xxviii. 23). They proclaimed that their Master, who had submitted to death that He might take away sins by the sacrifice of Himself, had been raised from the dead, had been exalted to the heavenly throne, had sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, and had been crowned with glory and with honour King of kings and Lord of lords, all things being put under His feet (Eph. i. 20–22; Heb. i. 3, x. 12, 13, xii. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 22; Rev. xvii. 14). And whilst they emphatically asserted the spiritual character of this kingdom as a kingdom not of meat and drink but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, they at the same time maintained that to Christ as King all things are subjected, that He is Lord of all, and that to Him all beings owe obedience and homage.

“The existence of a kingly office of the Lord,” says Oosterzee, “as well as of a prophetic and priestly one, cannot in itself be open to any doubt. As King the Redeemer was already expected and predicted by the poets and prophets of the O. T., and was, moreover, proclaimed by His apostles to friend and foe. His anointing with the Holy Ghost at baptism may be at the same time regarded as His divine consecration to this dignity in the kingdom of God. Even in the days of His humiliation He repeatedly called and showed Himself King: as King, He was displayed even on the cross; and if His resurrection was the manifestation of the most glorious triumph, His ascension was the hour of His coronation.”<sup>1</sup>

ii. The kingship of Christ as Mediator is to be distinguished from that sovereignty or supremacy which He has as God. As the equal and fellow of the Father, He is God over all; His dominion embraces the universe; there is nothing over which He has not control; He doeth according to His pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. But it is not of this that we speak when reference is made to the kingship of Christ. It is of His kingship as Mediator, as the God-man exalted in human nature to the throne, that we speak. This differs from His sovereignty as God in several particulars. The one is essential, absolute, underived, and eternal; the other is

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 621.

economical, official, conferred, relative, and special. As God, the kingdom is His by essential right ; as Mediator, the kingdom has been given to Him by the Father. As God, His dominion is absolute ; as Mediator, His dominion is relative and special, having reference to the economy of grace of which He is the administrator, and to the purposes of God in regard to the salvation of men which He is to carry to their fulfilment. As God, all things are under Him by natural constitution ; as Mediator, all things have been put under Him by economical arrangement. As God, He is the King eternal, immortal, and invisible ; as Mediator, He is the King whom God hath set on His holy hill of Zion, who, being manifested in the flesh, has been justified in the Spirit, who has been received up into glory, who is seen of angels, and who shall reign until all His enemies are put under His feet.

But though we thus distinguish the reign of Christ as Mediator from His supremacy as divine, it is at the same time to be maintained that it is because He is God as well as man that He has been exalted to the mediatorial throne. Without this He could not have occupied such a place. To a mere creature, however exalted, "all power in heaven and earth" could not have been given ; no created hand could grasp such a mighty gift, no created mind could administer such a vast and multifarious empire. A creature, be His endowments what they may, is necessarily limited both in intelligence and power, and to such it is neither possible, nor if possible would it be safe, to entrust unlimited authority and power. Of necessity, then, is it that He to whom such a kingdom is given should be divine. If it is in human nature that Christ sits upon His throne, it is because that nature was assumed by Him who in the beginning was with God and was God.

iii. The kingdom of Christ may be viewed under two aspects, in its general administration as embracing the universe, and in its special administration as identified with the Church. Under both aspects it is as God as well as man that Christ reigns over it. As regards the former, reason itself teaches that to God only can the government of the universe belong ; and if Christ is to administer the affairs of His

Church scattered over the world and extending through all time, if He is to secure the final triumph of His cause and bring to a successful issue the course of all who believe in Him, if He is to anticipate, counteract, and overrule all the schemes and efforts of His enemies, if He is to be the Leader and Helper of each of His people in the spiritual life, if He is so to keep and care for all that the Father hath given Him so that none of them shall be lost, and if He is so to control and govern the agencies of the universe as to make all things work together for good to them that love God and are the called according to His purpose,—it must be manifest that only one possessed of omniscience and omnipotence, only one, therefore, truly divine, is competent for such a trust.

(i.) In Colossians (i. 13, 20) there is a remarkable passage in which the apostle dilates on the supremacy of Jesus Christ as connected with His deity. Here, after stating that believers in Christ are delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, in whom they have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, the apostle goes on to speak of the majesty and glory of Him into whose kingdom believers are brought. He calls Him "the image of the invisible God," that is, the perceptible manifestation of Him who is invisible, whom no man hath seen at any time, or can see, the reference being, not to the Logos or to the Deity of Christ as such, but to the God-man as He was manifested to men when He dwelt among them, and they beheld His glory as the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, and as He is still manifested in the heavenly world to those who there surround His throne. To this the apostle adds the description, "The First-born of all creation" (*πρωτοτοκος πάσης κτίσεως*), which does not mean the first of creatures that was born, but the Head, the Chief of all creation; just as in Rev. i. 5, He is called *πρωτοτοκος των νεκρων*, "The First-born of the dead," i.e. the Head or Chief of the dead, the Lord of the dead as well as of the living (Rom. xiv. 9), and as Israel is called by God "my first-born" (Ex. iv. 22), to indicate the dignity and pre-eminence to which Israel by being chosen of God as a people peculiar to Himself was raised. In Ps. lxxxix. 27, God says of the Messiah, "I will make Him the



First-born, higher than the kings of the earth," where the meaning can only be, "I will constitute Him Chief, and raise Him above all the kings of the earth." So also in Rom. viii. 29 it is said that God hath predestinated believers to be conformed to the image of His Son, "that He might be the First-born among many brethren;" and in ver. 18 of this first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, Christ is said to be "the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." Not mere priority of being, therefore, but supremacy, pre-eminence in dignity and power, is the phrase *πρωτότοκος* used to indicate; so that when it is said of Christ that He is the First-born of all creation, the idea intended to be conveyed is that He stands at the head of the universe as its Proprietor and Ruler.

He who is thus at the Head of all being, the apostle goes on to say, is also the source and cause of all creation: "In Him were all things created (*ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτισθῆναι πάντα*)," not merely by Him but in Him; He was not merely the instrument of creation, but its source and containing cause; as in Him was life (John i. 4), and as in Him shall all be made alive (*ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιηθήσονται*, 1 Cor. xv. 22); so in Him the whole created universe had its source, both that part of it which is perceptible to us and that which lies beyond our knowledge, both things in heaven and things on earth, even those which are most exalted in dignity and excellent in might, thrones and dominions, and principalities and powers, whether on earth or in heaven. And as all things have proceeded from Him, so to Him all things, as it were, return; He is not only the beginning, but He is also the end of all created being; all things are by Him and for Him; from Him they came, and in Him they find their ultimate end and aim. And as He is before all things,—not as some would have it, as He came into being before all things, but as *He is* before all things, so in Him all things cohere; He holds all together, and preserves them in one vast ordered unity.

The relation in which Christ thus stands to the created universe is that of its Head and Ruler, its Former, Sustainer, and End. In the same relation does He stand to the Church.

He is its Head, its Origin, its Ruler; and He is so on a double ground,—on the one hand, as the First-born from among the dead, invincibly declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection; and, on the other, as the Being in whom God willed that the whole *pleroma*, the totality, of the divine qualities and powers should dwell. It is thus as at once human and divine that He presides over that kingdom which has been given Him by the Father, Head at once of the universe and of the Church.

(ii.) The Church or spiritual kingdom of Christ is the proper sphere of His dominion. There He reigns as sole Head and King. In Him this kingdom begins, by Him all its laws and ordinances are instituted, from Him all the authority exercised in it is derived, by His counsel it is guided, by His power it is protected and advanced, and for Him, for His glory and joy, it exists and is preserved. He reigns there in the midst of His enemies, but in vain do they seek to impair His dignity, to weaken His authority, or to restrain His power. Having all power in heaven and on earth, He can not only frustrate the counsels of His adversaries and beat back their assaults, but He can overrule their agencies and make their schemes and efforts subservient to His own cause. “Head over all things for the Church,” He can make all things work together for her good, so that even those things which the enemy has intended for her hurt and hindrance are made to turn out for her help and furtherance.

More particularly, the activity of Christ in His kingdom is exhibited—

1. In the formation and the establishment of His kingdom on earth. He calls out a people for Himself from among the mass of fallen humanity. His Church is gathered by Him from the midst of the unbelieving world. Through His grace men are delivered from the kingdom of darkness, and brought into the kingdom of God’s dear Son. As in the days of His flesh He called His disciples to Him one by one, so it is still by His call that men are individually drawn into His kingdom, and it is thus that His kingdom is formed and advanced in the world. It was by no happy accident, by no fortunate concurrence of circumstances, by no counsel or plan of men that His Church was at first founded; it was

because Jesus "being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He shed forth" that mighty influence by which men were converted and brought to acknowledge Him whom the Jews had crucified to be "both Lord and Christ," that His kingdom had its first great beginning in our world (Acts ii. 33-36). And it is by the same power still that it is continued and advanced. Only those whom Christ by His Word and Spirit calls to Himself and draws out of the world, only those who are partakers of the heavenly calling, only those who are called of God unto His kingdom and glory, become subjects of His kingdom, and enter on the enjoyment of its privileges. Men, it is true, must of their own will and choice enter this kingdom; Christ gathers men into His kingdom not otherwise than by inviting and inducing them to come; still, it is only as He by His Word and Spirit draws them to Himself that any will seek or find access to His kingdom. To all who are His subjects Christ may say as He said to His disciples of old, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (John xv. 16).

2. Christ as King rules in and over His kingdom. As the "Head of His body the Church," He controls and regulates it. He determines its position and manifestations in the world; appoints the form it has to assume in its outward organizations, enacts the laws by which it is to be regulated and the ordinances which it has to observe. He "holds the seven stars in His right hand," and "walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" (Rev. ii. 1). Nor is it only in the Church at large that He rules; His rule extends to each individual of His subjects in whom He rules by His Word and Spirit, guiding, directing, controlling, and animating each and all of them. They thus live because He lives in them (Gal. ii. 20): they are as living stones in the spiritual temple, because they are built upon Him, the living stone (1 Pet. ii. 4, 5), and rest on Him, the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord (Eph. ii. 20, 21). In this respect He is the sole Head, Master, and Lord in His kingdom. None can share the rule with Him. He needs no vicegerent to govern any part of His empire. Officers He

may appoint in His Churches, agents He may employ to carry out His purposes or administer His ordinances; but these are merely His servants, and they act only by His authority. For any man to claim headship over the Church, for any to assume to make laws for His kingdom or any part of it, is to arrogate for the servant what belongs only to the Master, and is alike impious and mischievous. In His hand is the sceptre, and He delegates it to no other. To Him alone, "in whom are hid all the treasure of wisdom and knowledge," can the rule of this vast empire be safely entrusted. All human hierarchies, all royal supremacies over the Church, are to be denounced as not only inexpedient, but lawless, treasonable, and injurious.

3. Christ as King protects His Church or kingdom. His Church is exposed to the continual assault and opposition of enemies; and so many and so powerful are the influences arrayed against her, and so assiduous are her enemies in their hostility, that were she left without protection she would be utterly destroyed. But she is not so left. Her King is her Defender and Protector. He is the glory of her strength; the Lord is her defence, the Holy One of Israel her King. Protected and defended by Him, no weapon that is formed against her shall prosper. He will baffle the designs, frustrate the schemes, and beat back the assaults of all her adversaries. Though for wise ends He may sometimes restrain His power, and suffer the enemy for a season to seem to prevail, it is only that He may make His Church to feel more intensely how she is dependent on His aid, and may the more certainly and completely overwhelm the aggressor and secure the final victory to His Church. When He ascended the throne the Lord said to Him, "Sit Thou at my right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (Ps. cx. 1); from that time forth He sits on that throne, expecting with divine patience till all His enemies shall be subdued before Him; and He is constantly on the watch to counteract the efforts of His adversaries, and cover them with defeat and confusion. Nor will He for one moment intermit His care or relax His efforts until all hostility is overcome, and the final triumph of His kingdom is secured. And as He thus protects His Church in her

militant state, so will He bring her at last to glory, having purged out of His kingdom everything that defileth, and perfected in all His subjects the excellency of His own character and image.

The kingdom of Christ, viewed under its different aspects, is sometimes distinguished into the kingdom of Power or Nature, the kingdom of Grace, and the kingdom of Glory. To this there is no objection, so long as it is distinctly kept in view that these are designations of the one kingdom under different aspects or relations; but there is a danger of such distinctions leading to the conceiving of the kingdom as divisible into different realms, lying apart from each other and administered on different principles. This would be a mistake. The kingdom of Christ is one. In the dispensation of the fulness of times God purposed to gather together in one all things in Christ, "both which are in heaven and which are on earth" (Eph. i. 10). The power which He has as King is power in heaven as well as on earth, and He exercises that power not over nature only or against His enemies, but also in carrying out the purposes of His grace, and in the consummation of the whole in glory. Grace, as our old divines were fond of saying, is glory begun, and glory is grace perfected and completed for ever. The two are but parts of one grand continuous whole; and in both it is by His mighty power, whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself, that Christ the King administers the affairs, preserves the integrity, dispenses the benefits, and secures the perpetuity of His reign.

(iii.) The kingdom of Christ is a spiritual kingdom. According to His own emphatic declaration, "It is not of this world." It may be in the world, it may include the world in it, but it is not of the world. "In this negation," says Schleiermacher, "there lies first this, that His regal power does not immediately extend over the things of this world and order them, and hence only the inner part of men, each for himself, and in their relation to each other, remains as its immediate sphere. Moreover, this also is implied that He uses for the exercise of His rule no means which depend on things of this world, that is, no constraint to which superiority of material forces belongs, and no enticements or threatenings which need

such support, and operate only on the sensuous nature which belongs to this world.”<sup>1</sup> So also, on an earlier occasion, our Lord, when the Pharisees inquired concerning the coming of the kingdom of God, said, “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation,”—with outward pomp and show, and by outward means,—“neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke xvii. 20, 21). To the same effect is the declaration of the apostle, “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. xiv. 17); and his other declaration, “The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power” (1 Cor. iv. 20). It is a kingdom which has its sphere in the inner nature of man. It is the rule of truth, righteousness, and love over the minds and hearts of men; and it recognises no means as legitimate within its province but such as appeal to the intelligence and affections of its subjects.

(iv.) The kingdom of Christ stands thus in a relation to earthly kingdoms of entire independence of them and separation from them. It neither directly interferes with them nor recognises their right to meddle with it. It needs not their aid, and it refuses their control even in the smallest matters. But though entirely separate from earthly kingdoms, it is not hostile to them, except as they may oppose and seek to hinder it. Christ recognizes civil government as an ordinance of God, and He commands His subjects to be subject to the powers that be; to give honour to rulers; to pay tribute to whom tribute is due; to obey magistrates, and to make prayer for kings and for all that are in authority (Rom. xiii. 1, 6; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2; Tit. iii. 1). There is but one limitation to the obedience which they are to render to the higher powers, and that is when what these enjoin is what God forbids. In that case, as God must be obeyed rather than men, it becomes the duty of the followers of Christ to refuse obedience to the human edict; yet must this be done in such a way as not to infringe upon the just claims of the civil ruler, or to indicate rebellion against lawful authority. The Christian, in fact, is to regard himself as a citizen of two cities, a subject of two kingdoms, which, lying

<sup>1</sup> *Glaubenslehre*, ii. 150.

distinct and separate from each other, have each its own claims, and in each of which he has to render obedience to the ruling power within its own sphere, and in such matters as properly belong to it.

(v.) Scripture represents Christ as entering formally and publicly on His mediatorial reign after His resurrection and ascension to heaven. "Who," says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. i. 3). Referring to the exaltation of the Redeemer to universal dominion, Paul says it took place "when God raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. i. 20-22). We are not, however, to conclude from this that Christ then for the first time reigned as King. Even before His crucifixion, while He was still on earth and in a state of humiliation, He claimed to be a King, and accepted royal honours. It was as a King that He hung upon the cross, as the inscription which Pilate caused to be put over His cross, and which he refused at the request of the Jews to alter, testified. By the Old Testament prophets He is recognized, even before His advent, as the King whom God had set on His "holy hill of Zion," and on whose shoulder the government was laid. From the first, indeed, ever since the first gospel was preached by God to Adam after his fall, Christ has been virtually mediatorial King as well as Priest of His Church. But it was not till He had finished the work which the Father had given Him to do, and had ascended into heaven, that He openly and formally assumed His royalty. That was the day of His coronation, when, amid the plaudits of heaven, He was solemnly inaugurated as King, and God in the presence of principalities and powers, gave "Him to be Head over all things for the Church."

We are not, then, as some vainly teach, to expect as yet to come an advent of Christ to take up His kingly dignity and reign in person over His kingdom. He is now upon the throne, and He cannot be more so than He is now. When He comes the second time, it will be to consummate, not to commence His reign, to wind up the affairs of His empire, and as Judge of all, to settle the final destinies of the universe. This shall be at the end of the world, at Christ's

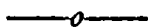
second coming, when all the purposes of His mediatorial reign shall have been accomplished, and all whom the Father hath given to Him shall have come to Him and received from Him eternal life. Being on the throne, He shall continue to reign till all His enemies shall have been put under His feet ; till death itself, the last enemy with which He has to contend, shall be destroyed, and through the resurrection of the dead, and the changing from corruptibility to incorruptibility of those who shall be alive and remain at the coming of the Lord, " Death shall be swallowed up of victory " (1 Cor. xv. 54). Then, all power and authority having been subjected to Him, and all that opposed itself to Him having been put down, the end shall be, and He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father (1 Cor. xv. 24).

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# PART IV.

## SOTERIOLOGY.



### FIRST DIVISION.—THE DIVINE PURPOSE CONCERNING THE SALVATION OF MEN.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### PRELIMINARY. THE NATURE AND CONDITIONS OF SALVATION.

IN entering upon the subject of SOTERIOLOGY, or the DOCTRINE of SALVATION, it will be proper in the outset that we endeavour to obtain just views of the Nature and Conditions of Salvation as a blessing to be enjoyed by sinners of the Human Race.

##### 1. *The Nature of Salvation.*

(1.) As respects its nature, it is obvious in the general that, in order to convey to man the benefit such a word imports, there must be provided a remedy suited to the evils under which he suffers, and commensurate with these evils to their fullest extent. Unless the blessing conferred be exactly adapted to remove the evil endured, it will not be to him a deliverance from the calamities under which he lies; and if it be not adequate to remove *all* the evil that has befallen him, his salvation will necessarily be incomplete; and it may be that a condition of partial cure may prove a greater calamity than that in which he is wholly under the burden of disease.

Now, to determine accurately what are the evils from which man needs to be delivered, we have only to look at

what man was normally and originally formed to be, and contrast that with his present condition as a sinner in the sight of God. In whatever respects his present condition is a departure or defection from his original condition, in these respects he needs salvation, and it is as he is in these respects restored to his first estate that in any true or adequate sense he is saved.

When we consider the account which the Bible gives of man's primal state, we find two facts especially characteristic of it from a moral or spiritual point of view. The one fact is that he enjoyed fully God's approbation; the other is that he possessed in himself likeness to God. He was made in the image and likeness of God; and when God looked on him He pronounced him "very good." In his nature he was like God; in his conduct and character he was approved of God.

Now, his retention of both these primary characteristics was conditioned by his being obedient to the divine will. This is apparent at once as respects his retention of the approbation of God; it needs no argument or illustration to show that if a creature refuse or neglect to do as his Creator enjoins, he cannot continue to enjoy his Creator's approbation. A human prince may continue his favour to one who has transgressed his law; but that is because human laws are not necessarily utterances of the prince's individual will, are not necessarily outward exponents of the prince's inner moral nature, and consequently may be really less agreeable to him than the society or the service of his subject by whom they have been violated. But it cannot be so with God. His law is the expression of Himself; and therefore it would be a contradiction of His own nature were He to continue His approval of any being by whom that law has been transgressed. When man becomes a sinner, we see at once that he *must* by that have forfeited the divine approbation, and come under the divine displeasure.

It is perhaps not so obvious at first sight that man's retention of likeness to God depended on his obedience. But not less real was the connection in this case than in the former. Man's likeness to God is of necessity a spiritual likeness—a likeness not merely as respects spiritual constitu-

tion and the action of his self-conscious soul, but still more as respects moral tastes, tendencies, and likings. Man was like God just as men whose affections, feelings, and leanings are directed to the same objects, lie in the same direction, are like each other. But such likeness cannot coexist with disobedience on the part of man to what God has enjoined: for as what God enjoins is what He wills and approves, disobedience is an express proclamation that man's will and preference are not the same as God's. Man is like God only when he loves and chooses what God loves and enjoins; when his affections rest on that in which God delights; when there is accordance between what he desires and what God desires; when his will moves him to do what God wills; when, in short, the ruling principle of his nature is the love of that rectitude which has its foundation and source in the nature of God. When man, then, sinned he by that very act went away from his original righteousness and so lost his moral resemblance to Him, the righteous Lord, who loveth righteousness, and who cannot look upon sin.

It thus appears that by one act of sin man necessarily fell both from the divine favour and from the divine likeness which it was primarily his privilege to possess. And the course thus entered on has a tendency to proceed. One sin conducts to another until the habit of sinning is formed, deep and awful guilt is incurred, the entire moral nature becomes corrupt, and every vestige of moral likeness to God is at last obliterated. Hence, as the race of man increased upon the earth we find evil passions and sinful lusts becoming predominant, crimes and violence filling the earth, wrong thoughts of God and His claims taking possession of men's minds and leading to superstition, idolatry, or atheism, and a decided tendency downwards seizing hold of the race, which, unless counteracted by divine interposition and providential interference, conducts to the degradation of savageism and the gloomy horrors of devil-worship. A similar process is seen in the individual. Leave a man to himself, and he will descend from the innocency of childhood to the lowest pitch of moral and spiritual impurity. The process may be slow, but it will be sure. When once the mind has ceased to be

under the controlling influence of love to God and to goodness, there is nothing within itself to keep it from descending to the lowest abyss of evil. The soul of man, created to hang upon God, possesses no restorative, no recuperative energy by means of which, when once its relation to God is destroyed, it can save itself from going ever farther and farther from Him. The hand of God alone can arrest its downward course and restore it to its original dignity and purity.

It thus appears that in the case of every sinner there are two things requisite in order to his being saved : the one is that he be restored to the divine favour by his guilt being cancelled ; the other is that his moral and spiritual resemblance to God be restored by his being brought under the love of goodness and rectitude as the supreme, all-commanding principle of his active nature. When he ceases to be guilty and delivered from condemnation, he stands accepted and approved of God ; and when ceasing to desire, admire, or follow what is opposed to the mind of God, he becomes in thought, feeling, and tendency wholly at one with Him : then in the proper and adequate sense of the term man is *saved* ; in the expressive language of Scripture he hath “ passed from death to life,” he hath been delivered “ from the kingdom of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son.” This, however, is not all that needs to be done in the case of man. From the peculiarity of that constitution under which Adam, as the representative of the race, acted, there arises a necessity for another thing being done before either of those I have mentioned can be approached, or man fully restored. Adam not only set to his posterity the example of sinning, but as their head and chief he brought the race as a race into a state of legal disability, which, until removed, precludes all friendly relations between God and them. Their position in this respect is analogous to that of a family which has been attainted through the misconduct of its head. In the case of such a family, so long as the attainder lasts, no individual member of it can aspire to the privileges and honours which his ancestor lost. Before such a thing can be so much as proposed, or any opportunity given to him to seek it, the attainder under which his whole family rests must be repealed.

Even so is it with the race of man suffering in consequence of Adam's sin. The guilt of that sin must be remitted to the race; the legal disability it entailed must be removed, the attainder it brought must be cancelled, and the race as such must stand erect and unimpeached in the high court of heaven, before the way is so much as opened for any individual of the race to aspire to the enjoyment of spiritual blessing.

(2.) In all, then, there are three things to be done ere any man can be saved. First of all, the guilt of Adam's sin must be remitted to the race, and thereby man must be placed in a salvable state; second, the individual sinner must obtain the remission of his sins, and receive acceptance into the divine favour; and, third, he must be "renewed in the spirit of his mind," and brought back to a moral resemblance to God and oneness with Him. The first is universal pardon; the second is individual acceptance and justification; the third is individual sanctification and spiritual redemption; and the combination of these three constitutes complete salvation.

## 2. *The Conditions of Salvation.*

Having thus set forth the nature of salvation, and so explained the terms of this great problem, let us now consider the conditions under which alone it can be successfully wrought out. I speak here, you observe, of *conditions*, not of *means* or *methods*; the plan of redemption is a different object of thought from the primary conditions under which alone any plan can be attempted.

These conditions are two,—

(1.) Man's salvation must come to him from God. The purpose of it must be God's; the provisions by which it is to be attained must originate with Him; and it must be by His application that in each case these provisions take effect. This condition arises necessarily out of the nature of the case.

*a.* The evils under which man suffers are such as to preclude his salvation originating with himself. Not only is he unable to devise any scheme by which the problem of his salvation shall be solved, but the effect of sin is such as to deprive him of any inclination to be saved. He may feel his present condition to be an evil one; he may feel that a

state of sin and guilt is an unnatural and undesirable state to be in ; he may shrink from the probable consequences of a life of sin in a future state of being ; and he may sometimes make spasmodic efforts to raise himself into a better and more hopeful state. But withal he has no real desire for salvation such as we have described it. How can he ? The very assertion that he is a sinner means that he is under the influence of a power which determines him away from God and God-likeness. But how can a man who, by the ruling and constantly operating principle of his nature is determined away from God, ever determine himself to return to God ? How can a man desire that which he abhors ? or seek after that from which his soul shrinks ? As well might we expect to see water run up a hill as expect desires after God and goodness to originate spontaneously in the bosom of a sinner. His desires, tastes, and affections are averse from all that is holy and divine ; and so they must continue, unless God, who alone can do marvels, come forth for his rescue.

b. But not only is man precluded by the very evils under which he suffers from being his own saviour ; the removal of these evils involves action on the part of God which only He Himself can determine. It is a maxim of common sense to which all must assent, that none can forgive sins but God only ; and there is no man who would have any sense of forgiveness unless he believed that that forgiveness had come to him from God. All feel that under a system of government the power of remitting penalties incurred by a violation of law can reside only in the same authority by which the law itself was promulgated ; else would there be an *imperium in imperio*—a sovereign power in that which is professedly subject, and consequently an utter uncertainty whether the law which the sovereign had enacted was to be enforced or not. In God alone, therefore, can reside the power of remitting the transgressions of that law of which He is the author. Besides, as under the government of God nothing of the nature of mistake can be permitted, it is only as the remission of transgression is in the hands of one who is omniscient and unerring that it can be safely administered ; for only such an one can know whether all that is needful for the upholding of the divine government has been done, and all the conditions on which

pardon depends have been complied with. God alone can estimate the full enormity of sin as a transgression of His law; God alone can determine what shall be an adequate satisfaction to that justice which sin has offended; God alone can in each individual case decide whether the party is in a fit state to be restored to His favour. The law of the moral universe is that punishment shall follow sin; and if in any case this law is to be suspended and the sinner is to go free and return to the state of a privileged subject, it is God's hand alone that can accomplish the moral miracle, and preserve entire and intact the moral order of the universe, notwithstanding this suspension of one of its most fundamental laws.

c. Not less evident is it that the work of moral renovation in the soul of the sinner must be the work of God. That work is represented in Scripture as a new creation, a being born again, a renewing in the spirit of the mind; and these are works which God alone is competent to perform. Only He who searcheth the heart is competent to estimate the actual state of each soul as respects moral and spiritual character; and only He who can touch the springs of action is able to apply the power by which a soul that has grown old in the habit of sinning can be turned to love, desire, and follow after holiness. For this man has no innate ability; he wants alike the inclination and the power to recover himself from sin; and there is nothing around him that can come to his aid. The desire to repent, the motives to seek renovation, the moral force necessary to break away from old attachments and life-long habits, and to turn into a new and previously avoided path, must be supplied by Him who alone has the hearts of all men in His hand, and can turn them as the rivers of waters. If men are to become new creatures, it must be by the agency of Him who alone can create. If men are to be born again, it must be "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." If men are to be renewed in the spirit of their minds, it must be, not by works of righteousness which they have done, but according to the mercy of God, "by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Ghost." From first to last the salvation of a sinner must be of God.

(2.) This, then, is the first condition of our salvation. The other condition is that, in accomplishing salvation for man, the methods pursued must be such as to do no violence to the natural constitution and laws of our nature. This must be obvious at the first glance from the mere consideration that, as salvation consists in the restoration of man to his primordial condition, its very design would be frustrated were any violence done to the abiding and essential nature of man. The necessity of this condition becomes still more obvious when we consider that man is not a machine or a mere animal whose condition can be altered and amended by mere outward influences and forcible appliances. Man is an intelligent, self-conscious, self-moved agent; and being such he can never become anything but as he knows and chooses and wills to be that thing. Whatever agency, then, God puts forth for man's salvation, the nature of the case requires that it shall act in such a way as to leave man's intellectual and moral freedom perfectly unfettered. Man cannot be saved apart from his own intelligence and will. It must be by knowledge and free choice that he enters into life, as it was by knowledge and free choice that he fell into death. Sin is his intelligent determination of himself to evil; salvation must be his intelligent determination of himself to holiness. A man can no more be good and blessed without the free action of his own soul, than a tree can be covered with leaves without the action of those vital powers within itself which regulate vegetation. Nor would the glory of God in man's salvation be manifested were it otherwise. God displays His glory in regulating all His creatures according to their own laws: were He to depart from this in the matter of man's salvation, and to accomplish that by treating man as a mere machine, it would be a confession of weakness rather than a manifestation of majesty, and would not redound to His glory in the estimation of His intelligent creatures.

Having thus investigated the nature of the conditions of human salvation, we are now in circumstances to proceed to the consideration of the methods and processes by which God actually brings about the salvation of men. And here, keeping in view our preceding remarks, we may conveniently arrange



the whole subject of soteriology under four main heads : first, what God does *for* us and *apart from* us for our salvation ; second, what God does *upon* us and *in* us to secure and advance our salvation ; third, what God aids us *to do for our selves* in the matter of our salvation ; and fourth, what God secures to us as the result of our final triumph and the summation of our salvation.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE DIVINE BENEVOLENCE.

#### I. THE GENERAL BENEVOLENCE OF GOD.

We have already called attention to the fact that salvation can come to man as a sinner only from God. He alone can originate the purpose, devise the plan, and apply the benefit of salvation to man. But if God is to act in this matter, it can only be out of His own spontaneous benevolence that He can act. Man can neither deserve nor demand God's interposition on his behalf ; no power superior to God can control His action so as to determine it to man's advantage ; and no inherent necessity or want of the divine nature, apart from His benevolence, can impel God to put forth His power for man's rescue. To the divine benevolence alone, therefore, can man look for deliverance. From this alone can help come to the sinner.

The testimony of Scripture on this head is explicit and full. To the grace, the love, the benevolence, the pity, the philanthropy of God it traces everything that has been purposed and everything that has been done or is done for man's redemption. It is of His own good pleasure that He hath redeemed us. It is because He is rich in mercy that He hath quickened us. It is by grace that we are saved. He hath commended His love to us in that whilst we were yet sinners Christ died for us (comp. Eph. i. 5, ii. 4, 5 ; Rom. v. 8).

Now, there is a twofold aspect under which the divine

benevolence towards man may be viewed, and a corresponding distinction which has to be made as respects that benevolence. It may be viewed in its bearing on the race of man at large, and it may be viewed in its bearing on that portion of our race actually redeemed by means of that scheme or plan of redemption which God has provided. Viewed under these two aspects, it has been distinguished by theologians into the *Divina Benevolentia universalis* and the *Divina Benevolentia*  
*salutis*.

The *Benevolentia universalis* of God, or His gracious leaning toward the race of man, notwithstanding their sin and rebellion, is designated in the Bible by various terms, such as *χαρις*, "grace or favour;" *πλοῦτος τῆς χαριτος*, "wealth or riches of the favour" (Eph. i. 7, ii. 7); *ελεος*, "pity" (Eph. ii. 4; Tit. iii. 5); *σπλάγχνα ελεους Θεοῦ* (Luke i. 78); *αγάπη* (1 John iii. 10); *φιλανθρωπία* and *χρηστοτης* (Tit. iii. 4). Out of this, as the foundation and source of all blessing to man, has flowed everything that has been done by God for the recovery of our race, lost and ruined by sin.

This universal benevolence of God has manifested itself in various ways.

i. It has appeared in His compassion and pity for man, though guilty, whereby God has spared the race, though its existence has been forfeited by sin, and with long-suffering patience bears with individuals and communities, though their iniquities are multiplied and seem to rise up in witness against them. If sin be an act of rebellion against God, and if it deserve His wrath and curse, we can account for the fact that a sinful race is preserved, and that individuals and communities continue to exist and even to enjoy prosperity, though persisting in sin, only by the consideration that He against whom they have sinned is full of pity and compassion, and in the greatness of His benevolence spares them from the penal consequences of their sin.

ii. The universal benevolence of God appears in His not "willing" (*i.e.* desiring, wishing, feeling complacency in) that any should perish, but that all should be saved. This is repeatedly attested in Scripture (Ezek. xviii. 32, xxxiii. 11; 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4). These passages are not to be understood as having reference to the counsels or purposes of God, for as

God's counsel shall stand, and as He will do all that He purposes, had He willed in this sense the salvation of all men, all men should certainly have been saved. The passages have reference to what God wills in the sense of having pleasure in; and they most strikingly set forth the riches of His benevolence towards mankind in general, the tenderness of His compassion even towards those whom, for reasons known only to Himself, He does not put forth His power to save.

iii. God has shown His benevolence to our race in the mission of His Son into the world for the benefit of the world, and especially for the world's salvation through Him. What ever special reference the work of Christ may have had, or may be supposed to have had, to those who are actually saved by it, there can be no doubt that it had a general reference to the race at large, and that in virtue of it blessings many and great flow to the race. Indeed, apart from this, how can we account for the fact of man's continued preservation, to say nothing of the innumerable temporal comforts which the race enjoys? If life, happiness, well-being have been forfeited by sin, how comes it that life, happiness, and well-being are continued to man the sinner? It is not enough to say that God's mercy and benevolence continue to be in these. That is perfectly true; but then the question arises, How can this benevolence find scope to exercise itself upon one who is under the sentence of a law which forbids such benevolence to be showed to a sinner? This is just in substance the question that arises when we ask, How can man be just before God? and as we answer that question satisfactorily only by calling in the operation of the propitiatory mediation of Christ, it is to this also we must appeal in order to be able satisfactorily to answer the question before us. The great fundamental principles on which God's moral government is placed shut us up to the conclusion that from the righteous Ruler of the universe no blessing can come, no favour can be shown, to a sinner, except on the ground of a mediatory satisfaction; and this applies as much to temporal blessings and favours as to those which pertain to our spiritual interests. To the mediation of Christ, then, must we refer the continuance of our race in existence, and the enjoyment by the race of temporal

advantages. To Him also are to be traced all those collateral advantages which mankind reap from Christianity, advantages which extend to multitudes to whom Christianity is unknown or repudiated. Especially, however, are we indebted to Him for the salvation which He hath procured for us, and which has an aspect towards the race at large. On this head we need only cite our Lord's words to Nicodemus in proof of what we have advanced. "God," says He, "so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). In this passage it is distinctly asserted that it is the divine benevolence to our race at large that gave birth to the mission of Christ into our world as a Saviour of men. I am aware that attempts have been made to explain the passage so as to limit the term "world" to the chosen people of God, the elect; but all such attempts are found to be futile by the very words of the verse itself. For in the words "that whosoever believeth in Him," etc., a limitation is expressed of the more general term "the world" used in the preceding clause. The parties included, consequently, under this limitation are *part* of the world to which Christ was sent. But the description given of these parties as those who by believing in Christ are saved points them out as the elect of God. Whence it conclusively follows that as the part cannot be commensurate with the whole, the elect, who are but part of the world, cannot be the same as the world. The world here, then, must mean the race of man. We can understand this in no other sense than as intimating that the mission of Christ into the world to procure redemption for man had its source in, and is a manifestation of, the divine philanthropy, the benevolence of God to man, the love of God towards our race.

The qualities of this universal benevolence of God may be briefly summed up in the following particulars. It is—(i.) gratuitous and free (Rom. xi. 32; Gal. iii. 22; Rom. viii. 32); (ii.) it is alike to all (Rom. iii. 22; 1 Tim. ii. 3); (iii.) it is sincere and earnest (Ezek. xviii. 23, 32, xxxiii. 11); (iv.) it takes effect and becomes experienced in its direct and full benefit by individuals through certain means and on certain conditions, the means being the manifestation of the truth to men's minds, and the conditions being the reception

of the truth by those to whom it is made known, and the acceptance by them of the blessings it offers.

iv. It is often said that the purpose of God to send salvation to our fallen race is a fact of which Scripture alone gives us any intimation. Now, it is very certain that it is from Scripture alone that we acquire any clear, exact, and detailed information on this subject; Scripture alone makes us certain and clearly cognizant of the fact. But may we not say that natural reason, looking at the actual phenomena of the universe in relation to God's dealings with men, may discern much there to suggest, at least, the *probability* that some such manifestation of God's love to our race shall be given? I am well aware how much of erroneous and unwarrantable discourse there has sometimes been on the subject. I do not forget how it has sometimes been argued that as man is in his present state very unhappy, in many cases most miserable, it is not likely that God, the All-merciful, will leave him entirely and for ever in such a state, but that it is rather to be supposed that He will somehow and at some period send him deliverance. But such argumentation is unreasonable and unsafe. For, in the first place, it overlooks the fact that man's misery is *deserved*; that if he is unhappy it is right and just that he should be so, seeing he has been and continually is guilty of sin. In the second place, it overlooks the consideration that if man is *merely* unhappy there is no special need for any divine interposition on his behalf, inasmuch as the same natural laws, through the neglect or violation of which man has made himself unhappy, will suffice to restore happiness to him if he will only obey them; and, in the third place, this kind of reasoning lands those who embrace and follow it in the serious difficulty, that if it be a reasonable expectation that God, simply because He is All-merciful, will sometime interpose for man's deliverance, then, seeing He has not so interposed for all these centuries and millenniums during which men have been suffering, either He is not so merciful as has been assumed, or He does not do that which it is reasonable to expect Him to do. These considerations are sufficient to guard us against such argumentation as that to which I have referred. If we are to occupy solid ground

on this subject we must take up another position. We must start from the admission that man as a guilty sinner against God's law has no claim whatever upon the mercy of God ; that he deserves to be miserable here, hereafter, and for ever and that even though God be benevolence itself, that gives no ground to expect *a priori* that He will interpose to save man from the consequences of his own transgression, consequences which come upon him as the result of his being under the moral government of God. And when we stand on this position, there seems to rise a far clearer and stronger probability that God has some purpose of grace and mercy in store for man than comes to us from the other hypothesis. For, if man be guilty, why should he be merely unhappy ? why should he exist at all in such a state as the present ? why should he not be at once swept from the face of the earth, and consigned to that supreme misery which he has deserved by his sin ? Why should God preserve the race here, and bestow on us so many alleviations and benefits, and surround us with such inducements to virtue and goodness, had He not some purpose of redemption for us ? Why should a race which, if left to itself, would undoubtedly soon die out or be self-destroyed, be marvellously preserved from age to age unless God has some good and gracious purpose to answer in regard to it ? Especially, why should this race be preserved in a *capacity* for moral improvement and restoration, if God has not meant to interpose for its restoration and amelioration ? If you saw a house, the proprietor of which, though for some reason he had deserted it, yet instead of leaving it to go to ruin or giving it up to another, retained it in his own hands and continued to keep it in repair and to do every thing fitted to render it habitable, would you not infer that the probability was that he intended some time to return to it and make it his habitation ? And, seeing God has marvellously preserved the human race, not only in existence, but with all its religious capacities and longings, and keeps it capable of receiving spiritual blessing, is there not a probability that He means sometime to return to it and become again its Great Inhabitant ? Take with you this fact also, that man has abiding aspirations, and hopes of recovery ; he cannot be content with his present fallen condition ; he feels

not only that he was made for something better, but that he is even now capable of something better; and that whatever advances he may have made in knowledge and power he still wants something higher and nobler, even a spiritual and moral restoration. If earth were like hell, a place where hope is excluded and all is dark and doomed, we might say that for earth, as for hell, there is no probability of deliverance, no glimmering ray auspicious of a better future. But seeing God so deals with man as to inspire him with an undying hope of a future restoration, does it not seem as if He were giving to him a sure augury of times of refreshing yet to come to him from the presence of the Lord?

The advances which men make in intellectual power and resources, as well as in scientific knowledge and physical resources, suggest the probability that provision will be made for his progress not less in moral and spiritual attainment. "Is the lesser," it has been justly asked, "to advance, and the greater to remain stationary? Does God take greater interest in the mere improvement of human knowledge and refinement than in the improvement of the heart and conduct? . . . Or rather, does not the whole government of God show that He values the former chiefly as subsidiary to the latter? In the past progress of the one we have thus a presumption in favour of the coming progress of the other;" and as the moral renovation of the race can be accomplished only by God's interposing and providing for this, we have in the fact that He enables man to make advances in intellectual and physical attainment what encourages us to expect that He will not fail in some effectual way to interpose and provide for man's higher interests and progress as a moral and spiritual being.

There seems ground, then, for anticipating, even from natural phenomena and on general grounds of reason, that God will interpose in some effectual way for man's restoration morally and spiritually. The considerations at which we have glanced may not separately be thought to be of much weight, but, as has been remarked by the writer I have already quoted, "by their collection and clustering they seem to form a pleasant belt of light—a kind of milky-way—hung over our world in this its dark night to give light to the traveller

who has set out in search of truth." How God will interpose for man's recovery, or whether He will certainly interpose at all, natural reason is incompetent to teach; this knowledge can come to us only by revelation from God. But it is interesting and not unimportant to see how natural reason conducts us to the threshold, as it were, of divine revelation, and bids us wait there, prepared to receive the announcement which God is to make.

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## CHAPTER III.

### THE DIVINE BENEVOLENCE.

#### II. THE SPECIAL BENEVOLENCE OF GOD.

##### (I.) ELECTION.

Hitherto we have been occupied in considering the operations of the general benevolence of God towards the race of man as seen in the compassion He has showed towards mankind notwithstanding their sinfulness and rebellion, the bounty He has caused them to experience in the gifts of nature and providence, and especially in the provision of the plan of redemption, the gift of His Son as a propitiation for the sins of the world, and the institution of means for the offering to the whole world of the benefits thus secured. We have now to turn our attention to the operations of the special benevolence of God,—that with which He regards His own people or those who actually are saved through Christ.

That God regards such with special favour is admitted on all hands. Nor can it well be questioned, either as a conclusion of reason or as a doctrine of Scripture. It would be absurd to suppose that a difference so immense as that which separates the true child of God from the impenitent sinner should exist without producing some effect on their respective relations to God. It would offend the moral consciousness to be told that the holy and just God regards with exactly the same feelings the man who loves and obeys Him,



and the man who hates Him and acts the part of a determined rebel against Him. And we must resort to singularly violent expedients to force Scripture out of its plain obvious meaning if we are to cancel its testimony in favour of the position that God loves His own people, the purchase of His Son's propitiatory work and the partakers of His grace, with a special love. On this point, then, there is no difference of opinion among Christians; even Unitarians themselves admit that the benevolence of God towards the wicked is not and cannot be the same as the benevolence of God towards the good and virtuous.

But whilst it is universally admitted that God loves the righteous with a special love, there is the utmost difference of opinion as to the operation and manifestation of this special love, particularly as respects the relation which it bears to the personal salvation of the righteous. Is it a love drawn towards them by their goodness, and simply securing to them the benefits which their goodness merits? or is it a love entirely sovereign, *i.e.* which does not find its motive reason in any quality or attribute of those who are the objects of it, and which conveys benefits wholly irrespective of any worthiness or goodness in them? Is it a love *consequent* upon the turning of the sinner to God, or is it a love *antecedent* to that, and of which that is itself a result? Is it a love which begins to operate in time, or is it a love which has been operative from eternity, and which has led by an eternal purpose to the salvation of the saved? If the latter, was the purpose which has terminated on their salvation a purpose to save them, or only a purpose to place within their reach the means of salvation? And if the former, was it a purpose founded on their foreseen faith and obedience, or a purpose irrespective of these, resting on reasons in the divine mind with which these had nothing to do?

The discussion of these questions has much occupied theologians for at least 1400 years, and it does not appear as if there were even yet any approximation towards a healing of the differences which have split them into separate schools and frequently engendered very bitter strifes. This may suggest to us that the questions at issue are really not of very easy solution, and that there is much to be said on both

sides of most of them, if not of all; and at the same time may hint a preliminary caution against entering upon the examination of the various conflicting opinions in any other than a humble, modest, and candid spirit, with earnest prayer to the Divine Spirit of truth that He would be pleased to lead us into the truth on this subject, so far at least as it is competent for man to comprehend it.

i. There are four leading diversities of opinion on the points at issue by which theologians have been divided into four great schools or parties. These are—

(i.) The opinion that though God *foresees* all things, He *foreordains* nothing in reference to the salvation of individuals, but leaves all to secure for themselves, as free agents, what amount of blessing they can by faith and obedience.

(ii.) The opinion that God not only foresees but foreordains everything, both as respects means and as respects ends, in regard to the spiritual interests of men, having determined by the eternal counsel and decree of His own sovereign will to whom the message of salvation is to be sent and from whom it is to be withheld, and of the former by whom it shall be embraced and by whom it shall be rejected; consequently, the eternal salvation of the one and the eternal condemnation of the other.

(iii.) The opinion that whilst God does predestinate by a decree certain men to salvation and eternal life, He grounds this on His own prescience of their faith and obedience, so that the decree is not sovereign and unconditional, but is conditioned by their foreseen faith and obedience; whilst of those that perish God simply foresees the ruin, but in no way ordains it or directly causes it.

(iv.) The opinion that God by an eternal sovereign decree has predestinated certain of the human race unto eternal life, having chosen them for this end of His own free grace before the world began, and having determined to secure to each of them in time the personal enjoyment through faith in His Son of the blessings of redemption, with perseverance therein unto the end; but that this gracious purpose and working in reference to the saved is not accompanied with any purpose or decree securing the final impenitency, and consequently the final destruction, of the rest of mankind.

These four opinions constitute the great landmarks of theological speculation in the department now before us. The first of them is that held by the Socinians and Lower Arminians; the second is that held by the High Calvinists; the third is that held by the Evangelical Arminians; and the fourth is that held by the Moderate Calvinists. There are other and minor shades of diversity within some of those schools; but these will be best considered as we proceed.

On this, as on all other theological questions, our first care should be to ascertain what the inspired writers have taught concerning it. Let us then, in the first place, with impartial minds and with such aids as God may vouchsafe to us, examine the various passages in Scripture bearing upon this subject, that we may see how far and in what way our only infallible guides in such matters give answer to the questions above proposed.

In examining these passages it will be of advantage, as conducing to clearness, if we consider those which relate to the saved apart from those which relate to the impenitent and lost. We shall thus best arrive at satisfaction upon the point whether God's purposes and dealings towards the latter are of the same kind, though directed to an opposite end, as His purposes and dealings towards the former.

ii. As a sort of preliminary to our examination of those passages which bear on God's purposes and dealings towards the saved, let us cast a passing glance upon those passages in the O. T. which relate to God's purposes and dealings towards Israel. These are not to be identified with His purposes and dealings towards men in the matter of eternal life; but as the same phraseology is applied in Scripture to both, there must be some very close analogy between the one and the other, and it must be evident that as the phraseology is transferred from the literal to the spiritual, we shall be greatly helped in understanding it in relation to the latter by acquiring a just understanding of it in relation to the former.

Of the passages bearing on God's purpose and deeds in relation to the ancient Israel, a selection will suffice for our present purposes. Take the following:—Deut. iv. 37, vii. 6, 7, 8, ix. 5, 6. In exact keeping with these statements is the constant phraseology of the O. T. in respect of the

relation of Israel to God. They are frequently called the "chosen" of God, the children of Jacob His "chosen" ones, His "elect" in whom His soul delighteth. They are represented as "purchased" by Him for Himself, as "redeemed" by Him for Himself, as "created" by Him for Himself. They are described as "called" by Him, as taken from the ends of the earth and "called" from the chief men thereof; and they are repeatedly designated the "called of God." Such phraseology at once reminds us of the language used in the N. T. respecting the spiritual people of God; and it is evident that the one is an imitation or an application of the other. Let us consider, then, what these statements teach concerning the ancient literal Israel.

(i.) They evidently teach that Israel as a nation enjoyed privileges altogether peculiar, and were the objects of a love strictly special. God had not done for any other people what He had done for them, nor had He showed to any other people such love as He had showed unto them.

(ii.) These privileges and this love which were peculiar to Israel were common to all Israel. All who belonged to the commonwealth of Israel, to the seed of Abraham, were alike the objects of this love and the partakers of these privileges. It was to the mass, the body, the community as such that they were exhibited and given.

(iii.) The blessings thus conferred and the love thus showed were all in consequence of an act of choice on the part of God. He had chosen them to be His people, and therefore He blessed them as His people. It was because of this He redeemed them out of the house of bondage, purchased them, and led them forth in His mercy, formed them into a people for Himself, and dealt with them as He had dealt with no other people.

(iv.) This choice was altogether sovereign, *i.e.* it was motivated by no merit of any kind on their part, but was directed solely by the free love of God. Of this the Israelites were again and again assured in the most express terms. It was not their might, nor their goodness, nor their worthiness in any respect that drew down on them the election of God. It was simply because God loved them and would be faithful to the covenant which He had made with

Abraham, their great progenitor, that He showed them this signal favour. It is true that in some of these passages Israel is represented as being chosen and blessed for the sake of Abraham; but as Abraham himself was chosen and blessed, and the covenant given unto him solely as an act of favour, this presents no difficulty in the way of the conclusion which we have enunciated. Granting that they were blessed for the sake of Abraham, yet as he was blessed wholly of grace, the ground of the blessing conferred upon Israel must still be sought in the free grace and sovereign love of God. There is only one passage which seems to intimate anything opposed to this. It occurs in Gen. xviii. 19, where, according to the A. V., we read, "For I know him (Abraham), that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord," etc. Here it certainly appears as if the bestowal of blessing on Abraham by God was grounded on the divine prescience of Abraham's piety and dutifulness as well as the obedience of his posterity; and in this case we accordingly seem to have a proof that the choice of Israel was not an absolute and unconditional choice, but one determined by the foreseen goodness and piety of Abraham and his seed. It is only, however, through an error of the translator that the passage appears to have this aspect and meaning. Properly rendered, the words of God run thus: "For I have known him [*i.e.* known him with love and favour] in order that he may inculcate upon his sons and upon his house after him," etc. This translation is rendered necessary by the use of *יָמַעַן אֵינֶר* after the verb; this particle can only mean "in order that;" had the writer intended to express in what follows the verb the object of the verb, he would have used the particle *כִּי*. And he uses *יָדַעַתִּי* here in a sense in which the verb *יָדַע* in the O. T., as well as the corresponding Greek in the N. T., is frequently used. Comp. *e.g.* Ps. cxliv. 3, "Lord, what is man, that Thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that Thou makest account of him!"—where the "knowing" of the first strophe is paralleled by the estimating or favouring of the second;—Amos iii. 2, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth," where "known" is evidently used in the sense of "chosen" or "favoured." So far, then, from

this verse teaching that Abraham and his posterity were chosen because of their foreseen piety and obedience, it teaches that it was in order that they might be pious and obedient that God had chosen them: their piety and obedience were the intended result, not the foreseen ground, of their being chosen and favoured.<sup>1</sup>

A passage which has sometimes been adduced as if it indicated that the choice of Israel was not unconditional, but was dependent on their foreseen obedience, is Isa. lxiii. 8. In the preceding context the speaker celebrates the loving-kindness of the Lord to Israel, and speaks of all the great goodness which He had bestowed upon them, after which he adds, "For He [*i.e.* God] said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; so He was their Saviour." From this it has been concluded that God Himself assigns their foreseen fidelity as the ground or motive of His kindness to them. But that this cannot be the meaning of the passage is evident from two considerations; the one of which is, that in the verse next but one following, the 10th, the prophet complains of them as a rebellious and ungodly people who broke their covenant with God, so that if God had chosen them on the ground of their foreseen obedience, He must have chosen them on the ground of what He foresaw would not be,—which is self-contradictory and absurd; the other is that at the close of the preceding verse, the 7th, it is expressly stated that God had showed kindness to Israel "according to His mercies" and "according to the multitude

<sup>1</sup> Rosenmüller's note is, "*Vulgo ita redduntur: Noli enim eum præcepturum esse filiis suis et posteris suis, ut instituta mea serrent et juste et probe vivant. Quæ quidem interpretatio recte sese haberet si יָדַעְתִּי cum verbis quæ sequuntur jungeretur per particulam כִּי quod, vid. 1 Sam. xiv. 3; Jer. x. 23; Ezek. xxxiii. 33. Sed לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר notat propterea quod, quia; et יָדַעְתִּי significat amorem; hoc sensu, diligo eum, quia præcipit filiis, etc. יָדַע, nosse, valet etiam alicujus rationem habere, cum acceptum habere.*" Rosenmüller is wrong here in giving to לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר the meaning of "because;" it means "in order that," "to the end that;" see Gesenius under לְמַעַן. Knobel's note on the passage before us is: "For to be great and famous is he already destined. *For I have known him, i.e.* made acquaintance with him, entered into a closer relation with him (Amos iii. 2; Hos. xiii. 4), and particularly לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר, 'with the view that,' in order that he may charge his posterity to keep the way of Jehovah, and so to exercise righteousness," etc.

of His loving-kindnesses," expressions which are tantamount to an affirmation of the perfect gratuitousness of God's goodness to them ; so that it would be again a contradiction were we to suppose the 8th verse to contain a statement of the grounds of a goodness which has just before been pronounced perfectly gracious. We may safely say, therefore, that this cannot be the intention of the 8th verse, nor do its words, properly rendered, convey any such idea. The particle  $\text{וְ}$  which our translators render "surely," is usually employed by Isaiah in the sense of "only," and it is here rendered by Rosenmüller "tantum." Nor does the verse begin with a causal particle ; it begins with the copulative  $\text{וְ}$ . Instead, therefore, of containing the cause or reason of what goes before, this verse simply continues the specification of God's great goodness to Israel : "He said, Only they are my people, my children that will not lie ; and He was a saviour (or deliverer) to them." He not only chose them as His people, but He, as it were, placed confidence in them and treated them as His true and faithful children, and rescued them from the house of bondage. There is nothing here of foreseen faith and obedience as a ground of choice ; there is only an utterance of reasonable expectation that those who had been chosen to be God's own people would keep faith with Him, and be His true children.

When we compare the statements of the N. T. respecting the divine choice of Israel, we shall find that they strongly affirm the perfectly sovereign character of that choice. It may suffice to refer to what Paul says in Rom. ix., where among other statements appertaining to the ancient Israel we have the following : ver. 7, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children : but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called : that is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God : but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Abraham had more sons than Isaac, and on natural principles they were as much entitled as he to the privileges of the covenant ; but it was not on natural principles that this was determined ; the gracious promise of God was here alone efficient, and therefore as that promise respected Isaac he alone was privileged. The apostle goes on to illustrate this still more pointedly in the case of Jacob and Esau : "And not only this ; but when

Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth), it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." No two brothers could possibly be placed on more of an equality than were these two. The twin children of one father and one mother, there was nothing that could possibly determine any superiority of the one over the other, save the few minutes of priority which the elder had over the younger in entering the world. And yet this one solitary advantage which Esau had over Jacob was set aside by God, who, before the children were born, announced that the elder should serve the younger. For this no reason apprehensible by man existed. It was done that the purpose of God according to election, His wise and well-founded purpose according to free and sovereign choice, might stand. He preferred Jacob and rejected Esau; that is all we can say of the matter. He acted in this as He always acts in dispensing His grace—solely as He willed. This is His rule, and His righteousness is made apparent by His never departing from it. With Him there is no respect of persons. He gives blessing or withholds it because so it seems good in His sight. He puts one in a position of advantage both naturally and spiritually, and leaves another without any such advantage because so He has in His sovereignty purposed and willed. In giving advantage to one, however, and withholding it from another, He does not directly inflict evil on that other, or doom him to a course of iniquity, and to destruction finally. He simply leaves him without the advantage He gives to the other; leaves him to follow his own course, not, it may be, without bestowing on him much good, but without the special advantage He has given to another. Esau was not left wholly without a blessing; but he was rejected from the place assigned to Jacob, and refused the special blessing which Jacob received.



## CHAPTER IV.

## ELECTION.

(II.) THE ELECTION OF BELIEVERS.—*Passages and Inferences.*

We now proceed to the examination of those passages which more directly bear upon the manifestation of God's special love to His spiritual people in their election and calling.

We shall begin by citing the principal of these passages in the order in which they occur in the N. T.:—Acts xiii. 48; Rom. viii. 28–30; Rom. ix. 14–16, 21–24, xi. 5–7; 1 Cor. i. 27, 28; Gal. iv. 9; Eph. i. 4–6; 1 Thess. i. 4, v. 9; 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1, 2, ii. 9; 2 Pet. i. 10; Rev. xvii. 14.

Such are some of the more important passages bearing on this subject. The mere reading of them over may suffice to show how important a place this topic occupies in the N. T., whilst the number and variety of the statements made encourage us to hope that by a careful, modest, and impartial examination of them we may arrive at a satisfactory conclusion regarding the doctrine of Scripture on this head. And here it may not be unseasonable to utter a caveat against all rash and presumptuous speculations on a theme so recondite as that now before us, as well as all impatience of those limits which are necessarily imposed upon all human knowledge in regard to matters pertaining to God and His ways. "First of all," says Calvin, "let it be borne in mind that when men inquire into predestination, they penetrate into the inner shrine of the divine wisdom, whither, if any rush securely and confidently, he shall, without obtaining what shall satiate his curiosity, enter a labyrinth from which he shall find no exit. Nor is it reasonable that what God has willed should lie hid in Himself man should with impunity discuss, and from eternity itself evolve the sublimity of wisdom which God willed to be adored, not apprehended, that by means of it He might also be wonderful to us. What

of the secrets of His will He hath thought proper to be unfolded to us, these He has delivered in His word; and He has done this in so far as He foresaw it would convince us, and conduce to our advantage.”<sup>1</sup> On all such subjects we may say with Augustine, “*Melior est fidelis ignorantia, quam temeraria*

From a careful examination of these passages the following positions may, we think, be legitimately deduced:—

i. Believers stand in a peculiar and endeared relation to God. They are His people, called by Him into intimate intercourse with Him. They are His “peculiar people,” i.e. a people constituting His *peculium* or special property; the phrase used by the apostle to designate this relation, *λαος εις περιποίησιν*, “a people for a possession,” being evidently borrowed from the translation in the LXX. of Mal. iii. 17, where the phrase *εις περιποίησιν* is used to express the Hebrew *לְבִיָּה*, signifying property. As this is the word constantly used to describe Israel as the special possession of God (see Ex. xix. 5; Deut. vii. 6, etc.), its application to the spiritual Church of God, first by the prophet Malachi and after him by the Apostle Peter, must be designed to indicate to us that just as the ancient Israel in their national capacity were the peculiar property of God as distinguished from all other nations, so are believers in a spiritual sense His peculiar property as distinguished from all other men. There is a sense in which all men, all creatures, are His property; but when God is pleased to say of any that they form His peculiar or special property, we are constrained to believe that He claims in them an interest, and entertains towards them a regard which is confined to them, which is not common to them with any other of God’s creatures.

ii. This special relation into which the people of God have been brought to Him is the result of a choice or election of them by Him. They are called the elect or chosen of God,—an elect or a chosen generation (*γενος*, “race,” “tribe,” “nation”), the election (*η εκλογη*, the abstract for the concrete, like *περιτομή* and *ακροβυστία* = *οί εκλελεγμενοι*); and they are exhorted to know their “election of God,” and to make their “calling and election sure.” From such state-

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, Bk. III. ch. 21, § 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Sermo* 27.

ments it is beyond all doubt clear that in *some* sense believers have been chosen of God; and there is no reason why we should not understand this in the *proper* sense of the term. It is true that the term *εκλεκτος* is sometimes used in the secondary sense of "precious" or "dear," from the very obvious consideration that what one selects from a mass of other things is usually esteemed highly, and, when the person selecting is wise, is always something intrinsically valuable; and some have proposed to understand the term in one or other of these senses when used of believers in the N. T. According to this, when Christians are called the elect of God, the phrase only means those whom God loves, or regards as precious. But to this no heed can be given by the candid and intelligent inquirer, and that for several reasons—1. No one is entitled to take a word in a secondary and derivative meaning unless the primary meaning has fallen into disuse, or there be something in the context to lead to the preference of the secondary to the primary; it being always presumable that words are used in their primary and proper meaning unless some cogent reason can be shown to the contrary. 2. Of the instances from the N. T. in which *ἐκλεκτος* is supposed to mean "valuable" or "dear," there is not one in which the primary idea of *choice* is not involved; and it is a strange logic which would infer from passages in which a word is used in a secondary sense with a distinct recognition of the primary as giving birth to the secondary, that the word may be used in the secondary sense to the *exclusion* of the primary. 3. Even supposing that it were proved that *ἐκλεκτος*, when used of believers, is to be understood only in the secondary sense, this will not prove that believers are not said to be chosen of God in the proper sense of the term; for there would still remain the passages in which the verb *εκλεγω* is used, and on which no such secondary meaning can be put. As the verb in the active expresses the act of Him who chooses, and in the passive the effect experienced by those who are chosen, when believers are said to be chosen of God, or when God is said to have chosen them, no other than the proper meaning of the term can be affixed to it. But if, when believers are said to be chosen of God, we must understand that they are the objects of a discriminating

selection by Him, it seems hardly worth while to contend for another sense when they are called the elect or chosen of God.

The election, then, of believers by God is, in the proper sense of the term, His choosing them to be His. It does not merely express the excellence of their character or the dearness of their relation to Him; it expresses primarily that which is the cause of these, viz. His selection of them, His choosing of them for Himself, whereby they become excellent in themselves and dear to Him. We must also be careful to distinguish the election of believers from their actual separation from the world. In popular language it is usual with us to employ the words "choose" and "elect" so as to denote rather that appropriation to ourselves of any object by separating it from what belongs to others or is common to all which is the result of choice, than the choice itself; and there have been theologians who have allowed themselves to be misled by a similar ambiguity in speaking of God's election of men: they have used the term as denoting the actual separation of believers from the mass of men, and their introduction into God's family. Thus Richard Watson, the ablest defender of Evangelical Arminianism which our age has produced, says: "To be elected is to be separated from the world, and to be sanctified by the spirit and by the blood of Christ;"<sup>1</sup> and this definition of election he employs polemically against the Calvinists for the purpose of reducing them to an absurdity in maintaining the divine election to be from eternity, inasmuch as, according to him, this would be equivalent to affirming that God has from eternity actually separated from the mass of men and actually sanctified those who are saved,—an affirmation at once seen to be absurd and ridiculous. Of the eternity of God's choice of the believer we shall speak by and by; at present what we have to do with is the false conception of the nature of the choice itself, on which alone Mr. Watson has succeeded in giving any show to his attempt at a *reductio ad absurdum* of the doctrine that it is eternal. Be it observed, then, that to be elected is *not* to be "separated from the world and to be sanctified by the spirit and by the blood of Jesus Christ." These privileges may be the result of the divine election—we believe they are; but

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, vol. iii. p. 64.

they are not that election itself. That term properly relates to the *purpose* or *determination* in the divine mind to separate some from the world—not the actual separation of them. The two are as distinct in thought as my decision to summon my servant into my presence is distinct from the actual summons which brings him into my presence; or my decision to read one book rather than another is distinct from my actually detaching the book from among its companions on the same shelf for the purpose of reading it. God's calling of a man is one thing; God's selection of the man whom He will call is quite another thing. God's sanctifying of a man is one thing; God's choice of the man to sanctification is quite another thing. It is but an insuring of error to confound things so clearly distinct.

iii. I proceed to remark that this election by God of the believer is an eternal election; or, in other words, God's determination to choose those whom He does choose is one formed from all eternity. This is a position which follows almost by necessary consequence from the preceding position. For if God elect or choose those who are to be His, He must purpose to do this; in other words, His choice must be not a random or accidental choice, but one which He makes wisely and purposely. This conclusion rests upon the most elementary and essential conception of God as a Being of wisdom and knowledge, and cannot be questioned without blasphemy. But another no less elementary and essential conception of God shuts us up to the conclusion that what He purposes He from eternity purposes. We cannot conceive of the Infinite and Eternal beginning to find out a reason for resolving to do what before He had no thought of doing. What He at any time intends to do, He has before all time, from all eternity, intended to do. "If," as Dr. Wardlaw observes, with his usual precision and clearness, "if we admit an intention the moment before putting forth the quickening energy, where, in tracing it back, are you to stop short? where are you to fix its commencement, its first entrance into the divine mind? To suppose," he continues, "an intention to enter the infinite mind that was not there before, is to suppose God to change; and as He always has reasons for His purposes, it is to suppose Him to come to the knowledge of something of which

He had not been before aware, or had not contemplated in the same light. All such suppositions are incompatible with any right conceptions of the divine omniscience and immutability.”<sup>1</sup> To this reasoning it seems impossible to frame a sufficient answer. On the ground that what God does He purposes to do, and on the ground that what He purposes He has from eternity purposed, it follows demonstrably that if He chooses men at all, His choice of them is from eternity.

And with this conclusion concurs the language of the passages already quoted. Believers are said to be called according to God’s purpose (*κατα προθεσιν*), where the word rendered “purpose” literally means that which is set before the mind as the object of intention, and then by a very common metonymy the act of the mind in intending, or the intention itself; hence it is properly rendered purpose, counsel, or design. So also it is said of believers that God “hath chosen them before the foundation of the world,” a phrase which all are agreed denotes “before all time,” from eternity; and the same is the force of the other expression used in parallel passages, “from the beginning,” as is evident from the use of it in John i. 1 and elsewhere. On these expressions it is not possible to put any but the one interpretation, and on this all commentators of any note are agreed, however much they may differ as to the objects of the electing choice, or the ends for which they were chosen. Of similar import also is the declaration that believers are “known of God.” The verb here must be understood in an emphatic sense. To be known of God in a simple sense, *i.e.* to be the objects of His omniscience, is no more the privilege of believers than it is of others: all things are open and known to Him. That which believers especially enjoy is that they have been known of God as Abraham was, according to a passage formerly examined—known with a peculiar discriminating love—known as the objects of an eternal predestinating purpose. That the N. T. affirms the election of God to be according to an eternal purpose is as certain as that it affirms election to have been at all.

iv. This choice of believers is a choice of them in Jesus Christ. Thus they are said to be “chosen in Him before the foundation of the world,” to have been “predestinated unto

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 525.

the adoption of children by Jesus Christ," to have been "appointed to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ," and to have been "saved and called with an holy calling according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." These passages plainly teach that in *some* sense believers have been chosen in Christ, in other words, that God in the election of His spiritual people had reference in some respect unto Jesus Christ. When, however, we come to ask in what sense is this to be understood, or in what respect had God reference to His Son in the election of His people, we come upon a point which has been warmly contested between the Arminian and Calvinist schools. By the former it is maintained that believers are chosen in Christ in the sense that Christ is the meritorious or procuring cause of election; in other words, that God having first decreed to send His Son to make atonement for the sins of the world, purposed on the ground of this to elect or choose those who believed in Him to be His people. By the latter it is maintained that the election of the saved, though an election of them as persons to be saved through the mediatorial work of Christ, was nevertheless in its source altogether irrespective of this work, and in the order of nature antecedent to the appointment of this work. On questions of this sort I have on former occasions expressed my unwillingness to enunciate any very precise or dogmatic decision, fearing lest by such an utterance one may incur the censure of meddling with matters too high for us. Viewing the question, however, simply as one of exegesis, I cannot but regard the Calvinistic view as, on the whole, the correct one. In several of the passages cited the turn given by the apostle to his statement seems to preclude any other interpretation. He says, "we have been predestinated *through* (διὰ) Jesus Christ," and that "we are appointed to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." In these passages there can be no doubt that the respect to our Lord Jesus Christ, which God is said to have had in the election and predestination of the saved, is respect to Him as the medium of their salvation, not as the meritorious cause of their election. In the other passages the phraseology of the apostle is somewhat different, and at first sight seems rather more in favour of the Arminian view.

To be chosen *in* Christ, and to be saved and called according to grace given *in* Christ Jesus, are statements which undoubtedly *may* mean that it was in Christ that the meritorious cause of the election and the grace was found. Still these passages fall short of affirming that it was *on account of* Christ that believers have been chosen; and they *may* mean that it was as those who should believe in Christ and be saved thereby that believers were chosen, that they were chosen and called to be in Christ, to become partakers of Christ, to enjoy the grace of salvation through Christ. What renders it probable that this latter is the apostle's meaning is, on the one hand, that he elsewhere so strongly affirms election to be of the mere *εὐδοκία* or good pleasure of God, which it could not be if there was a *meritorious* cause of it; and, on the other, in stating that believers are chosen in Christ he adds, "that we should be holy," etc., thereby indicating that, when chosen, believers were not contemplated as actually *in* Christ and therefore holy persons, but as still out of Christ and chosen to be in Him so as to become holy. It may be added that, in writing to the Thessalonians, Paul very explicitly affirms that what God has appointed men to is the obtaining of salvation through Jesus Christ (1 Thess. v. 9). In the divine appointment, then, respect was paid to Christ as the medium through which the salvation of the elect was to be achieved, not as the ground or meritorious cause of their election: our Lord Jesus Christ was regarded as the medium of their salvation, not as the source of their election. Upon the whole, then, the Calvinistic view of this question seems to us the one most in accordance with the apostle's statements; and therefore in speaking of the election of believers as being in Christ, we understand by the position that in choosing them God had respect to Christ as the medium through which their salvation was to be effected;—in the technical language of theologians, in election respect was had to the merit of Christ not *antecedenter*, as the impulsive and meritorious cause on account of which God destined the elect to be saved, but *consequenter*, as the primary medium of performing the gracious purpose.

v. From the passages cited it follows that the purpose of God in election is purely sovereign, or, as some have preferred



to express it, arbitrary. By this it is not intended to impute to God anything of the nature of caprice, or to insinuate that in the choice of some rather than of others He has acted without the highest and holiest reasons. All that the phraseology is designed to convey is that the reasons upon which God has acted in this matter are not divulged to us, and especially that they are not to be found in those who are the objects of His grace, or in anything about them. In general, when we speak of the divine sovereignty in relation to God's creatures, the term is used technically for the purpose of expressing the fact that God confers blessing on those who have not deserved it, for reasons of His own of which we are wholly ignorant, and in our present state at least can never discover. And such we affirm to be the case with the election of the saved as taught to us in the passages formerly cited. In connection with this it may be observed that the Scriptures, in referring to this subject, ascribe God's sovereign choice of the saved to His σοφία and His νοϋς (Rom. xi. 33, 34), and speak of it as His βουλή or counsel (Eph. i. 11). It is not, therefore, as if God either acted in this matter *sine ratione*, or as if with Him it was "Sic volo, sic jubeo; stat pro ratione voluntas." He has in this, as in other parts of His procedure, a high and worthy reason, though it be one which lies in a sphere to which our cognizance does not extend.

On this head the testimony of these passages seems very explicit. God is said to have chosen believers from the foundation of the world, and consequently altogether irrespective of any merits of theirs; to have predestinated them according to the good pleasure of His will (εὐδοκία τοῦ θελήματος, Eph. i. 5),—an expression which may mean either that so it *pleased* God, seemed good to Him to will, or that it accorded with the *benevolence* of God so to will, the former being probably the meaning to be preferred (comp. ver. 9, where we have the fuller expression, "according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself," an expression which can only refer to the self-determination of the divine will, irrespective of any outward motive<sup>1</sup>); and believers are

<sup>1</sup> Grotius: "Ita ut placuit voluntati ipsius." He adds that εὐδοκίω and εὐδοκία and the equivalent Hebrew יָצַח, "ubi non personam directe respiciant,

said to have been "predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. i. 11). Without quoting more, these passages may suffice to prove the perfect sovereignty of the divine act in the election of believers.

An attempt has been made to evade the force of this conclusion by asserting that though these passages undoubtedly preclude the idea of the divine election being consequent upon the *actual* conduct of believers, they do not preclude the assumption that this election has had respect to the faith and piety of believers as *foreseen* by God. This is a favourite hypothesis of the Arminian school, but it is by no means of Arminian origin. It is not a little curious to find that this was originally the opinion of Augustine. In one of his earlier works, entitled, *Expositio quorundam propositionum ex Ep. ad Rom.*, c. 60, he says, "God did not choose in prescience the works of any one which He was Himself to give, but by His prescience He chose faith, so that such as He foreknew would believe on Him; He chose that He might give to them the Holy Spirit, so as that by doing good works they might obtain eternal life." This opinion he afterwards renounced, and in his *Retractationes* he formally recalled and repudiated his former advocacy of it (Bk. I. c. 23). Traces of the same opinion are to be found in the writings of Jerome and others of the Fathers, especially the Greeks; and among the schoolmen it was advocated by Bonaventura and by Duns Scotus. The latter expressly says,<sup>1</sup> "The divine will concerning creatures themselves acts freely and contingently; wherefore He predestinates men to be saved contingently," thus making the divine choice of men contingent on their

cui tunc præpositio ~~is~~ solet præponi, sed actionem, talem denotant actionem cuius ratio non soleat reddi." Calvin: "*Secundum beneplacitum voluntatis*. Sufficiebat voluntas, solet enim eam Paulus externis omnibus causis opponere, quibus Deum provocari vulgo existiment: sed ne quid ambiguitatis maneret opposuit Beneplacitum, quod nomen omnia merita diserte excludit." Ruckert: "By the combination  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\ \tau\epsilon\ \epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\lambda\lambda\epsilon\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \epsilon\iota\lambda\lambda\epsilon$ , nothing else evidently can be meant than in virtue of or according to the liking of His will, i.e. He fixed the predestination, not from anything foreign to Himself, but solely because so it seemed good to Him." So also De Wette and Meyer, Olshausen, Harless, etc., take the other meaning, according to the "benevolence of His will."

<sup>1</sup> *In Sent.*, Bk. I. Dist. 40.

piety, and by consequence the divine predestination one founded on the foreseen occurrence of this contingency. Similar to this is the doctrine of the Remonstrant party. Grotius: "Decretum ejus quod Deus facere vult si homines faciant quod debent" (*In Eph.* i. 5). And in their Remonstrance they say more at large: "Deum æterno immutabili decreto in Jesu Christo, filio suo, ante jactum mundi fundamentum statuisset, ex lapso peccatis obnoxio humano genere, illos in Christo, propter Christum et per Christum servare, qui spiritus sancti gratia in eundem ejus filium credunt et in ea fideique obedientia per eandem gratiam in finem perseverant" (Art. I.). They thus make election a mere choice of those who believe, and predestination a mere anticipation of this choice by the foreknowledge of God. By many divines of the Anglican Church this doctrine is also held. Thus Bishop Tomline maintains that "Predestination is founded in foreseen obedience and disobedience," and contends that this is the only sense in which predestination is "reconcilable with the attributes of God and the free agency of man."<sup>1</sup> The eminent Wesleyan theologian, Richard Watson, also takes his stand on this same ground. "Those," says he, "whom He [God] chose in Christ before the foundation of the world were considered not as men merely, which gives no reason of choice worthy of any rational being, much less of the ever-blessed God" [we may remark in passing that no one ever affirmed it did, for all Calvinists agree that the reason of the divine election is not found in the man as such, any more than in the man as a believer], "but as believing men."<sup>2</sup>

Of this doctrine a recent German commentator of the N. T., not remarkable for the evangelical tone of his sentiments, but whose philological and exegetical merits are distinguished, says that it is "destitute of exegetical validity."<sup>3</sup> This judgment is just. There is not a single passage in the N. T. in which such a view of the subject is even by appearance taught, and the entire tone and spirit and expression of the passages already cited are decidedly opposed to it. It is true that the apostle, in writing to the Romans, says that those

<sup>1</sup> *Elements of Christ. Theol.*

<sup>2</sup> *Institutes*, vol. iii. p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> "Ohne exegetisches recht." Meyer on Eph. i. 5.

whom God has predestinated are those whom He foreknew (viii. 29); and that Peter, in writing to believers, addresses them as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God" (1 Ep. i. 2). But these passages simply prove what no one is disposed to question, viz. the foreknowledge of God in election. That God foreknew those whom He chose, and that His choice was according to this foreknowledge, are positions involved in the very fact of His having chosen them at all: if there had been no foreknowledge there could have been no such thing as previous election or predestination. But it would be absurd to contend from this that the election was founded in the foreknowledge, as that which supplied the meritorious ground of the election. It is one thing to say God predestinated those whom He foreknew; and it is quite another thing to say that God predestinated them because He foreknew they would be believers, and obedient. The latter statement plainly contains much more than the former, and therefore the former is not competent to cover it. This reasoning goes on the presumption that in the passages quoted the verb "foreknow" and the noun "foreknowledge" relate merely to prescience, merely to God's having intelligence beforehand of what was to happen. But the argument becomes strengthened when we consider that it is not merely in this sense that such terms are used in Scripture concerning the people of God. When God is said to know His people, more is meant than that He is acquainted with them and their circumstances. "*Γινωσκειν*" says Usteri, "when used of God in reference to persons, expresses an acknowledgment or owning which has its ground in love; the concept of the Hebrew *יָדָע* has been transferred to the Greek word"; and as instances he adduces Amos iii. 2; Hos. xiii. 5; Ps. i. 6; Matt. vii. 23; 1 Cor. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 19. We have already seen this usage of the term in relation to the ancient Israel, and also the usage of the term "foreknew" with a similar force. We are entitled, therefore, to say that, as a matter of usage, where foreknowledge is ascribed to God in reference to those whom He predestinates, it is foreknowledge in the sense of *foreloving* and *forecowning*; and in this case every such supposition as that the predestination of believers by God

finds its ground in His foresight of their faith and obedience, is not only shown not to be in the passages, but to be formally excluded by them: in this case election according to foreknowledge is simply election according to sovereign love, the election of grace.<sup>1</sup>

It is perhaps hardly necessary to dwell on the refutation of an opinion which is thus exegetically baseless; but as it has been held by so many men of learning and ability, it may be worth while to devote to it a little further notice. I observe, then, that this opinion is liable to the following fatal objections:—

(i.) It is irreconcilable with the strong and decided terms in which the apostle affirms the perfect gratuitousness of election. On this point he uses language than which it is impossible to conceive any more pointed and clear, Rom. ix. 15, xi. 6; 1 Cor. i. 27, 28; 2 Tim. i. 9. The testimony of these passages is unmistakable. But how can what they so clearly enunciate be true if the ground of election be found in the foreseen goodness of those elected? What difference does it make in a question of merit whether the deeds by which the merit is secured be seen as past or foreseen as future? In either case it is the deed of the individual that creates the merit and establishes his claim. If, then, God elects man on the ground of foreseen faith and obedience, He elects him on the ground of merit. Here, then, we have a direct and unqualified contradiction of the apostle's explicit statement. It is of him that willeth and of him that runneth, and not merely "of God that showeth mercy." It is of works and not of pure grace. It is not the foolish and base and despised things of this world that God hath called, but the excellent things of faith and moral goodness—not things that had no being, but things that actually existed and were of moral worth: so that man, the possessor of these, actually *has* ground of boasting in God's presence.

<sup>1</sup> "Προγνωσις," says Vorstius, "significat non solum Dei præscientiam, sed conjunctam cum decreto seu voluntate."

"The distinction between προγνωστικὴν and προορίζειν is this, that in the former concept the element of knowledge is especially prominent, since every divine determination rests on the basis of His omniscience." Meyer on 1 Pet. i. 2. He adds: "In the classical speech also the original meaning of γνωστικὴν occasionally passes over into that of determining; hence ἐγνωσμένον ἴσται, it is determined."

See, then, how direct is the denial which this opinion flings against some of the plainest sayings of the word of God!

An attempt has been made by some of the Remonstrant party to evade the force of this conclusion by making a distinction between foreseen faith as recognized in the divine decree, and foreseen faith as the ground of the divine decree. Thus Grotius says: "*Hoc decretum salvandi singulares personas, prævisa fide, sed non ob prævisam fidem,*" etc. But this distinction is utterly irrelevant and futile here. For either the foreseen faith formed the ground of the saving decree, or it did not. If it did not, then God's decree to save men is irrespective of their foreseen faith, and we are landed in the conclusion of what Grotius and his party abhor, that of an absolute sovereign decree to save "*singulares personas.*" If, on the other hand, it did, then follows that contradiction of the apostle's language which I have already pointed out—the foreseen faith becomes the meritorious ground of a choice which the apostle most expressly says was not of merit but of grace. Grotius is here on the horns of a dilemma: either he must renounce his Arminianism and become Calvinist, or he must retain his Arminianism and renounce the teaching of the apostle.

(ii.) This opinion is irreconcilable with those passages which represent faith, piety, and holiness as *ends* contemplated by the divine election of believers. Thus we read Acts xiii. 48; Eph. i. 4; Rom. viii. 29, 30; 1 Pet. i. 2. From these passages it clearly appears that in election and predestination God contemplated the sanctification, obedience, and piety of His people as an end to be thereby secured. But if this was an end to be secured by election and predestination, how could it form the foreseen ground of these? Can one and the same thing be both an end and a cause to the same operation? If it is those whom God has ordained to eternal life who believe, how can their believing have formed the ground of their ordination? If God has elected men that they might be holy, how can their foreseen holiness be the ground of His electing purpose? If calling follows on predestination, and justification on calling, and glorification on justification in regular sequence, how can the first step in

the sequence be occasioned by any of the subsequent steps ? or would it not be quite as reasonable to say that God justifies men on the ground of their foreseen glorification, as to say that He predestinates them on the ground of their foreseen justification ? And if they are “elect unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Christ” (*i.e.* personal enjoyment of the blessings secured to them by the sacrifice of Christ), how could their obedience and their justifying faith be the ground of their election ? I am aware that this last passage has been differently rendered by some critics. Instead of “elect through sanctification of the Spirit,” it is proposed by Calov to render it “elect in sanctification of the spirit,” and he understands by the statement “elect as persons in a state of sanctification,” *i.e.* on the ground of foreseen holiness. But such a construction of the words is very improbable ; and, besides, on this exegesis what are we to make of the following words ? If they were already viewed as in a state of sanctification when elected, how could they be elected to obedience and to justification ? Are persons first holy and then justified ? This exegesis is plainly forbidden by the passage itself, and not less so is that advocated by Mr. R. Watson, viz. that the words *εις υπακοην κ.τ.λ.* are to be construed with *αγιασμω* and not with *εκλεκτοις*, so that the meaning would be, not “elect unto obedience,” but “elect through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience”—the obedience being thus regarded as the effect of the sanctification. But though the passage may bear this meaning, what is gained by it ? It still remains asserted by the apostle that believers have been elected to spiritual blessings, viz. to the gift of the Holy Spirit to produce obedience ; for if the passage, on Mr. Watson’s rendering, does not mean this, the apostle is made to affirm that believers are elected to nothing. Besides, what on this interpretation are we to make of the last clause, “and sprinkling of the blood of Christ” ? Is this to be construed with *εκλεκτοις* or with *αγιασμω*. Obviously not with the latter, for the assertion that believers are sanctified by the Spirit to the end that they may be sprinkled with the blood of Christ would be contrary to the whole teaching of Scripture. But if with the former, then we ask again, what does the Arminian gain by the

change of rendering? If we *must* read "elect unto the sprinkling of the blood of Christ," i.e. unto pardon and justification, why not as well read "elect unto obedience"? The one statement surely is not more reconcilable with the Arminian hypothesis than the other. In this passage, then, no less than in the others, we have a clear assertion of the truth that the election of believers was with a view to their obedience and faith—a truth which is diametrically opposed to the opinion that this election was determined by their faith and obedience as foreseen.

(iii.) It cannot but strike one forcibly, that if predestination is capable of being construed to the understanding so simply as it would be if it were merely a determination to accept as saved certain persons who it was foreseen would save themselves by embracing through faith the salvation offered to them in the gospel, the Apostle Paul makes by far too much of it as a profound fact in revelation, and one at which the natural understanding cannot but stumble. According to this theory the subject is robbed of all difficulty and of all profundity, and becomes one of the simplest things in the world. God, who foresees all things, foresees that when an offer of salvation is made to men some will accept and be saved, and foreseeing this He decrees that such shall be saved. In such a statement there is no mystery, nothing to stumble any one that believes in God and in the gospel at all. But Paul evidently thought that when he was propounding the doctrine of the divine election of the saved he was propounding something very deep, and likely to prove very staggering to the human understanding. Hence his anxiety to meet the objections which he anticipated would arise from this cause. Hence his exclamation by which he would shut the mouth of the gainsayer on this subject: "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Hence his resort to the absolute sovereignty of God, and his illustration from the case of the potter who from the same lump of clay can make what sort of vessel he will. And hence the wondering, adoring exclamation with which he closes his discussion: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Evidently the apostle did not find



the subject so perfectly simple as these divines would make it. Is there no reason to suspect from this that the clearness of their scheme has been secured at the expense of truth, and that they have made the problem easy of solution simply by first eviscerating it of some of its essential elements?

(iv.) The Remonstrant divines, and those who agree with them on this point, have, in their zeal to avoid Calvinism, exposed themselves to be dragged into the lowest Pelagianism. This seems to me to admit of logical demonstration; and as Turretine has in a very condensed and clear form presented the demonstration, I cannot do better than translate his words: "If election," says he, "is out of foreseen faith, God must have foreseen that faith either as an act of nature proceeding from us, or as an act of grace dependent on God, or as common to both, an act arising from God and nature conjunctly, and due partly to the one and partly to the other. Now, if He foresaw it as an act of God, then He foresaw it as His own gift, *i.e.* as decreed by Him out of election, and in this case the faith follows the election, not precedes it. If as an act of nature, then we make ourselves to differ, which is a contradiction of what Paul says (1 Cor. iv. 7), and a decisive concession to Pelagius. If as a common act, then either the part which man acts in this determines the part God acts in it, in which case man becomes the architect of his own salvation, and has wherewith he may sacrifice to his own act, seeing he contributes to his own salvation what is the principal part of it; or the part which man acts is determined by the act of God, and in this case election will be the cause of faith, not the contrary. It thus appears that either we must ascend with Scripture to God as Him who maketh man to differ by His own gift, or we must descend with Pelagius to man as causing himself to differ by his own free will: there is no medium between these."<sup>1</sup>

(v.) In fine: If election be on the ground of foreseen faith and obedience, one is prompted to ask, *To what* are the subjects of this faith and obedience elected? Some reply, To actual salvation; others, To the enjoyment of the means of salvation. Now, which of these replies is to be preferred it

<sup>1</sup> *Institut. Theol. Elenct.*, loc. i., qu. xi., thesis xxii.

is no part of our business at present to inquire: what I wish now to bring out is, that on either supposition those holding the opinion we are now examining will find themselves involved in difficulties. For let us suppose their position to be that God elects to salvation those who believe on the ground of their foreseen faith, it will follow that the divine election is wholly nugatory and superfluous: it is an election to salvation of those who have already by God's own scheme of redemption secured salvation by believing in His Son. On this hypothesis, then, God is charged with folly in that He is supposed to have decreed something to happen on grounds which assume that the thing has happened before He decrees it. Let us then take the other supposition, viz. that it is asserted that what God has elected men to on the ground of foreseen faith is not salvation, but the means of salvation. In this case the meaning must be that God has determined to furnish to certain persons the means of salvation, because He foresaw that when so furnished they would use them and profit by them. But those who were thus foreseen to use, etc., do so either by a special operation of God on their minds, securing their so acting, or they do so by their own unaided agency: If the former, the purpose of God concerning them must have embraced the forthputting of this special operation, *i.e.* they must have been elected to believe, not because it was foreseen they would believe, which is a renunciation of the hypothesis: If the latter, then God is asserted to have acted on the foresight of what He has expressly told us never happens, viz. that a sinner without aid from above accepts salvation and is saved. It is evident, therefore, that this part of the Arminian hypothesis involves its adherents in perpetual contradictions and inextricable confusion.

On these grounds we think the hypothesis that God has elected the saved on the ground of their foreseen faith and obedience utterly untenable. The only ground exegetically solid and logically consistent is that assumed by Augustine: "*Non quia credidimus, sed ut credamus elegit nos.*"

vi. A sixth conclusion which we deduce from the statement of the N. T. concerning the election of the saved by God is, that the divine purpose in election had respect to the

*actual salvation* of those elected ; in other words, that it was an election securing to them salvation, and not merely the providing for them of the means of salvation.

(i.) This conclusion rests upon such statements as the following : Acts xiii. 48 — where the blessing to which believers are represented as having been ordained is stated to be eternal life ; Rom. viii. 29 — where conformity to the image of Christ or perfect holiness is distinctly set forth as the end for which God has predestinated believers ; Rom. ix. 23, 24 — where that to which God is said to have afore prepared His people is glory or final salvation ; Eph. i. 5, 11 — where that to which believers are said to be called and predestinated of God is that they should be holy and blameless, that they should receive the adoption of children, and that they should obtain the heavenly inheritance ; 1 Thess. v. 9 — where it is expressly stated that it is to the obtaining of salvation that believers have been appointed ; 2 Thess. ii. 13 — where it is to salvation and to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ that believers are said to have been chosen and called.

The testimony of these passages is so full and so explicit that it seems marvellous that it should ever have been made a question whether the election spoken of in the N. T. is an election to salvation and eternal life or not. I am aware that attempts have been made to destroy the force of some of these passages as witnesses in support of the affirmative side of this question. But even were these attempts more successful than it can, I think, be shown they are, there would still remain enough, the force of which cannot be weakened or set aside, to show that the election of believers is an election to salvation and eternal life, and not merely to the means of salvation. Of the passages the force of which attempts have been made to invalidate, we may notice one, Acts xiii. 48 : “ As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” Here everything turns on the meaning of the word rendered “ ordained,” *τεταγμενοι*, and on this, therefore, the efforts of expositors must chiefly terminate. Now, this is part of a verb which in the active signifies to arrange or put in order ; hence to constitute or appoint, to devote, destine, or ordain. In the passive, therefore, it is properly

translated "to be arranged," "appointed," "constituted," or "ordained." So it is by our translators rendered in Rom. xiii. 1: "The powers that be *are ordained* (τεταγμένοι εἰσὶν) of God;" and here no one has ever suggested a different rendering; so that our translators in giving it this rendering in the passage before us have, beyond all question, taken the word in its proper and usual acceptation. Those, however, who are opposed to the doctrine of election as an appointment of men unto eternal life, refuse to take the word in this its obvious and wonted meaning, and finding passages such as 1 Cor. xvi. 15, where the verb τάσσω in the active is rendered by our English "addicted," they propose to render the passage before us thus: "As many as were addicted to eternal life believed," *i.e.* as many as in their hearts were inclined for eternal life believed. Were it not that this rendering has actually been given to the passage, and that in a recent publication in this country, it might seem incredible that such a rendering and exegesis should have been proposed. It can be imputed only to the grossest ignorance, presuming that it was uttered in good faith. For the error is so transparent that any one who knows aught of the subject may at once perceive it. In the first place, it is founded on an ambiguity in our English word "addicted," which does not exist in the Greek word τασσω. By "addicted" we sometimes mean "devoted" or "appointed," but sometimes also, and more generally, "inclined to," "fond of;" whereas the Greek word τασσω never has any such meaning as the latter. Then, secondly, this interpretation involves the error of giving a passive voice a reflex meaning, and that upon the ground that the active verb followed by εαυτους has such a meaning—a blunder so gross that one wonders any man of even moderate attainments should have fallen into it. It is true that some eminent scholars, among others Grotius, have suggested a middle or reflex meaning here, on the ground that τάσσω is often used in a *military* acceptation, so that τεταγμένοι ἦσαν may mean "those who keep rank, who obey orders, who have enlisted, and are where they ought to be." But though this meaning of the word may stand as possible, it is one utterly inapplicable to the passage before us; for the writer does not say merely οἱ τεταγμένοι,

but *οσοι τεταγμενοι εις ζωνην αιωνιον*, where the particle *εις* plainly indicates the end for which they were *τεταγμενοι*;—they were persons arranged, appointed, or ordained unto eternal life, as Chrysostom explains it, *τουτ' εστι, αφωρισμενοι τω Θεω*. Besides, as Meyer remarks in his note on the passage, “what right has a commentator, in order to get rid of a meaning which he does not like, to depart from the plain obvious meaning of the words, and to foist into the passage ideas which there is nothing in the context to suggest or to favour; for what is there here to lead to the supposition of a *military* sense of the words? The context suggests nothing else than the simple meaning ‘ordained’ for *τεταγμενοι*, and the sense of the *end* or *object* for *εις ζωνην αιωνιον*.” He adds, “Among the Rabbins also both the idea and the expression ‘ordained (מבנים) to the life of the future age’ are very familiar.” Alford in his note on this passage proposes the rendering, “As many as were disposed to eternal life believed.” Here he takes advantage of the same ambiguity as attaches to the word “addicted.” In ordinary speech we say a man is *disposed* to any course when he is inclined to it, when his own liking and choice is towards it. But the verb “dispose” properly means to place, arrange, adapt, or form for any purpose; and “to be disposed,” to be thus by some outer power or influence placed, arranged, or formed. Now it is in the latter of these senses that the Greek word *τάσσω* and its passive *τασσομαι* are alone used; there is no such ambiguity in the Greek word as there is in the English. To substitute “disposed” then in the rendering for “ordained,” is only to substitute an ambiguous word for one that is not ambiguous, and so to mislead the reader. To the judgment of Meyer, already quoted, I may add that of Olshausen, who says, “In the words, *οσοι ησαν τεταγμενοι εις ζωνην αιωνιον*, there is to be recognised the idea pervading all Scripture of a *prædestinatio sanctorum*. The attempts,” he adds, “to escape this are extremely forced.” Lechler, one of the latest commentators on the Acts, says, “The words say nothing else than that all those and only those were really converted who were ordained, determined, to eternal life by God.” Both Lechler and Meyer, it is true, affirm that there is no reference here to an absolute decree of predestination; but how any

correct thinker can hold that God has ordained any one to eternal life otherwise than by an absolute decree, I am unable to conceive. That God's preordination should depend on a contingency, is simply unthinkable. If, then, we would not incur the charge of wresting the Scriptures, we must abide by the obvious meaning of this passage, and receive it as affirming that of the multitude to whom the gospel was preached, those believed who were ordained or appointed unto eternal life. Eternal life was the end to which they were appointed of God, and the belief of the truth was the medium through which this was to be realized.

(ii.) To the truth which seems so clearly taught in the passages cited is opposed the opinion of those who contend that what believers are elected to is not salvation or eternal life, but only the means and opportunity of obtaining these. This opinion has found much favour with divines of the Anglican Church. Thus Bishop Tomline says, "There was no *absolute* election of particular persons who must necessarily be saved, but a *conditional offer* of salvation to all,"—of which sentence it is only the concluding part, in which the Bishop expresses his own view, that we quote as worthy of attention. In the same strain also Dr. Whately writes: "By contemplating the correspondence between the Jewish and the gospel schemes, he [the diligent student] will clearly perceive that there is no such distinction among Christians as the called and the uncalled—the elect and the non-elect;" "though all born in a Christian country and initiated into Christ's Church are arbitrarily elected to this invaluable privilege, their salvation is *not* arbitrary, but will depend on the use they make of their privileges; those, namely, to which all Christians are called—the knowledge of the gospel, the aids of the Holy Spirit, and the offer of eternal life; privileges of which all are exhorted, but none are compelled, to make a right use, and which will prove ultimately either a blessing or a curse to each according to the use he makes of them."<sup>1</sup>

This extract from Whately not only clearly states the opinion itself, but glances at some of the arguments by which it is attempted to be sustained. Before proceeding farther, we shall briefly examine these.

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Election*, p. 76. (*Essays*, second series.)

1. An appeal is made to the analogy between ancient Israel and the people of God, and it is argued that as the former were chosen only to the offer of blessings and not to the very blessings themselves, so by analogy we may expect to find that the latter are chosen, not to salvation, but to the offer and the means of it. On this it may suffice to remark that it is an error to assume that Israel was not chosen to blessing, but only to the offer and opportunity of blessing: Israel as a nation *was* chosen to actual blessing of a national kind, and was actually put in possession of that blessing without any merit of their own; so that in so far as analogy may serve to guide us in this matter, we may conclude that what the people of God in a spiritual sense are elected to is actual spiritual blessing, and not the mere offer of it. And, in the second place, it argues great ignorance of typical interpretation to suppose that that of which the ancient Israel was typical was a concrete visible body like a national Church or a body having an outward patent organization, and into which men born within certain geographical limits are initiated by an outward ceremonial. According to all true principles of typical interpretation, it is the mystical body of Christ, the spiritual Israel, the invisible Church, that supplies the antitype of which the national Israel was the type; so that it is between these two alone that any valid analogy can be drawn. But in what possible sense the invisible Church of Christ has been elected to the offer of salvation, I leave it with Dr. Whately and his followers to determine.

2. It is argued that the salvation of individuals is made dependent on their rightly using the means placed at their disposal by God, and that, consequently, it can only be to these means that they are arbitrarily and unconditionally elected. This argument Whately urges with considerable force, and it constitutes the staple argument of the party to which he belongs on the question now before us. As it is not only very confidently urged, but has a certain aspect of speciousness, it may be necessary to examine it carefully.

The force of it lies in the assumed incompatibility of an election to eternal life with the suspension of the actual enjoyment of that life on the right use of certain means of salvation placed before us in the Bible. The question, there-

fore, which we have to meet and dispose of is, Does a command or exhortation to use the means adapted to produce a certain end prove that that end is not predestinated by God? If this question *must* be answered in the affirmative, it must be admitted that a very serious difficulty has been placed in the way of our embracing the conclusion to which Whately and his party are opposed; but if, on the other hand, we find that it must be answered in the negative, we shall easily move out of our way the obstacle which they would place between us and that conclusion to which we think the statements of the inspired writers naturally lead.

Let us then meet this question fairly in the face; and, in the first place, let us ask, Does the predestination of an end necessarily *exclude* the use of means adapted to attain that end? or does it not rather *include* the appointment of these means? These questions we may answer with all confidence, the former in the negative, the latter in the affirmative. For not only does abstract reason conduct us to such answers (seeing there is nothing in this fixing of an end *per se* to supersede the use of means for the attaining of that end, but the very opposite), but all we know of God's own working favours the same decision. All His works, we know, are the results of a previous purpose and a firm decree, for He does nothing at random; and yet are not all His works carried on by the use of means? With confidence, then, may we affirm the perfect compatibility of the use of means to gain an end, with the predestination of that end as one sure to be gained.

Another question let us ask by way of meeting the difficulty now before us, Where the means by which an end is to be accomplished are to be used by intelligent agents, is the exhortation to these agents to be diligent in the use of these means incompatible with the predestination of the end? To this question we answer also unhesitatingly, No. For on a broad and comprehensive view of the subject these exhortations form part of the means by which the end is to be attained. The case stands thus: God predestines a certain end to take place by certain means, which means are of two kinds,—*acts*, and the *motives* by which the acts are to be called forth. He predetermines, therefore, inclusively both the acts which are to result in the end and the motives which



are to result in the acts. But the motives in the case before us are supplied by such exhortations as are supposed in the questions we are considering, so that these exhortations are virtually the motives which prompt to the acts, and consequently form, as said above, part of the means by which the end is to be secured. But we have before showed that the predestination of an event does not exclude, but includes, the use of means adapted to produce the event. It follows that the use of exhortations to agents by whom the operative means must be used is not incompatible with the predestination of the end.

Now, if these reasonings are just, we are guided by them safely and surely to return a negative answer to the question with which we started. If the use of means, and if exhortations to that use, be not incompatible with the predestination of the end which these means are designed to reach, but be rather included therein, then may we confidently conclude that a command to use these means does not prove that the end has not been predestined. The two are perfectly compatible with each other, and consequently the existence of the one can never be legitimately used to prove the impossibility of the other. Difficulties, it is true, hang around this subject on every side; but it is important to observe that it is not at the point before us that the difficulties press. We may not be able to reconcile man's free agency with God's predestination, but that cannot prevent our seeing that, whether we assume these two to exist, or hold that the latter is superseded by the former, it is alike possible to reconcile the exhortation to the use of means with the predestination of the end to be thereby attained; for, whilst in the latter case the exhortation forms simply a link in a preorganized chain, all the parts of which follow, each its predecessor, in necessary sequence, in the former case we have only to suppose that God, in accordance with man's free will, renders the exhortation effectual to remove any difficulty which may arise upon the point before us.

(iii.) Such are the arguments by which it is usually attempted to maintain the opinion that it is not to salvation, but merely to the means of salvation, that men are elected of God. We have found them invalid, and might therefore here

dismiss the subject. But it may not be amiss before doing so to offer a remark or two by way of still further showing the untenability of this opinion.

1. I observe, then, that such an opinion is incompatible with those statements of Scripture which represent actual salvation as an evidence of election. Take, *e.g.*, 1 Thess. i. 4, 5: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God; for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power," etc. Here Paul expressly states that he knew these Thessalonians to be elect of God, because they had felt the power of the gospel he preached. But what proof of their election would there have been in this unless this had been the end to which they were elected? Had it been only to the offer of the gospel that they had been elected, there would have been no need for the apostle to lay stress on their not merely having had the gospel preached to them, but having felt the power of it as evidential of their election. On this hypothesis the proof of election is not a man's being converted by the power of the truth, but simply his having heard the truth preached. But not so judged the apostle, as these words evidently show. To his mind the mere coming of the word to these Thessalonians would have been no proof of their being elected of God; what carried conviction to his mind was that the gospel had come with power so as to result in their conversion. And with reason, may we say, did the apostle so judge, for on the former ground he would have had no more evidence of the election of these his beloved brethren than he would have had of those Jews at Thessalonica that believed not, and who would fain have destroyed the apostle, seeing to them no less than to the others did Paul's gospel come.

2. This opinion is incompatible with those passages of Scripture which represent heaven as a place prepared from eternity for the people of Christ. Of such passages we may take our Lord's own words as an example, Matt. xxv. 34: "Then shall the King say to them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." In these words our Lord distinctly states that in appointing the heavenly inheritance God had a reference to those who should enjoy it, and

prepared it for them. But if He prepared it for them, He must have destined them for it, else would His preparation have been subject to failure, which cannot be supposed in God. Such subjection, however, would have been incident to the divine purpose had it been merely to the opportunity of reaching heaven that His people are predestinated; for in that case those to whom the opportunity was given might never have used it, and so many of those for whom God had prepared a place in heaven might never have reached it. Such a thing we know cannot be, and therefore we must repudiate as unscriptural and unsound the opinion that would shut us up to such a conclusion.

3. It may be remarked, in general, upon this theory that it is impossible to see what is gained by it, what difficulties it avoids, what advantages it offers. There still remains upon it an election as arbitrary and sovereign as that which is maintained by the view to which it is opposed. In the one case God is said to elect individuals to salvation, in the other He is said to elect communities to the means of salvation. Now, the latter is as inexplicable to us as the former. This Whately fully and frankly admits. "Some nations," says he, "had the gospel preached to them long before others; the apostles were directed by the Holy Ghost what countries they should first visit and enlighten by their ministry, and many there are that remain in ignorance of Christianity to this day. We can give no account of this distinction but that such is God's pleasure. No reason can be assigned why we ourselves, for instance, in this country should have received the light of the gospel, while many other regions of the earth remain in the darkness of idolatry. The 'calling' and selection of us and of other Christians to the knowledge of the true God seems as arbitrary as that of the Israelites." Now, all this we cordially admit as just and true and satisfactory. But if it be so as respects national election to the means of grace, is it less so as respects individual election to the enjoyment of the end which these means can alone effect? If an arbitrary grant of the one be not inconsistent with the divine equity, on what ground is God charged with partiality when He is affirmed to have arbitrarily chosen men to the other? If God may without partiality give two talents, may He not also without

partiality give ten? If from the nations of the earth He may, in full accordance with the perfections of His character, select one to whom alone He sends the gospel in word, may He not out of that nation select some to whom He will send also the power by which that word becomes effectual? Is not the latter but an extension of the principle involved in the former? and as in matters of principle there is not a *majus* and *minus*, but all acts involving the principle are alike right and alike wrong, is it not clear that either we must deny both elections or admit that the one is as reconcilable with the character of God as the other? Besides, it should not be overlooked that on the theory we have espoused, as that plainly favoured by the N. T. writers, there is a perfect analogy between the course thus attributed to God in grace and the course which we see Him constantly following in Providence. As the supreme source of all good, we see that He not only selects nations as the recipients of special bounties, but out of these nations selects individuals on whom still more special bounties are conferred. Now, if this be the scheme on which God proceeds in the distribution of providential blessings, does not analogy lead us to infer that a similar scheme will be followed in the distribution of the blessings of His grace? At any rate, if the inequality within inequality in the one department be compatible with the divine equity,—and that it is so even the mere Theist must hold,—no less must the analogous phenomenon in the other department be so. Those, therefore, who would press this objection against the Calvinist doctrine had need to take heed that they do not put a weapon in the hands of the Atheist, or cut off their own retreat when hard pressed by him.

It may be further remarked, that to be consistent Whately and his party ought to go a great deal farther in asserting the necessity of perfect equality in God's dealings with those to whom the gospel is sent. For, keeping out of view at present the saving operations of the Holy Spirit, and assuming that men put in possession of the means are left to use these or not without guiding influence from above, are they therefore, I ask, placed on a footing of perfect equality? Do we not find among them the greatest variety of natural ability and capacity? the greatest variety of

circumstances favourable and unfavourable to their becoming religious? the greatest diversity of natural inclination, previous habit, educational bias, domestic and social influence? Now, no man will deny that these have a most potent influence in determining a man's religious decisions and character; nor will any but an Atheist deny that they all flow directly, or next to directly, from the appointment of God. Among those, then, to whom the gospel is sent there is still inequality in point of fitness to profit by that privilege, and inequality proceeding from God. What shall we say to this? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid! But if such inequality of gift does not impeach the righteousness of God, why should the opinion, that the inequality extends beyond what meets the eye, be held to impeach His righteousness? For, observe, this is the entire difference between natural gifts and spiritual gifts in relation to the point before us—that the former are *sure* to be bestowed, whilst the latter are known to be bestowed only by God's *telling us so in His word*. Now, in sober seriousness, what difference can the mere medium through which we ascertain a fact make on the scientific, philosophical, or moral worth of that fact? What should we say, *e.g.*, if an astronomer, who should have faith in all that the unaided eye showed him of the heavenly bodies, but should refuse to accept what the telescope of Rosse or Herschel reveal? Would not all men cry shame on such indiscriminating caprice? But what better are they who admit as presenting no difficulty those inequalities in God's dealings with men in reference to the securing their salvation which are observable by the unaided reason, whilst they refuse to concede the same in the case of inequalities declared by God in His word to exist, though not discoverable by reason? Suppose, *e.g.*, the case of a young man, endowed with fine abilities, an amiable and reverent spirit, a docile and religious bias, the child of pious parents, by whom he is carefully from his infancy upwards educated in the knowledge of saving truth and trained in the ways of God, and entering on life under all the auspicious and favouring influences which such advantages are calculated to exert. Here is a case in which an individual is by the special kindness of Providence brought to be not far

from the kingdom of heaven, brought, as it were, to its very gates. One step more and he enters it, and becomes one of the saved. Has there, then, in this case been partiality on the part of God? By no means, replies Dr. Whately: *why* God should have showed such favour to this individual, when so many others have been passed by, we cannot tell; "we can give no account of this distinction but that such is God's pleasure;" but far be it for us to impute partiality to God on that account. Well, I would rejoin, suppose that God, having brought the individual thus far on the way of salvation, graciously completes the process by conferring on him a gift by which he is led to take the one remaining step and thereby actually to enter the kingdom; do you say there would be partiality in that? According to the advanced doctrines of Whately and his party, the reply to this must be in the affirmative. But is not such a reply altogether capricious and arbitrary? On what ground is the distinction on which it rests made? If nineteen steps in a process may be legitimately taken, why not also the remaining twentieth? To be consistent, Dr. Whately and his party should utter their protest at an earlier stage—at the first step of the process; they cannot with any decency or logical consistency utter it after they have admitted the propriety of so much of the very same kind of procedure as that to which in the last stage of the process they seek to object. To my mind it seems as plain as reasoning can make it, that either they must charge partiality on the whole of the divine administration in regard to man, and so minister to the cause of Atheism, or they must give up their objection to the doctrine of election as a choosing of men to spiritual blessings, that it impugns the divine equity and impartiality. If they hold it enough for them to say to the Atheist, when he points to the inequalities of dispensation in the bounties of Providence, that such is the will of God, on what principle do they refuse to accept the same reply in relation to the inequalities in the dispensation of grace which the doctrine of election to spiritual blessings involves?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The principles by which the doctrine of divine providence is established are substantially the same with those which support the doctrine of the sovereignty of divine grace in its personal operations. The objections and

vii. The topic we have been considering brings us to the noticing of another general deduction from the passages above quoted, viz. that election is an election of persons, and not of nations or communities. This point has been already partially considered, but it is of sufficient importance to demand a further illustration.

It may be well, in the outset, to remark that, according to the strict analogy with the case of Israel, we should say that it is the Church as the spiritual body of Christ that is elected, just as it was the nation of Israel as a whole that was elected. But if any are disposed to press this analogy to an argument against our present position, we have to ask them to tell us how it is conceivable that the Church should be elected as a whole without each of its members being elected individually? One can understand how a nation as such should be chosen to temporal blessing without respect to individuals, because there are natural causes which secure the continuance of a nation, so that though many of its constituent parts perish it remains as a whole entire. But in the case of a spiritual body, which is kept up not by natural means, but by the constant addition to it of persons who are to share in the spiritual blessings to which the whole are elected, it is impossible to conceive of any other way in which this can be done but by the choice of the persons themselves who are to be so blessed. The apostles, therefore, freely use terms indicative of the personal election of believers to spiritual blessings.

In proof of this we may adduce such passages as the following: Acts xiii. 48—where the distributive *οοοι* clearly points to a personal ordination and, consequently, selection; Rom. viii. 28—where it is evident that the purpose of God in calling has respect to the individuals just as much as His overruling providence has in the causing of all things to co-operate for their good; Rom. ix. 15, 16—where the singular number indicates the *individual* character of the dispensation; 1 Thess. i. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 13—where the whole tenor of the

difficulties are accordant and identical; and in both cases the same reasonings, confirmed by various important analogies, and supported by the direct testimonies of Scripture, may be applied with equal force and equal success." *Spiritual Blessings*, a discourse by J. Fletcher, D.D., 5th edition, p. 5.

statement, and especially the distinction instituted between the apostle and those of whose election he speaks, clearly shows that what was in his mind was a personal election of the parties; indeed, the entire circumstances of the case render the supposition that he had in view the election of the community to which these Thessalonians belonged as a recipient of the offer of the gospel almost ridiculous. The same may be said in reference to such passages as the following: 2 Tim. i. 9; 1 Pet. i. 1, 2, ii. 9; Rev. xvii. 14. If these passages do not teach the election of individuals to spiritual blessings, it seems vain to hope for the explicit statement of any doctrine from the general tenor of apostolic utterance.

Reference has sometimes been made to the use which the apostle makes of the case of Isaac and Ishmael, of Jacob and Esau, in Rom. ix., as if it favoured the idea of a national rather than a personal election. Now there can be no doubt that the apostle introduces these cases as illustrative of the doctrine of election; and consequently they may be with advantage taken as tending to explain the nature of election as understood and taught by the apostle. But on what grounds, we ask, is it assumed that in referring to these cases the apostle referred to communities or nations and not to individuals? So far as his words go his reference is, *prima facie*, to the men themselves. He does not speak of the *posterity* of Isaac and Ishmael, of Jacob and Esau; he simply mentions these men themselves, either by name or by implication. Why then should it be supposed that he has in view here the communities which sprang from them? Such a supposition is purely gratuitous, and made only to serve a cause. Nor is this all; by such a supposition the apostle's instances are deprived of their applicability to the point for which he adduces them. For what does he want to illustrate here? God's sovereignty in selecting the Jews as the recipients of privilege while other nations were overlooked? By no means; on the contrary, what Paul would illustrate and defend in this chapter is God's sovereignty in selecting from the mass of the Jews some as an "election according to grace," while the mass was left to prove that they "are not all Israel who are of Israel." Now this part of the divine



procedure he defends, as against the cavil of a Jew, by showing that in so acting God has only followed the principle on which He had always acted in such matters—the very principle in virtue of which the Jews themselves had come to enjoy their privileges — that, namely, of sovereign personal election according to His pleasure. It would have been no reply to the objection of the Jew to point to the selection of the Jews as a nation; for the Jew did not object to such a selection, or find any difficulty in it: it was by the selection of some of the posterity of Isaac and Jacob from amongst the rest that he was staggered. Now, this could be met only by a reference to the personal election of Isaac in preference to Ishmael, of Jacob in preference to Esau. The Jew's objection was, "Why should God choose some of Israel, and not all?" The apostle's reply is, "On the same principle that He chose one of Abraham's sons and not all, and one of Isaac's sons and not the other, and that by a sovereign choice." It is essential, therefore, to the validity of the apostle's reasoning here that his reference to Isaac and Jacob should be a reference to the individuals and not to their posterity, so that this instance is rather in favour of than opposed to the opinion we would advocate.<sup>1</sup>

It may be remarked, before passing from this part of the subject, that in contending for personal election to spiritual blessings it is not at all necessary to deny or question national election to the means of spiritual blessings. The two are perfectly compatible with each other; in fact, the latter to a great extent is presupposed by the former, inasmuch as it is usually from amongst communities to which the gospel has been sent that individuals are called, and their election of God thereby evinced. We must not be understood, then, as denying an election of nations to the enjoyment of the means of grace; all that we contend for is that it is not to this that the sacred writers usually refer when they speak of election, but to a choice of individuals to actual spiritual blessing.

"The personality of election, if I may be allowed the expression," says Dr. Fletcher, "seems to arise out of its very nature. It is difficult to conceive of any purpose or determination existing in the divine mind without being specific and definite

<sup>1</sup> See Wardlaw's *Systematic Theology*, vol. i. p. 489, etc.

in all its arrangement.”<sup>1</sup> To the same effect President Edwards says, “If God ever determined in the general that some of mankind should certainly be saved, and did not leave it altogether undetermined whether even so much as one soul of all mankind should believe in Christ, it must be that He determined that some particular persons should certainly believe in Him. For it is certain that if He has left it undetermined concerning this or that and the other person, whether ever he should believe or not, and so of every particular person in the world, then there is no necessity at all that this or that or any particular person in the world should ever be saved by Christ for matter of any determination of God’s. So that though God sent His Son into the world, it was left wholly undetermined by God whether ever any person should be saved by Him, and there was all this ado about Christ’s birth, death, resurrection, ascension, and sitting at God’s right hand when it was not as yet determined whether He should even save one soul, or have any mediatorial kingdom at all.”<sup>2</sup>

viii. I proceed to the last deduction which I would make from the statements of Scripture concerning the subject of election and predestination. It is this, that in these God had respect to men, not simply as creatures, but as fallen creatures.

This opinion is grounded chiefly on such statements of Scripture as that believers are chosen in Christ, chosen out of the world, that the lump or mass out of which they as vessels of mercy are afore prepared unto glory is the common lump or mass of humanity to which the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction belong, and that it is to mercy the former are chosen, whilst it is to wrath the latter are doomed. In all these statements the condition of man as already fallen is presupposed. The appointment of Christ as a Mediator presupposes the fall of man as what renders such an appointment necessary, and consequently they who are chosen in Christ must be chosen under the same supposition. They that are chosen as vessels of mercy (σκευη ἐλέους) must be regarded as needing mercy before they can be so chosen, and consequently as fallen beings. And if believers are chosen out of the world, *i.e.* the kingdom of darkness, or the mass of ungodly men, and

<sup>1</sup> *Spiritual Blessings*.

<sup>2</sup> *Miscellaneous Observations on Important Doctrines*, ch. iii. § 53.

if it is out of the common lump or mass of humanity that they are prepared unto glory, it is obvious that the choice which took effect in this must have respected them as involved in the world and mixed up with the corrupt mass. We therefore regard the purpose of God in election as having respect to men, not simply as creatures, but as fallen creatures.

(i.) The distinction just noted has led to an important division of theologians, and to a variety of designation which is of both historical and dogmatical interest. From asserting the position which we have noted as that apparently supported by Scripture, those who take this view have received the name of *Lapsarians*, because they contend that the divine purpose in election had reference to man as *lapsus*, a fallen being. The position thus occupied, however, is a middle position between two extremes; the one of which is occupied by those who maintain that in predestination God had respect to man simply as a creature and anterior to his fall; the other of which is occupied by those who suppose that God in predestination had respect to man not merely as fallen, but as also redeemed through faith in Christ, or as condemned through final impenitence. Of these two systems the former, from its advocates making the standpoint of the divine predestination, so to speak, above the fall (*supra lapsum*), has received the name of *Supralapsarianism*; the latter, from supposing the divine decree to found upon something subsequent to the fall, has been called *Sublapsarianism* or *Infra-lapsarianism*. These terms are worthy of being correctly understood and remembered, for they form noticeable landmarks in the field of theological speculation. They came into use during the discussions which arose out of the Synod of Dort, and the efforts of the Remonstrants in Holland. Francis Gomarus, the determined opponent of Arminius, may be regarded as the leader of the Supralapsarian party. The views advocated by them, however, had their rise at Geneva. We find the germ of them in Calvin's *Institutes*, as when, *e.g.*, he says, "I confess indeed that all the sons of Adam have fallen into this state of misery in which they are bound by the will of God. . . . When, then, they perish in their corruption, they only pay the penalty of that calamity into which Adam fell by predestination of God, and drew with him all

his posterity ;”<sup>1</sup> and when he seems to homologate the sentiment which he puts into the mouth of an objector, “*quum ergo in sua corruptione pereunt, nihil aliud quam pœnas hant ejus calamitatis, in quam ipsius [Dei] prædestinatione lapsus est Adam, ac posteros suos præcipites secum traxit.*” By Beza the Infralapsarian doctrine was still more fully developed and strenuously advocated. But it is in the writings of Gomarus and his coadjutors that it appears in its most unqualified form, and has received its most vehement advocacy. By modern Calvinists it is generally repudiated; though some of them hold that the finally impenitent are the objects of a damnatory decree upon the ground of their foreseen impenitency.

On the subject now before us the sentiments of theologians fall into three antagonist positions. There is, first, the position of those who maintain that as God has of His own sovereign pleasure, and for reasons known only to Himself, predestinated from all eternity certain men to the enjoyment of eternal life; so He has, in like manner, with similar sovereignty, and equally irrespective of anything in the individuals, predestinated the rest of mankind to eternal destruction. There is, secondly, the opinion of those who think that though God predestinates men to destruction, it is on the ground of their foreseen transgression and impenitency. And there is, thirdly, the opinion of those who hold that whilst God has predestinated in a sovereign manner the saved to eternal life, He has not predestinated either absolutely or conditionally the final destruction of any. Among those who hold by the last opinion in the main, there is a difference arising from some holding that there is a decree of preterition in respect of the ungodly, *i.e.* that God has decreed to pass them by, decreed not to exert any special influence on them for their redemption, but simply to pass them by and leave them to themselves; whilst others, standing firm by the position that God decrees only what He actually does, have not made the passing by of the lost, to whom He does nothing calculated to cause their destruction, the subject of a decree.

Of these opinions the last is the one that most commends itself to my judgment as in accordance with inspired state-

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, iii. 23, § 4.

ment upon this subject. But before affirming anything positively here, let us carefully examine those passages of the word of God that bear on this question.

(ii.) In the O. T. there are passages which seem to indicate a divine purpose or decree in the final destruction of sinners. Thus it is said of the sons of Eli, that "they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them" (1 Sam. ii. 25); and in Prov. xvi. 4 we have it asserted as a positive dogma, that "the Lord hath made all things for Himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." What seems positively asserted in this latter passage, viz. that by the divine preordination the wicked are made for the purpose of being destroyed, the former passage seems to teach implicitly; because, if God exerted an influence on the hearts of the sons of Eli so as to secure their final destruction, He must from all eternity have decreed this fate for them. Is this, then, what these passages really teach? or is this their apparent, not their real meaning?

With regard to the passage from Proverbs, we may commence by affirming the accuracy of the translation in the A. V. Holden proposes to render it, "Jehovah hath made all things for Himself; yea, even the wicked He daily sustains;" but this is an arbitrary alteration which cannot be tolerated; it sets aside the parallelism, changes the words, and introduces a meaning that has no relation to the context. All the ancient versions and all the modern commentators of note, Rosenmüller, Maurer, Ewald, Bertheau, substantially accord with the A. V. The only alteration that there seems any ground for introducing is the substitution of "itself" for "himself" in the former hemistich, the suffix in *לְמַעַן* having reference to *לָא*, so that the rendering should be, "Everything hath Jehovah made for itself" (*i.e.* for its own proper end): "the wicked also for the day of calamity." Does, then, this passage teach that God has created wicked men for the purpose of punishing them? We think not. We think the only truth that can be fairly educed from the whole passage is that there is a fitness according to the constitution of things in wicked men coming to an evil or calamitous end. God does not make them to be evil; He does not create them to destroy them; but He has so arranged it that by a sure

law he that is wicked shall come to evil. "The writer," says Maurer, "does not mean to say that the bad man is created by God with the design of being destroyed, but what he would indicate is that he who does wickedly shall by the divine decree suffer punishment. And this he expresses subtly by saying that all have been made by God, each for its own proper end, also the wicked, of whom the end is that he shall perish." Still more tersely Rosenmüller gives the sense thus: "God hath made all and each so that they respond to themselves, that to each antecedent its proper consequent responds in that order which the Supreme Arbiter of all has once decreed. . . . Nor is this accordance perceptible only in respect of good things, it holds also in respect of evil, since, according to a most just decree, the immitted evil of punishment follows on the permitted evil of sin." So also Bertheau gives the meaning: "The day of calamity consequently comes surely on the wicked." The ancient versions seem to have had a different reading here, for the Chaldee translates, "the wicked is kept unto the day of evil;" and so also the LXX., *φυλάσσεται δε ὁ ἄσεβης εἰς ἡμέραν κακῆν*. We have here, therefore, nothing more than a poetical utterance of the great moral truth that God administers His government by a system of penalties adapted to transgressions, and of sure incidence on those who transgress.

As respects the passage concerning the sons of Eli, it may be doubted whether it refers to spiritual death at all, there being a strong probability that it is to temporal destruction that the statement refers; it was the decree of God that they should die and leave the succession open to Samuel, and therefore they were so left to themselves as to ensure that fate. Still, it must be admitted that by adopting this view a mere shifting of the difficulty, and no real solution of it, is secured; for it still remains as the apparent doctrine of the passage that the cause of their wickedness and impenitency was found in God's purpose to destroy them. To evade this difficulty some of the Lutheran interpreters propose to render *כי* here, not by "because," but by "wherefore:" "they hearkened not to the voice of their father; wherefore the Lord would slay them." This suggestion, which has been eagerly caught hold of by some writers on the Arminian side, has

been justly repudiated by Maurer as "falsissimum;" there is no evidence that  $\epsilon\upsilon$  ever has the meaning of "wherefore;" its proper meaning is *that, for, or because*, and by this we must abide. The explanation of the passage given by Grotius is as follows: "From those who commit grievous sins, though long and often admonished, God takes away prudential restraint, and before punishment their wickedness becomes open and manifest. This is peremptory induration. It is to this Æschylus refers—

Θεὸς μὲν αἰτίαν φύει βροτοῖς,  
 "Ὅταν κακῶσαι δῶμα παμπύδην εἰλῇ."

With this interpretation of the learned Remonstrant agrees that of the sober Calvinistic Matthew Henry, whose note on the passage is as follows: "They had long hardened their hearts, and now God, in a way of righteous judgment, hardened their hearts and seared their consciences, and withheld from them the grace they had resisted and forfeited. Those," he adds, "that are deaf to the reproofs of wisdom are manifestly marked for ruin." This interpretation seems to exhaust the meaning of the passage. God gave up these young men to their own evil ways. It was His will that they should be left to fill up the cup of their iniquity and to eat of the fruit of their own doings. And being thus left they turned a deaf ear to all their father's admonitions, and recklessly pursued their sinful courses to their own destruction.

I will add here the remarks of a learned German professor on these and analogous statements of Scripture: "All are fully explained on the principle that when moral evil, sin, is carried back to Jehovah, this indicates the conflict of His righteousness with sin and evil, which He overcomes by evil itself, and represents in its inner nothingness. When a man begins with the evil, when his mind apostatizes from God, the consequence is that the evil regularly develops itself inwardly and by outward progress. Where through a man's own fault a beginning is given to the evil, then Jehovah conducts its further course and brings it to its goal. So much these passages teach and no more. When in some of them the discourse is of death, and their corporeal death appears to be an analogue of eternal, in such passages there is not contained the idea of an absolute predestination to evil and destruction,

but they present only the carrying out of that general arrangement of God to its last consequences, that is, to the goal to which the sins chosen by men themselves lead.”<sup>1</sup>

The passages to which I have referred, occurring as they do in historical and poetical compositions, would hardly require to be considered so carefully did they stand alone,—not that these parts of Scripture are less truly and fully inspired than other parts, but because it is incident to the historical and poetical style to be less precise and definite in the use of terms than compositions of a more doctrinal or logical character. But these passages meet with such as are analogous to them in other parts of Scripture, some of the strongest of which are to be found in the doctrinal writings of the Apostle Paul. Hence it seemed proper to advert to them as tending to prepare the way for the consideration of the more weighty and difficult utterances of inspiration to which we have now to advert.

Of these the most important occur in the Epistle to the Romans, especially when the apostle speaks of God’s different feelings towards Jacob and Esau, when he dwells on God’s treatment of Pharaoh, and illustrates His sovereignty in election by a similitude drawn from the power of the potter over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel to honour and another to dishonour. These passages have been triumphantly adduced by Supralapsarians as wholly favouring the doctrine of sovereign reprobation, or an absolute predestination of those who are lost to damnation. It will therefore be necessary to attempt clearly and accurately to ascertain what it is that the apostle here actually teaches.

The statements in question occur in Rom. ix. 10–13, 17–24. The former of these sections has already been discussed in another connection,<sup>2</sup> and the conclusions at which we arrived equally apply to the subject before us. We need not therefore dwell upon it further.

The case of Pharaoh is adduced by the apostle as still further illustrating his point, viz. the perfect sovereignty of God in His dealings with men (Rom. ix. 15–18). There is here obviously an allusion to the statement of Moses, that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh and the position of the

<sup>1</sup> Lutz, *Bibl. Theol.*, pp. 206, 207.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 235.



apostle undoubtedly is that in some sense God not only dooms men to destruction, but brings about that destruction to which they are doomed. It concerns us to inquire in what sense this is done.

Now be it observed that Moses not only says that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, but he says also that Pharaoh hardened his own heart; and it is noticeable that he makes both these statements exactly the same number of times in his narrative. Seven times he says God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and seven times he says Pharaoh hardened his own heart. Now we must accept both statements, and not ignore either, or dissolve the one in the other. We must neither say, Pharaoh was wholly passive under the hardening hand of God, nor say, There was no agency of God in the matter; He merely witnessed and permitted the agency of the Egyptian king in hardening his own heart. When Scripture makes two statements which do not appear immediately reconcilable with each other, the business of the interpreter is not to absorb the one statement in the other according as his preconceived notions may dictate, but to look out for some principle on which they may be harmonized. The neglect of this has been a fruitful source of error and controversy. Besides this general objection affecting both modes of dealing with the statements of Moses, each of them is liable to serious objection taken by itself. With regard to the first,—that God by His sole and direct agency hardened the heart of Pharaoh,—it can be held by no man who is not prepared to regard God as the author of sin. If it is by His direct operation on the hearts of His saints that He produces all the goodness that is in them, He must also have been the author of all the wickedness of Pharaoh if He directly operated on his heart. To such a conclusion no man can suffer himself to be brought; and as the Bible utterly repudiates it, we may rest assured that any interpretation of any of its statements which logically leads to it must be false. As respects the other opinion,—that God hardened Pharaoh's heart merely by suffering him to go on in his rebellious course,—it may at first sight appear more plausible than the former, but on careful examination it will not be found such as a careful reader can adopt. For, in the first place, what is gained by excluding the divine agency in

every sense from such results? The reply will probably be that it is more in harmony with the grace and benevolence of God to suppose that He simply allowed Pharaoh to take his course, than to suppose that He acted in any way so as to confirm him in that course. But is it true that the permitting of evil which might have been prevented is less difficult to account for in the case of a perfectly benevolent being than the acting so as to secure the commission of evil? At any rate, the supposition I am examining has this difficulty to get over. In the second place, this hypothesis will not meet the actual facts of the case. It will not account for the fact that God said to Moses, *before* he went to Egypt, that He would harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let Israel go; nor will it account for the fact that God told Pharaoh himself that for this cause He had raised him up, that He might show in him His power, and that His name might be declared throughout the earth. It is impossible to read such statements without being convinced that not only was Pharaoh's obstinacy foreseen, but that it was in the purpose of God that he should display this obstinacy, and that God dealt with him so as to bring about this result. Further, the supposition that God merely left Pharaoh to himself is not reconcilable with the fact that all the plagues sent upon Egypt were directly produced by divine power. The fact stands out glaringly on the surface of the history, that God subjected Pharaoh to a course of discipline through a direct forthputting of His miraculous power, the effect of which was to render him progressively more obstinate and hardened. It is impossible for any one to stand by the assertion that God occupied merely the place of an onlooker in this matter. The historical fact that His omnipotence was again and again exerted to produce those events which exasperated and indurated the heart of Pharaoh precludes such a position.

We revert, then, to the statements of Moses, that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, and that God hardened his heart. We take both to be true, and the inquiry which, with all modesty, we propose is, In what sense are these statements to be understood? In answering this question I shall do little more than place the real facts of the case before you; they will speak for themselves.

When Moses and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh, and demanded, in the name of Jehovah, that he should let Israel go, he said, "Show a miracle for you," *i.e.* "Prove your commission to be from God by the proper evidence of a divine commission—the working of miracles." This was a reasonable demand, and it was instantly complied with. Aaron's rod was cast down, and it became a serpent. Here, then, was the proof Pharaoh demanded, and in reason he ought to have admitted the claim of Moses and Aaron, and yielded to the voice of God speaking through them. Instead of this, however, he stifled conviction, and cast about for some means of discrediting the miracle which had been performed, and in pursuance of this sent for his magicians,—men who made no pretensions to a divine commission, but avowedly performed tricks by sleight of hand, or through the pretended aid of familiar spirits,—and to them he committed the task of so imitating the miracles of Moses and Aaron as might justify him in treating the miracles of the latter with contempt, as mere pieces of magic or legerdemain. Hence the magicians are said to have *served* Pharaoh with their enchantments. They did not pretend to work miracles; all they did was to try and pour derision on the miracles of Moses, and so aid the king in his preconceived design of resisting, at all hazards, every evidence Moses might afford of being a divine messenger.

Now, from this it is easy to see how Pharaoh hardened himself. He did so by wilfully resisting evidence and stifling conviction. Had he been imposed upon by the magicians so as to be left in honest doubt of the miracles of Moses, or had he been incompetent to see the force of the evidence Moses offered, he might have refused to let the people go, and yet not have come under the guilt of hardening himself against God; but it was his deliberate resistance to clear evidence which constituted his criminality, and by which he effected upon himself that obduracy which resulted in his own destruction.

Let us now ask, What was it that God did so as to promote the same result? Now, here two things are evident as matters of fact. The one is that the miracles which God wrought before Pharaoh exerted a hardening effect upon his

heart; he was, beyond all question, a worse man after witnessing these, and in consequence of witnessing them, than he was before; so that by means of what God did the heart of the Egyptian monarch was hardened. The other fact of which there can be no doubt is that God designed and purposed that the miracles of Moses should have this effect on Pharaoh's mind. Of this we are certain from God's own declaration, first to Moses and afterwards to Pharaoh himself. Now, with these two facts before us, we have only to suppose that God adapted the miracles to produce what they were intended to effect, and which they actually did effect, to complete the whole of what we think is meant by God's having hardened the heart of Pharaoh. For this additional element we cannot adduce the express words of Scripture, but it seems to be so essentially in the reason of the case that I do not see how any one can refuse it. If God did certain things with a view to a certain end, and so as actually to effect that end, it can hardly be maintained by any one that He did not adapt the means to the end.

The view which I have just presented of this much-controverted subject seems to me to commend itself by the circumstance that it does not ask the suppression or emasculation of any statement of Scripture, whilst it preserves unassailed those eternal principles of moral truth which are antecedent to all Scripture, and which Scripture is designed to elucidate and enforce. By means of it we see that there was a real sense in which Pharaoh hardened his own heart, inasmuch as he wilfully set himself up against the most cogent evidence; and that there was a real sense in which God hardened his heart, inasmuch as He instituted a course of procedure which was designed and adapted, not to force or constrain him to be wicked, but to confirm and indurate him in the wicked course which he had wilfully chosen and wilfully persisted in. Throughout the whole the free will, the independent agency, of Pharaoh never was interfered with or overborne. He was, and continued to be throughout, a free and therefore a responsible agent. On him consequently must fall all the blame and guilt of the result; to God belongs the glory of having brought about that result for the immensely important end, in reference to the well-being of a

race, of showing His power, and causing His name to be declared throughout all the earth.

It thus stands out as a great principle, an ultimate fact in the divine administration, that God "will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." *Why* He should choose one for mercy and another for judgment, we cannot say; enough for us to know the fact, and to rest assured that the Infinitely Wise One acts in this as in everything else for the highest reasons and for the worthiest ends. The great difficulty which arises in the mind with regard to the doctrine of sovereign grace has ever been the reconciliation of this doctrine with man's responsibility. Hence the apostle introduces an objector as saying, "Why doth He yet find fault? for who hath resisted His will?" The objector must, in accordance with the preceding context, be supposed to be a Jew, and the drift of his object is this: If, then, it is in fulfilment of the divine appointment that I have rejected Christianity, why am I blamed for it? To this the apostle replies, in the first instance, by refuting the feeling from which it sprung, and thereby showing that from the relation of the creature to the Creator there was no ground for any such feeling, or for the objection to which it gave rise (ver. 20). The feeling was one of pride and irreverence. The party uttering it forgot that it was of his Creator that he thus spoke; he thought of Him merely as his superior, not as the Alone, the Absolute; and he forgot that the matter in hand had to do with God in the sphere of His absolute working, and not in the sphere of His relative connection with men as the subjects of His government. In the latter sphere strict justice would have required that all should perish because all had rebelled; and this being the case, if God, acting on higher grounds than those of mere administrative justice, acting as the Sovereign Creator and not simply as the law-restricted judge, chose one man or people to a career of honour and blessing, and others to a career such as their own wicked hearts would delight in, who should dare to arraign His procedure or say unto Him, What doest Thou? "Shall the thing formed," says Paul, "say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" The idea here plainly is that outward circumstances do not alter moral obligations.

All men are bound to follow the right, and to eschew the wrong; and though God may arrange the circumstances of men so that some are most favourably placed for being virtuous or learning what is true and good, whilst others are not so placed, but, on the contrary, are surrounded by all that tends to confirm them in ignorance and vice, this by no means exempts the latter from that moral reckoning to which man as a moral agent is subject; and, further, though the progressive wickedness of the one or the goodness of the other may have been purposed by God, and so may accomplish His design, this does not alter the moral quality of the actions of either party, or exempt from responsibility where responsibility is due. Whilst, then, it is quite true that the rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews was an event both designed and foretold by God, and whilst He arranged things that they were led to commit their great sin, yet the guilt and folly of it were all their own, and they, acting throughout as free agents, and dealt with by God as a Judge most equitable, had no right to complain that they were condemned for what they knew they had *wilfully* done simply because it was what God purposed they should do. In short, as all that God in His absolute sovereignty purposes is in perfect consistence with what He has bound Himself to do in His relative capacity as a Judge, so no man has any right to reply against Him because he is made amenable to His judgment for offences which have yet furthered the purposes of His sovereignty.

There are some who say that they never can be brought to believe that God should appoint or destine any of His intelligent creatures to destruction. Now, I will fully agree with them that God can never *compel* any man so to act as to secure destruction, either by creating him in such a way as that by the laws of his constitution he cannot but be wicked, or by exerting on his mind an irresistible power, so that he cannot but go on in the way of rebellion and sin. But when not only this is contended for, but when it is also asserted that God cannot, consistently with His own revealed character, ordain any of His intelligent creatures to destruction, I marvel at the boldness which can venture on such a position in the face, not only of such statements as those

of the apostle referred to, but of the fundamental principles of natural theology which the great facts of the universe press upon us. It must be allowed by all that evil exists, that wicked men are actually made worse by the discipline through which God's providence leads them, and that God will actually punish them at the last for their continued rebellion and impenitence. On these points, I say, all must agree; for they are not such as *can* be questioned. Is it any relief to the mind to be asked to believe that all this comes to pass by chance? or that the Moral Governor of the universe rules without a plan, and simply accepts events as they occur? or that He arranges circumstances which exert a certain effect on individuals and lead them to a certain end without having *intended* such an effect or purposed such an end? To my mind these suppositions bring no relief from the difficulties which overhang this subject, rather do they increase them; for they seem to open a path along which a logical necessity would drive men to Atheism. No; if I am to believe in a personal God at all who governs the universe and who is such as the Bible represents, I must hold by the doctrine which I find here — a doctrine which takes the happy mean between Pantheism and Epicureanism, between the doctrine which teaches that all things, the evil as well as the good, are but manifestations of God, and the doctrine which teaches that God dwells aloof from the universe and suffers things to take their course, having no plan to accomplish, no purpose to execute, no result to secure, in connection with events of the universe.

(iii.) From this analysis of these passages let us now turn to collect the sum of their testimony bearing on the question for the sake of which we entered upon the examination of them. This may be stated in the following particulars:—

1. These passages evidently teach nothing incompatible with the doctrine that it is only for sin that God dooms any man to final perdition. Pharaoh was raised up by God and placed in his prominent position that he might give the more striking illustration of the divine power and majesty; but that for which he was condemned was his obduracy in resisting the command of God, and his cruelty to the Israelites. The vessels of wrath are such as are fitted for destruction,

*i.e.* they are persons whose character and conduct are such that there is a congruity between them and the destruction to which by God's just judgment they are doomed. In the case of Esau there is somewhat of difficulty, because there we have the case of one rejected by God before he had done either good or evil. This rejection, however, did not entail upon Esau of necessity any special calamity; it only placed him in a position of inferiority to his younger brother in the matter of the birthright, which did not of itself cut off from him either the hope or the means of salvation and eternal life. If Esau perished at last, it could only be because he persisted in sin and rebellion against God.

2. There is nothing in these passages to show that God operates directly on the minds of any to cause them to be sinful. It is true it is said that "whom He will He hardeneth." But He does this, as the apostle shows in adducing the case of Pharaoh, simply by operations which have a direct bearing on the manifestation of His own perfections and the accomplishment of His benevolent purposes, but which act on the ungodly so as to increase their obduracy and harden them in sin.

3. There seems no authority in these passages for the sublapsarian doctrine that God decrees the ruin eternally of sinners on the ground of their *foreseen* guilt and rebellion. In the case of Esau it is expressly stated that his conduct had nothing to do either prospectively or retrospectively with his rejection; and in the case of Pharaoh the hardening to which he was subjected was itself his doom, and not the foreseen cause of his doom. In the case of the vessels of mercy and the vessels of wrath, it is expressly said that it is simply of God's will that mercy is shown to the one, while the other is exposed to wrath, and not because God foresaw that the one would be good and the other would be evil.

4. There is no ground in these passages for the doctrine of a decree of preterition in reference to the unsaved. Such a decree, indeed, would seem to be superfluous. If men are wicked, and if their sin deserves the penalty of death, it seems wholly needless that God should solemnly bind Himself by a decree not to interpose to prevent their running their course and reaching its proper goal. We can conceive of



God forming a decree to the opposite effect in the case of the saved, viz. that He will interpose to prevent them ruining themselves; and we can conceive of His decreeing to surround men with circumstances directly adapted to further His own cause, but which they use so as to increase their own ungodliness and secure their own destruction. But that God should decree simply to do nothing in any case, seems a supposition unworthy the perfection of the Most High.

5. Upon the principle that God decrees what He does, we must suppose that what He did which had the effect of hardening Pharaoh's heart was the result of a decree; but we must distinguish between a decree to damn a man irrespective of any deeds of his own, and a decree to confirm and harden a man by giving him opportunity of hardening himself. God, though not the author of sin in any case, and though never directly provoking a man to sin, may yet see meet, when a man has chosen for himself a course of transgression and obstinately persists in it, to surround him with circumstances which tend to push him forward in his evil course, and secure his reaching the goal to which his course naturally tends. In many respects this is an awful doctrine; but it is one so clearly recognized in Scripture that we dare not allow any considerations of a general kind to prevent our accepting it. Every time, indeed, that we say, as our Lord has taught us to say, in prayer to God, "Lead us not into temptation," we recognize the fact that God might so surround us with circumstances that we should be thereby tempted to sin, and so hardened in iniquity and ultimately perish; and knowing this we pray to God in whose hand our life is, and whose are all our ways, that He would so arrange for us the circumstances of our condition here that we shall escape this danger.

## CHAPTER V.

## ELECTION.

(II.) THE ELECTION OF BELIEVERS—*continued*.ix. *General Observations.*

Besides the direct scriptural evidence in favour of the views we have enunciated, there are certain considerations of a more general nature, though also based on Scripture, which go to support these views. To these we may now briefly advert.

(i.) It is a datum alike of reason and of Scripture, that God certainly foresees and foreknows all that takes place. As a consequence from this, He foresees and foreknows that certain persons shall be saved by the belief of the truth as it is in Jesus. Now, on what is this foreknowledge founded? Assume that man is perfectly indifferent in the matter, and that the chances are equal that he will accept and that he will refuse the gospel salvation when it is offered to him, in this case it may be admitted that the foreknowledge of God of who should accept and who should reject the gospel, does not presuppose an elective decree on His part, as He would know what causes would determine the contingency in each particular case. But this the Bible will not allow us to assume; for it informs us that such is man's alienation of heart from God that there is no chance whatever that he will accept the salvation offered to him by God; but, on the contrary, the most absolute certainty that he will refuse it. The fact, then, stands thus: God certainly foreknows that the gospel will be accepted by many of the human race, though it is certain that not one of these, if left entirely to himself, would accept it. We are therefore shut up to the conclusion that such foresight rests upon a predetermination to put forth the energy necessary to secure the result; in other words, God foresees that certain individuals of the human race will be saved because He has already chosen these to salvation, and

determined to exert on them saving power. The election of believers, therefore, is postulated by the divine foreknowledge of who shall be saved.

(ii.) Scripture intimates to us that in the covenant of redemption under which our Saviour undertook to make atonement for sin, the Father engaged that He should have a seed to serve Him, that a people should be given to Him, and that He should reap the reward of His obedience and suffering by bringing many sons unto glory. Some may object to the phraseology I have just used in which this is represented as resting on a covenant engagement between the Father and the Son; but as to the thing itself we cannot imagine any person who takes his views of the work of Christ from Scripture to have any doubt. If the Father sent forth His Son to get to Himself a kingdom, if He gave Him up for sinners that they might be saved, if He appointed Him to be the Head of a redeemed body, the High Priest of a ransomed Church, the foundation of a spiritual building composed of living stones resting on Him, the living stone; if, in short, He sent His Son to sustain certain offices and perform certain works on behalf of men,—it cannot be supposed that He would leave it wholly uncertain whether this was to have any result or whether it was to be wholly fruitless. Would it be worthy of God to send His Son on a thriftless errand, or one which, for aught secured to the contrary, might be such? Can we conceive of Him, who doth nothing in vain, constituting His Son a King, and yet securing Him no kingdom? constituting Him a Head, and yet securing to Him no Body? constituting Him an High Priest, and yet securing to Him no people for whom to plead? Or dare we for a moment think of God making the soul of His Son a sacrifice for sin, and yet securing to Him no reward in the success of His work for such unparalleled humiliation? Is it, in short, possible for us to believe that (as Edwards words it) “there was all this arrangement about Christ’s birth, death, resurrection, ascension, and sitting at God’s right hand when it was not as yet determined whether He should ever save one soul, or have any mediatorial kingdom at all?” These questions, one would think, must be answered in the negative by every devout reader of Scripture. Whether, therefore, we choose

to speak of a covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son or not, this much we may assert as plainly involved in all that Scripture teaches relative to the mission of the Son by the Father,—that when the latter laid upon the former the work of human redemption, it was not left an uncertain thing whether that work should answer its purpose or not. But if the Father engaged to the Son that He should receive a reward in the success of His work for His voluntary submission in undertaking that work, and if in the very act of appointing Him to an official relation to sinners of the human race He also secured to Him that that relation should be a reality and not a nonentity, it follows that He must have purposed to put forth the power by which that was to be secured. For, apart from such a purpose, all is uncertainty, and the Saviour might have come and suffered and returned to heaven, and not a single soul been redeemed as the result of His work. If this be a conclusion from which the pious mind shrinks, it will be for those who reject the doctrine of a personal sovereign election to show how they can reconcile their piety with the principles they avow.

(iii.) The turning-point of this whole question as between Arminians and Augustinians or Calvinists is found in the question, Does the actual salvation of any sinner of the human race originate with himself, or does it originate with God? In other words, does the individual by a purely intellectual process, or by a process of volition wholly self-caused, embrace the salvation offered in the gospel, or is his decision to do so, and the act to which that leads, the result of an influence exerted on him by God? That the whole question of predestination to life turns on the answer to be given to this question must be sufficiently obvious; for, suppose we answer it by affirming the latter of these hypotheses, it follows that as it is by a direct act of God on the soul that the salvation of the individual is secured, and as whatever God does He has from all eternity decreed to do, He must have so decreed to exert upon that individual the energy which has resulted in his actual salvation; in other words, the salvation of that individual must have been the object of an eternal decree, that is, the individual must have been predestinated to life. On the other hand, should we arrive at

the conclusion that in the actual salvation of the sinner God has no part, this being entirely the result of a self-caused volition on the part of the sinner, it will follow that no such thing as a decree predestinating that individual to eternal life can have existed. We are thus led to a further step in our inquiry and to a new position in theology—that, namely, which respects the divine agency in the actual salvation of the sinner.

The intimate and important bearing of this question on the controversy between Arminians and Calvinists may be shown in another way. As we have already seen, Whately considers election to consist in the selecting of communities, to the members of which the offer of salvation, including the aids of the Holy Ghost, is made; and with regard to individuals he would say that their actual salvation depends on their rightly using these means, including their availing themselves of the offered aids of the Holy Ghost. Both parties, then, are agreed as to the aids of the Holy Ghost being requisite to salvation; but whilst the one party say that it lies simply and solely with each individual whether he will avail himself of these aids or not, the other party maintain that the Holy Spirit is given to certain individuals to operate in them a saving change, and that out of this arises their first inclination to listen to the gospel call, and avail themselves of offered privileges. It is obvious that, as between these two parties, the whole controversy turns on the point whether man originates his own acceptance of the aids of the Spirit for salvation, or the Spirit originates in man the inclination to be saved. And according as we decide this point shall we incline to such an election as we have showed to be taught by the apostles, or to such an election as Whately and his party contend for.

To this point, then, we have now to turn our attention; and here, as in regard to the more general question we have already considered, we shall follow the path of simple Biblical investigation. Before, however, adducing the passages of Scripture which bear upon the *work* of the Holy Spirit, it will be necessary that we should adduce the testimony of Scripture concerning the *Person* of the Holy Spirit. In the meantime I shall submit to you a few observations of a

general kind regarding the doctrine we have been considering—the doctrine, viz., of predestination to life.

x. *The Practical Uses of the Doctrine.*

(i.) We must beware of so conceiving this doctrine as to confound it with fatalism. The opponents of Calvinistic opinions are fond of affixing this stigma upon them, as if their views of the divine predestination of believers led to or were identical with this unsound and dangerous system. But though Calvinists may sometimes by using incautious expressions have given some ground for such a reproach, the two doctrines are in reality very distinct. In fatalism God is regarded as the mere instrument of an irresistible and all-embracing necessity; in predestination He is regarded as an absolutely free agent, loving whom He wills, and forming His decrees on reasons of the highest and holiest kind. In fatalism man is regarded as a mere machine, in whom and over whom a rigid unreasoning destiny reigns; in predestination man is regarded as a free agent, every step in the process of whose salvation is taken with his own full consent and in accordance with the laws of his nature. In fatalism each event is viewed as isolated, and as coming to pass simply because the inexorable destiny has brought it about; in predestination each event is regarded as a link in a chain, so that results are connected with instrumentality, effects with causes, ends with means. These differences between the two systems are great and momentous, and not less weighty are the differences between them in respect of practical tendency; for, whilst the former leads a man to lie down in sullen inactivity to await what fate may bring, or makes his working a going against his principles, the latter affords a constant encouragement and stimulus to put forth all his energies to secure worthy and virtuous results. To use means for an end is, on fatalistic principles, a practical absurdity; on the principle of predestination it is a high exercise of wisdom; for on the former hypothesis the end will come whether we use the means or not, on the latter the use of the means is indispensable to the securing of the end. Hence we find in the matter of religion that whilst fatalistic views lead to the

melancholy and oftentimes revolting conclusions of Antinomianism, the doctrines of predestinarianism are usually associated with the zeal, watchfulness, and activity of a vital and sanctifying Christianity. It is a remarkable fact, that of all the nations which have embraced Christianity those in which the doctrines of Calvin have prevailed have been most distinguished for the assiduity with which the people attend upon the means of grace. Nor is this otherwise than what might be expected. If the doctrine taught be that God's predestination of a man to salvation is through the use of means; if it be taught that God's part in this work in no way interferes with man's moral or intellectual freedom, but moves in a sphere which leaves intact and unfettered all man's spiritual energies; if it be clearly laid down that though God may have predestinated a man to eternal life it is only as that man has repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that this life shall be attained, only as he understands and obeys the gospel that he shall obtain the salvation the gospel bestows, only as he adds to his faith all moral virtues and spiritual excellences that he makes his calling and election sure, and only as he follows after holiness that he shall see the Lord,—it is obvious that the only rational conclusion to which any one who receives such a doctrine can come is that it behoves him, if he would be saved, to give all diligence to pursue the course which is thus marked out for him. Teach a man that he shall be saved if elected, whether he use the means or not, or that he shall perish if non-elect however diligently he may use the means, and you at once paralyze his energies, and make him a mere passive instrument in the hands of destiny. But so to teach is to teach another doctrine than that taught by the sacred writers—a doctrine borrowed from the gloomy speculations of heathenism, and which bears no affinity to the luminous and gladdening revelations of Scripture. Let it be our endeavour, therefore, ever to represent to ourselves and to others this Scripture doctrine of predestination unto life in its true scriptural aspect, that it may not only receive no prejudice from our misrepresentation of it, but may come forth in that form in which it is best fitted to exert a beneficial influence on the spiritual interests of ourselves and others.

(ii.) This brings me to a second observation which I would offer on this subject, viz. that it is principally, if not always, in its practical bearings that the apostles bring forward this doctrine in their writings. They do not adduce it as if it had an importance merely *per se*, as a doctrinal position, or as part of a theological system; they bring it forward and dwell upon it as a principle of spiritual vitality, as a motive to spiritual activity, or as a source of spiritual joy and comfort. And this may suggest to us the proper place which this should occupy in our public teaching, and the connection in which it should be introduced. We should refer to it not as a mere piece of speculative theology, but as a great revealed fact having life in it, and potent for good to the soul that believes.

There are those who would have this subject banished from the instruction of the pulpit altogether. They think it calculated to encourage men in indifference or to puff them up with spiritual pride; and they would have the public teacher of Christianity avoid these dangers by practically ignoring those parts of revealed truth which relate to the election of the saints, and to omit all reference to them from his public ministrations. This is by no means a novel feeling; we find it existing in the Church as early as the time of Augustine, as early, that is, as these subjects began to assume a prominent place in the minds of the Christians, and to be discussed under a dogmatical form. "At Marseilles and in other parts of Gaul," writes Hilary of Arles to Augustine, "these are the things that are ventilated, viz. that in preaching it is novel and useless to affirm that some are elected according to purpose, so that they can neither seize nor retain that unless the will to believe be given to them; they think that all vigour of preaching is excluded if nothing be said to have remained in man which may be excited by it." A similar testimony is given by Prosper, a disciple of Augustine, in a letter to him. Now it must be admitted that there is some force in this; for if men are told in one and the same breath that they must believe to be saved, and then that they can be saved only if they are predestinated to be saved, it is obvious that the only effect will be to confuse and perplex the mind of the hearer, and to neutralize whatever effect the proclama-



tion of the gospel may be adapted to produce on him. But whilst there is thus force in the objection, it is force solely as directed against an undue and unsuitable adhibition of the doctrine of election; it has no force as against the teaching of that doctrine in its proper place and in connection with the uses for which it is revealed to us in Scripture. It supplies an emphatic admonition to the public teacher of Christianity to see to it that he rightly divides the word of truth so as to give to saint and sinner each his appropriate portion; it can never be admitted as authorizing or justifying a misprision or keeping back of any part of the revealed counsel of God, the *whole* of which the public teacher of Christianity is bound to declare.

Were the pulpit designed exclusively for the preaching of the gospel to sinners, we might with propriety say that from it the doctrine of election should be excluded, and that upon the principle enunciated by our Lord in reference to this very matter, that we are not to give that which is holy to dogs, nor to cast our pearls before swine. These doctrines belong to the holy; they can be understood and appreciated only by such; and therefore to such alone should they be spoken: the rest can only abuse them, and perhaps injure themselves thereby. But it is not for the proclamation of the gospel to sinners alone that the pulpit has been instituted; nor, we may say, is it for this principally that the Christian ministry to whom the pulpit belongs has been appointed. The first duty of the pastor is to the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer; for their comfort, strength, progress, and final triumph he has chiefly to care; and woe unto him if, for the sake of winning those who are without, he keep back or present imperfectly any of those truths which God has revealed especially for their behoof! Of these truths this doctrine of election is one, and to bring it forward in its scriptural simplicity, and for the practical ends which it is adapted to promote, is a very necessary and very profitable part of a pastor's duty.

What these practical ends are I may simply mention.

1. This doctrine should be set forth as a motive to gratitude, the election of any sinner of the human race to spiritual blessings being wholly of grace.
2. As enforcing humility,

seeing not for any worthiness of ours, but solely through sovereignty have we been put in possession of the blessings of redemption. 3. As a strong inducement to piety and practical godliness, seeing it is to these we are elected, seeing it is these God wills us to attain, and seeing it is by these we are to make our calling and election sure; for, as Turretine remarks, "Predestination is not to be viewed *a priori*, but rather *a posteriori*, not so as that we should descend from causes to effects, but that we should ascend from effects to causes; not that we should curiously turn over the book of life to see if our names are inscribed there (a thing not permitted to us), but that we should carefully examine the book of conscience, a thing not only permitted but enjoined, that we may see if we have the seal of God stamped on our hearts, and the fruits of election, to wit, faith and repentance, are to be detected in us; for this is the safest way to the salutary knowledge of this doctrine." 4. As a support under temptation, a consolation under affliction, an anchor of the soul amid the buffetings of that stormy sea over which we have to pass to reach the haven of eternal rest; for, if God be for us, if He have chosen us for Himself to be heirs of salvation, then who can be effectually against us, or what shall separate us from His love?

These are some of the uses to which this doctrine may be applied, and they are such that no pastor who desires the prosperity of his flock, or who would build up the people of his charge in faith and holiness, will lightly neglect to inculcate a doctrine of such fruitful efficacy.

In conclusion, I would observe that in presenting this doctrine to men it is of importance that we should make them clearly understand that what we mean by predestination is that what God does or purposes to be done He has *always* intended and purposed to do, or to permit, or to cause to be done; in other words, that God's acts, whether of performance, or permission, or arrangement, are not the result of caprice or sudden thought or occasioned resolution from something that has come to pass, but are the result of deliberate purpose, according to His good pleasure and for reasons known only to Himself—a purpose which in the case of an eternal and unchangeable Being must of necessity have been from all

eternity. Strictly speaking, there is no decree or ordination, no law or enactment, rendering it a matter of physical necessity that any man should by receiving the gospel be saved, or that any man by refusing it should perish ; there is nothing but a wise sovereign purpose on the part of God to show forth His perfections in the salvation of some, while His wrath against sin and His power are showed forth in the destruction of the disobedient and impenitent.

When the doctrine is thus presented it seems impossible for any serious objection to it to arise in the minds of any who really believe that God's agency operates in the matter of man's salvation. If God does anything directly to effect the salvation of an individual, He must have purposed to do it ; and with Him this purpose must be sovereign and eternal. And in this, while mercy is showed to the individual, there is no injustice to others. Where all are righteously condemned because of transgression, it is surely no violation of justice if some are, for reasons sufficient to the great Lord of all, delivered from this and put in possession of eternal life, while others are left to endure the penalty they have incurred by sin. If any are disposed to take this ground they must be prepared to go farther and impeach the equity of God, because in His providential dealings with men He distributes favours according to His own good pleasure, setting up one and putting down another, and showing favour to one while others are left destitute of such advantage. The fact that the greatest inequalities exist amongst men is one which cannot be set aside ; it stares us in the face whenever we look on the world of men around us. If, then, this fact is compatible with the divine justice and equity, with what reason can it be maintained that there is unrighteousness with God if He distributes the blessings of salvation as a sovereign according to His own good pleasure ? God is surely as free to show mercy to one and not to another as He is to send health and prosperity and religious advantages to one and not to all. In this respect the doctrine of election stands on exactly the same footing as the doctrine of providence. "It only assumes that God acts in the dispensation of His grace precisely as He acts in the distribution of His other favours ; and all systems which are founded on

the principle that this sovereignty of God is inconsistent with His justice and His parental relation to the children of men, are in obvious conflict with the facts of His providence."<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER VI.

### SOTERIOLOGY.

#### SECOND DIVISION.—THE DIVINE PURPOSE IN ITS FULFILMENT.

##### I. THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Of the things which God does *for* His people, and which are manifestations of His special benevolence towards them, we have already considered at some length His gracious purpose to save them from sin and misery—a purpose wholly sovereign, and which had from eternity its place in the divine mind. Now this purpose was really a purpose to exert on them an influence which should lead them to avail themselves of the means provided by the general benevolence of God for the salvation of sinners of the human race; for, as God's purposes and decrees have always a reference to God's own actings, we cannot suppose that His decree to save any one came short of a purpose to put forth a divine energy on that one by which he should be saved. We are thus brought to the subject of divine influence in the salvation of sinners—a subject with which that of predestination is inseparably connected, so that the two stand or fall together.

It is agreed on all hands, that whatever God does in reference to the salvation of individuals is ascribed in Scripture to the agency of the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of God. We shall therefore properly enter upon our present subject by an inquiry into the testimony of Scripture concerning the Spirit.

<sup>1</sup> Hodge, *Theology*, ii. 339.

i. *Names given to the Holy Spirit.*

(i.) Let us commence by considering the meaning of the *names* by which this object is designated in Scripture. And here we have, in the first instance, to inquire into the force of the term *Spirit* as used in the Bible.

This term occurs very frequently both in the O. T. and N. T., and it has several varieties of meaning, all of which, however, may be traced back to one fundamental idea. "Spirit," from the verb "spiro," denotes primarily "breath," "air in motion," and from that "wind," and "the breath of animals;" and the same is true of the Greek πνευμα (from πνεω), and the Hebrew רוּחַ. We find both words used in these acceptations in Scripture. Thus in Job i. 19 we read, "and a great wind" (רוּחַ גְּדוֹלָה); and in John iii. 8 our Lord says, "the wind bloweth where it listeth," etc. (πνευμα); in both of which passages the word denotes the air of the atmosphere in motion, and so it means in many other passages; comp. e.g. Gen. viii. 1; Ex. xv. 10; Ps. i. 4, etc. In Ezek. xxxvii. 5, God says, "Behold, I will cause *breath* to enter you, and ye shall live;" Ps. civ. 29, "Thou takest away their *breath*, they die;" Job ix. 18, "He will not suffer me to take my *breath*," where the word used is רוּחַ, and in many instances besides. So in the N. T. we read in Rev. xiii. 15, "And He had power to give *breath* to the image of the beast," where πνευμα is used; and in Jas. ii. 26, where we read "the body without *breath* is dead," the same word is used, though in the A. V. it is translated "spirit." From denoting "breath" these words came by a very natural transition to signify "life," animal life (just as we have *anima* from ανεμος); for as there is a close connection between breathing and living, and as it seems as if with the last breath the life expires, so the term denoting the former came naturally to be used to denote the latter; see Gen. xlv. 27; Judg. xv. 19, etc. Another step brought it to denote the principle or source of life, the soul, and from that to designate the rational part of man, whether as the seat of affections, or of cognitions, or of purposes. In this last sense it frequently occurs in Scripture, "His spirit was troubled," Gen. xli. 8; "He that hath no rule over his own spirit,"

Prov. xxv. 28 ; “ My spirit made diligent search,” Ps. lxxvii. 6 ; “ The Lord . . . formeth the spirit of man within him,” Zech. xii. 1 ; “ filled with the spirit of wisdom,” etc., Ex. xxviii. 3 ; “ The spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak,” Matt. xxvi. 41 ; “ whom I serve in my spirit,” Rom. i. 9 ; and many other instances. From denoting the inner, the immaterial principle in man, it came to denote generally any immaterial object ; hence it is used to denote a ghost (which we remark in passing is just the Saxon word for spirit), as in Job iv. 15, 16, where Eliphaz says, “ A spirit passed before my face,” etc. ; and in Luke xxiv. 37, where it is recorded that the disciples, when Jesus, after His burial, suddenly stood in the midst of them, “ were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.” On the same ground it is applied to angels whether good or bad ; thus Heb. i. 7 (in a quotation from Ps. civ. 4), “ Who maketh His angels spirits,” etc. ; and ver. 14, “ Are they not all ministering spirits ? ” etc. ; and we read of “ unclean spirits,” “ spirits of wickedness,” etc. In the same sense God is said to be a Spirit ; He is not a material essence ; He cannot be subjected to any of the conditions of materialism, or discerned by material organs. It may be partly on this ground that the Holy Spirit receives this designation — the object so designated is not material or sensible. But there is another and perhaps more essential idea involved in this appellation. As the soul or inner nature of man is an active, energetic principle, so the term spirit is sometimes used in the sense of impulsive power, animating force, or vivifying energy. As Samson drank of the waters that sprang out in Lehi, “ his spirit came again (*i.e.* the life-power within him was restored), and he revived ” (Judg. xv. 19). When Isaiah (xxx. 3) says of the horses of the Egyptians that they are “ flesh and not spirit,” the idea is that though Israel foolishly trusted in them they were not trustworthy, being destitute of vigour and power. And in many passages the phrase “ spirit of God ” is used where the most prominent idea, if not the only idea, intended by the expression is that of the divine power and energy ; as, *e.g.*, “ By His Spirit he adorned the heavens ”

<sup>1</sup> There is a difficulty in construing this verse. The words of the original are בְּרוּחוֹ יְסֻמֵּם יִסְבֹּר, which cannot be translated as in our version, because if

(Job xxvi. 13); "all the host of them (the heavens) were made by the spirit of His mouth" (Ps. xxxiii. 6); "the Lord shall consume [the wicked] with the spirit of His mouth," etc. (2 Thess. ii. 8). From this usage in connection with that previously mentioned, in which spirit conveys the idea of an invisible immaterial essence, the term came, I apprehend, to be appropriated to the Holy Spirit, the invisible but mighty agent in man's redemption.

(ii.) From the simple term "spirit" let us now pass on to consider some of those adjuncts by which this term is more clearly defined or more fully described in Scripture. These are found in such phrases as "Spirit of God" or the Lord, "Spirit of Christ," "Holy Spirit," "Spirit of holiness."

1. The phrase "spirit of God" sometimes occurs where there is no reference whatever, or no direct reference, to the Holy Spirit. Thus we read, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; for the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it," where the reference is plainly to a scorching wind (comp. also Hos. xiii. 15). Again, when Job says, "The spirit of God is in my nostrils" (xxvii. 3), he plainly means the breath of life communicated to us by God; and in this sense the phrase repeatedly occurs; and it is probably with reference to this that God is called the "God of the spirits of all flesh," *i.e.* the Giver and Sustainer of life wherever it exists. The phrase is also applied to denote unusual mental endowments, such being regarded as gifts from God; as when Bezaleel is said to have been "filled with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and understanding, and all service, and workmanship" (Ex. xxxi. 3); or when great feats of arms or wise and able movements in politics are ascribed to men because on them the spirit of the Lord was; in such instances the phrase does not seem to convey more than that the parties in question were endowed with singular natural powers by God. In another class of passages this phrase is used to denote the divine power, or an

וְיִשְׁכַּח be taken as a verb it must be the 3rd pers. sing. fem. of the pret. in Piel

וְיִשְׁכַּח, to make globular, and cannot therefore have *he* for its subject. Some follow Ibn Ezra in regarding the וְיִשְׁכַּח in בְּרוּחוֹ as redundant, and so make רוּחַ the nom. to the verb, translating, "His Spirit garnished the heavens." But this is of doubtful legitimacy. Perhaps the best way is to take שִׁפְרוֹ as a noun = beauty, and translate, "By His Spirit are the heavens beauty."

exercise of that power, as when the spirit of God is said to be "*poured*" upon men, or men are said "to be filled" with the spirit, or to "receive" the spirit of God,—phrases which can have no other meaning than that the parties of whom they are used have become the objects of some great and special divine influence. Besides these passages, however, there are others, both in the O. T. and the New, in which the phrase is used in such a way as to suggest that it is a personal existence, a divine agent to which it is applied. Thus we read at the beginning of the Bible that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. i. 2), and a little farther on God is introduced as saying, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. vi. 3). So also we read, "The Spirit of the Lord hath spoken by me, and His word was in my tongue" (2 Sam. xxiii. 2); "whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?" (Ps. cxxxix. 7). "And now the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me," or, as it ought probably to be translated, "And now the Lord God hath sent me and His Spirit" (Isa. xlviii. 16); "But they rebelled and vexed His Holy Spirit" (Isa. lxiii. 10); "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (1 Cor. iii. 16); and many others of like sort. In these passages the language is such as to suggest the probability that it is of a personal existence in some sense that the phrase, "Spirit of God," or of the Lord, is used. It is possible, indeed, to explain them without adopting this hypothesis; and therefore we at present only draw from them an inference as to the probability of it. But that probability we cannot help believing to be strong, from the peculiar form of phraseology employed in these passages. That which moves over a material surface, which strives with men, that speaks, that sends or is sent, that may be vexed, and that dwells in men, presents itself to the mind naturally as a real agent or personal entity. Such language *may* be only highly figurative, and may consequently only describe a power, influence, or tendency; but the first and most natural presumption is that the object to which it is applied is a person.

2. The phrase "spirit of Christ" occurs twice in the N. T.: Rom. viii. 9, "Now, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His;" Phil. i. 19, "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayer and the supply [or



aid] of the spirit of Jesus Christ.”<sup>1</sup> In Gal. iv. 6 we have the synonymous expression, “The spirit of His (*i.e.* God’s) Son;” and in Acts xvi. 7, according to the reading of the best MSS., we have the phrase, “the spirit of Jesus.”<sup>1</sup> In these phrases the genitive may be taken as either the genitive of possession or the genitive of cause; so that the phrase “spirit of Christ” may denote either the spirit which was in Christ, or the spirit which Christ bestows. So far as these expressions themselves, therefore, are concerned, they determine nothing certainly as to our present object; because whether we take the genitives possessively or causally, the phrase may be held merely to describe a certain state of mind—in the one case of Christ’s mind, in the other of His people’s mind as influenced by Him. When, however, we look at these phrases in their connection with the context in which they stand, we shall see occasion to attach to them a somewhat different meaning, excepting in the case of Gal. iv. 6, where the statement, “God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father,” cannot well be understood, especially when compared with Rom. viii. 14–16, otherwise than with reference to the communication to believers of the same spirit that was given to Christ. With this exception, however, the statement just made will be found to hold good. Thus in Rom. viii. 9 the words above quoted follow immediately on the statement, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.” In these words there can be no doubt that by the Spirit of God we are to understand the Spirit that God sends or bestows; and when, immediately after this, Paul adds, “Now, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His,” the presumption is that he means the Spirit which Christ sends, and by which His people are made to walk, even as He also walked, not in the flesh, but in the Spirit,—the more especially since we are elsewhere informed that the Spirit that comes to believers proceedeth from, or is sent by, the Son as well as the Father; and since Paul immediately adds, “but if Christ be in you,” etc., an expression which shows that he

<sup>1</sup> Οὐκ ἔσacen αὐτοὺς το πνεῦμα Ἰησοῦ. The Text. Recep. has simply πνεῦμα, but Ἰησοῦ is added in codices A, B, C, D, E, etc., and in several of the ancient versions, including the Vulg. and the Syr.

regarded the having of Christ's Spirit as equivalent to Christ Himself dwelling in us. The Spirit of Christ, therefore, is a Spirit which is distinct from our own spirit, for it is sent to us, and dwelleth in us; distinct also from the spirit or mind which was in Christ, for it is capable of being in us, and whose dwelling in us is equivalent to Christ's being in us. All these considerations suggest the idea of some *personal* existence as here referred to; at any rate, it must be admitted that they fall in with that hypothesis better than any other.

In Phil. i. 19 the phrase "Spirit of Jesus Christ" occurs in connection with an utterance on the part of the apostle of confident expectation that certain circumstances to which he refers would turn to his salvation through the aid of the Spirit of Christ. But that which aids a man must be distinct from the man himself; and the Spirit of Christ sent to aid a man cannot mean the mind or spirit that belongs to Christ Himself. Such phraseology, it is obvious, agrees better with the supposition of a personal agent than any other.

In the passage from the Acts (xvi. 7) this supposition is almost forced upon us from the language in connection with which the phrase in question occurs. "After they were come to Mysia they essayed to go to Bithynia; but the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." This language is plainly such as would be naturally employed in speaking of a personal agent; it must strike one at once that not without the utmost violence can the phrase "Spirit of Jesus" here be made to mean either the mind of Christ or the mind which Christ put into His disciples. The language clearly directs us to conceive of some intelligent agent distinct from the parties referred to, and by whom a purposed influence was exerted on them.

3. We come now to consider the appellation most commonly given to the object of our investigation—the Holy Spirit, *רוח קדש*, *πνευμα αγιον*. This phrase occurs frequently, especially in the N. T., and may be regarded as the proper and special designation of the object to which it is applied. We may expect, therefore, to find from the usage of it the most decisive evidence of the true nature of that object.

Now, discounting one or two instances in which the phrase seems to describe the renewed nature in believers, and one or

two which are of doubtful import, it will be found that this phrase is invariably employed so as to bear a sense applicable only to a personal agent. The instances are too numerous to be examined in detail. I shall therefore confine myself to a few of the more striking.

When our Lord was about to leave His disciples, He, in order to cheer and encourage them, promised to send to them the Holy Spirit, whom He describes as another *παράκλητος*, advocate, helper, or comforter (in the ancient sense of that term as = one who stands beside a man and puts strength in him), and of whom He says that when He "is come He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come" (John xvi. 13). Now, how are we to interpret such language on any other supposition than that it is of a personal agent that it is uttered? Suppose that we understand by the phrase "spirit of truth" here merely a divine influence experienced within the mind of the disciples, with what propriety could this be called *another παράκλητος*, as distinguished from Jesus Christ, a concrete person? or how could this be said to act as a "guide," to "speak," to "hear," and to "show"? and what possible meaning can we attach to our Lord's assertion that this subjective influence was not to speak of Himself, but according as He should hear from others? Such language surely necessitates the conclusion that the object of whom it is used is a personal agent. And in connection with this it is worthy of notice how our Lord uses, in reference to this object, the masculine personal pronouns *εκεινος* and *αυτος*, and the relative *ος*, throughout this context. Such a usage is grammatically incorrect, and can be accounted for only on the principle of a *constructio ad sensum*. But this presumes that the object denoted by *πνευμα* is a person, for only on that presumption will the principle of a *constructio ad sensum* apply. Putting this beside the general tenor of our Lord's statements in this context, we can hardly doubt that when He spoke of the Holy Ghost, He had in His own mind, and meant to convey to the minds of His disciples, the concept of a personal agent.

In Acts xiii. 2 we read, "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Separate me Barnabas and

Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.'” Here the Holy Spirit appears as selecting and calling men to a particular work, and as commanding the Church to set these men apart as His instruments for that work. What is this Holy Spirit of which such things are said? If it be replied, A divine influence, we ask, In whom? or where? In Barnabas and Saul? But how could an influence within them speak to and command the Church? or how could men be set apart for something that was within themselves? It must be obvious that the simplest and most natural explanation of language like this is furnished by the hypothesis that the Holy Spirit here mentioned is a personal agent, and not a mere influence.

In Acts xv. 28 the exercise of judgment is ascribed to the Holy Spirit: “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us,” etc. Does the Holy Spirit here mean a divine influence? If so, will any one tell us what is meant by a particular course appearing good, *i.e.* commending itself to the judgment of a divine influence? Is not this, as Dr. Wardlaw observes, simply “nonsense”? Shall we then say that by the Holy Ghost here we are to understand a subjective state of the apostle’s mind? If so, what, we ask, is the distinction between the Holy Spirit and the “us” to whom as well as to the Holy Spirit the course in question seemed good? Suppose we substitute for the words “the Holy Spirit” what, according to this interpretation, is their equivalent, and read the passage thus: “It seemed good to a subjective state of our minds and to us,” etc., do we not again produce nonsense? How much better at once to follow what common sense dictates, and where an act of judgment is ascribed to an object understand by that object a personal existence to which alone acts of judgment are appropriate — especially when this object is represented as uniting in this act with others who are undoubtedly persons!

In 1 Cor. xii. 11 the Holy Spirit is represented as possessing and exercising *will*: “But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as *He will*” Here we have the Spirit selecting individuals, and conferring upon them miraculous gifts according to His own sovereign will. Can there be a more distinct and undeniable

ascription of personality than this ? In what does personality consist, if not in the possession and exercise of will ? And if it was in virtue of an act of will on the part of the Holy Spirit that each received the miraculous gift he had to exercise, are we not shut up to the conclusion that the subject in which that will operated is a personal agent ?

The same conclusion is pressed upon us by those passages which represent the Holy Spirit as capable of being acted on by men. Such are those passages that speak of the Spirit as being "grieved," being "resisted," being "lied" to, being "tempted," being "blasphemed," and the like. In what special meaning these terms are to be taken it does not fall within our province at present to inquire ; it is enough that, mean what they may as respects the *nature* of the effect produced, the mere use of such phraseology in reference to the Holy Spirit is of itself sufficient to show that by this phrase we are to understand a personal agent and not a mere influence. How can one grieve, or blaspheme, or tempt an influence ? and though it is possible, certainly, to resist an influence, yet when we read the entire passage in which this expression occurs as applied to the Holy Ghost, we shall see that it is not to any opposition to an internal impulse of the source of which the parties themselves are unconscious, but to the conscious resistance to some command, expressive of the will and authority of another, that the statement relates. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost : as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts vii. 51). These words were spoken by Stephen to the Sanhedrin when he stood before them and made his defence. Now to what was it that he referred in making this charge against them ? Was it to certain states of their own mind ? or to certain mysterious influences exerted on them ? Was it not rather to the outward message which had been brought to them by our Lord and His disciples, which they had cast away from them and resisted ?—just as their fathers had resisted the messages sent to them by the prophets, as Stephen goes on in the following verses more fully to assert. To resist the Holy Ghost, then, is to treat as false such an objective announcement of truth as Christ, His apostles, and the prophets brought. But how can this be unless of that

announcement the Holy Spirit be the author? Here, then, the Holy Spirit appears as a witness and a teacher who is resisted when His message is set at nought. Is not this most distinctly to ascribe to Him the attributes and qualities of a person?

The comparison of these different statements of Scripture must be sufficient to satisfy us that by the sacred writers the Holy Spirit of whom they speak was by them regarded as a person. There is no criterion of personality which they have not enabled us to apply so as to satisfy ourselves on this point. If intelligence, will, activity, and receptivity be marks of a personal existence, then are all of these so frequently ascribed to the Holy Spirit that we must either regard the sacred writers as singularly incorrect in their use of language, or believe that they themselves regarded and meant their readers to regard the Holy Spirit as a Person. We have, in fact, just the same kind of evidence for the Personality of the Spirit that we have for that of the Divine Being; and so far as the statements of Scripture are concerned, we have that evidence equally explicit for the one as for the other.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

#### ii. *The Deity of the Holy Spirit.*

Besides proving His Personality, however, some of the passages we have been considering suggest something still higher and more peculiar respecting the Holy Spirit. The very expressions Spirit of God and Holy Spirit carry in them something divine; and if such expressions describe a personal agent, and not a mere power or influence of which God is the cause or source, we can hardly hesitate to call that Person divine. When, moreover, we find this Spirit of God associated with Jehovah the supreme God in counsel and working; when we find this agent exercising His

authority in sending forth prophets and apostles, fitting them for their work, and commanding them what they are to do; when we find ascribed to Him the office of *παρακλητος* or helper of the disciples of Christ, who should supply to them all that His personal presence had supplied; when we find the exercise of a sovereign will ascribed to Him in the dispensation of miraculous gifts; and when we find an offence against Him treated as a sin of the deepest dye,—we are constrained to feel that the Being of whom such things may be said is in nature and dignity far beyond the sphere of creature existence. We are thus led to inquire whether Scripture supplies us with any further and more precise information on this point.

The answer to this inquiry is, that the sacred writers clearly teach that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, and that by the same kind of evidence by which they assure us of the true and proper Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The evidence for the latter is indeed more copious than the evidence for the former, but it is exactly of the same kind, and therefore not less convincing.

A brief survey of this evidence may be now given.

(i.) Though the Holy Spirit is nowhere expressly called *God* in Scripture, and though none of the peculiar *names* of God are applied to Him, yet in repeated instances the phrase Holy Spirit and Spirit of God is used interchangeably with the term God, and the things which are imputed to the one are imputed also to the other. Take, for example, the language of Peter to Ananias (Acts v. 3, 4); it is evident that to lie to God and to lie to the Holy Ghost are one and the same thing; a position which is tenable only on the supposition that the Holy Spirit is God. In this respect it is of no moment whether we understand the Holy Spirit here as the Spirit of inspiration dwelling in the apostles, or the Spirit dwelling in the Church as the source of purity and illumination. In either case the lie of Ananias was an attempt to deceive the Spirit of God, and this Peter identifies with an attempt to deceive God. These two propositions are capable of being harmonized only on the supposition that the Spirit as a person to whom a lie can be uttered is a Divine Person, is God.

We find a similar collocation in 1 Cor. iii. 16, where St. Paul says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" a statement which he repeats (vi. 19) in the form: "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" and again in 2 Cor. vi. 16 he calls believers the "temple of God," who has promised to "dwell in them and be their God." From these statements it is plain that to be a temple of the Spirit and to be a temple of God are one and the same thing; that for the Spirit to dwell in a man or in a Church is the same thing as for God to dwell there; and that it is by God's Spirit making the bodies of believers His temple that God becomes to them in actual manifestation and realized blessedness their God. As these passages cannot be interpreted of a mere effect produced on men's minds by divine power, but relate to the indwelling in man of a personal agency denominated the Holy Ghost, it is obvious that the being so named is identified with God, and therefore must be viewed as a Divine Agent. Whilst, therefore, we cannot, as in the case of our Lord, adduce the *argumentum onomasticum*, the Name-argument, directly in proof of the Deity of the Holy Spirit, we can adduce what is not less cogent, the *interchange* of the term "God" with the phrase "Holy Spirit" as designating one and the same Person, and thereby indicating the Holy Spirit to be God.

(ii.) The divine attribute of omniscience or Infinite intelligence is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit," we read, "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.<sup>1</sup> For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Here the Spirit is said to search, *i.e.* explore, become cognizant of the deep things of God, those things which the apostle elsewhere says are "unsearchable, and past finding out,"<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* such as no creative intellect can discover or comprehend. The Spirit is here said also to know the things of God, *i.e.* the thoughts, purposes, plans of God,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. The word rendered "searcheth" is *ἐρευνα*, on which Chrysostom remarks: οὐκ αγνοίας, ἀλλ' ἀκριβοῦς γνωσ-ως, ἐνταῦθα το ἐρευναν ἐκείνηται.

<sup>2</sup> ἀνεξερευνήτα τα κριμάτα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνεξιχνίαστοι αἱ ἰδοὶ αὐτοῦ, Rom. xi. 33.



just as a man's spirit knows, *i.e.* is conversant with the man's own thoughts, purposes, and plans. Such a statement ascribes to the Holy Spirit divine knowledge, such knowledge as God alone can have; for who can penetrate to the unrevealed, unuttered thoughts of God but God Himself? To evade the force of this as an argument for the Deity of the Holy Spirit some have pressed the apostle's analogy here, and have argued that as the spirit of man is simply the man himself as an intelligent being, so the Spirit of God here is not a distinct personality, but only that quality of God by which He is an Intelligence, by which He knows. But this is pressing the apostle's analogy too closely, and gives to his words a meaning not borne out by the context or by the form of his expression. For in the preceding context it is plain that by the Spirit is meant not the divine intelligence, nor simply God as intelligent, but that Agent by whom effects are produced on the minds of men, and by whom the apostles were made to know those things which they revealed to others. "God," says he, "hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit," where by the very form of the phraseology we are constrained to understand by the Spirit an Agency in some sense distinct from God. Besides, had the apostle intended to represent the Spirit of God here as standing in the same relation to God as the soul or intellect of a man stands to the man, he would have made some such addition to the words *το πνευμα του Θεου* as he has made to the words *το πνευμα του ανθρωπου*, viz. *το εν αυτω*. Not only, however, is no such addition made, but in contrast to the *πνευμα το εν αυτω*, which belongs to man, the apostle describes God's Spirit as *το εκ του Θεου*, "that which is of [out of] God." As the passage stands, the idea conveyed to the reader naturally is that whilst the spirit of man is that intelligence which is in himself, shut up in him, the Spirit of God is in some sense distinct from Him. The Spirit of man is *το εν αυτω*, that which is in him; the Spirit of God is simply the Spirit which is of God, *το εκ Θεου*. Not unintentionally, surely, is this variety of expression used; and it is of itself sufficient to preclude the interpretation which would make the Spirit of God here either simply God Himself or the soul of the divine substance, dwelling there as the soul of man dwells within his material organism.

"The argument," says Dr. Pye Smith in remarking on this passage, "is from the greater to the less, from the universal to the particular. If the Spirit searches out or is intimately acquainted with ALL things, 'even the deep things of God,' certainly He is able to reveal the entire system of religious doctrine, 'the wisdom of God—the hidden wisdom which God had ordained before the world—the things which eye had not seen, nor ear heard, neither had entered into the heart of man.' The highest intelligence of creatures must exclaim, 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!' But no such inability belongs to the Spirit of God. These infinite depths are all penetrated by Him."<sup>1</sup>

In like manner, when the Psalmist says, "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" (Ps. cxxxix. 7), he evidently ascribes to the Spirit the same omnipresent omniscience which he ascribes to God. The testimony, however, of this passage is not so decisive, because by "Spirit" here may be meant simply the divine intelligence or pervading power. As, however, the Spirit which created, sustains, and pervades the universe is represented in the O. T. as in some sense distinct from God, we may probably regard this utterance of the Psalmist as a profession of his belief in the omniscience of the Spirit of God as a personal existence.

An undoubted testimony to the Spirit's omniscience is furnished by St. Paul when he says, "The Spirit also maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," and thereby "helpeth our infirmities" (Rom. viii. 26). The Spirit here is undoubtedly the Holy Spirit in His objective personality as distinct from the renewed nature in the believer, and as distinct from God the Father to whom prayer is presented. But if the Holy Spirit so knows our mental and spiritual condition as to come to our help, and intercede for us so as to secure for us blessings we know not for ourselves to ask, then must He possess that knowledge which only God possesses—that faculty which can read the unuttered desires of the soul, yea, which can interpret the unformed wishes and longings of the heart. And when this is affirmed in regard to the people of God at large, there is of necessity ascribed to

<sup>1</sup> *Discourse on the Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit*, p. 41.

Him omniscience in the largest and fullest sense, for nothing less is adequate to the mighty task of so knowing all the wants and all the weaknesses of all the people of God throughout the world as properly to represent their case and procure for them that which shall meet their necessities and supply to them the help they need. As it is only a divine Saviour who can so undertake for His people as to procure them acceptance with God, so it is only a divine Intercessor who can so represent them as to bring down upon them blessings such as shall supply their utmost and most peculiar needs. It is Deity on the throne, Deity at the altar, and Deity at the footstool that alone can secure for us full and final redemption.

(iii.) We find boundless power also ascribed to the Holy Spirit. In Scripture He is represented as the sovereign Agent in the working of miracles; "all these," says the apostle, speaking of the miraculous gifts in the primitive Churches, "worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will" (1 Cor. xii. 11). Repeated instances occur in which acts of a supernatural kind are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. By Him were holy men of old inspired to write the Holy Scriptures; the prophets spake as they were moved by Him; He spake by the prophet; by Him was our Saviour conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary; by Him was our Lord consecrated to His work at His baptism; by Him was He led up to be tempted by the devil in the wilderness; by the power of the Spirit He returned into Galilee; by the Spirit of God He cast out devils; by the eternal Spirit He offered Himself unto God; according to the Spirit of holiness He was declared to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead. By the Holy Spirit men are regenerated and created anew; by Him believers are sanctified, and made to bring forth the fruits of a holy and heavenly life; by Him they are led; by Him they are strengthened with power; and by Him they have all access unto the Father, and are made temples of God, where He delights to dwell. Works like these are repeatedly and distinctly ascribed in Scripture to the Holy Spirit: Are they not of such a kind as only a divine Agent can effect? If they be ascribed to a Power less than divine, is not the

boundary line between the finite and the infinite obscured, and the most certain evidences of divine agency rendered doubtful or altogether invalidated?

Of the passages above cited it is fair to remark that two are susceptible of another meaning than that which refers them to the Holy Spirit. I allude to that in which Christ is said to have been declared the Son of God with power by the "Spirit of Holiness," and that in which He is said to have offered up Himself by the Eternal Spirit. By the *πνεῦμα αἰωσυνης* in the former of these passages some understand the divine nature of Christ as distinguished from that which He derived by descent from David; and the same meaning is also given by some to the *αἰώνιον πνεῦμα* of the latter passage; while others regard the *πνεῦμα* in both cases as describing the heavenly state into which Christ has entered as distinguished from that state in which He appeared here below, and in which He was manifested in the flesh, and died as a sacrifice to be offered within the veil. There is much difficulty connected with the proper interpretation of both passages. On the whole, I think the interpretation which understands them of the Holy Spirit is the one least burdened with difficulties; but as uncertainty hangs over this, it is but fair to allow for this in adducing them for purposes of proof.

(iv.) The Holy Spirit is joined with the Father and the Son as the object of religious worship, as the object of prayer, and as the source of spiritual blessing. The first teachers of Christianity were sent forth to make disciples of all nations by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, *i.e.* with a view to the ultimate enjoyment of the revealed truth of the triune God. Now, as Dr. Wardlaw justly observes, "on the very first aspect of this text it seems most unreasonable to suppose that the one true God is here associated with two of His creatures, or with one of His creatures and an attribute, an energy or mode of operation;" and "the unreasonableness," he adds, "is increased when the words are considered as the terms of an initiatory rite connected with a religion in which all worship but that which is addressed to the one Jehovah is, under every form, whether expressed or implied, so decidedly and totally condemned."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Discourses on Socinian Controversy*, p. 46.

We find also the apostle conjoining these three in one act of supplication: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen" (2 Cor. xiii. 14). The support which this passage lends to the doctrine of the *personality* of the Holy Spirit cannot escape the notice of even a cursory reader; for nothing can be conceived more incongruous than the conjunction of two persons with an attribute or quality of one of them in an invocation; nor could any interpretation be more arbitrary than when three objects are invoked together to admit the personality of two of them and deny that of the third. But not less decisively does the passage speak for the Deity of the Holy Spirit, for if it be admitted that the proper object of prayer is God, then the invocation of the Holy Spirit here, especially when that is conjoined expressly in one address with the invocation of God, leads to the conclusion that in the mind of the apostle the Holy Ghost was regarded and revered as a Divine Person.

In the introduction to the Apocalypse we have the following invocation: "Grace unto you, and peace, from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness," etc. (i. 4). By "the seven spirits of God" here the best commentators understand the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, who is thus described according to the style of Oriental symbolism which pervades this book. Farther on in the book (iv. 5) these are expressly called "the seven spirits of God;" and at v. 6 they are represented as in the hand of the Lamb, and sent forth by Him into the whole earth. Now, this proves that these seven spirits are existences or agencies distinct from God Himself, not mere creations of His power, as might, indeed, be inferred from their being collocated with God and Jesus Christ as beings of one kind. This collocation also forbids our regarding them, with some commentators, as angels,—an interpretation which even De Wette rejects, observing that "these seven spirits form, with God and Christ, the primal source of grace and praise, whence it is clear that the threefold representation here corresponds to the Trinity; whilst, on the other hand, the seven angels that stand before God's throne are mere

creatures, servants of the divine will, media and manifestations of the omnipotence that rules the world." The same commentator also explains the use of the phrase seven spirits for the one Holy Spirit, as resting on the symbolical meaning of the number *seven* as the number of *perfection*, and adds, "This holy, perfect number denotes the multifarious agency of the Spirit of God." Düsterdieck, one of the latest commentators on the Apocalypse, adopts the same view, and says, "The Spirit cannot, in His essential oneness, be represented either as before the throne of God or as sent into all the earth; therefore there is required the concrete representation which is furnished by the holy number seven, symbolizing the divine fulness; and hence the one Spirit is represented as seven spirits, as elsewhere He is represented as seven eyes and as seven lamps." Here again, then, we have the Holy Spirit joined with the Father and the Son in a solemn act of invocation.

It follows from these passages that to the Holy Spirit divine worship is to be offered and divine honour ascribed, the same as to the Father and to the Son. To give such honour or worship to one not truly divine would be blasphemy or idolatry. But, on the other hand, to withhold this from one whom the Author of our religion and His apostles place on an equality with God as the object of religious respect and worship, cannot be regarded as other than presumptuous, if not impious.

(v.) Scripture represents the Holy Spirit as being sinned against by men. The Israelites were charged by God through the prophet with the sin of rebelling against and vexing His Holy Spirit; our Lord speaks of sin against the Holy Ghost; and Ananias and Sapphira are said to have lied unto the Holy Ghost. Now, that against which man may sin, against which he may rebel, and that to which he may lie, is not only of necessity a person, but must be regarded in the cases specified as a Divine Person. For though one may by misconduct vex and rebel against a creature, when God says that men have rebelled against and vexed His Holy Spirit, we cannot suppose for a moment that any creature is intended. God's Holy Spirit must be something *divine*; and if it is not a mere divine attribute or energy, but a person, it follows that

the being of whom this language is used is a Divine Person. Again, it is quite possible to blaspheme a creature ; but when it is said that blasphemy of the Holy Ghost is a sin so enormous that it cannot be forgiven, we are shut up to the conclusion that the Being against whom this sin is committed is none else than God. We may not be able to determine precisely what the sin against the Holy Ghost is, but we may be certain that a sin involving such unparalleled guilt cannot be committed against any being inferior to God. And, in fine, as the lie which Ananias and his wife told to the Holy Ghost is so expressly said by the apostle to have been a lie unto God, for, said he, "thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God," there can be no doubt that the Holy Spirit is here represented as a truly Divine Person.

(vi.) The Holy Spirit is represented in Scripture as the author of spiritual gifts to men. We have already noticed that He is conjoined with the Father and the Son in this respect, and from this conjunction we have drawn an argument in favour of the Spirit's Deity. But, apart from this conjunction, there is in the mere fact itself that He is the author of spiritual blessings to men evidence of His being divine. For no being can confer spiritual blessings and gifts but God ; and consequently when it is stated that these are bestowed by the Holy Spirit, we are bound to conclude that the Holy Spirit to whose action they are ascribed, if not a mere divine energy, is really and truly God. But that it is not of a mere divine energy that this is said is evident from what the apostle, in writing on this subject, says as to the agency of the Spirit in this matter : "Distributing," says he, "to each severally as He wills." Mere energy operates as it is directed by the being who possesses it ; that which exercises will and acts according to purpose must be a Person. It follows that the Holy Spirit, who distributes divine gifts according to His own will, must be a Divine Person.

Such is a summary of the evidence from Scripture on which we receive the doctrine of the divine personality of the Holy Spirit. Of the passages cited there are some which undoubtedly are capable of being interpreted so as not to involve that doctrine ; but to adduce these in order to disprove the doctrine is as absurd as it would be in a court of

law to adduce a number of witnesses whose testimony was ambiguous to upset the evidence of witnesses whose testimony was clear, distinct, and full. The case stands thus: In some passages the phrase Holy Spirit is used so that it may be equally well understood either of a Person or of an Influence or Power; in a number of other passages it is used where it can be understood only of a Person. On the principle, therefore, of the Inductive Logic, that that which alone accounts for *all* the phenomena is to be accepted as the true cause, we conclude that the interpretation which alone applies to all the passages in which the Holy Spirit is spoken of is the true one, and that consequently we are to receive His true and proper Deity as a truth taught us in Scripture.

(vii.) Two objections to the Deity of the Holy Spirit may be noticed.

1. An objection has been adduced against the doctrine to which we are thus brought, drawn from the fact that in Scripture so little is said of the adoration or worship of the Spirit. In reply to this, it may suffice to say that the conjunction of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son as the object of prayer, already referred to, as much implies the offering of worship to the Spirit as if He had been alone invoked. It may indeed appear at first sight strange that, supposing the Spirit to be a Divine Person, there should be no injunctions in Scripture to pray to Him or to worship Him, and no instances recorded in which acts of devotion were addressed to the Holy Spirit apart from the Father and the Son. But whilst the absence of these cannot invalidate the evidence arising from the actual invocation of Him along with the Father and the Son, the fact itself may be accounted for by the position which the Spirit occupies in the work of redemption. In this work it is the special office of the Spirit to carry on the work of grace in the souls of the saints, and, among other things, to aid them to pray, so that they shall ask as they ought the things that they need. According to the representation of Scripture, we pray to the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit; and hence the Spirit, being brought before us thus markedly as the divine Author or Source of true prayer, there is an obvious reason why He should not also be prominently brought before us as the Being



to whom prayer is to be addressed. In the economy of grace the Father appears as the Divine Source of all blessing; the Son as the Divine Mediator, through whom all blessing flows from God to men; and the Spirit as the Agent in men by whom man is prepared to receive the blessing, is led to seek it, and has it effectually applied to his heart. It is obviously in keeping with this that the Father should principally be set before us in Scripture as the Being to whom we are to direct our prayers; the Son less so; and, least of all, the Spirit. But it does not follow from this that the Spirit is not the proper object of devotion, and may not be directly invoked, any more than it follows that we may not pray directly to Christ, or offer directly to Him our worship.

2. Another objection that has been urged against the doctrine of the Spirit's true and proper Deity is, that He is represented as proceeding from the Father and the Son, and as sent by them; whence, it is argued, He must be inferior to them and subordinate. To meet this objection, recourse has been had to a mysterious doctrine of the eternal procession or spiration of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, by which it is held that the Spirit eternally originated from the essence of the Father and Son, so as to be in essence one with them, and, by consequence, equal to them essentially. Without at present instituting any inquiry into this doctrine, though I shall come to consider it presently, I would only now observe, as to the point before us, that, even admitting this to be a Scripture doctrine, it only half meets the objection; for though the procession of the Holy Ghost be understood to mean His eternal origin from the Father and Son,—though we may swallow the self-contradiction of an origin which was never begun,—there will still remain the difficulty arising from the Spirit's being *sent* by God and *given* by Him. This obviously cannot be referred to an eternal process, but must be viewed as something which took place in time; and the question therefore still presses on us, Does this representation of the Spirit as *sent* by the Father and the Son present a real difficulty in the way of our believing the Spirit to be divine, one in essence and equal in glory with the Father and Son? To this question a satisfactory answer may, I think, be given; and the answer which suffices for this will suffice

also for the question about the bearing on our present topic of the *procession* of the Holy Ghost. The sending of the Spirit and the procession of the Spirit I regard as one and the same act presented under different aspects. In the former we have the subjective side of the same truth as that of which the latter gives the objective side; as a free agent the Holy Spirit proceeds, goes forth (*εκπορευεται*) from the Father and the Son; under another aspect He is sent forth by them.

Now it cannot be denied that the sending of the Spirit by the Father and Son implies, in some sense, that the Spirit is subordinate to the Father and the Son. But it does not necessarily follow that this subordination is essential, for it may be merely official; and in this case it may be maintained that the Spirit is equal in essence to the Father and the Son, and yet subordinate to them in the economy of redemption. Even among men, official subordination in combination with natural and essential equality is so common as to be one of our most familiar experiences. Now Scripture teaches us that it is so with the three Persons of the Trinity; in essence they are one and equal, whilst in the economy of redemption they are officially diverse and unequal. The Father is officially superior to the Son; the Father and the Son are officially superior to the Spirit; and yet all three are of one essence, and equal in power and glory. This, it is true, is a great mystery, but it is mysterious only as all facts concerning the divine nature and attributes are mysterious. To the inductive inquirer it is no objection to a fact that it is mysterious, and when two facts are made known to him which he cannot combine under one general statement, that becomes to him the most acceptable hypothesis which allows both their proper authority and weight, which does not sacrifice one to the other. This is the course we follow in the case before us. Scripture reveals the Deity of the Holy Spirit, and, consequently, His equality with the Father and the Son. Scripture also reveals the Spirit's subordination to the Father and the Son. We harmonize these statements without detracting from either of them by the hypothesis that, whilst the equality is essential, the subordination is merely official.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

iii. *The Relation of the Spirit to the Father and the Son :  
The Procession of the Spirit.*

What has been advanced may serve for a reply to the objection which has been adduced against the doctrine of the true and proper Deity of the Holy Spirit. It will be necessary, however, that we should go a little farther into the consideration of the relation of the Holy Spirit to the other two Persons in the One Godhead.

This relation may be regarded either as immanent in respect of essence or transient in respect of function. In regard to the former, the doctrine to which I have already adverted, commonly known as that of the procession of the Holy Ghost, has been held as part of catholic orthodox Christianity. To this, therefore, I must now direct your attention.

(i.) *History of the Dogma.*

In the creed called Athanasian this doctrine is thus briefly expressed: "The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding." In the creed adopted by the Council at Constantinople in A.D. 381, the language used is less definite: "I believe . . . in the Holy Spirit, Lord and life-giving, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who, with the Father and the Son together, is adored and glorified; who spoke by the prophets;" and in the Nicene Creed, of which the Constantinopolitan is only an expansion, it is only said, "I believe in the Holy Ghost." In the writings of the Fathers, also, the farther back we advance the less do we find of definite traces of this doctrine. Origen seems to have had very confused views on the subject of the Holy Spirit's relation to the Father and the Son. Whilst in some parts of his writings he seems to recognize the perfect equality of the three Persons in the Trinity, in others he

writes as if he believed that the Spirit was formed by the Son, and was inferior to Him. Thus, after referring to some who thought that as all things were made by the Word, the Spirit must have been made by Him, and to others who contended that the Spirit was unbegotten, he professes his own belief thus: "We, however, being persuaded that there are three hypostases, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and believing that nothing is unbegotten but the Father, hold it most pious and true that of all things made by the Word the Holy Spirit is the most honourable."<sup>1</sup> Jerome, referring to the opinions of Origen, says, "Though he says he knows not whether the Spirit be made or not made, he afterwards expresses what was his own opinion, asserting that nothing, excepting the Father alone, is not made."<sup>2</sup> Tertullian gives expression to more definite views; he asserts the doctrine of the Trinity, but holds that both the Son and the Spirit are emanations from the Father, though in substance equal with Him.<sup>3</sup> In Irenæus, Justin Martyr, etc., we find little that enables us to judge of the views they held regarding the Spirit; in some places they seem to confound the Logos and the Pneuma; in others, to represent them as distinct; in all, however, the idea of the Spirit's derivation from the Father may be found more or less clearly enunciated. After the Council at Nice, and chiefly through the writings of Athanasius, the whole doctrine of the Trinity acquired a more precise and definite form; and it is after that that we find the dogma of the procession of the Spirit becoming distinctly recognized and enunciated as a Church dogma. Thus Gregory Nazianzen says, "Deity is common to all; what is peculiar to the Father is the being unbegotten, to the Son the being begotten, to the Spirit the being sent forth."<sup>4</sup> And still more clearly Augustine says, "Hold most firmly, and by no means doubt, that the Holy Spirit, who is the one Spirit of the Father and the Son, proceeds from the Father and the Son. For the Son saith, When the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father has come,—where He teaches that this is His Spirit, because He is truth. That the Spirit proceeds from the Son is also taught by the doctrine of the prophets and the

<sup>1</sup> *In Joann. apud Huetii Origeniana*, t. ii. p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.* 59, *ad Aritum*.

<sup>3</sup> *See adv. Praxeam*, 2 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Orat.* xxv. 16.

apostles.”<sup>1</sup> Even in Augustine's mind, however, this dogma does not appear to have been definitively settled, for we find him in one of his treatises opening the question, whether in saying that the Spirit proceeds from the Father it is intended that the Father is a source or beginning for the Spirit; and this he answers by distinguishing between a beginning of what is made and a beginning of what is given. “And here,” he says, “it becomes clear how it can be that the Holy Spirit is not also the Son, since He also came forth from the Father, as it is said in the gospel. For the Spirit came forth not as *born*, but as *given*, and therefore is not called Son, because He was neither born like the Only-begotten, nor made so as that He might become a son by adoption, as with us.”<sup>2</sup> This language seems almost to indicate that both as to the Sonship of Christ and as to the procession of the Spirit, Augustine held that these distinctions do not appertain to the divine essence, but were rather economical, having reference to the manifestation of the Son and the Spirit in the work of redemption, or in this world. The dogma, however, of the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son became gradually more and more firmly established in the Latin Church, especially after the controversies about the insertion of the word “*Filioque*” in the creed, and the final severance of the Latin from the Greek Church, by the latter of which the dogma of the procession of the Spirit from the Father alone, by or through the Son, was tenaciously held. Through the schoolmen the doctrine of the Latin Church on this head passed to the theologians of the Reformation, and has found its place in most systems of theology since. In the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England it is inserted thus: “The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.” In the Confession of Faith drawn up by the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and adopted as the Confession of the Church of Scotland, the doctrine is stated more precisely thus: “In the Unity of the Godhead there be Three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceed-

<sup>1</sup> *De Fide ad Petrum*, c. xi.

<sup>2</sup> *De Trinit.*, l. v. c. 15.

ing; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son." To these I may add the following statements of the doctrine by divines of eminence. Hollaz: "The hypostatic character of the Holy Spirit is the *spiratio passiva*, or procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, *i.e.* the eternal origin of the Holy Spirit by which He is produced within the bosom of Deity by the Father and the Son, by the communication of one and the same essence numerically, as the common breathing of both." "This spiration," he further says, "is not external, as was the breathing of Christ on His disciples (John xx. 22), but internal and immanent, since it took place within the bosom of Deity; not transitory or evanescent, as is that of breathing men, but eternal and permanent, because the Holy Spirit proceeds from eternity, as the breath of the Almighty (Job xxxiii. 4), and the Spirit of the mouth of the Lord (Ps. xxxiii. 6); not an accidental spiration, but a substantial, for on God there falls no accident, nor can the Holy Spirit as a divine substance and person be produced by an accidental act." Turretine: "As to the Son is ascribed *γέννησις*, to the Holy Spirit is ascribed *εκπορευσις*, or procession, not only in a wide sense of the word as if it denoted origin from some one, for in this sense it might be used as well of the Son, to whom *ἐξοδος* and *ἐξελευσις* are attributed when it is said that He came out from the Father (John xvi. 28), and had eternal goings forth (Mic. v. 2); but strictly in that it denotes emanation from the Father and the Son, distinct from the generation of the Son. The question is not as to a temporal and external procession which terminates on creatures, by which the Spirit is sent to sanctify us and to complete the work of salvation; but concerning a procession eternal and internal, which terminates on what is within, and is nothing else than a mode of the communication of the divine essence, by which the third Person of the Trinity has the same essence numerically from the Father and the Son as the Father and the Son have."<sup>1</sup>

These extracts will give you a correct conception of this doctrine as held by divines. The slight sketch of the history of the dogma I have given may also be of use as showing

<sup>1</sup> *Instit. Theol. Elenc.*, i. 399.

how what was probably at first a mere misinterpretation of a passage of Scripture, became by mere dint of reiteration a theological dogma, the holding of which is declared to be essential to salvation. We shall find on examination on what a merely apparitional basis of Scripture authority it rests.

In the extract from Turretine above given, that eminently perspicacious writer distinguishes between a procession of the Spirit which is temporal and external, and has for its object an operation of the Spirit on creatures, and a procession internal and eternal which terminates within the divine essence, and has relation purely to the mode of communication of the divine essence from the Father and Son to the Spirit.

(ii.) *Objections to the Dogma.*

It must strike one at the outset that in the very mooted of such a question there is a transgression of the limits within which theological speculation can alone be safely or legitimately pursued. We may competently inquire as to the revealed *facts* concerning God ; but as to the mode of the divine being and essence, as nothing has been revealed to us, and as we are not able to comprehend anything, it is unwise and unlawful for us to inquire or speculate. We receive and uphold as a fact the truth that God is, but how God is we do not know and never can discover. We receive as a fact that in Jesus Christ the divine and human natures are united ; but how this is we cannot tell and may not inquire. We receive as a fact that in the divine essence there are distinctions corresponding to the outward distinctions in the economy of redemption of Father, Son, and Spirit ; but in what these distinctions consist, or how they are reconcilable with the divine unity, we cannot tell and have no means of knowing. Now, this question of the procession of the Holy Ghost is a question avowedly as to the mode of the divine existence, or as to the mode of the being of the Trinity. It lies, therefore, beyond the limits of legitimate inquiry, and to pursue it will only land us in a confession of incompetency or in a darkening of counsel by words without knowledge. That in reality they know nothing about it is amply confessed

by some who have been most earnest in asserting the dogma. It is a *προοδος αρρητος*, says Gregory Nazianzen ;<sup>1</sup> " We have learned," says John of Damascus, " that there is a distinction between being begotten and proceeding, but not at all what is the mode of the difference ;" " There is a difference," says Augustine, " between generation and procession, but I know not how to distinguish, because both are unspeakable." <sup>3</sup> The schoolmen, less wise or less reverent than their predecessors the Fathers, made attempts to reduce this distinction to terms ; but, as Turretine says, their attempt rather perplexed than explained the matter. Turretine himself says, " What the distinction may be cannot be explained and had best be ignored ;" and a recent Roman Catholic theologian of great eminence, Dr. Heinrich Klee, says of the Spirit, " He proceeds in a manner to us unknown and not to be more closely characterized, to be simply called Procession or Spiration." <sup>4</sup> But one is naturally led to ask, If it be so, why make a dogma of this at all ? why attempt to define what is thus avowed to be incomprehensible ? We may also ask, If the mode of the Spirit's procession be inscrutable, is it not something like a contradiction in terms for Turretine nevertheless to propose to inquire into this mode of the communication of the divine essence ? Another thing that must strike the inquirer is that this dogma not only enunciates what is incomprehensible, but it sins against one of the fundamental laws of thought or (to use Sir Wm. Hamilton's words) " conditions of the thinkable," viz. the law of non-contradiction. For it virtually affirms and denies the same character of the same object, by positing the true and eternal deity of the Spirit, and yet asserting that the Spirit is as to essence an emanation from the Father and the Son. One is surprised that a man like Turretine should use such a contradiction in terms as to speak of an " eternal procession." Surely that from which any thing or being proceeds must have existed prior to the procession ; and if the Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son, the Father and the Son must have existed before the procession of the Spirit commenced. How then could that be eternal ? How could that which began to be after the

<sup>1</sup> *Orat.* xxxii.

<sup>2</sup> *Expos. Fidei Orthod.*, iv. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Cont. Maxim.*, iii. 14.

<sup>4</sup> *Katholische Dogmatik*, Bd. ii. p. 186.



Father and the Son have, like them, existed from all eternity? Such a dogma is plainly unthinkable, and should therefore be relegated to the region of the unasserted. Let no one say, It is a mystery and therefore must be believed, though it cannot be comprehended. This is not the case; the objection I am now urging is that there is no mysterious fact here announced, but a plain and very discernible contradiction in terms. My objection is, not that I am asked to believe a fact which I cannot explain, but that I am asked to think what by the laws of human thought is unthinkable. A dogma is not a fact; it is the theory or explanation of a fact; and if it be so constructed as to involve a contradiction in terms, no human mind can possibly receive it. We do but deceive ourselves with words when we confess dogmas which by the laws of thought it is impossible for us to think. But, it may be said, does not our Lord Himself expressly teach that the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father? and are we not bound, therefore, to accept this doctrine, however it may seem to contradict our natural reason? To this I would reply, on the one hand, that as the Lord never requires of us that we should do what it is impossible for us to do, it is in the highest degree improbable that He should have asked us to accept any doctrine which contradicts our natural reason, and which, consequently, it is impossible for us to receive; and, on the other hand, that though it is undoubtedly true that our Lord in speaking of the Holy Spirit uses the expression "the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father" (John xv. 26), and that consequently we must in some sense hold a procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father; yet as our Lord does not say that this relates to an emanation of the Spirit from the substance of the Father, nor that the procession was internal and eternal, we are left at full liberty to inquire whether these dogmas of theologians are sustained by His words. Now, Turretine admits that there is a procession of the Holy Spirit which is temporal and external, and which has reference to His being sent for the carrying on of the work of God in men's souls; and the question may be fairly asked, whether it is not to this and this only that our Lord here refers. That it is so can hardly, I think, admit of any reasonable doubt. Our Lord when He used these words

was conveying to His disciples an assurance that though He was about to leave them He would send to them another Paraclete, even the Spirit of Truth, which, says He, "proceedeth or goeth forth (*ἐκπορεύεται*) from the Father." Is not the natural interpretation of these words that as it was from the Father, as the source of all blessing, that our Lord Himself came forth, so the Spirit whom He should send would also come forth from the Father? Without this He could not have supplied the place of Christ to the disciples, nor been to them the Spirit of all truth in whose teaching and guidance they could implicitly confide. If it be said that had this been our Lord's meaning He would have used the future and not the present tense, He would have said, "The Spirit of truth which shall proceed from the Father," not "the Spirit of truth which proceedeth," etc., a form of expression which seems to indicate some personal quality or characteristic, and not a single act in which the Spirit was to be the agent; I reply that there is no need to suppose our Lord's words to refer either to a single act or to a personal quality or essential characteristic, for the present tense is constantly used in Scripture to express action which is continual and habitual, so that the force of the present tense in the case before is that not once only, but habitually, the Holy Spirit, when He comes forth, proceeds from the Father. I may add that by all the best interpreters this verse is held as referring, not to the essence, but to the advent or appearance of the Holy Spirit as sent forth by Christ.<sup>1</sup> The Holy Spirit as a Divine Agent goes forth, whilst at the same time in economical subordination to the Father and the Son He is sent forth; comp. John xiv. 16, 26; Gal. iv. 6. It may be also observed that, while this passage does not give any real support to the dogma of the essential procession of the Spirit from the Father, it is directly opposed to the dogma of the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Son; for, as our Lord is speaking here of what He was to do for His disciples after He had gone to the Father, the procession of the Spirit from Him can only mean that which took place in time, when after His ascension the promise of the Father was fulfilled to them.

<sup>1</sup> So De Wette, Meyer.

The passage we have been considering is that on which the advocates of this dogma chiefly rely for its support ; but they also sometimes try to strengthen this by other reasons. Thus they appeal to the use of such phraseology applied to the Holy Spirit as “the Spirit of God,” “the Spirit from God,” “the Spirit of Christ.” But it is easy to see that from such phraseology no argument can be drawn for either side in this question, inasmuch as it is equally appropriate whether we regard the Spirit as essentially proceeding from the Father and the Son, or as economically sent forth by them ; in either case the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, of God the Father and God the Son.

An argument has also been drawn from the use of the term *Spirit* as applied to the third Person in the Trinity. Among the scriptural grounds adduced by Dr. Hodge is “the signification of the word Spirit. It means breath, that which proceeds from and which gives expression and effect to our thoughts.” On this I remark 1. that it proves nothing as to the point now in hand, for at the utmost it only would indicate the fact of procession without determining whether that procession be essential or only economical, from all eternity or only in time. 2. An argument based on the etymological sense of a term must necessarily be very precarious, for words are seldom used in their etymological meaning ; they speedily acquire secondary senses in which they are commonly used ; so that the last thing on which a theologian should seek to base a theological dogma is the etymological meaning of a word. The word “spirit,” like the Hebrew רוח and the Greek πνευμα, undoubtedly originally meant *breath* ; and in this sense it occurs in a very few instances in Scripture. But as generally used there it denotes something which is immaterial as opposed to that which is visible and tangible. In this sense our Lord says, “God is a Spirit,” — an immaterial Being whom we can neither see nor touch ; and in this sense also it is applied to the third Person of the Trinity as manifested and working in the economy of redemption. To argue from the application to Him of this term that He proceeded or was breathed forth from the Father and the Son, is no less absurd than it would be to argue from our Lord’s

words that God Himself was breathed forth from some other being.

Dr. Hodge further argues that "since Father and Son as applied to the first and second Persons of the Trinity are relative terms, it is to be assumed that the word Spirit as the designation of the third Person is also relative." Here again this able divine adduces an argument which does not touch the question really at issue; for allowing that the word Spirit is a relative term, like Father and Son, it is still open to inquiry whether the relation be an essential or only an economical one. I believe that all these designations are economical, that is, they express the distinctions in the Godhead as these are manifested in the work of redemption, not as they exist in the essence of the Godhead, concerning which we have no revelation, and for which we have no names. But, be this as it may, even if we allow that the terms Father and Son, which do express relation, are designations of the essential relations between the first and second Persons of the Trinity, it surely does not follow that the term Spirit, which does not express relation, must have that meaning forced on it merely because it stands by the side of Father and Son in the designation of the Trinity. Never, perhaps, was there a theological dogma, extensively received, which rested on so narrow a basis as that we have been considering; and certainly never was there one more entirely unsupported by the basis on the narrow pedestal of which its advocates have tried to rest it. It is a dogma to which Scripture gives not a shadow of support, and which reason refuses to receive as self-contradictory and therefore unthinkable.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Wardlaw's *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 54 ff., and Stowell's *Congregational Lecture on the Work of the Spirit*.

## CHAPTER IX.

## II. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

## (I.) THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN NATURE.

In considering the relation of the Holy Spirit to the other Persons in the Trinity, the conclusion at which we arrived is that of their essential and hypostatical relation we know nothing; and that it is only of their relation as manifested in the world or in the economy of redemption that it is competent for us to discourse. Under this aspect the Father appears as representing the Godhead, as the Source of all being and blessing, as the Supreme Ruler of the universe, and as the Author of all the purposes which determine events; the Son appears as the great Mediator between God and the world, as the Creator and Upholder of all things, as the Revealer of the Invisible God, and especially as the Reconciler of God and man, through whose work and merits God's purposes of grace towards our fallen race take effect; and the Spirit appears as carrying out the works thus purposed and secured, co-operating with the Son in His special work, and under Him completing and perfecting all that the Father purposed. Basil the Great, in writing of the creation of angels, tersely expresses these external relations of Father, Son, and Spirit thus: "In the creation of these, recognize the Father as the preparing cause, the Son as the creative cause, the Holy Spirit as the completing cause."<sup>1</sup> To the same effect Gregory of Nyssa says: "Every energy extending from God to the creation, and named according to the manifold intents, comes forth from the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed by the Holy Spirit."<sup>2</sup>

We are thus brought from considering the Person to consider the Work of the Holy Spirit. And as all the works of God are either in nature or in redemption, we have to con-

<sup>1</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, c. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ad Ablabium*. Quoted by Owen, *Discourse concerning the Holy Spirit*. Works, vol. iii. p. 94.

sider, first, the work of the Holy Spirit in nature, in the world, or in the old creation; and, second, the work of the Holy Spirit in the economy of grace, in the spiritual kingdom, or in the new creation.

In Scripture the Spirit is represented as the operative cause of all created existence. "By His Spirit," we read, God "hath garnished the heavens" (Job xxvi. 13); when the earth lay in a state of chaos the Spirit of God moved on the face of the deep, and communicated to the inert and formless mass a vivifying power (Gen. i. 2). Job, speaking of his bodily frame, said, "The Spirit of God hath made me" (xxxiii. 4). The Psalmist says of all living things, "Thou [God] sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created" (Ps. civ. 30). Isaiah says it is not until "the Spirit is poured from on high" that the "wilderness becomes a fruitful field," etc. (xxxii. 15). And as the Spirit is the operative cause of natural existence and life, so is He the operative cause of intellectual and spiritual life. "There is a spirit in man," says Elihu in Job (xxxii. 8); "and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Extraordinary mental endowments by which men were fitted for extraordinary work are also in Scripture ascribed to the Spirit. Bezaleel was "filled with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning [artistic] works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass" (Ex. xxxi. 2-4). By God's Spirit being upon him, Moses was fitted for the duties of the high and difficult post which he had to occupy; and when he was enjoined to devolve part of these duties on the seventy elders, God said, "I will take of the Spirit that is on thee, and will put it upon them" (Num. xi. 17). When God gave the command to appoint Joshua to succeed Moses as the leader of the people, He said, "Take Joshua, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit," etc. (Num. xxvii. 18). In the history of the Judges it is again and again said that the Spirit of the Lord came on individuals, who were thereby qualified for the work to which they were called. To Saul as king of Israel the Spirit was given that he might rule well and wisely; and when he became self-willed and regardless of the authority of God, the Spirit of God, we are told, departed from him (1 Sam. xvi. 14). When

Samuel anointed David to be king, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him from that day forward" (1 Sam. xvi. 13); and so essential to him as king did David feel the presence with him of God's Spirit to be, that when he was brought to a sense of his great guilt, humbled himself before God, and pleaded for forgiveness, his prayer was, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. . . . Uphold me with Thy free Spirit" (Ps. li. 11, 12), for only through the presence with him of God's Spirit could he teach transgressors God's ways. In all these instances it is to the Spirit's operations within the natural sphere, independent of His agency in the work of redemption, that reference is had.

As the Creator and life-giving Spirit, the Holy Ghost operated on the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was by the Holy Ghost that He was conceived of the Virgin Mary; it was by the Holy Ghost that He was endowed with those gifts by which He discharged His office on earth (Isa. lxi. 1, xlii. 1, xi. 1, 2; John i. 32, iii. 34); it was by the Spirit that our Lord wrought miracles (Matt. xii. 28; Acts x. 38); it was by the Spirit He was quickened and raised from the dead (Rom. viii. 11); and it was by the Spirit that He went and preached to the spirits in prison (1 Pet. iii. 19). In the Church of Christ also the Spirit is the operator, not only of miraculous effects, but also of those intellectual endowments by which men are enabled to teach and edify believers; though this belongs rather to the next part of this subject.

## (II.) THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE ECONOMY OF REDEMPTION.

We have now to consider the work which the Holy Spirit carries on in men in the economy of grace.

As a comprehensive summary of the whole truth on this head, we may cite our Lord's words to His disciples when He gave them the promise of the Holy Spirit as a Paraclete to be with them always: "He," said He, "shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you" (John xvi. 14). According to this, the grand work of the Spirit is to glorify Christ. For this purpose He has been

sent to the Church, and for this purpose He abides with the Church. As our Lord came into the world to glorify the Father, and ere He left it could say, "I have glorified Thy name;" so the Spirit came to glorify Christ, and this belongs to Him as His special part in the work of redemption.

This end, our Lord further intimates, the Spirit is to pursue by taking of His and showing it unto His people. By *το εμον* here our Lord means His truth, the truth He had Himself taught, the truth of which God is the substance, the whole body of divine truth which constitutes Christianity a system of doctrine, and by which Christianity as a religion is to lay hold on the minds and hearts of men. This our Lord claims as His, on the ground, as He goes on to say, that all things that the Father hath are His; what belongs to God as the Author of all truth belongs also to Christ, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3). Hence, in establishing the Church, and carrying forward His work as the Church's abiding Paraclete, the Spirit has only to take of those treasures which are hid in Christ, and unfold, declare, or manifest them to men. "The Spirit, therefore, which proceedeth from the Father has Christ as the basis, the sum, the end of all His working, and all progress in the Church in knowledge consists only in a greater sinking into Christ, a deeper, more comprehensive apprehension of Christ, and all growth in holiness in a larger and fuller representation of the image of Christ. The Alpha and Omega alike for the Spirit and the Church is Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Now, in carrying forward this work of glorifying Christ by declaring the truth of God in Him to men, the Spirit has followed different methods, according to the circumstances of individuals, and of the immediate ends to be answered by their being led into all the truth. Where a person was called, as in the primitive time, to proclaim the message concerning Christ unto others, the Spirit operated on his mind so as to give him supernatural apprehension of the truth, and supernatural powers of communicating it to others. Where a man who knew the truth was called on to commit that truth to writing for the instruction and edification of the Church in all coming time, the Spirit qualified him for this

<sup>1</sup> Luthardt, *Das Johan. Evangel.*, ii. 345.



by inspiring him, so as that he put down in writing, with unerring accuracy, according to the mind of God, what he was called to write. When the truth has to be presented to the mind of an individual so as that he shall experience its saving, comforting, and sanctifying effects, the Holy Spirit accomplishes this end by so operating on the man's mind that it is opened to receive the truth, and inclined to yield to its influences. Viewed in relation to the first two of these, this promise may be regarded as applying to the apostles officially as the commissioned ambassadors of Christ to men, and as conveying to them, and to all who should be associated with them in revealing God's truth to men, that divine aid without which their work could not be successful. Viewed in relation to the last of these, this promise may be regarded as conveying to the apostles for themselves as sinners needing salvation, and for all to whom their message should come, such aid as is necessary for their profiting by the truth as it is in Jesus—so far, at least, as it is in God's decree or purpose that such profiting should be secured to any. The distinction here pointed out is commonly designated a distinction between the extraordinary and transient work of the Spirit and the ordinary or abiding work of the Spirit.

Of the extraordinary operations of the Spirit, were those shown in the bestowment of the spiritual gifts<sup>1</sup> described in 1 Cor. xii. 8–10 and 28. To examine them does not fall within my province at present. But, keeping in view the statement in Scripture that the Holy Spirit was sent forth to declare the truth concerning Christ, it is necessary that we should consider that special and extraordinary work which the Spirit accomplished in inspiring men to commit to writing truths by the reception of which men become wise unto salvation.

#### i. EXTRAORDINARY OPERATIONS OF THE SPIRIT—*Inspiration.*

Whatever benefits might be derived from the miraculous gifts exercised by individuals in the primitive Churches, it must be apparent that something more was demanded for

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Alexander's article on "Spiritual Gifts," in Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, vol. iii.

the wants of the Church as a permanent institution. The establishment of the fact of God's presence in and with His Church, and, in connection with this, the divine authority of the truth on which the Church is based and of which it is the conservator which these gifts tended to evince and confirm, is indeed a boon for the Church in all times and places. But for the Church's edification, nay, for its very sustenance and continued existence, it was needful that the instructions which, through the medium of these supernatural endowments, the primitive Church received, should be embodied in some permanent form, so as to be a possession and heritage for the Church in all times. Now, there are only two ways in which this could be done; the one is by committing to the Church an oral record of divine things to be handed down from generation to generation; the other is by committing to writing what of religious truth and fact it concerns men to know, and entrusting this to the safe keeping of the Church, as a sacred deposit to be preserved for ever. The latter of these courses, as we know, it has pleased the Divine Wisdom to follow. Under the ancient dispensation, holy men of God were guided by the Holy Spirit to commit to writing what God would have men know concerning Himself, concerning men's relations to Him, and concerning His dealings with men, whether as the objects of His favour or as under His displeasure and exposed to His wrath. So, also, under the Christian dispensation, the history and sayings of the great Author of Christianity have been committed to writing, and this has come down to us along with certain writings which, besides recording the early fortunes of the Churches He planted, contain expositions of the truths which He commissioned His servants to communicate to men, and which are presumed to be in substance identical with what was taught orally by those endowed with supernatural gifts in the early Churches. These writings, both of the ancient and new dispensations, are accepted in the Christian Church as the only written record of religious truth that possesses divine authority, and can claim to be the word of God. Now, this authority rests on the assumption that these writings have been produced so as to convey to us what God would have us believe and do. They are not mere

human records of events, nor mere human expositions of divine truth; in some sense they contain God's word, are His writing, convey to us His mind, and demand our reverence and submission as truly God's message to us. To express this we say, using an apostle's words, that they are "given by inspiration of God."

Without attempting anything like a full investigation of the subject of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures in all its bearings, I shall ask your attention to one department of it, viz. the actual phenomena exhibited by the Scriptures themselves as written compositions which bear upon the question of their authorship, and the work of the Holy Spirit in connection with that authorship.

(i.) Looking at the history of the writings, we find that, whilst they have been marvellously preserved from age to age so that no important part of them has been lost and no corruption affecting their substance has been permitted, they have been left to incur the fate of all ancient documents in being more or less corrupted by the errors of transcribers or by the additions and conjectural emendations of critics. As a consequence of this, while we assuredly possess the very books in substance as they came from the hands of their authors, we cannot be sure that the form has not more or less been affected by causes which have altered it from what it originally was. If we trace the former of these, as we are bound to do, to God's care that the truths He inspired through His servants into the sacred page should descend in uncorrupted purity to subsequent ages, we may regard the latter as indicating that He did not attach the same character of sacredness to the words in which they were embodied, or regard the preservation of these as essential to the preservation of the truth itself. This seems to favour the idea that the divinity of the Scriptures lies in the substance of their contents and not in the words in which these are expressed. It was a contrary opinion which roused so keen an opposition on the part of many learned and able men to the collection of various readings of the text of the N. T. They thought that by these the confidence of men in the divinity of Scripture would be shaken; and they were undoubtedly right in this if, as they

believed, the words of Scripture are as truly divine as the substance of it. That which is divine cannot admit of alteration. No change, whether it be an omission or an addition, or the substitution of one thing for another, can have any other effect than to detract from the original perfection of that which is divine. If, then, there is divinity in the words of Scripture, every, even the minutest, alteration of any of these words must have the effect of detracting from its divinity; and the collection of various readings, showing that thousands of such alterations have been made, among which it is not often possible to determine which is the correct reading, cannot but shake the faith of men in the divinity of the Bible. It is on this ground that the followers of Mahommed, who believe that the words of the Koran were dictated by God, will not allow the possibility of any variety in the readings of any MS. It is only on a similar assumption that the collection of various readings of the Scripture texts can be condemned; and the fact that such various readings are abundant, shows that in the case of Scripture such an assumption cannot be legitimately made.

(ii.) Looking at the books themselves, we see that the divine control exercised upon the writers was not such as to supersede, or even greatly to qualify, the peculiar mental and personal characteristics of each. We find that each has a style peculiar to himself; the language of each is of the country or class to which he belonged; the allusions in which each indulges are to things with which he himself, from position, education, or outward circumstances, was familiar; and, in short, the whole composition bears traces of free and unfettered mental action on the part of the writer. With this characteristic of the sacred writings every one is familiar, or if he is not it needs only a very cursory study of these writings to make him so. On the other hand, with all these characteristic diversities there is an undeniable unity pervading the whole collection—a unity of thought, sentiment, design, and spirit which betokens the agency of some one superintending mind in the composition. Whilst the former of these phenomena is inconsistent with the hypothesis that the contents of Scripture were dictated by the Holy Spirit to the writers, and by them put down mechanically as they

stand ; the latter is irreconcilable with the hypothesis that the writers of the different books of Scripture were under no common control or guidance, and equally with the hypothesis that there is a human element intermingled with a divine element in these writings, *i.e.* that parts of them are simply human, and parts of them divine compositions. The only hypothesis that will meet the facts of the case as just stated is that all and every part of the composition is both human and divine ; the agency of the Holy Spirit being so put forth as not to suppress the free agency of the writer, or to interfere with the natural operation of his faculties.

(iii.) Whatever aid the sacred writers received from the Holy Spirit, it was not such as to raise them above the prevailing popular notions on matters outside the sphere of religion, especially matters of physical science. Marvellously, indeed, have they been preserved from placing on the sacred page any of the gross and ridiculous opinions which formed part of the cosmogony and mythology of the ancients. But whilst this indicates the presence with them of a power such as did not preside over the creations of heathen genius and speculation, we see plainly that this power was not exercised in the way of conveying to them illumination on points of scientific knowledge beyond that of the age in which they lived. We find accordingly in their writings statements which no ingenuity can reconcile with what modern research has shown to be the scientific truth, *i.e.* we find in them statements which modern science proves to be erroneous. Now, I cannot believe that God would formally dictate to a man anything that is not absolutely and literally true ; and when, consequently, I find in the sacred writings statements which science shows me to be erroneous, I am led to conclude that they are there because God, for wise and worthy ends, permitted the sacred writers to express themselves, when such subjects came in their way, as they and all around them were accustomed to express themselves ; for which we can see one good reason at least, *viz.* that in no other way could they have been understood by the people to whom they in the first instance addressed themselves.

(iv.) The sacred writers, except when they formally announce a message from God, write very much like men

expressing what was in their own consciousness. Their standpoint is that of their own subjectivity. They do not appear as men who report or repeat something from another. They tell what they themselves think and feel and observe and know, even sometimes what they themselves want ; nay, not seldom they give utterance to feelings which are wholly human, and not always such as are to be commended (as, *e.g.*, in some of the Psalms, where the language is that of angry invective and bitter vindictiveness). All this may be accounted for on the supposition that they wrote out of their own minds and hearts under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to whom it seemed meet that they should thus give expression to what was in their individual consciousness ; but it seems to me utterly irreconcilable with the supposition that it is God who thus speaks, and that the human writer merely records what God says.

(v.) In consequence of this predominant subjectivity of the writers their statements of doctrine are sometimes partial, though always reconcilable with each other. Even when writing doctrinally they do not always give the whole truth absolutely in its entirety and in all its bearings. Most commonly it is only a part of the truth that is presented by the writer, and very generally it is not dogmatically that the truth is presented, but in its relation to some circumstances known to the writer, or some practical end in which he or those for whom he writes are interested ; so that it is only by a process of comparison and induction that we arrive at the truth in its entirety. That men writing thus should nevertheless teach essentially the same truth, so that when their different utterances are pieced together a consistent whole is obtained, is of itself evidence sufficient of their being under divine superintendence whilst they wrote ; for only on this supposition can we understand how innumerable partial statements of doctrine by different persons and at different times should be resolvable into one harmonious whole, and how thoughts uttered accidentally and casually, as it were, should yet in no case be found to clash with each other, but all fall into one great scheme of doctrine. On the other hand, the manner in which doctrinal truth is announced by these writers is such as to forbid the supposition that they

were mere organs of the Spirit who dictated to them what they have written. The thoughts they express are evidently such as they had in their own minds, and which they utter after their own manner and apply as their judgment prescribes.

(vi.) In regard to matters of fact and history, we find many and often serious discrepancies of statement between the different writers, and sometimes in the writings ascribed to the same author. Some of these are to be traced to errors on the part of copyists, and are of no moment as affecting the original composition of the writings. But there are others, and these of importance, which are not to be accounted for in this way. The most solemn injunction, for instance, of the old covenant, the law of the ten commandments, and the most solemn institute of the new dispensation, the Lord's Supper, appear under different forms in different parts of the sacred writings. In some of the historical books of the O. T. we come upon statements which are almost contradicted by statements in other of these books; and in the narratives of our Lord's life as given by the four evangelists there are differences of statement which it is impossible to reconcile. Now, what are we to make of such discrepancies as relating to the composition of these writings? Obviously they cannot be reconciled with the supposition that the Holy Spirit dictated what we find written; for, as with Him there is no variableness and no possibility of mistake, what He dictates must ever be the precise truth, neither in substance nor in form susceptible of change. On the hypothesis, however, that the Holy Spirit in guiding the writers of the different books permitted them to write out of their own minds and to state things as they remembered them or had received them from others when nothing depended on the perfect accuracy of their remembrance or report, the phenomena will be accounted for, and these discrepancies will be seen to be only what might be expected to occur when different witnesses were left free to give their testimony according to what they knew and believed. The opponents of revelation have made the most of these discrepancies as against the inspiration of the sacred writers, and believers have often been sorely troubled because of them. But though they are fatal to the theory of a mechanical inspiration, they present no real difficulty in

the way of such a theory as that which I have endeavoured to expound. If God directed and guided the writers to put down in writing things as they themselves remembered and knew them, their writings are as truly *θεοπνευσται*, God-inspired, as if every word had been dictated to them by the Holy Spirit.

(vii.) The conclusion to which these considerations bring us is that the inspiration of the sacred books is the result of the acting of the Divine Spirit on the minds of the writers so as to leave them perfectly free to utter what was in their minds, whencesoever derived, whether from their own observation, or from tradition, or from human records, or from divine revelation; yet ever so as to preserve them from any statement that would be inconsistent with the great purpose for which the Bible was written, and from every reference or inference that should be either inadequate or misleading. What they put down in writing was what was in their own minds, what they thought or felt or knew in respect of the matter in hand; but it was all put down *εν πνευματι*, so that the whole composition came to be exactly such as God willed it to be for the end it was designed to serve.

There was thus in the production of Scripture a union of the divine and the human, not a combination of what was purely divine with what was purely human, so that one part of Scripture should be wholly of God and another part wholly of man, but a union of the divine and the human in the composition, so that every part is both human and divine. We may find an illustration of this in other cases of the union of divine with the human. Take, for instance, the case of the union of the Divine Spirit with the spirit of man in the regeneration and sanctification of believers. The analogy between this and the union of the Divine Spirit with the human in the composition of Scripture is close, and the two are mutually illustrative. In both cases the divine influence comes of God's grace upon an individual, and certainly effects that for which it comes forth; in both cases its action is direct and immediate; and in both it is such as not to interfere with the ordinary laws and operations of the human mind that is the subject of it.

No one who believes in God as the Creator and Governor



of all things, man's mind included, will deny that God may act on the mind of an individual so as, without interfering with the laws of thought and feeling in the man, or making his influence patent or perceptible to the man's consciousness, to produce results that without such influence would not have been produced. And no one who receives the Bible and has himself experienced the salvation it announces needs to be told that in the regeneration and sanctification of men such a divine operation actually takes place. Here, then, is a case, lying within our own knowledge and experience, of the union of the divine agency with the human for the production of a certain effect. How that union is effected, or by what means God acts on man's mind so as neither to destroy his independent agency nor to suspend any of the ordinary mental operations, and so also as that the man shall have no consciousness of any influence exerted upon him, we cannot tell; but the fact that He does so act cannot be questioned or doubted. What takes places, then, in regeneration and sanctification? Not that God puts into us something foreign to us, and which comes into manifestation apart from the ordinary laws and operations of our minds, but that He so works in us to will and to do that what comes forth is our thought, our feeling, our purpose, our act, and yet at the same time a thought, feeling, purpose, and act inspired in us by God. Regeneration is thus both a divine act and a human act; it is not partly divine and partly human, one part being done by God and another part by man; it cannot be analyzed thus; it is all through both divine and human, the product of the human spirit and the Divine Spirit acting as one. It is the same with sanctification. It is God that sanctifieth; and yet it is by the exercise of his own will and the use of his own faculties that man attains to holiness. Now, exactly analogous to this is inspiration as exercised in the writing of Scripture. The Holy Spirit acted directly on the minds of the writers so as to produce a certain definite result, yet not so as to suspend the use of their own faculties or to awaken in them any consciousness of an action within them other than that of their own minds. The result was not a composition exclusively divine or exclusively human, not a composition of which one part is divine and another human,

but a composition wholly divine and wholly human, the two being so united by a supernatural power that they cannot be separated or viewed apart.

We might borrow an analogy also, illustrative of the point before us, from the union of the divine and the human in the Person of our Lord; though the analogy here is not so close as in the previous case, nor does it come so much within the sphere of our own experience. Still, we have here an instance of the divine being united with the human so closely that each resulting word and act was both human and divine. There was not in Jesus Christ a divine Person and a human Person, thinking, feeling, and acting separately; in Him there was but one person, a divine-human; He was not God *and* man: He was God-man, Θεάνθρωπος. He was the Word that was God, and became flesh and dwelt among men, the image of the invisible God. All His utterances consequently were divinely human; though expressed in the language of the people among whom He dwelt, they were truly divine words, words God-inspired. Analogous to this was the union of the Divine Spirit with the human in the composition of Scripture. As in the Person of Christ there was a union of the divine and human natures so that all that proceeded from Him was both divine and human, so also in the composition of Scripture there was a union of the Divine Spirit with the spirit of the persons employed to write the books, so that all that proceeded from their pens was at once human and divine. In this analogy there appears no fallacy or incoherence; and it may therefore be fairly stated as tending to elucidate the subject now under consideration.

We may now answer categorically the question, What is inspiration as predicated of the sacred writings of the Old and New Testaments? It was not a dictating of what was written by the Divine Spirit to the men who wrote, so that the words of Scripture are simply the utterances of the Spirit conveyed mechanically to the material substance on which they are inscribed by human hands. It was not a mere superintending of the thoughts and words of the writers so as to preserve them from serious error or mistake. It was not a communicating to them of certain truths and facts which they were left to set down in writing, each after his own fashion. It was the union of the Divine Spirit with the mind and soul of the

writer, so that what he wrote was a composition divinely-human. The Bible is thus at once the word of God and the word of man, and comes to us in the very form in all its parts and in all its utterances in which God willed that it should come.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

#### ii. THE ORDINARY OPERATIONS OF THE SPIRIT.

##### (i.) *Divine Influence : Common and Special Grace.*

We now proceed to consider what has been called the abiding and ordinary work of the Spirit, in distinction from His extraordinary work, a part of which we have already considered in dealing with the subject of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. Ignorant as we are of the mode of the divine operation on the mind of man, our consideration ought properly to be confined to the work of the Spirit in its manifestation in those phenomena which may be traced to His divine influence. But at the outset of our investigation we meet a question which has been started as to the extent and limitations of this influence, and to the consideration of this we must now address ourselves.

The Holy Spirit abides with and in the Church, and the ordinances which He has instituted and the protection He affords to the Church at large are common benefits of which all are free to partake. In His operations, however, His work is special, and is directed upon individuals. This is manifest at once in respect of those operations which are denominated extraordinary. The spiritual gifts bestowed on the primitive Church were bestowed on individuals selected on purpose to receive them, and specially acted on by the Spirit for this end. The same is obviously true of those who were inspired of God to commit to writing the things of God contained in the Holy Scriptures; that was an endowment bestowed on

individuals selected by God, and which was enjoyed by them alone. The raising up of men fitted to carry on the work of God in the Church, and sent forth for this end, is from the nature of the case a special work, and can be none else; and so also is every gracious interposition of the Spirit for the protection, guidance, and comfort of believers. It has been denied, however, that the work of the Spirit is special in the conversion and sanctification of men. A distinction has been taken between special and common grace; and whilst it is allowed that occasionally God may, by a special influence of His Spirit, act on men's minds for their benefit and spiritual advancement, it is maintained that ordinarily the grace of the Spirit is given to men in common to profit withal, and that it is only as each uses for himself the grace thus bestowed universally that he is benefited thereby.

1. From the way in which some who contend for the doctrine of common grace express themselves, it would appear that they regard the whole human race as endowed with the gift of the Spirit in such measure as to enable them to believe the gospel when offered to them, and so to be saved. Thus Bishop Tomline says, "God has equally enabled every man to work out his own salvation;" "God gives to every man, through the means of His grace, a power to perform the conditions of the gospel." "In consequence," says Mr. Richard Watson, "of the atonement of Christ offered for all, the Holy Spirit is administered to all." "The virtues of the unregenerate man," he says, "are not from man, but from God, whose Holy Spirit has been vouchsafed to the world through the atonement;" "The doctrine of the impartation of grace to the unconverted, in a sufficient degree to enable them to embrace the gospel, must be admitted." But though this is an endowment universally bestowed, it is not regarded by evangelical divines as operative save in connection with the institution of Christianity, and where the gospel of Christ is made known. Some even hold that it is in and by baptism that this common grace is bestowed. This is the doctrine of the High Anglicans, derived by them from the Church of Rome. "Whatever some few persons, or some petty sects (as the Pelagians of old, the Socinians now)," says Barrow, "may have deemed, it hath been the doctrine constantly, and with very

general consent delivered in the Catholic Church, that to all persons by the holy mystery of baptism duly initiated to Christianity, or admitted into the communion of Christ's body, the grace of God's Holy Spirit certainly is bestowed, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and virtue then undertaken by them; enlightening their minds, rectifying their wills, purifying their affections, directing and assisting them in their practice; the which holy gift (if not abused, ill-treated, driven away, or quenched by their ill-behaviour) will perpetually be continued, improved, and increased to them." "It had been foretold by John the Baptist," says Tomline, "that Christ should baptize with the Holy Ghost, meaning that the baptism instituted by Christ and administered by His apostles and their successors should convey the supernatural assistance of the Spirit of God. This communication being made at baptism, at the time of admission into the gospel covenant, every Christian must possess the invaluable blessing of preventing grace, which, without extinguishing the evil propensities of our nature, inspires holy desires, suggests good counsels, and excites to just works."<sup>1</sup> "The sacraments," says Mohler, expounding the teaching of the Romish Church, "are conceived as channels (*quasi alveus*) through which the power that flows from the sufferings of Christ, the grace which the Saviour hath merited for us, is separated and conveyed to each individually, that through help of the same the health of the soul may be restored or confirmed. . . . As respects the way in which the sacrament conveys to us sanctifying grace, it is taught in the Catholic Church that it works in us in virtue of its own proper character as an institution provided by Christ for our salvation (*ex opere operato scilicet a Christo*, not *quod operatus est Christus*), i.e. the sacraments confer a divine power merited for us by the Saviour which can be effected by no human disposition, by no mental state or effort, but is simply given by God for Christ's sake in the sacrament."<sup>2</sup> This is an expansion of what is more tersely expressed by the Council of Trent in one of their decrees: "Si quis dixerit per ipsa novæ legis sacramenta ex opere operato non conferri gratiam, sed solam fidem

<sup>1</sup> *Refutation of Calvinism*, 8th ed. p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Symbolik*, 5th ed. pp. 257-8.

divinæ promissionis ad gratiam consequendam sufficere, anathema sit.”<sup>1</sup>

This doctrine of the sacraments it is no part of our business at present to examine; I have adduced it simply as connected with the opinion that under the new dispensation grace is bestowed on men in common by the Spirit of God, whereby they obtain power to believe the gospel and to follow a religious course, and as showing how, in the judgment of some, this grace is communicated. The point to be considered at present is, whether this opinion is itself well-founded; in other words, whether there is any sufficient reason for believing that a donation of the Spirit has been given to men in common, whereby they are enabled to believe in Christ and walk in the ways of God and of holiness if they will.

Now, when such a position is assumed, we are entitled to demand that it shall be supported by some distinct testimony from Scripture before we are asked to accept it. This, however, we shall search for in vain in the writings of those by whom it is advanced. General affirmations of man’s inability of himself without aid from above to do the will of God, on the one hand, and declarations of God’s willingness to give the aid of His Spirit to those who ask it, on the other, are plentifully supplied; but no attempt is made to show from Scripture that God actually has bestowed His Spirit on all men in the sense affirmed. Some, indeed, who catch at the words of Scripture, but do not stop to inquire into their real import, quote the words of God by the prophet Joel, “And it shall come to pass afterwards” [or, as St. Peter gives it in quoting this passage, “in the last days,” *ἐν ἔσχαταις ἡμέραις*, Acts ii. 17, a meaning which Kimchi also gives, understanding it of the times of the Messiah], “that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,” as authorizing their position. The more instructed of their party, however, know better than to do this; they know that the promise in this passage has reference, not to the ordinary operations of the Spirit, but to those which are extraordinary, to the endowing of men with the Spirit of prophecy, so that they should see visions and receive divine communications in ecstatic dreams; and that the phrase “all flesh” does not mean the whole human race, but persons of all nations and

<sup>1</sup> *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. vii. can. 8.

classes, as is evident from the subsequent distribution of this into sons and daughters, young men, servants, and handmaids, and from St. Peter's application of it on the day of Pentecost, when he asserted that the miraculous gifts then exhibited by the disciples of Christ, male and female, were a fulfilment of this ancient prediction and promise (Acts ii. 14 ff.).

In one of the passages which I have cited from Mr. Watson he apparently argues for the universality of the gift of the Spirit from the universality of the atonement made by Christ. "In consequence," he says, "of the atonement of Christ offered for all, the Holy Spirit is administered to all." If by this he means that because the atonement of Christ is sufficient for all, the gift of the Spirit, as one of the benefits accruing for it, must be conveyed to all, he obviously assumes a position which is contradicted by fact, and which is in itself absurd, for the provision of a remedy is surely not to be confounded with the actual application of that remedy; as if one were to say, There is a medicine which is of universal efficiency for the cure of a particular disease, therefore every one afflicted with that disease will receive the medicine, and if he use it rightly will be healed. Or, perhaps, he means only that there is a parallelism between the atoning work of Christ and the gift of the Spirit—that the one has the same *extent* as the other, and that the benefits of the one are enjoyed by men under the *same conditions* as the other. Now this is true; but it leads to a conclusion the reverse of that for which Mr. Watson contends. For, as the atonement of Christ is of universal sufficiency and its benefits are free to all, yet is effectual for salvation only as it is applied; so the influence of the Spirit is of universal sufficiency, but becomes effectual only as it actually operates on any. When the parallel is thus stated, and this is the just statement of it, it becomes apparent that the infinite sufficiency of the Spirit's influence no more guarantees its universal efficiency than the boundless sufficiency of the Saviour's atonement guaranteed its universal efficiency for the salvation of men.

Bishop Tomline says, "God has equally enabled every man to work out his own salvation." By this he must mean, not that the same measure of grace is given to every man; for as men have different degrees of need, were the same

measure of grace given to all, all would not be equally enabled to work out their salvation; he must mean that all receive grace *proportionate* to their need, so as to be all alike able to work out their salvation. This raises the question, Why, then, do some obtain salvation while others do not? If an influence is exerted upon two individuals adequate to move them alike and equally, how comes it that the one is moved while the other remains fixed and obdurate? If there are two bodies to be moved, and a power sufficient to move each is applied to both, is it conceivable that the one body should be moved while the other remains at rest?

To this it may be replied, that as man is not a mere body to be moved mechanically by an outward force, but is an intelligent and free agent who is moved only as he wills to move, it is conceivable that of two men equally enabled by the Spirit to work out their salvation one may be saved while the other remains impenitent, inasmuch as the former may will to use the power which has been given him, while the other wills not to use it. This raises the question, What is the power which is supposed to be given by the Spirit to man? Is it the conferring on him of some mental faculty he has not naturally? or is it the giving to him of a disposition which inclines him to goodness, and impels him to will to be and to do what is required for salvation? The former of these no one will be found to maintain, for neither does Scripture assert nor does experience show that any new faculty has been conferred on the human race in consequence of the atonement of Christ; and, besides, were man naturally destitute of the faculty of apprehending and obeying the law of truth and goodness, he could not be righteously called to obey that law, nor be held responsible for neglect of it. Shall we then adopt the other hypothesis, and say that every man has in consequence of Christ's work received an influence by which he is disposed to choose the right way, to obey God's commands, to accept the invitations of the gospel, and so to work out His salvation? But in this case the question recurs with redoubled force, Why, then, is not every man saved? If every man has the natural ability to work out his salvation, and every man is influenced by the Spirit of God to will to do this, what can possibly hinder any man



from being saved? Surely the very acme of absurdity is reached when it is affirmed that every man both can do and wills to do something which yet the majority of men never do.

The truth is that those who use such language as that which I have quoted from Bishop Tomline, and the language is common to the Arminian school, have not been careful to determine the precise sense in which the words they use are to be taken. If, before speaking of man's being *enabled* to obey God's law, they would determine, on the one hand, what man *needs* in order to be able to do this, and, on the other hand, what the Holy Spirit *gives* whereby man is enabled to do this, they would probably see reason to avoid such phraseology. If, as they say, Adam lost when he fell *all* ability to do the will of God, he must have lost natural capacity to follow the path of rectitude as well as inclination or disposition to follow it. But if so, how can man be accountable for his conduct as under law to God? If he has no physical capacity to obey, how can he be blamed for not obeying? In this case sin is impossible, and virtue or holiness is equally impossible. Man is no more accountable for his actions than he is for his sufferings. Both are the result of influences over which he has no control. He is the mere slave of circumstances, and must resign pretensions to the dignity of a moral agent. From such a conclusion every one not a materialist must shrink. Was it, then, not physical capacity to do the will of God, but moral disposition or inclination to do it, that man lost by the fall? If so, what he needs is the restoration to him of this disposition or inclination. But will any say that this is given to every man? Will any affirm that every man that is born into the world is gifted with a disposition to love God and obey His law and seek His favour? Will any affirm that every child who is baptized is endowed with this disposition? No one surely will venture on such an affirmation. But if neither physical ability nor a disposition to goodness is given to man universally by the Spirit, *nothing* is given whereby man is enabled to work out his salvation; if he is to be saved at all, it must be either by an exercise of his own natural powers or by a special communication of grace to each individual who is saved.

The dictum of the Arminians regarding common grace is thus seen to be a mere form of words without any real meaning. They have been led to it by a desire to preserve to divine grace the praise of man's salvation without admitting either of the alternatives above noted. But in this they have utterly failed. In shunning the Scylla of Calvinism they have fallen into the Charybdis of Pelagianism. In refusing to admit the speciality of divine grace in human salvation, they are driven upon a course which leads logically to the denial of any grace in man's salvation at all. For, as Dr. Payne reasons, "If they maintain that an equal measure of the Spirit is given to all, or, in other words, deny that any special influence of the Holy Spirit is put forth in the conversion of men, then it follows that the faith of none is to be ascribed, simply and exclusively at least, to the influence of the Spirit,—or why does it not produce it in all?—but partly, at any rate, to the better moral state in which this primary gift of the Spirit found them, or to their better improvement of a donation and privilege common to all,—an improvement in which they have no additional assistance from the Spirit of God, for that would involve in it a special operation and a special purpose, or, in other words, the doctrine of eternal and personal election. But to affirm that the salvation of the saved is to be ascribed to their own unassisted and better improvement of the means of salvation, is, in effect, to ascribe the salvation of man to himself."<sup>1</sup> Or we may put the argument thus: Here are two men who have received an equal measure of the Spirit in order to salvation, the one of whom is converted and saved, while the other remains impenitent and unsaved. Now, who made these two men thus to differ? themselves or God? If themselves, then is salvation not of grace but of works, inasmuch as it is the man's own acting alone which has made him who is saved to differ from him that is lost. If God, then a special influence must have been exerted on the one man which was not exerted on the other, for only thus could the salvation of the one be effected by God. Between these alternatives, then, the Arminian must make his choice. If he take the former, he will not easily preserve

<sup>1</sup> Lectures on *Divine Sovereignty*, etc., p. 66, 2nd ed.

himself from sinking into Pelagianism ; if he take the latter, he cannot escape Calvinism, for the admission of a special divine influence in the conversion of a sinner draws after it the admission of an elective purpose and predestination on the part of God in reference to the individual so influenced.

2. The doctrine of common grace we have been considering is peculiar to the Arminian school. There is another doctrine which sometimes bears the same designation which is held by many Calvinists as well as by Arminians ; indeed it may almost be regarded as the commonly received doctrine of the Evangelical Churches. Thus in the Assembly's Larger Catechism, in answer to the question, "Are the elect effectually called?" it is replied, "All the elect and they only are effectually called, although others may be and often are outwardly called by the ministry of the word, and *have some common operations of the Spirit* ; who, for their wilful neglect and contempt of the grace offered to them, being justly left in their unbelief, do never truly come to Jesus Christ." So also Owen says : "In reference to the work of regeneration itself *positively* considered, we may observe that there are certain *previous* and preparatory works or workings in and upon the souls of men that are antecedent and *dispositive* unto it. But yet regeneration doth not consist in them, nor can it be educed out of them." And after instancing illumination, conviction of sin, and a reformation of life as things which "may be wrought in the minds of men by the dispensation of the word, and yet the work of regeneration be never perfected in them," he adds, "All the things mentioned as wrought instrumentally by the word are *effects* of the power of the Spirit of God. The word itself under a bare proposal to the minds of men will not so affect them ;" and farther on he says, "What He [the Holy Spirit] worketh in any of these effectually and infallibly accomplisheth the *end* aimed at, which is no more but that men be enlightened, convinced, humbled, and reformed, wherein He faileth not." <sup>1</sup>

(1.) For the more precise apprehension of this doctrine of common grace, it may be observed that the operation of the Spirit on the minds of men is assumed to be special, *i.e.* it is not an influence diffused over men universally, but one which

<sup>1</sup> Works, vol. iii. pp. 229, 234, 235, 237.

acts specially on each individual affected by it. The grace thus bestowed is common, not in the sense of being given to all men in common, but in the sense of producing effects which are ordinary, and may fall short of a real saving efficacy.

(2.) This operation of the Spirit on the mind is immediate and direct. It may be and usually is in connection with the word; but the effect is that "of the power of the Spirit of God."

(3.) This operation is always efficacious for the end at which it aims. The power of the Spirit may be limited in its aim, but whatever it aims at it infallibly accomplishes.

(4.) The things aimed at by the Spirit in these common operations are illumination of the mind, conviction of sin, and amendment of life and such like, all of which may be produced and yet the individual who is the subject of them may come short of salvation.

(5.) These effects, however, are in themselves *dispositive* to salvation, have a *tendency* to lead on to regeneration and the higher life, and are rendered fruitless in this respect by wilful neglect and contempt of the grace of which they are the objects.

It will be at once apparent that *this* doctrine of common grace is in no wise opposed to the doctrine of special grace in the conversion and sanctification of the saved, and may be held with perfect consistency by those who hold that only the elect are effectually called. For the grace bestowed is in both cases supposed to be special; the only difference being that in the one case the effect produced comes short of actual salvation, whilst in the other that result is secured.

Now, that God may be pleased in particular instances to operate on the minds of individuals so as to produce effects which are only transient and do not terminate in their actual renewal and ultimate salvation, it would be rash to deny. At the same time it must strike every one as somewhat *improbable* that such an expenditure, if we may so speak, of the divine grace should take place; improbable that He who does nothing in vain should operate on men's minds to produce effects which confessedly lead to nothing, which though, as Owen expresses it, "dispositive" to salvation, yet are not so

continued as to end in salvation. Does not this seem as if God might begin a good work in man, and yet fail to complete it either through forgetfulness or some change of mind?

What is thus in itself improbable is shown to be altogether untenable when it is considered that it is without any support from Scripture, and that the facts which it is supposed to be necessary to account for may be accounted for without it.

The effects supposed to be produced are, as enumerated by Owen: (1) Illumination, (2) Conviction, and (3) Reformation; the first respecting the mind only; the second, the mind, conscience, and affections; and the third, the life and conversation; all of which, he says, may be produced in men who yet remain impenitent and die in sin. Now, it is remarkable that though Scripture records instances in which all these effects were produced in men who yet remained impenitent, it nowhere ascribes these to the operation of the Spirit of God on these men. Ahab humbled himself before God; but it was because he heard the words of Elijah denouncing his sin, and threatening him with terrible retribution, that this effect was produced. The men of Nineveh repented and amended their ways; but it was at the preaching of Jonah that they did this. Herod did many things, and heard John the Baptist gladly; but it is expressly said that it was because he observed him and heard him that this effect was produced. Felix trembled, and seemed disposed to do justly by the apostle; but it was because Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come" that the Roman procurator was thus moved. The heathen, the apostle says, do the things contained in the law, though they are without the law; but he expressly says, they do this "by nature." The seed which fell on stony ground, in our Lord's parable, represents those who endure but for a while in a good course; but their entering that course at all is ascribed exclusively to their hearing the word and with joy receiving it. These are all the instances I find adduced by those who advocate this doctrine; and in all of them there is not only no allusion to a divine influence as having operated the results described, but in nearly all of them this is expressly attributed to a mere natural or external cause.

Some of the writers who advocate this doctrine refer in

support of it to certain passages of Scripture in which God is represented as by His Spirit striving with men without effect; but, even allowing that the reference in such cases is to an operation by the Spirit directly on the minds of men, these instances only prove that God may in special cases, such as that of the men before the flood, strive and labour to subdue men's obduracy without effect; they can never be held to prove that this is God's ordinary procedure with men, or that such effects as we see sometimes in unregenerate persons of a good character, are produced in them by the direct action of the Spirit of God. But *are* such passages to be taken in this way? When God says, for instance, in reference to the antediluvians, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for he is flesh" (Gen. vi. 3), is the meaning that God would no longer operate directly on the minds of men as He had been operating hitherto? I do not stop to inquire if this be the correct rendering of the passage; I believe it is not; but, be this as it may, the question I would urge is, Does the passage as it stands in the A. V. authorize the conclusion that it was by directly operating on their minds that God strove with the antediluvians? If this be assumed, we must suppose that it is possible for a creature not only to enter into a personal struggle with the Divine Spirit, but to pursue that so successfully as to weary out the Almighty, and constrain Him to give up the contest in disgust. This is too absurd to be accepted. What, then, are we to understand by the Spirit of God striving with men? An answer to this may be obtained if we look at such a passage as Deut. xxxiii. 8: "And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy Holy One, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah." Here there is no question as to the translation. The verb used is **נָאָר**, the proper meaning of which is to contend, to strive, and which is used both of a contending with blows and of a contending with words. Here, then, is an undoubted case of a striving of God with men: the question is, How was this done? The history supplies the answer. The place was called Meribah, "strife," "quarrel," because there the Israelites "chode with Moses their leader, saying, Give us water that we may drink" (Ex. xvii. 2, 7). Moses was the

servant of God, the bearer of God's commands to the people, and the instrument of God's working among them or in regard to them. In chiding with him, in reproaching him, and complaining of the condition into which they had been brought under his leading, they virtually spoke against God, and contended with Him. Here, then, to strive with God means to be rebellious against His ordinances, to struggle against His arrangement, to complain of His appointment, and to murmur against one employed to convey His will to men and carry out what He has designed. Take, again, Isa. xlv. 9: "Woe to him that striveth with his Maker. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?" Here striving with God is plainly identified with complaining of His arrangement, challenging His right to do to and with His creatures as He sees meet, and throwing the blame of man's misconduct or want on God, who has made man as he is, and places him where he is. Once more, take Isa. lvii. 16: "For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made." Here the same verb, *רִיב*, is used, and the reference undoubtedly is to the sending of judgments upon His people, whereby they were chastised and subdued; God had done this, but He says here He will no longer do so to them, lest they should be utterly destroyed. Let these instances suffice. They sufficiently show that when God is said to strive with men, or, what is the same thing, when men are said to strive with God, the meaning is that God sends His commands on men which they refuse to obey, makes arrangements for men to which they will not submit, or sends judgments on them by which they are chastised and corrected. By these usages, then, is the passage in Genesis to be explained. God's Spirit strove with the antediluvians by sending them messages of instruction and warning, surrounding them with circumstances fitted to lead them to repentance, and it may be enforcing His admonitions and warnings by varied dealings of a corrective character and tendency. Noah, we know, was to the men of his day a preacher of righteousness; he appeared as God's messenger to his contemporaries; and whilst he

admonished and warned them, and called them to repentance, "the long-suffering of God," St. Peter says, "waited," if haply they would listen to the message, and so avert the judgment that was impending (1 Pet. iii. 20). But they remained "disobedient," and so there was strife between them and God. So also it was with the people of Israel. So long as they were obedient to God's word He was at peace with them, and delighted to do them good; but when they refused to hearken, and made their hearts as hard as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent in His Spirit by the prophets, there came wrath from the Lord of hosts (Zech. vii. 12). God strove with them by His word which He sent by the prophets. When they obstinately refused to obey that, He sent on them His punitive judgment, and scattered them. It is the same still. The word of God is emphatically "the sword of the Spirit," that by which He aims to subdue the impenitency and overcome the rebelliousness of men; and only by this, or by His castigatory dealings with them in connection with this, does He strive with men. When men refuse to receive and obey His word, when they set at nought His counsel, and will have none of His reproof, when, unmoved by His judgments and threatenings they persist in their obduracy, the result can only be that they perish in their iniquity. God seeks to do men good; but when, like Israel of old, men rebel and vex His Holy Spirit, He is turned to be their enemy, and fights against them for their destruction.

3. There are who think that man is not able to obey God's word without the aid of the Spirit; and it has been maintained that all the things which apparently are effected in unregenerate men by the word are really the effects of the Spirit's power on their minds, the word itself being held to be impotent so to affect them. But if man has not power to do what God commands him to do, how can he be held guilty or be justly punished for not obeying? and how can the righteousness of God be vindicated if He exacts from His creature what he has no ability to render? Where ability ends, obligation ceases; impotency is exempt from law, and to demand of a subject what he is physically unable to render is the part of a tyrant and not of a righteous Lord. It is



simply impossible, then, that God, who is perfectly righteous, can lay on man any command which man is not able to obey if he will. *Morally* unable he may be, because of his aversion from God and his dislike to what God requires; but his *natural* ability to do what God enjoins cannot be denied without imputing unrighteousness to God in laying on him such an injunction.

As to the word of God being impotent to effect any spiritual result in those to whom it is sent, and as needing, consequently, some accession of power to render it effectual, which accession the Holy Spirit is supposed to give, not only in conversion and regeneration, but in what are regarded as the common operations of the Spirit, it is to be observed,—

(1.) That the word of God cannot be regarded as impotent to effect that for which it is sent forth without casting discredit on the word itself, and impeaching the wisdom of Him by whom it is issued. The word of God embodied in a message to men is a means to an end. But if it be not adequate to effect that end, of what real worth is it? and as wisdom is seen in the adaptation of means to ends, how shall we vindicate wisdom to God if it is seen that the means He has instituted are in this case impotent to effect the end for which they were designed? Now, the word of God is that by which men are to be instructed in divine knowledge, by which they are to be enlightened, guided, and purified, by which they are to be convicted of sin and brought to repentance, by which, in short, they are to be made wise unto salvation. But if it is in itself incompetent to this, if it cannot enlighten and sanctify unless some power be added to it from without, who does not see that the means provided by God for this special end are insufficient, and that consequently there is here a failure and a mistake on the part of God? “The gospel,” as has been well said, “is the spiritual medicine of the soul;” it is the specific which God has provided for the cure of man’s spiritual malady. But if it is declared to be insufficient for this, if when applied it is found to be impotent to heal the disease, then surely it is pronounced to be an imposture, and its Author is charged with ignorance or folly in sending it forth.

(2.) Scripture distinctly asserts that the word of God is

in itself powerful and altogether sufficient to accomplish the end for which it is designed. "The word of God," we are told, "is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12; see also Jer. xxiii. 29; Ps. xix. 7, cxix. 130; Rom. i. 16). Clearly, therefore, the word of God asserts for itself power to accomplish the results for which it is sent forth. To maintain that it has not this power unless some additional power be somehow added to it, is plainly to contradict the testimony of that word concerning itself.

(3.) As no means can effectuate the intended result unless they be applied, the word of God may be rendered ineffectual through man's refusing to receive it, or through his resisting it when it has begun to operate upon him. A medicine may be specially fitted to cure a disease, but it will not effect that result unless it be applied, and be allowed to operate without the counteractive influence of some antagonist influence; and in like manner the word of God, though in itself perfectly adequate to the cure of man's moral maladies, may be rendered fruitless through man's own negligence, and the counteractive influence of his hostility to it. Accordingly, when the apostle says that the law was impotent to condemn sin in the flesh, he is careful to assert that it was through the flesh that it was thus weak (Rom. viii. 3); it was weak, not in itself, for the law is holy, just, and good, but through man's carnality and unwillingness to submit to it. So also, when he speaks of the gospel as the power of God unto salvation, he conditions this by its being believed. If the gospel fails, then, in making man wise to salvation, the fault is not with it, but with the men themselves. They will not receive it or obey it. The faculty of faith is not wanting, the credibility of the gospel message is not wanting, the power of the gospel to save is not wanting; what is wanting is "the obedience of faith," the willingness on the part of man to accept the divine message, and to be saved in the way God has provided and in that message announces. As our Lord complained of the men of His day that they *would* not come unto Him that they might have life, so it is still simply

because men refuse to hearken, or because when they have received the word "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mark iv. 19). In some cases the word produces no effect at all, because the heart is obstinately closed against it; in others it produces conviction, penitence, and resolution to amend; but the soil of the heart still remaining unchanged, these fruits endure but for a while, and ere long go up as dust, or vanish as the morning cloud or the early dew. They become permanent, and the fruit is unto eternal life, only where the Spirit has previously made the soil good; then the good seed falling upon it is received, and fruit is brought forth to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

(4.) It may be at once seen from this what it is that the Holy Spirit does for the salvation of men to whom the gospel is brought. That divine Agent does not give any added power or force to the word, any more than He gives additional faculty to man to receive it; He simply removes that which hinders the word from being received, or obstructs its operation when received. As in the case of Lydia, God "opened her heart" so that she attended to the things spoken to her by the servants of Christ (Acts xvi. 14); so in every case where the truth is received in the love of it and unto salvation, it is because the Spirit has prepared the heart to receive it. The Spirit acts immediately and directly on the inner nature of man, so as to prepare for the entrance of the truth. God says of Israel, "I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord" (Jer. xxiv. 7). "God," says the apostle, "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" (2 Cor. iv. 6). As "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14); the Spirit must needs give to man a renewal in the spirit of his mind before he will receive the truth by which he is to be saved. When this is effected, the man's heart is opened and the truth enters in, and dwells in him to the salvation of his soul.

(5.) When people speak of additional power being imparted to the word for the effecting of man's salvation, they use

language which is utterly devoid of meaning. They confound moral causes with physical, and because the force of a physical cause may be increased, they conclude that the force of a moral agency may also be increased. But this is impossible. The two cases are not analogous. The effect of a physical energy depends very much on the force with which it is applied; the effect of a moral energy depends solely on the intrinsic weight of the energy itself. If an addition could be made to that, there would be more power given to it to move. But this is impossible. The motive power of any truth lies in the truth itself, and as truth cannot be made more true, its motive power can receive no addition. Motives may be multiplied, but this means not that the power of any motive is increased, but only that additional motives are adduced. One form of expressing truth may be better than another, and so may act more powerfully on the mind than the other; but that is not because an additional power has been given to the truth, but because the truth has been more fully or more exactly brought before the mind. It is the truth expressed, and not the mere expression of it, that moves; and when the expression of any truth is just and accurate, it has only to be fairly apprehended by the mind in order to produce its proper effect. As, then, in the word of God truth is expressed most perfectly, all that is needed in order to a man's being rightly affected by it is that it shall be brought into full, immediate, and constant contact with his mind. In the degree in which the man really apprehends the truth he is affected by it. But as he may take it in only partially, or may retain it only for a season, or may resist it and treat it as if it were not truth but falsehood, the work of the Spirit on the heart is needed, that the truth may enter into the man's mind and abide there in all its fulness and in all its power.

And here I may take the opportunity of cautioning you against the use of an expression which one sometimes finds used, both from the pulpit and in books. In asserting the necessity for a divine influence to the conversion of men it is not unusual to find this connected with a declaration that the "bare word" or the "dead letter" of Scripture is not sufficient for this. Now, such phraseology is surely objectionable. That which comes to us fraught with divine truth, that which has

in it the very mind of the Spirit of God, is not, and never should be said to be "bare." And as for its being "dead," those who apply to it such an epithet surely forget that God Himself has declared it to be "quick"—that is, "living," ζων—"and powerful;" has declared it to be "the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." Let such phraseology, then, be avoided. It may lead to the belief that the provision which God has sent for the healing and health of the soul is essentially inoperative; and when "this idea is conveyed to the mind of a sinner it will (as Dr. Payne has justly observed) veil the full extent of his guilt by failing to fix his attention upon his own obstinate rejection of the medicine as the direct and indeed exclusive cause of his remaining under the full power of spiritual disease."

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## CHAPTER XI.

### THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

#### (ii.) *The Design of the Spirit's Work.*

In the writings of the older divines we find considerable stress laid on what they call *the order of salvation* (*ordo salutis*). In this order some indicate not fewer than ten steps, while others content themselves with a smaller number. Calov and Hollaz enumerate them thus: Vocation, Illumination, Conversion, Regeneration, Justification, Mystical Union with God, Renovation, Sanctification, Conservation, and Glorification. Quenstedt follows the same enumeration, omitting the last two. Carpzov, by whom the phrase "*ordo salutis*" was introduced, gives the same number as Hollaz, but in a somewhat different order, and with some difference in the particulars: his arrangement is, Vocation, Illumination, Regeneration, Conversion, Justification, Contrition, Faith, Mystical Union, and Sanctification. Some, again, resolve the whole into four, viz. Faith, Regeneration, Justification, and Sanctification. The arrangement most generally adopted

is—1. Vocation; 2. Illumination; 3. Justification; 4. Regeneration; 5. Mystical Union; and 6. Renewal, meaning by the last the conformation of the whole man to the image of God. These are all classed under the general head of *Gratia Spiritus Sancti applicatrix*, the appliant grace of the Holy Spirit, and they are referred to different offices which the Holy Spirit is represented as discharging, viz.—1. His *officium elenchticum* (according to John xvi. 8) or *epanorthoticum* (according to 2 Tim. iii. 16, where the Scriptures are said to be profitable *πρὸ ἐπανορθώσιν*); 2. His *officium didascalium* (John xvi. 13--15); 3. His *officium paedcuticum* (2 Tim. iii. 16; Rom. viii. 14); and 4. His *officium paracleticum* (Rom. viii. 16, 26).

To this method of arrangement I am not disposed to pay much regard. It seems to me unnecessarily minute and formal, and though it may be possible to enunciate a distinction between the different particulars of which it consists, in reality and substantially the greater part of them are only different stages or degrees of the same act or state. To me it appears that a careful analysis will resolve them all into Vocation or Calling; Regeneration, or the implantation of a new principle of spiritual life; Justification, or the removal of all penal disabilities, and the placing of the individual in a right state in relation to the law and government of God; and Sanctification, or the removal of all moral and spiritual defilement from the individual, so that he becomes holy as God is holy, and so fit to dwell in His presence for ever.

These are the topics to which I have now to direct your attention. I shall not, however, discuss these topics as separate and collateral theses. I prefer regarding them all in their subordination to the grand result of the Spirit's working, viz. the bringing of men into the condition and to the privileges of Divine Sonship. To accomplish this is the grand design of the scheme and work of redemption. It is to this that God predestinates men: "Blessed," says the apostle, "be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ . . . having predestinated us to *υἰοθεσίαν* [a receiving into Sonship] through Jesus Christ to Him-

self " (Eph. i. 3-5). It was for this that God sent His Son in human nature into the world (Gal. iv. 5), and it was with a view to this that the sufferings of Christ were endured (Heb. ii. 10). It is for the securing of this that the Holy Spirit has come forth from the Father, and operates in the hearts of men (Rom. viii. 14-16; Gal. iv. 6).

To bring men to the enjoyment of the Divine Sonship, then, is the great design of the entire scheme of redemption, and to this privileged state all are actually brought who receive Christ, and are accepted in Him (John i. 12; 1 John iii. 2). Thus received, God dealeth with them as with sons; and of them it is expected that they should live and act as sons of God, being without rebuke, being imitators of God, and seeking to glorify Him in their bodies and spirits which are His.

(iii.) *The Work of the Spirit in bringing men into Divine Sonship.*

We may therefore start with advantage from this point; and assuming that to bring men into the condition and to the privileges of the sons of God is the great design of Christianity, we may proceed to inquire what it is that the Holy Spirit does to individuals so as to bring them into this state, and what are the blessings which through the Spirit's working are actually secured to them. We shall thus be led to consider—1. Their Vocation or Calling; 2. their Regeneration; 3. their Justification; 4. their Sanctification; 5. the securing to them of all needful guidance, sustenance, and blessing through life; 6. the Resurrection of the body as the crown and consummation of the sonship; and 7. The grand result of the whole in their reception into heaven, in their being brought to the glory of their Father's house, and in their being made perfectly like Him, when they shall see Him as He is.

1. *Vocation or Calling.*

(1.) The effectual calling of men by God brings those who are the objects of it into the condition of sons of God. As man

was made at first to be a son of God (Luke iii. 38), so it is to this high privilege that he is restored through that redemption which is in Christ Jesus. God calls those whom He hath chosen to eternal life to be sons, sons of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. God sent forth His Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the sonship (*υιοθεσίαν*) (Gal. iv. 5). And all who are so redeemed may adopt the joyful utterance of the apostle, "Now are we the sons of God" (1 John iii. 2).

(2.) This divine sonship includes three states of privilege. First, it implies that those who enjoy it are the objects of God's special love. "Behold," says the apostle, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John iii. 1). Hence God speaketh unto them as children, and deals with them as those whom He loveth (Heb. xii. 5, 6). In accordance with this, such phrases as *τεκνα ἀγαπητα* are applied to them; they are spoken of as *λαος περιουσιος* (Tit. ii. 14), a phrase corresponding to the Hebrew *עַם סֵגֻלָּה*, which God applies to Israel as His special people, the people of His treasure (Ex. xix. 5; Deut. vii. 6, etc.), and of them God speaks as His property or treasure, which in the great day of the Lord He will recognize as specially His (Mal. iii. 17). The Hebrew word *סֵגֻלָּה*, and the Greek *περιουσιος*, by which the LXX. render it, and which the N. T. writers have adopted, denote not merely a possession or something possessed; they convey the idea of something which the owner sets much store by, which he embraces and holds fast (comp. the verb *סָגַל*), and therefore are properly regarded as involving the idea of treasure, *peculium*, or special property. Secondly, this sonship implies the believer's resemblance to God. As the son resembles the father, so believers are to be imitators of God (*μιμηται του Θεου*), as dear children; they are to be perfect as their Father in heaven is perfect, and holy as He who hath called them is holy; they are to walk worthy of God, who hath called them to His kingdom and glory; and they are to be blameless and harmless, sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation (Eph. v. 1; Matt. v. 48; 1 Pet. i. 15; 1 Thess. ii. 12; Phil. ii. 15). They are



thus exhorted because they have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him (Col. iii. 10). Made sons of God, they have been created anew in His image; and though in the present state this never appears as perfectly developed within them, yet is it there in its great lineaments, and they are subject to a grand transforming process, by which, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord; and are taught to rest in the assurance that when this process is completed, "as they have borne the image of the earthly, they shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (2 Cor. iii. 18; 1 Cor. xv. 49). Thirdly, this divine sonship implies that those who are the possessors of it are the objects of God's special care, protection, and blessing. As it belongs to a parent to watch over, guide, and protect his child, seek the advantage and welfare of his child, and at the same time train and discipline him; so God our heavenly Father gives practical expression, so to speak, to His fatherhood, by caring for the welfare, watching over the interests, guiding and directing the steps, and protecting from evil those whom He has received as His sons and His daughters. God puts upon them His new name; He sends into their hearts the spirit of sonship, whereby they cry, Abba, Father; He gives them free access into His presence, so that they can approach Him with the confidence of children; He makes all things work together for their good; He supplies all their need according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus; He subjects them to needful chastisement, not for His pleasure, but for their profit, that they may be partakers of His holiness; and He so encompasses, guides, and sustains them, that they may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Having predestinated them to the sonship, He blesses them "with all blessing in heavenly places in Christ" (Rev. ii. 17, iii. 12; Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6; Eph. iii. 12; Rom. viii. 28; Phil. iv. 19; Heb. xii. 6, xiii. 6; Eph. i. 3). Fourthly, they who partake of this divine sonship have also secured to them a divine heirship. The apostle represents the latter as involved in the former. "If

children," he argues, "then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. viii. 17); and again, in writing to the Galatians, he says, "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal. iv. 7). Their sonship therefore secures to them an inheritance of God; and what that inheritance is St. Peter tells us (1 Pet. i. 3-5). Thus the believer, though formerly an enemy and an outcast, becomes in virtue of his sonship a partaker of the promise of eternal inheritance, and has all the rights of an heir in his Father's house.

The privileges and blessings thus included in the divine sonship of believers all hang closely together. It is the love of God which is the source of all spiritual excellence and blessing to the believer, which produces moral resemblance in his soul to God, which draws forth his affections to God and to goodness, which secures to him the guidance, protection, help, and comfort he needs here, and conveys to him the assurance of the heavenly inheritance, as well as makes him meet to be a partaker of it hereafter. In proportion also as the believer realizes these privileges of the divine sonship, in that proportion does his sense of filial relationship to God become deeper and more distinct; the *εχθρα* and *φοβος* of his natural state disappear, and the *φιλια* and *αγάπη* of a true child predominate within him, and influence his whole conduct and deportment.

(3.) Now the question arises, On what does this divine sonship of the believer rest? In other words, How and by what means does he who was not a child of God become such?

To this it is not unusual to answer, He becomes a child of God by adoption; and theologians have set forth adoption as one of the parts or stages, so to speak, in the order of salvation. Thus Turretine, who considers it as a part of justification, defines adoption to be "the judicial act of God by which, out of His mere compassion, He adopts into His family those whom He hath chosen to salvation through faith in Christ, and extends to them the name and right of sons as to inheritance."<sup>1</sup> By others adoption is regarded as distinct from justification, but they equally regard it as that by which

<sup>1</sup> *Instt. Theol. Elenc.*, Loc. xvi. Qu. 6, § 2.

men become sons of God. Thus the Confession of Faith of the Westminster divines teaches that "all those who are justified, God vouchsafeth in and for His only Son Jesus Christ to make partakers of the grace of adoption, by which they are taken into the number and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God." And in the Shorter Catechism the same doctrine is still more tersely and distinctly taught. "Adoption," it is there said, "is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God." We may, indeed, regard it as a common doctrine of theologians of the Calvinistic school, that it is by adoption that we are made sons of God.

Now I cannot help thinking that this doctrine has been pressed out of very slender materials, and has but little, if anything, to support it in Scripture. It rests almost entirely on the use of the word *νιοθεσία* to describe the state into which believers are brought as the children of God. Now, it is true that in the later classics this word is used to designate the act of adoption, that act by which a man took the child of another man and legally placed him in the position, so far as civil rights were concerned, of a child of his own. It may be admitted also that to a certain extent the changed relation of the believer to God may be represented figuratively by this. At the same time, it cannot be denied that the figure of adoption very inadequately represents the relation of the believer to God as his Father, and the condition into which, as a child of God, he is brought; and it cannot escape notice that in order to make anything of their doctrine, theologians have had to put into it a great deal which the figure of adoption would not of itself have conveyed. An adopted child may bear the name, enjoy the favour, dwell in the house, and inherit the property of him by whom he has been adopted. But mere adoption can never produce in the person adopted resemblance to the person adopting, such as a son bears to his father; and yet this is the feature of the divine sonship in believers on which Scripture lays most stress. Besides, though *νιοθεσία*, when used of the relation of one human being to another, can mean only adoption, seeing men have no other way of placing those who are not their sons by birth in

the place of sons, it does not follow that it must mean the same when used of a state into which a man is placed by God. But what seems to me fatal to this doctrine of adoption is that Scripture so distinctly states that men become sons of God by a new creation, by being begotten of Him, by being born again, by being born of God. Surely one who is a son by begetting and by birth cannot become a son by adoption. To set about adopting a lawful child would not only be superfluous, but would be legally incompetent. When God therefore tells us we are His children by the new birth, it seems preposterous to maintain that we become His children by a process of adoption.

I am aware that those divines who hold by the doctrine of adoption do not set aside, but rather strenuously maintain that of regeneration, and satisfy themselves that they can consistently accept both. Thus Dr. Crawford,<sup>1</sup> who admits that "there is an apparent incongruity in using the two words *Regeneration* and *Adoption* with reference to believers if we insist on giving to each its strict and literal meaning. For the circumstance," he adds, "of believers being spiritually '*born of God*' would seem to preclude the sonship by *adoption*," proposes to avoid this incongruity and apparent preclusion by taking the words in a looser sense, and regarding the language as that of mere approximation. But this can hardly be accepted as satisfactory; for though it would be unwise to demand that all the words in which divine ideas or facts are made known to us should be taken in their strict literal meaning, it surely does not follow that we are at liberty to use words which, under any meaning we can fairly attach to them, mutually preclude each other, as he admits Regeneration and Adoption to do. Dr. Crawford has not told precisely under what modifications of meaning he would use each of these words, and I would not presume to say he has none to propose. But judging from what he has actually said, I venture to think he would be somewhat puzzled to put down in precise form such a definition of these two terms in relation to believers as would give to each a distinct and separate meaning, and yet not confound either of them with something else. Thus, when he contends that "adoption is not merely remedial and restora-

<sup>1</sup> *Fatherhood of God.*

tive," but that in effecting it there are "high and potent agencies employed with which we can scarcely suppose humanity to be brought into contact without having all its original elements and characteristics not only restored, but gloriously elevated and transfigured, insomuch that far more than was lost in Adam shall be gained in Christ," he seems to me to use language which appropriately describes that great change effected by the Spirit of God on man which Scripture represents as a new birth, a new creation, a passing from death unto life, and which we are accustomed to designate by the term regeneration. And when, farther on in his book, he speaks of adoption as "significant of a forensic, or, at all events, of a *federal* transaction," and describes it as "practically resulting in God's giving to His people the plighted assurances of His word, confirmed by the inward testimony of His Holy Spirit," he seems to me to identify adoption with justification, by which God entitles the believer in Christ to receive all the privileges and immunities of the kingdom of God. From this I infer that this able divine had not clearly settled in his own mind in what sense regeneration and adoption are to be taken, so as to make each significative of a proper and special state of blessing enjoyed by the child of God.

The conclusion at which I have arrived is that *υιοθεσια* as used in the N. T. is to be understood as meaning simply a state of sonship, without predicating anything as to the way in which that sonship is conferred; that there is no ground in Scripture for the doctrine of *adoption* as taught by theologians; and that the only way in which men become sons of God is by regeneration.

This truth is asserted in Scripture by various forms of expression (see John i. 12, 13, iii. 3; Rom. viii. 14, etc.).

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

2. *Regeneration.*

Regeneration may be taken in a wider and in a stricter or more limited acceptance. In the former it includes all that is done in order to constitute one who is fallen and guilty a child of God,—the change in his legal state before God as well as the change in his heart and affections towards God; in the latter it is limited to the moral and spiritual change which takes place when a man is delivered from the dominant power of sin, and is inclined towards that which is good and holy and godly. By modern theologians, especially in this country, it is only in this latter acceptance that the term is used. This is not in exact accordance with Scripture, where that change by which men become sons of God is represented as including a change both of state and of character. This is distinctly recognized in some of the Lutheran Confessions and by some of the Lutheran divines. Thus in the *Formula Concordiæ*, adopted by the Lutheran Church in 1577, the following statement is made: "The word regeneration is sometimes taken in such sense that it includes both the remission of sins and the subsequent renovation which the Holy Spirit operates in those who are justified by faith, sometimes also it signifies remission of sins alone and adoption to be sons of God. . . . Moreover, the word vivification is sometimes so taken as to denote the remission of sins. For, when a man is justified by faith, that by itself is a regeneration, because, from being a child of wrath he becomes a child of God, and thus is transferred from death to life." Quenstedt, a Lutheran divine, says: "Widely taken, it [regeneration] denotes restitution of spiritual life in general . . . and thus taken it comprehends under it also justification following renovation. Strictly taken, it is used for the remission of sins or justification (Gal. iii. 11), or for renovation." Hollaz, another Lutheran divine, says: "Regeneration is an act of

grace by which the Holy Spirit endows a man with saving faith, so that his sins being remitted he is made a son of God and heir of eternal life." And, not to multiply quotations, an eminent German theologian, the late Carl Immanuel Nitzsch, says: "The regeneration of man, or the divine transformation of the spiritual individual life in its original elements, is the unity of the justification and the conversion of the sinner." And in a note he adds, "Regeneration relates to the totality and unity of the self-consciousness. This, under one aspect, is more a perceptive, under another, more an active energy—representation and will. Through justification the representative self-consciousness is renewed, the way of viewing God and the relation to God in individual feeling is changed. By conversion the will is changed."<sup>1</sup> Into the accuracy of these distinctions I do not stop to inquire; I cite the passage merely to show how by a recent writer of great eminence regeneration is regarded as including both justification and conversion, or moral renovation.

I proceed now to consider regeneration under the aspect to which it is commonly restricted by theologians.

(1.) The word regeneration (*παλιγγενεσία*) occurs only once in the N. T., in Tit. iii. 5. The word was in use among the Greeks, but with them it had no such sense as that in which it is used by the apostle. "*Παλιγγενεσία*," says Archbishop Trench, "is one of the many words which the gospel found, and, so to speak, glorified; enlarged the borders of its meaning; lifted it up into a higher sphere; made it the expression of far deeper thoughts, of far mightier truths, than any of which it had been the vehicle before. It was, indeed, already in use; but as the Christian new birth was not till after Christ's birth, as men were not new-born till Christ was born (John i. 12), as their regeneration did not go before but only followed His generation; so the word could not be used in this its highest, most mysterious sense, till that great mystery of the birth of the Son of God into our world had actually found place."<sup>2</sup> The idea, however, which that word is used to convey appears abundantly under other forms in the N. T. We have it in such expressions as "the new

<sup>1</sup> See also Martensen's *Doγματικ*, § 232.

<sup>2</sup> *Synonyms of the New Testament*, p. 59, ed. 1865.

creature or creation" (*καὶνὴ κτίσις*, Gal. vi. 15), "God's workmanship" (*ποίημα Θεοῦ*, Eph. ii. 9), "created in Christ" (*κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ*, ver. 10), or "according to God" (*κατὰ Θεοῦ*, iv. 24), as applied to believers, no less than in such expressions as "born again" (*ἀναγεννασθαι*, 1 Pet. i. 3), "born from above" (*γεννασθαι ἀνωθεν*, John iii. 3), "born of God" or "of the Spirit" (*ἐκ Θεοῦ*, John i. 13, or *ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος*, iii. 5, 6). We find it also in such representations as that of the "new man" into which believers have been renewed, having put off the old man which is corrupt (Eph. iv. 22 ff.; comp. Rom. vi. 6), "the inward man" (*ὁ ἐσω ἀνθρώπος*, Rom. vii. 22; Eph. iii. 16; Col. iii. 9; comp. 2 Cor. iv. 16), "the renewing of the mind" (*ἡ ἀνακαίνωσις τοῦ νοός*, Rom. xii. 2; Tit. iii. 5), by which they have been transformed, etc. It is also involved in their being described as being converted, as having repented, as having passed from death unto life, as having been delivered from the power of darkness, as being turned from darkness to light, as having put on light, as having been illuminated, etc. All these relate substantially to the same object of thought, and present it under various similitudes and in different aspects. They leave us in no doubt either as to the fact itself which they set forth, or as to the importance attached to it as a part of the great work of human redemption.

Without attempting any formal definition of regeneration or dealing in any merely general illustrations, I would now proceed to examine one or two of those descriptions of it which occur in the N. T., and from which a just and full conception of its nature may be obtained.

One general remark only I would premise, viz. that the change which takes place in regeneration, in its stricter sense, or, as I would for the sake of avoiding confusion prefer to call it, renewal, is not a physical, but a moral and spiritual change. No alteration takes place on the mental constitution, no addition is made to the mental faculties, nor are any new laws imposed on their operation; and if it be that after conversion there often happens to the individual an accession of mental vigour and perspicacity, this is to be traced rather to the free exercise of the mind on high and important subjects than to the immediate operation of any change



effected in conversion. The strong figures used in Scripture to denote this change might lead to the conclusion that a change in the actual substance of our inner nature was intended. But it is not so. "It is called a new creation," says Basil the Great, referring to the strongest perhaps of these figures, "not because another creature is formed, but because those who are illuminated are prepared for better works."<sup>1</sup> At the same time it is not any slight or superficial or merely outward change that is intended by such phraseology. Scripture speaks of men receiving a new nature, and of being made partakers of a divine nature when they are regenerated and born of God. But whilst this *θεία φύσις* is not the actual nature of God, of which none can partake, whilst it is not a new mental constitution, a reconstructed physical nature; so neither, on the other hand, is it a mere improvement in outward character and action to which the man is brought. It is the implantation in the soul of a new spiritual *principle*, which is divine, not only as produced by the Spirit of God in the soul, but as itself divine, being of the same kind with that which is in God, "a habitual holy principle wrought in us by God and bearing His image."<sup>2</sup> "Nature is an abiding permanent principle carrying on the things which it is to act accordingly. We are not partakers of God's nature essentially, therefore not as a nature, otherwise than as having His likeness or image in divine qualities stamped upon us, and so becoming like to Him, to be holy as He is holy, which makes us fit to have fellowship with Him. . . . And this new nature denotes a stable and permanent being in the soul, as also a principle of working, or it were not truly a nature."<sup>3</sup>

In the N. T. this change which men experience when they are made sons of God is described by various phrases. Some of these I would now proceed to examine.

In Eph. iv. 22-25 the apostle says to believers, "That ye put off concerning the former conversation [mode of life] the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" [rather, "according to the lusts of the deceit," the lusts which the deceit has and produces, the deceit being the sinful prin-

<sup>1</sup> *Contr. Eunom.*, t. ii. p. 105, cited by Suicer, *Theol. Eccles.*, s. v. *κτίσις*.

<sup>2</sup> Owen, *Works*, vol. iii. p. 221.

<sup>3</sup> Goodwin, *Works*, vol. vi. p. 199.

ciple in men, of which the apostle says, Rom. vii. 11, that sin taking occasion of the commandment *deceived* him, and by it slew him]; “and be renewed in the spirit of your mind. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” The apostle here exhorts Christians to seek and aim at the continuance and completion of that great transformation which commenced in their spiritual renewal and re-creation. The expressions of which it chiefly concerns us here to take note are the expression “renewed in the spirit of your mind,” and the expression “the new man, which after God was created in righteousness and true holiness.”

The former of these is a peculiar expression, occurring nowhere else in the N. T., and interpreters are not agreed as to its meaning. As to the word “renewed” (*ἀνανεοῦσθαι*) there is no difficulty or difference of opinion; all unite in explaining it as meaning “a making new,” a renewing, not in the sense of a restoring of man to the state in which he was before the fall, but in the sense of giving him a new spiritual nature, different from that which he previously had. This renewal the apostle elsewhere (Tit. iii. 5) identifies with regeneration, and ascribes to the operation of the Spirit of God. By this men cease to be in the flesh and come to be in the Spirit; and without this no man is really and truly in Christ (Rom. viii. 9). It is in the words added to this by the apostle that the difficulty lies. Christians, he says, are renewed in the spirit of their mind, *τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ νοῦς ὑμῶν*. What are we to understand by this? Assuming that the *πνεῦμα τοῦ νοῦς* cannot be taken as merely equivalent to *ὁ νοῦς*, and that “the spirit of the mind” must be something more than simply the mind itself, some take the dative here as the dative of instrument, and understand by *πνεῦμα* the Holy Spirit, and by the genitive the genitive of subject, so that the phrase would mean “by the Spirit which is of your mind, which your mind receives,” “*qui animo vestro datus est*.” “This,” says Meyer, “is the Holy Ghost, which, communicated to men, has its seat in the *νοῦς* and effects the *ἀνακαινώσις τοῦ νοῦς* (Rom. xii. 2), so that there is no longer the old *ματαιότης* of the *νοῦς* (Eph. iv. 17), and that *καινότης* which takes its place is a *καινότης τοῦ πνεύματος*

(Rom. vi. 4, vii. 6)." But though it is undoubtedly true that the Divine Spirit is the agent by whom this renewal of the mind is effected, it seems impossible to accept such an explanation of the peculiar phrase "spirit of your mind" as that above given. It is inconceivable that the apostle should have called the Spirit of God the spirit of the mind of believers. Had he said "the Spirit that dwelleth in you," or "the Spirit that worketh in you," or any similar phrase, there could have been no doubt as to the meaning; but to make the phrase "the spirit of your minds" equivalent to these seems wholly arbitrary and unauthorized.

In other parts of Scripture the spirit appears as a part or sphere of the mind according to the tripartite division of man into body, soul, and spirit; and it is this which, I apprehend, the apostle has here in view. Regarding the spirit as the nobler part, the commanding and directive part of man's inner nature, he intends by "the spirit of the mind" that which regulates, controls, and characterizes the man as an intelligent and moral agent, his higher mental nature, his reason, and his will. The renewal of the spirit of the mind would thus be much the same in effect as what the apostle elsewhere calls simply the renewing of the mind (*τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοῦς*, Rom. xii. 2), whereby men are so transformed that from being conformed to this world they are conformed to the mind and will of God; for the renewal of the higher and directive part of the mind is essentially the renewal of the mind as a whole. This renewal manifests itself in that newness of spirit in which men serve God (Rom. vii. 6), and that newness of life in which those that are in Christ are raised to walk.

Regeneration, then, is a renewal of the man in the ruling power of his mind. As already observed, it is not a change in the constitution of the mind, or in any of the natural laws according to which it acts. What is changed is the spirit of the mind, the dominant tendency, the prevailing character and ruling power of his mind. The man continues to think and feel and will according to the same laws and by the exercise of the same faculties as before, but his thinking, feeling, and willing are not the same as before. His mind itself in its substance and nature is not changed; but the bias of his mind, so to speak, is changed; and just as a bowl

which under a given bias tends to the left as it rolls along will, when that bias is reversed, as naturally tend to the right; so does the mind, which under its original bias tended to evil and ungodliness, when it is renewed and thereby brought under a new bias, tend to what is good and holy and godlike. The prejudices which obscured the mental vision in the direction of the things of God have been cleared away, and in God's light the man is brought to see light clearly. The evil tastes and passions that enslaved the mind are put down and mortified so that the mind can freely apprehend truth and yield itself to its sway. In place of a predominant inclination to the things of sense and of the world, there is implanted in the mind a supreme tendency towards God and the things of God. The prevailing mental character of the man is changed. He has become a man of another spirit. He has received a new heart and a right spirit. He is renewed in the spirit of his mind. He is regenerated by the renewal of the Holy Ghost.

This renewal the apostle further describes as a putting on of the new man, *i.e.* the new spiritual nature bestowed in regeneration, which after God was created in righteousness and holiness of truth. The aorist here (*κτισθεντα*) indicates that the nature referred to was once for all formed in the individual; he is not speaking here of a general fact which is continually exemplified, but of a fact brought to pass in the experience of each individual believer in the past. When regenerated, the new man was then inspired within him, was then after God created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. The allusion is to man's having been first formed at his creation in the image and after the likeness of God. That consisted chiefly in the conformation of his spiritual and moral nature and character to God, in his being capable of intelligence and invested with goodness, like God, the only absolutely wise and the only absolutely good. Like his Maker, man could discern the excellency of moral goodness, could discriminate between good and evil, could love the good and hate the evil, could live in the pure enjoyment of goodness. This man had in virtue of his creation by God. And what man thus could do, he did in his primordial state. The life of Adam in Paradise was but a child's life at best; but it was

the life of an intelligent, pure, and holy child—a life of reverence and love to God, and of undeviating righteousness and holiness. And it is to this that man the sinner has to be brought back; not, indeed, to the child-life of Eden,—that is neither possible nor desirable,—but to something higher, though of the same kind, in the fully developed manhood of his intelligence,—to the moral purity, rectitude, and holiness which characterized him in his primeval condition. And as it was by his being created in the image and likeness of God at first that he came into this condition, so it is by his being created anew after the same image and likeness that he is to be restored to this condition which he has lost through sin. So the apostle expresses it here and in other passages, as, for instance, Col. iii. 10, where believers are said to have “put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image (*κατ' εἰκόνα*) of Him that created him.”

The change, then, which is effected when men are renewed in the spirit of their mind consists in their being created after God, after His image and likeness, in righteousness and holiness of the truth. By this latter expression is not to be understood, as our translators have put it, true as opposed to pretended or spurious holiness, but that holiness which is of the truth, which springs from and is sustained by the truth, as opposed to the *ἐπιθυμίαι τῆς ἀπατῆς*, the lusts engendered and sustained by the deceit, the falsehood of sin, according to which the apostle says, in a preceding verse, the old man becomes corrupt. For this end the man is created of God anew. He has implanted in him a vital principle which gradually transforms him, so that from having borne the image of the earthly, he comes to bear the image of the heavenly. Born of God, the righteous and the holy, he is prepared to love righteousness and to follow after holiness. With him the old things have passed away, and all things have become new. His moral discernment is quickened. He is made of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. He has his senses exercised to discern between good and evil. The love of goodness becomes a master power in his soul, so that he is led to abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good. In outward appearance the man remains the same; but inwardly, in that which constitutes his proper self, he

is so changed that he may be fittingly designated "a new creature."

In a passage already cited (Col. iii. 10) the apostle supplies another element in this renewal which is effected when a man is made a child of God. He there says that such have put on the new man which is renewed, goes on being renewed, unto full knowledge after the image of Him that created it, *i.e.* the new man (τον ανακαινουμενον εις επιγνωσιν κατ' εικονα του κτισαντος αυτον). The idea of the apostle here seems to be this. Proceeding on the assumption that the image of God in which man was at first made is the pattern, the fair ideal, the perfect model, to which man is to be conformed, he intimates that it is by his obtaining and realizing full knowledge of God, knowledge corresponding to and accordant with the image of God, that this end is to be attained by man; and that in order to this man needs to be under a constant renewing influence. There is a renewal, therefore, which has reference to the contents of the mind as well as a renewal of the spirit of the mind. And this relates not so much to the putting into the mind of new thoughts, new ideas, new information, as to the giving to the mind of that spiritual discernment and apprehension of divine things by which truth already revealed—and it may be long known in statement—is brought home to the mind with power, so as to exert an influence over it in all its faculties and susceptibilities. It is a truth too little, perhaps, realized by men in general, that for the right and full apprehension of spiritual knowledge there needs a special spiritual discernment. Just as men may observe the Lord's Supper without discerning therein the Lord's body, so may they receive revealed truth without discerning anything beyond the outward form in which it is conveyed. And as in this way the natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit, so there needs the creating of a new man within, a man formed after the image of God, in order that the true knowledge of God may be rightly and fully apprehended by men. There is nothing strange in this. Truth is never fully apprehended or rightly appreciated except where the mind is in some degree in sympathy with it. If we dislike any object, we are almost sure to misapprehend the truth concerning it; and as man in his natural state

is at enmity with God, he is averse from all divine truth, and so either wholly rejects it when it is presented to him, or receives it in such a way as to be wholly unaffected by it, or it may be to be wrongly affected by it. Men speculating upon divine things often arrive at conclusions the very opposite of those which God authorizes and would have us to reach. Men with the Bible in their hands, and well acquainted with its statements, often err, not knowing the truth or the power of God. And as all are naturally subject to this blinding and perverting influence, there is a necessity for a renewal of the mind in order to the just apprehension, the right appreciation, and the proper use of divine knowledge. As the apostle here expresses it, we need a renewal *for* (*εἰς*), *with a view to*, full knowledge; only thus can this be acquired by us. But when this renewal is effected in a man, the truth of God comes to be seen by him as it really is in all its integrity and purity; it is apprehended by him in its power; it is really received into the mind, and, as it were, incorporated with it. And as the mind is most affected by the truths it most dwells on, is moulded by the truths it most realizes and is most familiar with, and as the truths which God has revealed to us are the expression of His own mind, it cannot but follow that the mind which becomes pervaded by and assimilated to these truths should gradually grow into the image and likeness of God.

To the same effect is another expression of the apostle in reference to this change. "God, who is rich in mercy," he says (Eph. ii. 4, 5), "for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." Here, as elsewhere in Scripture, man in his natural state is represented as dead in or by sins. This does not refer to his being under condemnation and so virtually dead in law, nor does it imply any physical deficiency or absence of vitality; it relates to that insensibility to divine and spiritual things which characterizes the natural man, and which in the total collapse of the spiritual energies may be justly described as a state of death. Man in his natural state possesses all the faculties by which he may perceive and appreciate divine things; but through sin these faculties are rendered inert, they are benumbed and stupefied, and so cannot

act; just as a corpse may retain unimpaired the form and symmetry of the living body, but lies motionless and torpid because of the absence of the vital energy by which alone it is capable of activity. Through evil disposition, by reason of a depraved heart, man is insensible to the beauty and unconscious of the worth of the things of God; and so he will continue until this disposition is changed, and a new principle of holiness and godliness is brought to rule within him. When this takes place the man is, in the language of the apostle, quickened, vivified, endued with life (*ζωοποιῖθεις*). No new faculty is given him; no constitutional change is wrought upon him. But he now sees, as he did not see before, the things of God; he is animated with new desires; he is impelled with new motives; and no longer lifeless and inert, he is seen quick to understand and active to do the will of God. This new "spiritual sense," as President Edwards has described it, "is not a new faculty of understanding, but a new foundation laid in the nature of the soul for a new kind of exercise of the same faculty of understanding;" and "that new holy disposition that attends this new sense is not a new faculty of will, but a foundation laid in the nature of the soul for a new exercise of the same faculty of will."<sup>1</sup>

(2.) Such is regeneration in the limited application of that term. Thus defined, it is seen to be not essentially different from that *μετάνοια εἰς τὸν Θεόν* which the apostles preached to men along with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts xx. 21), and that *μετάνοια εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας* which God giveth unto men (2 Tim. ii. 25). This word *μετάνοια* is rendered in the A. V. by *repentance*, and the cognate verb *μετανοεῖν* by "to repent." In this our translators have followed the Vulgate, which renders *μετανοια* by *pœnitentia*, and *μετανοεῖν* by *pœnitēri*, *pœnitentiam agere*, *pœnitentiam habere*. This is unfortunate, because a wrong concept of the subject is thus introduced into the mind. Penitence and repentance express properly the feeling of sorrow and pain arising from the consciousness of having erred or done something wrong; but this is not the meaning, at least not the proper meaning, of *μετανοια*. This, a compound of *μετά* and *νοῦς*, properly denotes a change of mind which may be accompanied by a feeling of

<sup>1</sup> *Religious Affections*, Pt. iii. § 1.



regret or sorrow or pain, but is not necessarily so followed. When a man changes from error to truth, from sin to virtue, from a foolish course to a wise one, he will naturally feel grieved and vexed and ashamed that he should ever have gone in the way from which he has now turned; and this feeling may in certain cases be very poignant and overwhelming. But a man may change his mind without any such painful emotions being thereby excited in him; and it is to the change itself, and not to any feelings that may accompany or follow it, that the word *μετάνοια* refers. In an ancient Greek lexicon<sup>1</sup> it is defined as *γνησία ἀπο πταίσματος ἐπὶ το ἐναντίον ἀγαθὸν ἐπιστροφή*. By the classical writers the verb *μετανοεῖν* is used in this sense. Thus Diodorus Siculus says (xv. 47), *μετενοήσεν ὁ δῆμος*, "The people changed their mind (purpose);" Xenophon, after adducing certain facts which he had taken into consideration, says, *ἐκ τούτου δὴ ηνεγκαζόμεθα μετανοεῖν*, "hence we were compelled to change our mind (opinion);"<sup>2</sup> Polybius, after saying that Darius had purposed to fight with Alexander, adds, *ὕστερον δὲ μετανοήσας*, "but afterwards changed his mind (intention)." In the O. T. the verb is frequently used of God; as, *e.g.*, 1 Sam. xv. 29, where the LXX. have *καὶ οὐκ ἀποστρεψεί οὐδὲ μετανοήσει ὅτι οὐκ ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐστὶ τοῦ μετανοῆσαι αὐτός*; and Jer. iv. 28, *δίοτι ἐλάλησα καὶ οὐ μετανοήσω*, where in both instances the Hebrew has *נָחַם*, which, though primarily signifying "to be grieved," is often used where only change of mind or purpose is intended. In one passage in the N. T. the synonymous word in its adjectival form, *μεταμελητός* with the *a* primitive prefixed, is used in reference to God: Rom. xi. 29, *ἀμεταμελητά γὰρ τὰ χαρίσματα καὶ ἡ κλήσις τοῦ Θεοῦ*, "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance," *i.e.* without change of purpose; they are certain and irrevocable. In several passages *μετάνοια* is used of men where only a change of this sort is intended; as, *e.g.*, Matt. iii. 8, "bring forth fruit *ἀξίον τῆς μετανοίας*," fruit such as befits and is a worthy index of a change of mind from error and evil to truth and goodness; 2 Cor. vii. 9, "Now I rejoice, not that ye grieved, but that ye grieved *εἰς μετάνοιαν*," grieved so as to be brought

<sup>1</sup> *Lex. Cyrilli, MS. Brem.*, cited by Schleusner, *Lex. Vet. Test.* ii. 448.

<sup>2</sup> *Cyrop.*, i. 1. 3.

to a change of sentiment and conduct ; Heb. xii. 17, " For he [Esau] did not find *τοπον μετανοιας* " a place of change of mind, *i.e.* a means of changing the mind and purpose of his father, so as to recall the blessing from Jacob and confer it on himself.

The *μετάνοια εἰς Θεον*, then, which the apostles preached in conjunction with the *πίστις ἡ εἰς τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν*, is that change of mind which we have already seen is described as a renewing in the spirit of the mind, a creating after the image of God in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Elsewhere it is called *μετάνοια εἰς ζωὴν*, " a change of mind unto life," inasmuch as by undergoing this change men pass from death unto life, from the death of sin to the life of holiness ; and this God is said to give to men (Acts xi. 18, " To the Gentiles also hath God given the change of mind unto life "). This change of mind is regeneration. The only difference between the two is that regeneration designates the effect from a reference to its cause, while *μετανοια* designates it with respect to its nature. It is a being born of God, because He effects it in the man ; it is a *μετανοια*, because it is a change in the mind and soul of the man.

The change thus designated is not to be identified with conversion. Conversion is the fruit or result of regeneration, renewal or mind-change ; when the man is born again, renewed in the spirit of his mind, changed in mind and heart, he then naturally turns from what he previously loved and followed to a new course of aim and pursuit. The word " conversion " is found only once in Scripture, Acts xv. 3, where we read that Paul and Barnabas on their way from Antioch to Jerusalem passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion (*ἐπιστροφήν*) of the Gentiles ; but the cognate verb frequently occurs. Usually it is used intransitively, or it has a reflex sense. Thus Zech. i. 3, " Turn (*שׁוּבוּ*, *ἐπιστρέψατε*) unto me, and I will turn unto you ; " Ezek. xviii. 32, " Turn yourselves (*שׁוּבוּ*, *ἐπιστρέψατε*) and live ; " Isa. vi. 10, " Lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert (*שׁוּבוּ*, *ἐπιστρέψωσι*), and be healed ; " Acts iii. 19, " Repent and convert, or turn (*μετανοήσατε καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε*), unto the blotting out of your sins," etc. In a few instances

the verb is used transitively, as Ps. xix. 7, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;" Jas. v. 19, 20, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death," etc. Occasionally, also, the passive occurs, but with a reflex meaning, as John xx. 14, "She turned herself back" (*εστράφη εις τα οπίσω*); Acts vii. 39, "And in their hearts turned back again (*εστραφησαν*) unto Egypt," etc. This determines the meaning of the verb in Matt. xviii. 3, "Except ye be converted, *i.e.* unless ye turn from your ambitious and worldly aims and views, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and Luke xxii. 32, "When thou art converted, *i.e.* when thou returnest to a right mind," etc.

It appears, then, that conversion refers to that change of thought, opinion, aim, and conduct which a man makes under a conviction that his former views, opinions, and actings were unwise or wrong. Conversion, therefore, is rather the result and outcome of regeneration than regeneration itself. It is what a man is led to through the renewal of his mind. The new nature which is implanted in the soul is to be regarded as a seed or principle which develops itself in certain manifestations, which produces certain fruits, and of these conversion is one. And as this seed is a vital principle, it manifests itself by the growth of those qualities and virtues of which it is the germ. Hence believers are said to grow in grace, to be filled with the fruits of righteousness, to have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. They have that life abiding in them; and so having the actuating principle of the divine life within, they walk in newness of life, and advance ever onward to that grace of perfect life of which they are now the heirs.

"The work of the Spirit of God," says Owen, "in regenerating the souls of men, is diligently to be inquired into by the preachers of the gospel, and all to whom the word is dispensed. For the former sort there is a peculiar reason for their attendance unto this duty; for they are used and employed in the work itself by the Spirit of God, and are by Him made instrumental for the effecting of this new birth

and life. . . . And this is the principal end of their ministry. Now, certainly it is the duty of ministers to understand the work about which they are employed, as far as they are able, that they may not work in the dark, and fight uncertainly as men beating the air. What Scripture hath revealed concerning it, as to its nature and the manner of its operation, as to its causes, effects, fruits, evidences, they ought diligently to inquire into. To be spiritually skilled therein is one of the principal furnishings of any for the work of the ministry, without which they will never be able to divide the word aright, nor show themselves workmen that need not be ashamed.

“It is likewise the duty of all to whom the word is preached to inquire also into it. It is unto such to whom the apostle speaks, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, ‘Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?’ It is the concernment of all individual Christians or professors of the Christian religion to try and examine themselves what work of the Spirit of God there hath been upon their hearts; and none will deter them from it but those who have a design to hoodwink them to perdition.”<sup>1</sup> Pastors and teachers, therefore, whose aim it is to save the souls of those who hear them should urge men to such self-examination; and in order to this they should be careful themselves to understand the nature and be cognizant of the fruits of regeneration, that so they may rightly direct their hearers in this great and needful exercise of self-examination.

<sup>1</sup> *Work of the Spirit.* Works, iii. 227.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

3. *Justification.*

Having considered regeneration as the complex of the two great blessings of justification and sanctification, we now proceed to consider these separately.

The doctrine of justification is one which occupies a very prominent place in the scheme of revealed truth. Perhaps more than any other doctrine, it enters into the very essence of Christianity as a religious system; and certain it is that our views of doctrine generally, and, I may say, the whole cast and character of our religious life, will be materially affected by the views we entertain on this subject. As the question, *How shall a man be just before God?* presents to us the great problem of religion, it cannot but follow that on our answer to that question must depend, to a very high degree, what kind of religion we really hold and follow. Luther was wont to say that justification by faith alone was the “*articulus cadentis vel stantis ecclesiæ*,” the article by which the Church falls or stands; and we generalize his assertion, and say that the doctrine of justification as a whole is that by which Christian belief and Christian practice stand or fall.

In seeking to lay before you just and scriptural views on this all-important subject, I propose to follow the usual order, and to consider, first, the nature of justification; secondly, the ground of it; and thirdly, the medium of it.

(1.) *The Nature of Justification.* The question here brought before us is, In what does this blessing consist? what are its characteristic elements and features?

*a.* The word “justification” occurs only three times in the Authorized Version; in Rom. iv. 25, v. 16, 18. In the first and third of these passages the word *δικαιωσις* is used, in the second *δικαιωμα* occurs. There is a slight difference of meaning between these two, the one denoting the act of pronouncing a favourable legal sentence, the other denoting the favourable sentence actually pronounced. But this difference does not

affect the general significancy of the passages, in all of which the same great truth is asserted, that through the work of Christ a provision has been made for the pronouncing of a favourable sentence on those on whom condemnation had been brought by sin.

Both *δικαίωσις* and *δικαίωμα* are derivations of the verb *δικαίω*, and this is frequently used in the N. T., as well as in the Greek translation of the Old.<sup>1</sup> In the latter it represents more than one Hebrew word, but its proper synonym is the verb *צדק*, especially in the Piel and Hiphil conjugations. As used by the sacred writers, it denotes to acquit, to absolve, to show or manifest to be righteous, to declare righteous, to treat as righteous. Thus, God is said to be justified (Ps. li. 4; Luke vii. 29; Rom. iii. 4), by which can only be meant that the perfect rectitude of all His doings is manifested or vindicated; and in the same sense our Saviour is said to be justified (1 Tim. iii. 16); and Wisdom is said to be justified of her children: in all these cases the word conveys the idea of a declaring something to be in reality what it claims to be. In a similar sense Scripture speaks of judges justifying the righteous, *i.e.* vindicating and declaring the man to be what in the eye of the law he really is, a just and blameless man. So, on the other hand, to justify the wicked is to pronounce lawful and right those evil courses in which he has indulged, and thereby to pervert the right. In all such cases we have the word used in its proper and direct sense, that of pronouncing a favourable sentence on any being whose character or conduct has been brought into question.

Now, in this sense it is clearly impossible that man can be justified before God. "The Scripture hath concluded all men under sin;" "there is none righteous, no, not one." As God therefore, the perfectly holy and just, will not pervert rectitude by justifying the wicked or clearing by an untrue sentence him who is guilty, it follows either that there is no justification for man as a sinner at all, or that justification is affirmed of him in some other than its primary, proper, and direct sense. The former part of this alternative no one can embrace; for it is again and again declared in the most explicit terms that God justifies the sinner. We are shut up, there-

<sup>1</sup> See Schleusner, *Lex. in LXX.*

fore, to the latter side of the alternative, and must find a sense in which it may without untruth be said that God justifies the ungodly. But there is but one sense which satisfies this condition, viz. that in which to justify means to treat as just or righteous on some sufficient ground those who in themselves are not righteous, and on the ground of their own merits can be treated only as guilty. It is granted that no instance can be adduced of the word justify being used in this sense apart from the case of God's dealing with the sinner; but if this be urged as an objection against our giving the word this meaning in that connection, it may suffice to reply that when words are used in peculiar applications they naturally acquire peculiar meanings, and that this is the only meaning which the word "justify" in such a connection will bear.

It is worthy of notice, however, that whilst Scripture speaks of men as being justified, it never speaks of them as possessing justification. It is nowhere said that we receive from God or enjoy *justification* (δικαίωσις or δικαίωμα). When Scripture would describe the state corresponding to the act of justifying, and actually enjoyed by those who are justified, it employs another word, the word usually translated in the A. V. "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη). Thus we are said to have righteousness imputed to us; to receive the gift of righteousness, to have attained unto righteousness, etc., and in one instance even the strong expression is used that we are "made righteousness" (Rom. iv. 6, 11, v. 17, ix. 30; 2 Cor. v. 21). Now it is possible to press this distinction too far, so as to extort from it unscriptural conclusions; but, on the other hand, it has been by much too generally neglected or overlooked. There must be some significancy in an invariable usage of words by the sacred writers, and when we find them consequently always speaking of righteousness and never of justification as the blessing actually enjoyed by men through Christ, we should at least pause to inquire whether there may not lie under this some valuable truth.

It may be further observed, that in order to take a full and comprehensive view of this subject, we must not confine our attention to the words "justify" and "righteousness," or the passages in which they occur, but must advert also to other terms used in Scripture to describe the state into which men

are brought through Christ by the regenerating Spirit. We find, for instance, this state described by the term *life*; and though this may include in its widest sense more than is included in justification and righteousness, it always imports this much at least, and in some of its usages imports this exclusively; as, *e.g.*, when the effect of Christ's righteousness is said to have been on all men unto "justification of life," when believers are said to "reign in life through Christ Jesus," and when it is said "the spirit is life because of righteousness." We find also the term *purify* or *cleans* (*καθαρίζειν*) used to describe this state, as when it is said "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us (*καθαρίζει*) from all sin;" when God is said to cleanse us "from all unrighteousness," and to purify men by faith; when the blood of Christ is said to "purge the conscience from dead works," etc. (1 John i. 7, 9; Acts xv. 9; Heb. ix. 14). It is to this state also that the apostle refers when he uses the remarkable expression, "to make perfect as pertaining to the conscience;" this, he says, the ancient sacrifices could not do; but this he intimates Christ has done for us when "by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. ix. 9, 12). And in this last-cited passage we have still another term used by the sacred writers to describe the state into which the gospel brings those who receive it—*redemption*. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." "We are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 13; Eph. i. 7; Rom. iii. 24).

*b.* Now, putting these statements of Scripture together, and seeking to gather from them all that they teach, we may obtain a full and clear view of the nature of the blessing to which they relate.

(*a.*) In the first place, they teach us to distinguish between justification as an act and justification as a state. As an act it imports the removal of a sentence; as a state it imports the enjoyment of a blessing. Under the one aspect it means that the sinner is declared to be or is treated as righteous; under the other it means that the sinner actually enjoys righteousness. In virtue of the one we can say, "There is no more curse;" in virtue of the other we can say, "We are



made the righteousness of God." The one is the repeal of the sentence of death; the other is the realization of life.

(b.) There seems ground in Scripture for distinguishing between an universal justification and a particular justification. There are two things that seem to me to have been to a great extent overlooked by systematic theologians on this subject; the one is that Scripture, in speaking of justification, speaks of it as a *past* thing, a thing done and not to be repeated; the other is that Scripture expressly says that the justification which has come through Christ has come upon all men. As respects the former of these points, I need only remind you of the constant language of the apostle to believers: "Ye *are* justified," "*having been* justified," "*being* justified by His blood," etc., where the turn of the expression is plainly such as to indicate that the justifying act is one done in the past. It is true that this phraseology leaves it uncertain whether the reference is to an act done once for all in the case of the race, or to an act done once for all in the case of the individual; and probably some of the passages in which it is used may refer to the one and some to the other. But no ambiguity attaches to such a statement as the following: "Who was delivered for (*i.e.* 'because of,' *διά* with the accusative) our offences, and was raised again because of our justification" (Rom. iv. 25). Here the apostle plainly states that our offences were the cause or reason of Christ's having been given up as a sacrificial victim, and that our being justified was the cause or reason of His being raised again. Now, as the cause must precede the effect, we must regard our justification as a thing actually realized and secured before our Lord's resurrection, in the same sense as our offences were a reality leading to His being delivered up for us. Had no offences been committed, Christ would not have died; and had our justification not been accomplished by His death, He would not have been raised from the dead. "The original words," says Bishop Horsley, "are without ambiguity, and clearly represent our Lord's resurrection as an event which took place *in consequence* of man's justification, in the same manner as His death took place *in consequence* of man's sins. It follows, therefore," he adds, "that our justification is a thing totally different from the final salvation of

the godly”<sup>1</sup>—and also, he might have added, “from the believer’s present state of personal acceptance with God.” When the explicit statement of this passage is considered, we shall readily conclude that when Paul says that men are “justified freely by grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus,” and when he exclaims, “being justified by His blood we shall be saved by His life,” his reference is not to righteousness as a personal possession, but rather to justification as an act reaching to men universally.

This brings me to notice the explicit statements of Scripture on this point. And here I have simply to remind you that in *all* the passages in which the term justification is used, it is expressly set forth as a blessing secured by Christ for all men. In the passage just cited, “Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification,” the qualifying pronoun “our” before “justification” cannot be restricted so as to include only believers, for if we do so we must equally restrict the “our” before “offences” in the parallel clause; and in that case we make the apostle teach that it was only the offences of the saved on account of which Christ died—a doctrine which can never be reconciled with the express declaration that He was the propitiation for the sins of the world. In the other two passages the words of the apostle are explicit: “The judgment is by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification;” “As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” Nothing can be clearer than this. As is the condemnation, so is the justification; the one is co-extensive with the other; as the offence of one brought all men under the former, so the righteousness of one has brought all men under the latter.

Attempts have been made to explain away this statement of the apostle, and his express assertion that Christ’s righteousness has had an effect upon all men unto justification, has been diluted into an assertion that the offer or means of justification have been brought within the reach of all men. But not only is this an unwarrantable liberty to use with

<sup>1</sup> *Nine Sermons on our Lord’s Resurrection*, pp. 262–3.

Holy Scripture, putting into it what is not there, and saying for the apostle what he could as easily have said for himself had such been his intention; but by this alteration of his statement we materially dislocate the whole tenor of his teaching here. His design is obviously to show that the righteousness of Christ, in its restorative and redemptive influence, stands up in complete parallel to the transgression of Adam in its destructive influence on the race, nay, goes beyond it by securing greater benefits than it entailed evils. Now he has shown that by Adam's sin all men have become subject to condemnation—to penal consequences apart from and anterior to any act of their own. But if, in this respect, Adam was the type of Him who was to come, it is obvious that the work of the latter must be at least commensurate with that of the former. An antitype may have more in it than the type, but it cannot have less; and if Jesus Christ was the antitype of Adam in the respect mentioned, there must be in his work an effect reaching to all men, so as to undo and remove the evil which from Adam's sin has accrued to all. If this is not done, He has failed of accomplishing all that the apostle's argument renders it necessary He should have done. If the sin of the first man has placed all the race under an attainder, then obviously the very first step towards an adequate reparation of this is the removal from all the race of this disability. If Adam's sin brought on all his posterity an actual evil, it is no undoing of this merely to make it *possible* for them to get the better of this evil. Unless, then, we would destroy the very main point and essence of the apostle's argument here, we must take his words as they stand, and receive it as a scriptural doctrine that through the righteousness of Christ all men are justified.

This doctrine has been rendered offensive to many from its being mixed up in some quarters with the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and in others from its being produced in the form of the doctrine of universal pardon. Had the doctrine of baptismal regeneration merely meant that in baptism there was a symbolical representation and memorial of the truth that all men have been delivered from the curse brought on them by Adam, I do not know that any serious objection could have been brought against it, or that it would

have proved very offensive to any one. But when it was taught that baptism actually *effected* this deliverance for an individual, still more when it was taught that baptism made the subject of it a member of the body of Christ and of a renewed moral nature, the limits of scriptural teaching were grossly passed, and just cause of offence was given to those who sought to conform their religious belief and practice to its dictates. As for the doctrine of universal pardon, it is difficult to know what the terms imply. If it be intended by them to assert merely that the effect of our Saviour's work has been to put all men into a salvable state, the idea is wrongly expressed, for there is in this case no pardon at all, but simply a placing of men where they may obtain pardon; but if the statement be intended to assert that men universally have received the pardon of their actual sins, this must mean that sin is pardoned before it is committed, so that, in point of fact, there is no actual guilt or condemnation resting upon any of the race. If the doctrine of universal justification be identified with this doctrine, it is not to be wondered at that men of sober minds should turn from it with aversion. But, as taught by the apostle, it stands clear both of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration and the doctrine of universal pardon. It means simply that through the grace of Christ the sentence of attainder under which the sin of Adam brought men has been repealed in the case of every man, whether baptized or unbaptized; but that for the sins which men actually commit, they must each one seek pardon for himself, and find it or perish.

This brings me to observe that whilst there is thus an universal justification, there is also a particular justification. This is what the N. T. writers more particularly denote when they speak of our being justified by faith, or of the sinner becoming justified before God; and the state which ensues upon this is what they intend by righteousness as possessed by the believer, or by a state of life, a condition of redemption, a being cleansed and purged from sin by the blood of Christ. That they should call this a state of righteousness rather than a state of justification, will be felt at once to be appropriate if we reflect on the fact that justification, from the nature of the case, cannot be continuous. It is a thing

which once done needs not to be repeated ; it abides, and the man once benefited thereby retains the benefit. The proper condition of the man who is in a right relation with law and government is a condition of righteousness ; he is properly, *quoad hoc*, a righteous man. To say that he was in a state of justification would be to say that he was continually having the justifying act repeated upon him. The accurate thinking of the apostle is thus manifest in the discriminative phraseology by which he conveys his teaching.

(c.) Both the justification of the sinner and the righteousness into which he thereby enters is of a legal character. With respect to the former of these there is no room for dispute or doubt. The verb “justify” (*δικαιῶ*) and the noun “justification” (*δικαιῶσις* and *δικαίωμα*) formed from it are forensic words, and no clear instance can be adduced of their ever being used save in a forensic sense. By most, therefore, it is agreed that justification properly so called is the legal act of pronouncing or accounting a man exempt from the penal consequence of sin, whether of all men from the penal consequence of Adam’s sin, or of each man from the penal consequence of his own. But the case is not so clear in reference to the righteousness or state of life in which the justified man stands. There can be no question that the word translated “righteousness” properly denotes personal righteousness, moral goodness, and that it is frequently so used in the N. T. From this some have been led to conclude that the righteousness which we enjoy through faith—that state into which we enter when we pass from death to life, is a state not having respect to legal position and relations, but to moral character and conduct ; so that when we are said to possess *δικαιοσύνη* or to be in a state of *δικαιοσύνη*, it is concluded that the reference is to the possession of personal rectitude or goodness, to a state, in short, of moral rather than of legal rightness. It is not easy to see what is gained by this, so long as it is admitted that the verb *δικαιῶ* is capable only of a forensic sense. If *δικαιοσύνη* be the result to us of God’s forensically justifying us, it seems only a dispute about words to contend for its having a moral rather than a forensic meaning. But, apart from this, the usage of the term in several places is such as

to fix it to a forensic meaning. Thus in Rom. i. 17, 18, it stands as describing a state opposed to wrath. Now, as to be under the divine wrath is to be under the condemning sentence and exposed to the threatened penalty of the divine law, that *δικαιοσύνη* which is the antithesis of this can only be a state of legal or forensic absolution or deliverance from guilt and penalty. Again, when the apostle, as he frequently does, contrasts the *δικαιοσύνη* which the Jew sought by the law with the *δικαιοσύνη* which is by faith, the latter must be understood in a forensic sense to make it the true antithesis to the former; that which the Jew sought through the law was not moral goodness, but acceptance with God; this was his idea of a state of *δικαιοσύνη*,—a state in which he was exempt from blame, and being so enjoyed the favour of God; and as Paul says that what he thus sought but did not gain by the law has been obtained by Christians through faith (Rom. ix. 30, 31), we must understand the *δικαιοσύνη* of the latter of legal and not of moral justification. Once more, when Paul says (2 Cor. iii. 9), “If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more shall the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory,” he contrasts the characteristic of the O. T. with that of the New. But if the one was a ministration of condemnation, that which is the antithesis of this must be a ministration of acquittal. So also, when Paul says that Christ was “made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him,” the righteousness of which he speaks being opposed to a state of imputed sin, *i.e.* a state in which one was held as guilty, must mean a state of legal exemption from guilt, of legal justification. Whilst, therefore, it is admitted that *δικαιοσύνη* often refers to moral state, it is also plain that the apostles used it to refer to legal state; and we must in every case determine from the context in which sense it is to be taken.

(2.) Having thus ascertained the *nature* of justification, we have next to inquire into the *grounds* or *reasons* of it.

*a.* Now, on this head the testimony of Scripture is full and explicit. We are justified not on the ground of any works or any worthiness of ours, but solely of grace on the ground of the atoning work of Christ (Rom. iii. 20, iv. 24, v. 9; Gal. ii. 16, 17; Titus iii. 7). To these passages many others might

be added. But it is unnecessary; the teaching of Scripture on this head is too familiar to all readers of it to require that we should elaborately support the position by quotations. Indeed, seeing it is on the ground of Christ's atoning work alone that God dispenses any blessing to the children of men, we should be led to infer that it is on this ground that sinners are justified, even were Scripture silent on the subject.

b. Assuming this, and confining our attention to the justification of the individual sinner, the question that now comes before us is, What is the *nexus* between the enjoyment of this blessing and the grounds on which it is enjoyed? In other words, on what principle is it that the doings of Christ are made valid for the securing of the blessing of justification to the sinner?

(a.) The answers which have been given to this question may be ranked as follows:—

(a.) It has been said that the sufferings of Christ were the endurance by Him of the punishment due to His people's sins, and that He, having thus endured the penalty of the law for them, has, as it were, paid their debt to the law, has actually satisfied all its claims against them, and thereby entitled them to pardon and restoration. According to this view there was an actual transfer of our sins to Christ, so that, to use the words of a writer of this school, if one has part in Christ, all his transgressions became actually the transgressions of Christ; and, on the other hand, an actual transfer of Christ's righteousness to us, so that, to follow the same writer, "as we have part in Christ, we are all that Christ was, as Christ was all that we were, as His."

(β.) A second opinion which has been entertained on this subject may be stated in the words of the Lutheran divine, Quenstedt: "The form of imputation consists in the gracious estimation (or reckoning) of God, whereby the repenting sinner is, on account of another's, *i.e.* Christ's, most perfect obedience apprehended by faith, reputed righteous before the divine tribunal, just as if it had been rendered by the man himself."<sup>1</sup> This is substantially the doctrine of Calvin on this subject. "You see," says he, "that our righteousness is not in us, but in Christ; that it becomes ours only in virtue of our being partakers

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Didact.*, iii. p. 525.

of Christ, forasmuch as we possess all His riches with Himself. It is no difficulty in the way of this that it is elsewhere taught that sin is condemned of sin in the flesh of Christ, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us (Rom. viii. 3); for there no other fulfilment is designated than we obtain by imputation. For the Lord Christ communicates with us His righteousness by, in a wonderful manner, trans fusing into us its force (*vim*) in so far as respects the judgment of God. That the apostle had no other view is abundantly clear from another sentiment which he immediately after has uttered (Rom. v. 19): as by one man's disobedience we were constituted sinners; so by the obedience of one are we justified. What else is it to place our righteousness in the obedience of Christ than to assert that we are held righteous solely on the ground that Christ's obedience is accepted for us as if it were ours?"<sup>1</sup> This is the view which Dr. Wardlaw advocates; but its ablest and most earnest advocate in recent times is Fuller.

(γ.) A third view, which has been supposed not to greatly differ from the preceding, has found its principal exponent of late years in Dr. Payne. It consists in rejecting the opinion that in justification God *holds* or *regards* the sinner as righteous, or as other than he really is, and in resolving justification wholly into the *treating* of the sinner for Christ's sake as a pardoned, accepted, and reconciled child of God. Whilst this opinion may seem not to greatly differ from the preceding, the difference is not unimportant. It avoids the imputation to God of a judicial estimation not according to truth, by representing Him as simply out of the riches of His grace dealing mercy to the guilty, not estimated, reckoned, or judged other than they are. According to the one view, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the sinner in the sense of his being regarded as if that righteousness were his own; under the other view, the sinner is regarded as having no righteousness of his own, as guilty and hell-deserving; but the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him in the sense that it is made over to him in donation, and for the sake of that righteousness so gifted to him he is forgiven and saved. I do not know whether there is not a still deeper difference

<sup>1</sup> *Instit.*, in. 11, 23.



between the two. Dr. Payne continues to speak of justification as a forensic act; but on his view it ceases, I cannot help thinking, to be so, at least in any strict sense. To hold a man righteous, to esteem, judge, or reckon him righteous, on whatever grounds, is the act of a judge; but to make over to him in free donation another's righteousness, and on account of that to show him mercy and grace he does not deserve, is the part, not of a judge, but of a sovereign. Though Dr. Wardlaw, then, treats the difference between his own view and this as so trifling that he says, "I must confess myself very much indisposed to discuss such a question," and concludes by declaring that "if there be a difference it is the shadow of a shade, about which the dispute would be as unsubstantial as itself," I cannot help regarding the difference as sufficient to entitle it to serious consideration. There is surely a difference worth contending for between justification regarded as a judicial declaration, that man is to be *regarded* as he is not, and justification viewed as a sovereign act *making over* to man what he has not, and then treating him as having it. In the one case God acting as a judge is represented as declaring what can hardly be said to be true in any sense; in the other case He appears as a sovereign who, admitting the legal equity of the judicial condemnation which has been pronounced against the sinner, may yet, for *other* reasons than those of law, reverse that sentence and set the guilty free.

This third view of justification is presented very clearly by Pietet in his *Théologie Chrétienne* (vol. ii. p. 109 ff.). But its greatest expositor and defender is John Owen, the first of theologians, in his invaluable treatise *On the Doctrine of Justification by Faith through the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ*.<sup>1</sup> I may with advantage extract from this work his statement of the view which he advocates on the point now before us. "To impute unto us," he says, "that which is not our own antecedently unto that imputation includes in it two things: First, a grant or donation of the thing itself unto us to be ours, on some just ground and foundation. For a thing must be made *ours* before we can justly be dealt withal according unto what is required on the

<sup>1</sup> See also his *Latin Correspondence*, p. 304.

account of it. Secondly, a will of dealing with us, or an actual dealing with us, according unto that which is so made ours. For in this matter whereof we treat the most holy and righteous God doth not justify any, that is, absolve them from sin, pronounce them righteous, and thereon grant unto them right and title unto eternal life, but upon the interveniency of a true and complete righteousness truly and completely made the righteousness of them that are to be justified, in order of nature antecedently unto their justification." Again he says, "This imputation is an act of God *ex mera gratia*, of His mere love and grace, whereby on the consideration of the mediation of Christ He makes an effectual grant and donation of a true, real, and perfect righteousness, even that of Christ Himself, unto all that do believe, and accounting it as theirs on His own gracious act, both absolves them from sin, and granteth them right and title unto eternal life."<sup>1</sup>

(δ.) Of late years a doctrine has been taught on the subject of justification which has the appearance of a regression to opinions long supposed to be exploded. According to this view, the justification of the sinner is not the imputation to him of a righteousness out of himself, but is the treating him as the actual possessor of a personal righteousness conveyed to him through his vital union with Christ. Christ is made righteousness to him in the sense of being Himself formed in the believer, bringing His own inherent righteousness into him, and thereby making him righteous. The part which faith has in this transaction is that it is that by which the vital union between Christ and the soul is formed,—that by which the man apprehends Christ, appropriates Him, becomes one with Him; and this faith is said to be imputed for righteousness because in it is the germ of all moral goodness; and as this germ has shut up in it all spiritual life, just as the acorn has shut up in it the full-grown oak, God is pleased of His grace to hold that as tantamount to all that it will ultimately produce, and to deal with man accordingly. This opinion, which appears diffusely in several of the writings of Mr. Erskine, and which has been more scientifically and accurately developed by Dr. McLeod Campbell in his work *On the Nature of the Atonement and its Relation to*

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 233 and 243, ed. 1677, 4to.

*the Remission of Sins and Eternal Life*, seems to me to be essentially a revivification of the doctrine taught by Osiander in the middle of the sixteenth century, and opposed by Melancthon and other Lutherans as heretical, though it is in many points closely allied to that taught by Luther himself, especially in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, as both Osiander and Campbell have shown. The essential identity of view between Luther, Campbell, and Osiander may be made evident by a single citation from each. "Christian righteousness," says Luther, "consists in two things, that is to say, faith in the heart and in God's imputation. Faith is indeed a formal righteousness, and yet this righteousness is not enough; for after faith there remain yet certain remnants of sin in our flesh. . . . Wherefore the other part of righteousness must needs be added also to finish the same in us, that is to say, God's imputation. For faith giveth not enough to God, being imperfect; yea, our faith is but a little spark of faith, which beginneth only to render unto God His true divinity. We have received the first-fruits of the Spirit, but not yet the tenths. . . . Wherefore faith beginneth righteousness, but imputation maketh it perfect unto the day of Christ" (p. 252). "For as long as I live," he says again, "in the flesh, sin is truly in me. But because I am covered under the shadow of Christ's wings, as is the chicken under the wings of the hen, and dwell without fear under that most ample and large heaven of the forgiveness of sins which is spread over me, God covereth and pardoneth the remnant of sin in me; that is to say, because of that faith wherewith I began to lay hold upon Christ, He accepteth my imperfect righteousness even for perfect righteousness, and counteth my sin for no sin, which notwithstanding is sin indeed" (p. 254). Osiander, in his *Disputatio de Justificatione*, lays down, amongst others, the following propositions: "The faith by which man is justified is a spiritual motion which God creates in our hearts by the word preached and His Holy Spirit. Faith justifies us neither in that it is a quality, nor in that it is a relation, nor in that it is an excellent virtue, nor by any worth of its own, but solely in that it apprehends its proper object Christ, and unites Him to us. That righteousness which we apprehend by faith is the righteousness of God, not only

because it is accepted of God, but because it is really the righteousness of God, that is, of our Lord Jesus Christ. To be reconciled to God is to be united to Christ, to be born again of Him, to have Him in us, and to be ourselves in Him, to live through Him, to be deemed righteous through His righteousness dwelling in us. Hence we are righteous by His essential righteousness." In another of his writings he says: "When He (*i.e.* Christ) Himself dwells in us by faith, He then brings His own righteousness, which is His divine nature, with Him into us, which thence is imputed to us as if it were our own." And a recent historian of opinions on the subject of reconciliation or the atonement thus expresses that of Osiander: "Christ is righteous, inasmuch as He is Himself the essential righteousness of God. Hence man is also justified only inasmuch as he apprehends by faith Christ as the essential righteousness of God. If he have apprehended this righteousness, God Himself dwells in Him. For where Christ is, there is also His divine nature; and where the Son is in His divine nature, there also are the father and the Holy Spirit, the one eternal divine essence."<sup>1</sup> This doctrine of Osiander I do not adduce as in *every* respect identical with that of Luther as expressed in the extracts above given, or with that of the party in our own days to which I have referred; for Osiander had certain mystical notions respecting the work of Christ, which he has mixed up with his teaching on the subject of justification, from which the others are free; but it must, I think, be clear that in his view justification takes effect in an individual substantially in the same way, and is to him substantially the same thing, as represented in the extracts above given from Luther, and in those I am now about to give from Campbell. After speaking of the "root-conception of Christ's identifying Himself with us," he says: "In virtue of this identification, the freedom and righteousness and life which are in Christ, being His own proper endowments, and of which His coming under our sins did not despoil Him, but which proved themselves mightier than all that power of darkness,—coming forth triumphant from the conflict,—these all are ours. . . . They are all ours as Christ is ours—'He is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteous-

<sup>1</sup> Baur, *Lehre von der Versöhnung*, p. 316 ff.

ness, and sanctification, and redemption.' Christ our life is presented to our faith, that believing in Him we may live—yet not we, but Christ in us. Faith does not make these high endowments ours: they are ours by the gift of God. Faith apprehends them, accepts them, gives God glory in accepting them; and this faith saves by bringing us into living harmony with the divine constitution of things in Christ; and, come into this harmony, God pronounces us righteous; and, abiding in this faith, light and life and joy in God abound in us, and the end of God in Christ is being fulfilled in us—partially now and here, to be completely so hereafter." And again he says: "Because this excellent condition of faith is in us but as a germ,—a grain of mustard-seed, a feeble dawn,—God, in imputing it as righteousness, has respect unto that of which it is the dawn—of which, as the beginning of the life of Christ in us, it is the promise, and in which it shall issue, even the noon-tide brightness of that day in which the righteous shall shine as the stars in the kingdom of their Father" (pp. 37, 39). These quotations may serve to show the substantial identity of these (supposed to be novel views) with those entertained as long ago as the time of the Reformation.

(b.) Such are the different views which have been advanced by theologians as to the imputation of Christ's righteousness for salvation to the believer. In reviewing them we shall probably agree at once to discount the first, as held only by a few hyper-Calvinists and Antinomians; as without sanction from Scripture; as opposed to the conscious experience of the godly in all ages, who have constant occasion to feel and to confess that sin still exerts a power over them, and is still in them what it is in other men, an evil and a guilty thing, even though they believe it will not be imputed to them for the sake of Christ; and as hypothecating, what is in the nature of things impossible, an actual transfer of sin and righteousness from those whose they really are to others whose they are not.

Of the other opinions above cited, that of Owen, Pictet, and Payne appears to me by much the most in accordance with the teaching of Scripture. It avoids that which is the fatal defect of the opinion which stands second in the above enumeration,

viz. of representing justification as of the nature of a legal fiction,—an act in which God regards the sinner as if he were what he is not, as if he had done what he has not done, and as if he had a claim which he has not. I confess I do not see in such modes of expression anything of the impiety which has sometimes been ascribed to them, for they are capable of a sense fully in accordance with the most reverent views of God and His ways, and so they were used by the eminent and godly men who have advocated this view. At the same time they are modes of expression which we should be shy of using without express authority from Scripture,—an authority which, in this case, I take to be wholly wanting. This view, on the other hand, avoids the Socinian doctrine that it is only the beneficial *effects* of Christ's work that we receive in justification,—a doctrine which is consistent enough on the part of those who deny to the righteousness of Christ anything of the nature of an expiation or satisfaction for sin, and resolve it wholly into His personal goodness, for the latter, of course, can be made only, as Schlichting observes, “*quatenus nostrum in bonum, justitiamque redundat*,” but which must ever be repudiated by those who regard the righteousness of Christ as propitiatory for us, for the effects of such a righteousness can be conveyed to us only as the righteousness itself is imputed to us. And, in fine, this view falls in with a principle which is repeatedly recognized in Scripture in other cases, that, namely, of conferring blessing on many who have not merited it, as a reward to one whose character and conduct were well-pleasing to God. Thus, in the covenant which God made with Noah, blessings were secured to the race at large in virtue of their descent from him; and in the covenant with Abraham his natural descendants were made partakers of the benefit for his sake. On the same principle Jehovah blessed the house of Potiphar “for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had in the house and in the field;” the kingdom of Judah was continued to the descendants of David, though forfeited by Solomon's sin, for their father David's sake; and other instances there are of a similar kind. In all such cases the merit or moral worth abides with the parties who pleased God; but the claim or right founded on that passes over so as to include others, and entitle them to bless-

ings they themselves have not merited. When, therefore, we are taught that God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us our sins and accepted us into His favour, the transaction seems to be one resting upon substantially the same principle on which we see God so extensively acting in other cases. In this case the merit and the righteousness are wholly the Lord's, but for His sake there is transferred to those that are His a claim and title to salvation, in virtue of which God treats them as dear children. "To as many as received Him gave He power ( $\epsilon\chi\omicron\nu\sigma\iota\alpha\nu$  = authorization or title<sup>1</sup>) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John i. 12). We may borrow an illustration of this from our Lord's parable of the marriage feast. None were entitled to sit down at that feast but those who had the marriage garment. This, however, none of those who came had. How then could any be privileged to enter and partake of the feast? Did the king propose to regard them *as if* they had a marriage garment though they had none, and so admit them to the feast? Not so; but out of his bounty he provided garments which he gave in free donation to those who would accept them, and thereby conferred on them a right and title to enter as privileged guests. Even so a title to become sons of God by being justified is given to believers by the righteousness of Christ being communicated to them, and they having this righteousness—not being regarded as if they had it, but actually having it—are, for Christ's sake, dealt with as righteous.

With regard to the last of the opinions above cited, I feel constrained to observe that whilst it gives prominence to certain aspects of truth that have probably been too little regarded in the prevailing schemes of doctrine, it is wholly inadequate as a statement of the doctrine of Scripture on the subject of justification. I think it of importance that our attention should be called to the fact that it is nowhere taught in Scripture that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us; but that the doctrine of Scripture is that faith is imputed or counted to us for righteousness, *i.e.* that faith in Christ puts us in the same position with regard to privilege as perfect righteousness would; and especially I count it of

<sup>1</sup> "Nicht *Würde* oder *Vorzug*, sondern *Berechtigung*; er ermächtigte sie." Meyer, *Commentary*, v. 27, xvii. 2.

importance that we should be brought to regard faith, not simply as an intellectual condition of salvation, but as that by which a real union is effected between the soul and Christ, so as actually, and that not arbitrarily, but in virtue of the mediatorial constitution, to bring us under the blessings Christ has secured. Nor would I overlook what we owe to the upholders of this opinion for their so vividly impressing on us the inherent religiousness of faith itself as the germ of the new life, the reverting, so to speak, of the soul to that condition of implicit trust in God, the loss of which was the beginning of sin in the world, and the want of which is at the bottom of all apostasy and rebellion against God. But whilst I freely and thankfully acknowledge obligation in these respects to the advocates of this opinion, I must reject the opinion itself as a statement of the N. T. doctrine of justification. It seems to me exposed to objections of the most decisive kind.

*a.* Whilst professing to abjure utterly the adhibition of a legal fiction in the dealing of God with man in the matter of salvation, this opinion is necessitated to resort to that very hypothesis in order to escape from teaching that man is justified by works. For if man be justified *propter fidem* and not simply *per fidem*, then his faith must be one of two things: either it must be so good and meritorious as to entitle him of itself to acceptance with God, or God must by a legal fiction regard it as if it were so. I can see nothing beyond this alternative. Now, the former side of this alternative no evangelical divine will adopt; even the Socinian will recoil from it as one which neither Scripture nor reason will sanction. What remains, then, but just the abhorred and repudiated hypothesis of a legal fiction? and that, let me add, under a far less innocent form than it appears in the doctrine of imputation as taught by Calvin, Fuller, and Wardlaw; for surely if it be wrong to teach that God imputes Christ's righteousness to us as if it were our own, it must be worse to teach that He treats the germ of goodness in us as if it were the perfection of it, and gives to a man who, from being wicked and sinful, has taken only the first step to goodness the right which belongs only to those who are perfect in goodness, and have never been anything but good.



β. I cannot see what provision is made on this hypothesis for the pardon of past guilt on the part of the sinner who accepts the gospel. According to this doctrine, faith is, because of its germinal goodness, held as if it were equivalent to all goodness, to complete moral righteousness. But plainly this can operate only *prospectively*,—faith can be counted only for such righteousness as it contains the germ of, and no more. What, then, cancels the guilt of, it may be, a long life of sin preceding the belief of the gospel? To this the advocates of this opinion have no answer but in the hypothesis of a universal pardon of all guilt, secured to men through the death of Christ, irrespective of faith or any moral goodness in them. Into this I cannot enter here further than to say that it is an hypothesis (α) destitute of all express authority from Scripture; (β) opposed to the clear testimony of Scripture, which not only teaches that guilt is still a possible, nay, an actual thing in this world, but that it is not passively under a general unconditional amnesty, but by active personal faith in Christ that men are justified; (γ) incompatible with the clear testimony of conscience, which, giving response to the moral law of the universe, convicts every man of guilt, and could receive no message as a gospel or as true that did not acknowledge and proceed upon that fact; (δ) and, finally, an extension of Antinomianism, by making that the common privilege of all men which Antinomians plead for as the privilege of the elect, viz. that with them sin is really no sin, all sin having been already condoned and cancelled in Christ. Regarding in this light the doctrine of universal pardon, I cannot but reject an opinion which falls back on this doctrine as essential to its support.

γ. I find it impossible to reconcile this opinion with the statement of the apostle, that God hath made Christ to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God. Between the two clauses of this verse there is an unmistakable antithesis, and to this due justice must be done if we would interpret it fairly. In whatever sense, then, we understand the sinner to be made righteousness through Christ, in that sense must we understand Christ to have been made sin for us. Assume, then, that we are made the righteousness of God in the sense that the germinal principle of righteousness

in us is treated as if it were the whole and fully developed product, and it will follow that Christ was made sin for us in the sense that the germ of sin in Him was held as if it had effloresced into all the fulness of perfect iniquity. We must therefore regard the apostle as here teaching, not merely the peccability of Christ, but His actual depravity—a doctrine not only opposed to the express declaration of Scripture, but from which the Christian consciousness, the Christian instinct, revolts. But how this consequence is to be avoided and the passage to be fairly interpreted I do not see, unless we adopt the common view, that as Christ had our sins put on Him and therefore suffered for us, believers have His righteousness put on them, and therefore are pardoned and accepted for His sake.

8. The apostle repeatedly affirms that we are justified by faith and by the blood of Christ. These statements are usually understood to mean that the *ground* of our absolution and acceptance with God is the atoning death of Christ, and the *medium* of our absolution and acceptance is our faith in Him, whereby we become one with Him. But what do these phrases mean on the hypothesis now under consideration? I am at a loss to attach to them any meaning except it be that the blood of Christ is *one* ground of our being made righteous, and faith is *another* ground of the same. But such an interpretation of the words we cannot admit. For, in the first place, the sentiment elicited is altogether strange to Scripture—nowhere are we taught that Christ's death and our faith are conjoint grounds of salvation; secondly, the sentiment is in itself absurd; because the object of faith being the blood of Christ, it is impossible that the faith and the blood can both be grounds of salvation, unless it could be maintained that an anchor which lays hold on the earth is a stay for the ship in the same sense in which the ground itself is; thirdly, this interpretation puts a sense on the Greek verb *δικαίωω* which it nowhere bears; it never means to make righteous, but always to pronounce righteous, to absolve, to clear.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Erskine, indeed, says that there is "but one verb answering to these two nouns [*δικαίωσις* and *δικαιοσύνη*], viz. *δικαιούμαι*, which verb may either signify, 'I am the subject of *δικαίωσις*,' i.e. 'I am freed from the imputation of

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

(3.) *The Medium of Justification: Faith.*

Having considered the nature and the ground of justification, we come now to consider the *medium* of it—that by means of which an individual becomes a partaker of this blessing.

On this head the testimony of Scripture is full and decisive (Rom. v. 1; Gal. iii. 8; Rom. iii. 28, iv. 11, ix. 30, x. 6; Phil. iii. 9; Rom. iii. 22, iv. 5, 9). It is by faith, then, that men obtain righteousness, or are justified. And as this is not the *efficient cause* of justification, for “it is God that justifieth;” nor the *meritorious ground* of justification, for this is found alone in the propitiatory work of Christ, “through whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand,”—it must be regarded as the *medium* through which we obtain the blessing. With this accords the phraseology invariably used in the N. T., where the relation of faith to justification is expressed by the particles *ἐκ* or *διὰ*, particles of mediation.<sup>1</sup> Faith is sometimes spoken of as the *instrumental cause* of justification. But this phraseology is objectionable, because, as an object can become an instrumental cause only by being used by the efficient cause to accomplish the result, to say that faith is the instrumental cause of a man’s justification would

sin,’ or ‘I am the subject of *δικαιοσύνη*,’ i.e. ‘I am made righteous’” (*Brazen Serpent*, p. 143). For this piece of lexicography Mr. Erskine gives no authority whatever; and in such a case his *ipse dixit* cannot be allowed to settle the matter, especially as he is obviously ignorant of the fact that the Greek language possesses the word *δικαιοποιεω* in the sense of “I make righteous.” I have examined some scores of passages in which *δικαίω* occurs, and I affirm that it never is used otherwise than in a judicial sense, nor do the lexicons give it any other meaning. Mr. Erskine denies that faith is ever connected with *δικαίω* when used in relation to the pardon of sin. Had he forgotten Acts xiii. 39, where we read: “Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and from all (*ἀπο πάντων*, i.e. *αμαρτιῶν*) from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses, by this man every one that believeth is justified”?

<sup>1</sup> See Winer’s *Grammar*, by Moulton, pp. 460, 472.

mean either that God employs faith as the instrument by which He effects justification, or that man by employing faith to effect justification is in some sense the efficient cause of his own righteousness; neither of which is true, inasmuch as faith is not God's instrument which He brings to bear on man for his justification, but something He requires man to have for himself, and inasmuch as man is not and cannot be in any sense his own justifier. Another phrase sometimes employed is that faith is *the condition* of justification. Now to this, rightly understood, there is no objection; but as the phrase is ambiguous, it is as well to avoid it. A condition may mean a valuable consideration or a meritorious act on the ground of which some bargain rests or some advantage is conferred; as when one man conveys a piece of property to another on condition of receiving a certain sum of money in return, or as when a reward is offered on condition of a certain act being performed. In this sense of the word it is obviously wrong to speak of faith as the condition of salvation or justification, for this would be to put the man's faith in the place of Christ's work. It is not, however, in this sense that the term is used in this connection. "Condition" often means that without which or in the absence of which a certain result will not take place; as when we say the opening of the eye is the condition of seeing, or the pellucidity of the atmosphere a condition of the sun's light reaching the earth. In this case we state a "*conditio sine qua non*," that in the absence of which the alleged result will not take place. And in this sense faith is unquestionably a condition of justification; it is that without which justification will not be effected. But as there is a danger of the term "condition" being understood in the former and not in the latter sense, and so of faith being looked upon as something which the sinner has to render by way of equivalent or meritorious work for justification, it is better to avoid this ambiguous terminology altogether.

*a.* Regarding faith, then, as the medium of justification, we have first to inquire what this faith through which men are justified is.

The Greek word rendered by faith in our version is *πίστις*.

This stands associated with the adjective *πιστος* and the verb *πιστευω*, and in order to arrive at a just idea of its meaning we must attend to the usage of these cognate words in the N. T. as well as to the usage of *πιστις* itself.

In the classical writers the primary concept attached to these words is that of *trust*. Thus we have such a phrase as *ω πιστιν ισχων τηνδ' χειρουμην αγραν* (Soph., *Oed. Col.*, 950), "on which placing trust I seized this prey;" *εταiros πιστος*, "a trusty companion;" *ταις σπονδαῖς πιστευειν*, "to trust to treaties." From this arose the secondary meaning of *persuasion, conviction, belief*, or the holding as true and trust worthy any assertion or object of thought. Thus Plato speaks of the maker of a vessel having a right conviction or opinion (*πιστιν ορθην*) concerning the vessel he has made (*Repub.* x. 601, E); and of a hunter having confidence (*πιστου*) in nets and snares (*De Leg.* vii. 824, B); and the phrase *πιστευειν τι τινι* was used by the Greeks to denote the putting faith in any one in regard to anything. From this the transition to believing what one says, or any statement that is made, is easy.

It is sometimes said that it is in this last-mentioned sense that these words are generally used in the N. T. This, however, is not the case. On the contrary, I doubt if a single instance can be adduced in which the substantive *πίστις* signifies the act of simple belief or holding for true any statement. The adjective *απιστος* is sometimes used actively, and as so used it sometimes has the sense of believing a fact or assertion; as when our Lord says to Thomas, "Be not faithless (*άπιστος*) but believing (*πιστος*)," where it plainly refers to the accepting as true and real the fact of our Lord's being then present in the body. The verb *πιστευειν* more frequently is used in this sense; as when our Lord, after saying to Martha, "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die," asks, "Believest thou this?" (*πιστευεις τουτο*); and Martha replies, "Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ" (*έγω πεπιστευκα οτι συ ει ο Χρ.*); where we have both an instance of the verb followed by the accusative, and an instance of it followed by *οτι* (John xi. 27). The construction with *οτι* is frequent in the writings of St. John.

*Πίστις* is often used in a vague and general way to denote

the acceptance and profession of the gospel or Christianity, without there being anything to indicate *how* it has been received; as when such expressions as the following are used: to "abide in the faith," to "turn from the faith," to "continue in the faith," "established in the faith," etc. And, in accordance with this, Christians are called οἱ πιστοί, "the faithful, or believers," and the verb πιστεῖν is used absolutely to express the action of those who embrace the truth, as in John i. 7, iv. 41, etc. Πίστις is also sometimes used to designate the truth itself which is received, as when Paul speaks of preaching the faith which he once destroyed, or when he calls on Christians to hold fast the profession of the faith.

In none of these usages of the terms is faith connected with justification. But besides these there is a usage of the terms in which the primary idea of trust or confidence is prominent, and specially trust or confidence in that which does not present itself to the senses or is discerned by the natural intelligence. This is the idea which pervades the O. T. references to faith. The Hebrew word אָמַן, which the LXX. render by πίστις, is from אָמַן, "to make firm" or "to be firm," and in the Hiphil "to hold firmly," "to confide in," "to trust;" and signifies primarily *firmness*, and from that, as used of God, *faithfulness*, or firm adherence to His word; and, as used of man, *confident trust*, or firm reliance on God and His word. This idea the N. T. writers have very prominently reproduced in their usage of πίστις and πιστεῖν. Instead of the construction of πίστις with the genitive of object, or of πιστεῖν with an accusative or with οὗ, they use such constructions as πίστις ἐπὶ, π. πρὸς, π. εἰς, π. ἐν, and πιστεῖν ἐπὶ, π. εἰς, and sometimes πιστεῖν followed by the dative. These formulæ are used when the object of the πίστις is some object not cognizable by the senses or the natural reason, specially some object made known to us by divine revelation. They are principally used in reference to God or to Christ as objects of man's trust and confidence. Thus πιστεῖν εἰς τὸν Θεόν does not mean to believe that God is, nor does it mean to believe what God says; it means to rely on God, to put trust and confidence in Him, though unseen by us, though not cognizable by us. It is with this meaning of the word in view that the apostle says of faith,

that it is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen ; it is that by which we, exercising confident trust in God, obtain a present and substantial realization of that which is not present to the senses, and for which we have no security but in God's word. So, also, the apostle describes the Christian life as a walking by faith, not by sight; we walk securely, not because we see our way, but because we confidently rely on Him who is our Guide and Helper.

It thus appears that, discounting those cases in which *πίστις* or *πιστευω* or *πιστος* is used vaguely of the mere acceptance or profession of Christianity, and those in which *πίστις* is used of Christianity itself as a system of truth believed, as not tending to throw any light on our present object of inquiry, *πίστις*, originally and primarily signifying simple trust, may come to signify the trust we have in any statement as true, the opinion we form of it as true, the holding of it as true ; and also the trust we repose in any object as being what it professes to be, or as sufficient for what it offers to perform, and so our confidence in or reliance on that object. It is in this last sense the term is invariably used when the object is a person and the noun is followed by the prepositions *εις*, *προς*, *ἐπι*, or *ἐν*. The same is true of the verb *πιστευειν*. That, when followed by an accusative, usually signifies to believe or hold for true the object expressed by the following accusative ; so, also, when it is followed by *οτι* it signifies the recognition or acknowledgment as true of that which the *οτι* introduces. When, however, it is followed by any of the above-named prepositions and in relation to a person, it expresses confidence or reliance on the person named. In the sense of simple belief the noun seldom if ever appears in the N. T. ; but in this sense the verb occurs frequently, especially in the writings of St. John. The verb also occurs in construction with the dative, and in this case it expresses the act of believing or acknowledging the veracity of the object denoted by the dative, as, *e.g.*, *πιστευετε μοι*, "believe me" (John xiv. 11) ; *τῇ γραφῇ ἐπιστευσαν*, "they believed the Scripture" (John ii. 22). We have thus three different constructions of the verb, each conveying a different sense. We have—

(a) *πιστευειν τι*, "to believe something," *i.e.* to hold it for true, or *π. οτι κ.τ.λ.*, "to believe that," etc.

(b) πιστεueiv τινί, "to believe any one," *i.e.* to regard his testimony as true.

(c) πιστεueiv εις, προς, or ἐπι τινα, "to believe on or upon any one," *i.e.* to place confidence or reliance on any one, which is also, though rarely, expressed by εν with the dative.

We thus arrive at the conclusion that the meaning of πιστις and its cognates in any given instance must be determined by the object with which they are connected, and the way in which they are construed with the word or words describing that object. If that object be a statement or testimony, then πιστις is the credit we give to it, the regarding it as true; πιστεueiv is the act of crediting it; and πιστος is the person so crediting it. If the object be a witness, whether personal or documentary, then πιστεueiv, construed with the dative, expresses the act of giving credit to that witness. If the object be a person, or a promise, or an assurance, and is indicated by the prepositions εις, προς, ἐπι with the accusative, or εν with the dative, then πίστις signifies the reliance we place on that object, and πιστεueiv signifies the act of placing that reliance.

I am the more anxious to place this clearly before you because it is often asserted that there is no real difference between believing a testimony concerning any one and believing in the person concerning whom the testimony is given. To one accustomed to mark the precision with which shades of meaning are expressed in Greek, such an assertion, amounting to a declaration that πιστεueiv τὸ περὶ τινος is equivalent in meaning to πιστεueiv εις τινά, cannot but appear very startling; nor will even the mere English scholar easily reconcile himself to the opinion that to believe anything of any one is tantamount to believing in that one. I confess I am surprised to find such a writer as Dr. Wardlaw giving in to this opinion, and asserting that "believing on the Son of God" is the same as believing the record that God hath given concerning Him.<sup>1</sup> Had the assertion been, that whosoever really believes the record will be led thereby to believe on the Son, it then might have been admitted; for in that case the believing on the Son would have been presented as something different from believing the record,

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Assurance and Pardon*, p. 28.



though consequent upon it. But to assert that the two positions are identical in meaning seems to me to set at defiance the most obvious conditions of speech. Surely to affirm that what a record declares concerning some one is true is not the same thing as putting faith in that one of whom the record speaks. That may follow as a result of the former conviction, but it is a result of it, and not the conviction itself. The one is an acknowledgment of the veracity of the author of the record ; the other is an affection excited in the mind towards the person of whom the record speaks. In respect of Christ, of whom the divine record speaks, we first of all receive as true what God in the record tells us of Him ; we next recognize in Him as thus presented to us one who is suited to be our Helper and Saviour ; and, finally, we confide in Him as our Saviour. It is only when we reach this last stage that we can with any propriety of speech be said to believe on Him.

Dr. Wardlaw adduces as decisive in favour of his doctrine John xx. 30, 31 : " And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book ; but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name." On this Dr. Wardlaw remarks : " The ' signs ' spoken of are evidences of the truth that ' Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; ' these signs are wrought for the express purpose that on the ground of the evidence afforded by them this truth might be believed : and with the believing of it eternal life is connected ; the life being obtained in believing." Now all this is true, but it does not touch the point in question, unless Dr. Wardlaw means to say that eternal life is obtained through a man's simply believing on the ground of external evidence such as is furnished by miraculous deeds or signs that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Son of God. This, I think, he would not have maintained. But if this be not maintained, then the passage decides nothing as to the point before us ; for it simply affirms that before a man can obtain eternal life through Christ he must believe that He is the Christ, etc., which is what all must admit. It does not say that this is *all* a man has to do in order to obtain eternal life ; and therefore it leaves us free to affirm that this eternal life is

obtained by any one only when, acknowledging Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, the man also confides in Him and trusts to Him as his Saviour.

Dr. Wardlaw also adduces in support of his view 1 John v. 10, where we have the phrase *πεπίστευκεν εἰς* used in reference to *μαρτυρίαν*, and where, he argues, it means nothing more than simply to believe, to accept as true God's testimony concerning His Son; from which he would have us to infer that *πιστεueiv εἰς Χριστον* means nothing more than to believe what is said concerning Christ in the gospel. But, on the supposition that the two usages are quite parallel, surely if *πιστεueiv εἰς μαρτυρίαν* is properly translated "to believe the testimony," then *πιστεueiv εἰς Χριστον* must be translated "to believe Christ;" it cannot possibly mean to believe the testimony concerning Christ. To believe Christ, however, would mean simply to credit what He says; and this, I presume, no one will accept as the meaning of the phrase *πιστεueiv εἰς Χριστον*. Instead, therefore, of determining the meaning of this phrase by the rendering which the A. V. gives of *πιστεueiv εἰς μαρτυρίαν*, we must correct this rendering by bringing it into accordance with that usually and properly given to the former; we must render it "to believe on the testimony," or, as Dr. Wardlaw himself admits, it may be rendered "putting confidence in the testimony." The parallelism of the two phrases is thus preserved; and the only difference in meaning between them is such as necessarily arises from the difference between putting trust or confidence in a person and putting trust or confidence in a statement.

At the risk of repeating what has already been said, I would sum up the result of our inquiry thus in the words of an eminent German theologian, Luthardt: "Faith has to do with God, in the N. T. with God through Christ as the absolute revelation of God (John xiv. 9). God (and Christ) is (1) The *ground* of faith, because it is on His authority that we believe; *τῷ Θεῷ*, Acts xxvii. 25; Rom. iv. 3; Gal. iii. 6; equivalent to 'the word of God;' we do not, however, find *τῷ Χριστῷ*, but rather the word of Christ, or on the ground of His word. To this faith Jesus sought to bring those to whom as yet His miracles were the only ground of faith (John ii. 23, iii. 2, iv. 48 ff.). (2) The

*content* of belief; the having believed, viz. that God is (Jas. ii. 19), that Jesus the Christ is (John viii. 24, *οτι ἐγὼ εἶμι*, 1 John v. 1). (3) The *aim* or *scope* of belief, the object on which man believes, to which believing he yields himself, which in faith he assumes with himself and thereon bases his life, *εις*, *επι*, *ἐν*.”<sup>1</sup> The effect of these different prepositions when used to indicate this object is thus set forth by the same author: “With *εις* and *επι*, and sometimes also with *προς* followed by the accusative *Χριστον*, there is conveyed the idea that Christ is the object or aim of faith, and faith is a yielding up unto Him; with *ἐν* followed by the dative *Χριστω* there is expressed the idea that faith is based on Christ and rests on Him.” To this I may add a sentence from the father of the scholastic theology, the “master of sentences,” Peter the Lombard: “Aliud est credere in Deum, aliud credere Deo, aliud credere Deum. Credere Deo est credere vera esse quæ loquitur, quod et mali faciunt, et nos credimus homine, non in hominem. Credere Deum est credere quod ipse sit Deus, quod etiam mali faciunt. Credere in Deum est credendo amare, credendo in eum ire, credendo ei adherere et ejus membris incorporari. Per hanc fidem,” he adds, “justificatur impius.”<sup>2</sup>

b. Having considered the nature of faith, let us now go on to consider the *object* of saving faith.

This is distinctly set before us in the N. T. as our Lord Jesus Christ, who is presented to us as set forth by God, and as acting for the redemption and salvation of lost sinners. It is not something about Jesus Christ, not the testimony concerning Him which is the object of saving faith, but Jesus Christ Himself, in His mediatorial character and office and work as made known to us in the Bible. The testimony therein contained concerning Him must, of course, be credited, for until this is done Christ is nothing to us but a name; but the mere crediting of this is not saving faith, because the object of that faith is not the testimony or record, but the divine-human Saviour Himself to whom it relates.

That this is the doctrine of the N. T. may be clearly shown. When Peter first opened his commission among

<sup>1</sup> *Kompendium der Dogmatik*, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> *Sent.*, iii. dist. 23 d.

the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius he made this declaration: "To Him [Jesus Christ] give all the prophets witness that through His name whosoever believeth in Him (*εἰς αὐτόν*, 'upon Him') shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). When the jailor at Philippi cried out to Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" their answer was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (*ἐπὶ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰ. Χ.*), and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). In all these cases the formula *πιστεῖν εἰς* or *ἐπὶ* is used, which, as we have already seen, intimates the placing of trust, or confidence in, or reliance upon, the object of the *πιστις*. In accordance with this, those of whom justifying faith is predicated are described as those who have believed on Christ, or, which is the same thing, on the name of Christ. Thus Paul declared, in his discourse in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, that from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, every one believing in Him (*ἐν τούτῳ*, "in this one whom I preach") is justified (Acts xiii. 39). See also John i. 12, iii. 16, 36, vi. 29, vii. 38; Acts xxvi. 18. More specially it is Christ as set forth to be a propitiation, and to act as Mediator between God and man, who is the proper object of saving faith. See Rom. iii. 25; 1 Cor. i. 30; 2 Cor. v. 19, 21.

Thus Scripture makes it clear that the proper object of saving faith is our Lord Jesus Christ, whom God gave up for us all, that by His obedience unto death He might lay a basis for our acceptance with God, and might acquire merit for the sake of which legal righteousness is given to sinners, and they are dealt with as righteous. And as faith is faith on Him or in Him, it is not a mere belief of the truth concerning Him, but a personal affiance of the mind on Him as He is made known to us in the gospel.

The conclusion at which we have thus arrived admits of being confirmed by several additional considerations.

(a) There are certain expressions used which are equivalents for faith, and which are of such a kind as to prove that something more than mere belief is required. Whilst on the side of the *intellect* such expressions as *θεωρεῖν* and *γινώσκειν* are used in connection with believing (John vi. 40, 69, x. 38, etc.), a connection which has its root in the fact that there

can be no faith without knowledge and perception of its object; on the side of the *will* we have such expressions as λαμβάνειν, "to receive;" ακολουθεῖν, "to follow;" ἐρχεσθαι πρὸς, "to come to," etc. Such expressions involve on the part of those of whom they are used the exercise not only of thought, but of desire, choice, and resolution. We have also such expressions as "the obedience of faith," *i.e.* faith as an act of obedience (ὑπακοή πίστεως, Rom. i. 5); καρδία πιστευεται, "believes with the heart" (Rom. x. 9); and as the opposite of faith we have ἀπειθεῖν, which conveys the idea of disobedience (1 Pet. ii. 7). All these expressions indicate the exercise of will and choice on the part of men in the matter of salvation; and unless we hold that there are different ways of obtaining salvation, we must regard these as equivalent to faith, and so conclude that faith is not a mere intellectual reception of truth, but an act implying desire, choice, acquiescence, trust.

(b) Belief is simply a kind of knowledge. The belief of anything is simply the knowing of it as real and true. If, therefore, the mere belief of certain facts and truths were all that is required for salvation, every one who knows these to be facts and truths would be thereby saved. But will this be maintained by any one? Surely it is not the knowledge we have of truth, but the *use* we make of that knowledge, which is of avail to us. If it be said, "But where there is the knowledge there will also be the use," it may be replied, this does not necessarily follow; for we meet continually with instances of men knowing certain things to be true and yet not using their knowledge for any practical end; and besides, this very assertion involves the admission that the mere belief is not enough, and that it is the following up of that belief with the use of it which makes it effectual for salvation. What is this but to admit that simple belief is not all that is required for salvation?

(c) In the O. T. we find that the quality specially required in those who would be held righteous is trust in God. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee;" "Trust in the Lord and do good;" "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord," etc. Now, if under the ancient economy that by which a man obtained acceptance with God

was trust in Him, does not this raise a strong presumption that that which in the N. T. occupies the same place, namely faith, should also be essential to trust in Him?

(d) We find that our Lord in performing miracles laid great stress on the faith of the party for whom or on whom the miracle was wrought. Now, what was the faith thus required by Him? Was it the mere belief of certain facts or truths concerning Christ? No doubt some knowledge of His character and claims, some acquaintance with His power, and belief that He was what He assumed to be, the Messiah, was involved in this faith, because there can be no faith in one of whom we know nothing, or nothing fitted to awaken confidence in Him. But surely this was not all that our Lord required when He demanded faith in those who implored His help, or all that He commended when He said to any one, "Great is thy faith; be it unto thee according to thy word." In many of the instances recorded the knowledge of the party was very limited, and in some it was manifestly not only defective but erroneous. But such as it was, it led those who had it to apply to Christ for the help they required. Knowing, for instance, that He was able to heal the sick, they brought their sick to Him for healing. What, then, was the faith which He required of them ere He granted their request? Was it not that they should place implicit trust in Him, that they should confide in Him as alone able to do for them that which they asked? But if that faith which was required for the saving and healing of the body was something more than mere knowledge, was trust in Christ as the Almighty Healer, what reason have we to suppose that that faith which avails to the saving of the soul is less than this?

(e) Abraham is presented in Scripture as a remarkable example of true faith. Moses tells us that "he believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness," and both Paul and James cite this thus: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." Now what was this faith of Abraham? Was it merely the knowledge of certain promises God had given him, and the belief that because God had given them they would be fulfilled? Was there not also trust in God that He would fulfil them? and did not this trust enter into the very essence of his belief

that they would be fulfilled? Now the apostle adduces the faith of Abraham as of the same kind with that faith of the Christian by which we are justified. It is on this ground that Abraham is represented in the N. T. as the father of all them that believe (Rom. iv. 11). "Abraham," says the apostle, "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" (Gal. iii. 6, 7). That it is the faith which justifies which the apostle thus identifies with the faith of Abraham, is evident from the whole tenor of his discourse both in Romans and Galatians. If, then, the faith which justifies the sinner be the same in kind as the faith of Abraham, as his faith was trust in God the faith of the Christian must also be of the nature of trust.

We arrive, then, at the conclusion that saving faith is trust—trust in Christ as the Saviour who hath made atonement for sin, and now lives and reigns to give repentance and remission of sins to men. The proper object of faith is the Lord Himself; not certain facts concerning Him, not His life, nor His death, nor His resurrection, not any doctrine or proposition regarding Him; but Christ Himself, the Son of God, the Prophet, Priest, and King of His Church, the Healer and the Helper of men, the Light and the Life of the world. They that trust in Him as Abraham trusted in God are thereby justified, and are blessed with faithful Abraham.

*c.* But what is implied in trust in Christ? There is implied in this—

(*a*) The having right thoughts concerning Him and His work, the knowing of the truth concerning Him, and the holding of that for true.

(*b*) The realizing His Person, His Agency, and His sufficiency for us as a Saviour.

(*c*) An earnest desire on our part of the blessing of salvation; for men never trust any one for what they do not desire to obtain.

(*d*) The yielding of ourselves to Christ, and our resting on Him as able and willing to do for us all that we desire and need; thus choosing Him to be our Saviour, and reposing with implicit confidence in Him for salvation.

The faith which we thus place in Christ brings us into close personal union with Him. We are thus made one with Him, and, as the apostle expresses it, are called to the fellowship of the Son of God, and made partakers of Christ (1 Cor. i. 9 ; Heb. iii. 14). United to Christ, the believer has fellowship in His sufferings, in His death, in His resurrection, in His ascension, and in His reign. He is crucified with Christ ; he is risen with Christ to walk with Him in newness of life ; he sits with Christ in heavenly places, and anticipates the time when he shall see Him as He is, and be for ever personally with Him. The believer is accepted in Christ's acceptance, justified in His justification, and made to participate in His blessedness in part now, wholly in the world to come.

(4.) *Summary of Opinion on the Doctrine of Justification.*

A brief summary of the views advanced on the subject of justification unto life may here be given in concluding the subject.

a. A summary of the views of the Lutheran divines is thus given by Heinrich Schmid : " Reconciliation with God having been effected through Christ, in that He in the place of men hath fulfilled the law and made satisfaction for the sins of the world, the new salvation is preached to men thenceforward, and therein is offered to men the forgiveness of their sins (Luke xxiv. 47 ; Acts ii. 38, v. 31, x. 43, xiii. 38, xxvi. 18). To become partakers of this there is not required on man's part a work by which he may previously merit it, for Christ has alone done all that is needed for the obtaining of salvation, but the only thing required is that man accept the offered salvation, that he appropriate the promised blessing, and this he does by faith. This faith, however, can be attained by the man only when he, having been informed of the salvation obtained through Christ and offered to him, recognizes the actual existence of this salvation and the truth of the promise as well as the consolation that lies in it, and arrives at the assurance that this salvation is designed, not somehow for this one or that one, but also for him ; for a joyful message can benefit a man only when no doubt



is entertained by him as to its truth, and when also he is convinced that he himself is intended in it. Faith accordingly consists of these constituent elements:—

“(a) Of *knowledge*, and that *explicit*, of the things to be believed (*credenda*), principally concerning Christ and His merit, and the grace of God, or remission of sins and salvation from God, to be obtained thereby.

“(b) Of *assent*, *i.e.* an approving judgment of the intellect by which we believe those things which Scripture delivers concerning Christ and His merit and satisfaction for our sins, and concerning the grace of God and His promises of the gratuitous remission of sins for the sake of Christ, to be certainly and indubitably true, and simply acquiesce in them.

“(c) Of *trust* (*fiducia*), an act of the will by which it acquiesces in Christ the Mediator as a good now, and ours, and the cause of another good, viz. the remission of sins and life eternal to follow.”<sup>1</sup>

The views of Calvin and his followers may be gathered from the following utterances taken from their writings and symbolical books:—

“A just definition of faith will be supplied to us if we say that it is a firm and certain knowledge of the divine benevolence toward us which, founded in the truth of a gracious promise in Christ, is by the Holy Spirit both revealed to and sealed upon our minds and hearts.”<sup>2</sup>

“In sum, he alone is a believer who, persuaded by a solid persuasion that God is to him a propitious and benevolent Father, promises to himself all things from His benignity; he alone who, trusting in the promises of the divine benevolence towards him, takes it upon him to have an undoubted expectation of salvation. . . . The believer, I say, is he alone who, resting on the security of his own salvation, confidently exults over the devil and death, as we are taught by that splendid burst of the apostle, ‘For I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able

<sup>1</sup> *Dogmatik der Evangelisch-Lutheren Kirche, dargestellt und aus den quellen belgt.*

<sup>2</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, iii. 2. 7.

to separate us from the love of God, which embraceth us in Christ Jesus' (Rom. viii. 38)." <sup>1</sup>

"Saving faith is an assured trust kindled in my heart by the Holy Ghost through the gospel, whereby I repose myself upon God, being assuredly persuaded that remission of sins, everlasting righteousness, and life are given, not to others only, but to me also, and that freely through the mercy of God for the merit of Christ alone." <sup>2</sup>

The later Geneva school of Calvinists, as represented by Turretine and Pictet, in order to meet an objection urged against the doctrine as taught by Calvin, adopted a modified view in an important particular different from his. The objection urged against his doctrine was that it ran in a vicious circle, for it represented justifying faith, by which we obtain the remission of sins, as consisting in our believing that our sins are remitted to us, thus making our receiving a blessing dependent on our believing that we already have it. To meet this Turretine distinguishes between remission as obtained *de jure* by the death of Christ, and remission as obtained *de facto* by the efficacious application thereof; in the former of which senses he maintains that the remission of sins already procured by the death of Christ is the object of faith, while in the latter sense the remission is something *to be* obtained; for, as faith is the instrumental cause of justification, it must precede justification. He further observes that "the fiducial act is twofold, on the one hand preceding justification as its cause, on the other following it as its effect. The former, consisting in a persuasion of the perfect satisfaction of Christ for the sins of all believers, and in fleeing to Him and receiving Him, respects the remission of sins as already meritoriously obtained by Christ, but as yet in fact to be applied to me believing. The latter, consisting in the reflex act of faith and in the sense of justification, respects remission as already applied to me believing. By the former I believe that my sins will be remitted in the future, or here and now. By the latter I believe that my sins have been remitted in the past. Hence to obtain remission of sins I have not to believe that my sins have been already remitted to me, as is falsely charged upon us, but I have to believe that to

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, § 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Heidelberg Catechism*, qu. 21.

me believing and repenting my sins will certainly be remitted, according to the promise made to those who believe and repent."

This, it will be seen, fairly meets the objection ; but it does so by a change of position from that against which the objection is directed. Calvin's position is that saving faith is a confident persuasion that my sins are remitted for the sake of Christ. Against this position the objection is perfectly valid, for to believe that my sins are remitted is really to believe that I am justified ; and if it is by this faith that I am justified, it follows that I am justified by believing that I am justified, which is not only moving in a circle, but, as Dr. Wardlaw acutely observes, represents a sinner as justified by his believing what must, of course, at the time of his believing be false.<sup>1</sup> Turretine escapes from this conclusion and dilemma by distinguishing between the faith which has Christ for its object and the faith which has respect to our own condition as pardoned, the former of which alone he holds to be justifying faith. In this he may be perfectly right ; but obviously in taking this ground he has deserted the position against which the objection was directed.

The position taken by Turretine is that which Arminius advocates. "Justifying faith," he says, "is not that by which any one believes that his sins are remitted to him for the sake of Christ, for this follows justification itself, or remission of sins, which is the effect of justifying faith. . . . Justifying faith is that by which men believe in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of all who believe, and of each of them in particular, even the Saviour of him who, through Christ, believes in God, who justifies the ungodly."<sup>2</sup>

Not essentially different from this is the view of Owen. "The nature of justifying faith," he says, "with respect unto that exercise of it whereby we are justified, consisteth in the heart's approbation of the way of justification and salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ proposed in the gospel as proceeding from the grace, wisdom, and love of God, with its acquiescency therein as unto its own concernment and condition. . . . That this [the pardon of our own sins in particular, the especial mercy of God unto our souls] is the object of justifying faith, and

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on the Assurance of Faith*, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, by Nichol, ii. p. 723 ; see also p. 400.

that a man is bound to believe this in order of nature antecedent unto his justification, I do deny; nor yet do I know of any testimony or safe experience whereby it may be confirmed.”<sup>1</sup>

“Faith is not an especial assurance of a man’s own justification and salvation by Christ; *that* it will produce, but not until another step or two in its progress be over; but faith is a satisfactory persuasion that the way of God proposed in the gospel is fitted, suited, and able to save the soul in particular that doth believe, not only that it is a blessed way to save sinners in general, but that it is such a way to save him in particular.” -

I adduce only one other quotation; this I take from one of the most recent works on dogmatics, that of Oosterzee. “It is impossible that a mere conviction of the intellect concerning the divinity of the gospel, still less a vague trust in God as our Benefactor and Guardian, can be denoted by this name. A certain degree of knowledge is undoubtedly necessary when we speak of faith; of the three elements into which faith is often divided—knowledge, assent, and trust—not one can be altogether wanting. Yet is this last more certainly the soul and kernel of the faith that saves the sinner. In the inmost sanctuary of the soul it prefers to fix its seat; with the whole heart man believeth unto salvation. The will, too, is not to be excluded here; the well-known ‘*nemo credit nisi volens*’ has a deep meaning. Hence, too, in the N. T. mention is often made of the obedience of faith, as if to denote that by faith a deed, a moral act, is meant, by which the man is brought over from the old into an entirely new state. But the sphere in which this act is effected is still the heart which voluntarily and unconditionally surrenders itself to Him whom it absolutely trusts.”<sup>3</sup>

b. In these passages, selected from widely different sources, there is a substantial accordance of doctrine with some differences, not of expression merely, but of sentiment as well. We may gather from them what is the Catholic doctrine concerning saving faith; and they suggest to me also the

<sup>1</sup> *Doctrine of Justification by Faith, Works*, vol. v. p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> *Evidences of the Faith of God’s Elect, Works*, v. p. 419.

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 640.

topics on which I would now proceed to make some observations.

(a) In the commencement of the first extract the following statement occurs: "Reconciliation with God having been effected through Christ in that He in the place of man hath fulfilled the law and made satisfaction for the sins of the world," etc. The part of this statement on which I would animadvert is the assertion that Christ in the place of man hath fulfilled the law as well as made satisfaction for the sins of the world. The latter assertion contains a great truth; the former asserts what has no countenance from Scripture, is in itself erroneous, and has been the basis of one of the most pernicious heresies which in later times has infested the Church. It is not true that Jesus Christ fulfilled the law in the place of man. Scripture nowhere asserts this. Our Lord, in the fulness of time, appeared in our nature and was subject to the law to which we as God's creatures are subject. That law He honoured, that law He perfectly obeyed. But He obeyed it for Himself, and not in the place of man. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered; and His obedience, an obedience even unto death, was part of the price which He paid for man's redemption; but it was obedience, not in the place of man, but obedience personal and real, rendered as due by Himself to God. From this its whole worth is derived; had His obedience been vicarious, it would not have been really His, and could not have been any part of the satisfaction which He made for sins. And then see what is fairly deducible from this position. If Christ fulfilled the law for man, in the place of man, just as He made satisfaction to divine justice in the place of man, then man is no more required to obey the law than he is required to make satisfaction for sin. If Christ fulfil the law for me, if He obeyed in my room and place, then the law has no further demand on me; my Substitute has already obeyed for me, and it would be a mere work of supererogation on my part were I to set myself to obey the law. A basis is thus laid for the whole structure of Antinomianism. That system is not founded, as is often said, on the assertion that the moral law has been abrogated, or at least is no longer binding on Christians; such an assertion, though it may find vogue among the

illiterate, and may lie at the basis of the coarse and vulgar Antinomianism that may sometimes be found in the slums of the religious world, could never for a moment be entertained by any man of even moderate intelligence. The moral law being the expression of the divine mind, and having its basis in the divine essence, can no more be abrogated or annulled than God Himself can be abrogated or annulled. That law must continue for ever, and from its obligations none can be freed by whom intelligence is retained. This all intelligent Antinomians admit. But they say, The law has been fulfilled by Christ. He has obeyed it, and done all that it requires in the room and place of His people; and the law can no more justly require them to obey it than a man whose debt has been paid by another can be justly required to pay it again himself. This is the insidious doctrine on which theoretical Antinomianism rests, and unfortunately the elementary principle out of which all this logically flows, viz. that Christ fulfilled the law in the place of men, is found, not only in the creeds of some of the Churches of the Reformation, but also in the beliefs of many Christian people who would shudder at the idea of their being ever by any process led to either theoretical or practical Antinomianism. All the more necessary is it that the unsoundness of the principle should be exposed, and thus people be put on their guard against accepting what would, if logically followed, lead them down into the ooze and mire of Antinomian apostasy.

(b) It is not obscurely intimated in several of the passages above cited, that the faith which saves is a mental act produced in man by God, that it is not merely a natural state or energy coming into operation according to mere natural laws, but it is a result of divine action on the mind—that faith, in short, is, as the apostle expresses it, “the gift of God.” This may be said to be the almost unanimous judgment of theologians of all schools within the evangelical Churches. By some, however, it is questioned, and there have been some even among ourselves who have strenuously maintained that faith is no more a divine gift than judgment or memory or any other mental energy. It would appear that even as far back as the early days of Augustine this view was held by some. Augustine himself tells us he held it in the

early part of his Christian life. In one of his latest works, *Retractationes*, after quoting 1 Cor. iv. 7: "For who maketh thee to differ from another, and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" he goes on to say, "By which testimony I also am convicted, since I erred in a similar manner, thinking that the faith by which we believe in God is not the gift of God, but is in us from ourselves, and that we by it obtain the gifts of God by means of which we may live soberly, justly, and piously in this world. Nor did I think that faith was anticipated by grace, so that by it there should be given to us what we should profitably ask, except in so far as we could not believe, if there had not preceded the preaching of the truth; but when the gospel was preached, our consent to it, I thought, was our own proper act, and was to us out of ourselves. Which error of mine some of my works, written before I was a bishop, sufficiently indicate."<sup>1</sup>

As to the point here touched on, if faith is merely the belief of a proposition, then it is, so far as the mere mental act of believing is concerned, undoubtedly of ourselves. But inasmuch as our dealing with evidence is very much affected by our prejudices, and as our wills may and do influence our understandings in that way; and inasmuch as man's prejudices and natural inclinations are averse from God's truth, there needs a special influence from above to overcome this, and incline men to attend to and receive the truth. Even, therefore, were we to regard faith as simply an intellectual act, there would still be a sense in which saving faith would be the gift of God. But if saving faith be more than a mere intellectual act, if it be not merely the assent of the understanding but the consent of the heart to the truth, if it be not merely the assurance that Christ is able to save but the rest and trust of the soul in Him as a Saviour; then still more clearly and emphatically must it be pronounced the gift of God. Until the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us, there is no true knowledge of Christ; and until the same divine agent works in us to will

<sup>1</sup> *Retract.*, i. 23. Comp. Aug., *Expos. quarundam propositionum in Ep. ad Rom.*, c. 60 and 61.

and to do, there is no inclination on our part to come to Christ. Faith, therefore, is not to us out of ourselves, but is, as the apostle calls it, "the gift of God," or, as he elsewhere expresses it, we "believe, according to the working of His mighty power" (Eph. i. 19).

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## CHAPTER XV.

### THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

#### 4. *Sanctification.*

We proceed now to the subject of Sanctification. We shall consider—

##### (1.) *Its Nature.*

The word *sanctify*, as used in Scripture, answers to various forms of the Hebrew verb שׁוּב, "to be fresh, new, clean," and in its ordinary usage, "to be holy" or "consecrated," and the Greek *αγιαζω*, which properly means "to make *αγιος*, to cleanse, to purify," but which in Scripture follows the usage of the Hebrew word, and often signifies "to set apart," "to consecrate." It is often said that the primary idea of the word is that of setting apart from an ordinary to a sacred use, and that from this comes the usage of it in a moral sense as denoting what is pure and good. But the reverse is the true statement on this head: the primary conception is that of newness, freshness, unstainedness, purity; and as this was either an essential condition of the consecration of any person or thing to God, or became a certain concomitant of it, the word came secondarily to have the meaning of consecrated or set apart from a common to a sacred use. In the N. T. the term *αγιασμος*, "sanctification," is always used in a moral sense as equivalent to a state of purity of heart and life; and this must be held to be the primary and proper sense of the term "sanctify" as used of *persons* in the Scriptures.

Sanctification, then, is the moral renewal of the man,



whereby he is brought back from a state of sinfulness to his pristine state of conformity to the image of God. It implies the destruction within him of the power of sin as a dominant power, his emancipation from the thralldom of evil, and the gradual strengthening within him of the principle of the regenerated life, so that in due time the new nature which has been given to him arrives at its perfect development, and he becomes holy as God is holy. Having received a legal deliverance from sin by justification, he receives also in sanctification a moral deliverance from sin, and is led on step by step to perfect goodness. As the work advances within him, his apprehensions of divine things become clearer and brighter; his love for divine things becomes more intense and constant; his desires after God and after conformity to His will more ardent and steadfast; his efforts to be good and to do good more unconstrained and earnest, and his whole nature and activity are brought more and more under the controlling influence of pure and elevated and godly motives. Growing in intelligence and spiritual excellence day by day, his path becomes brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, until at length he is fitted to dwell in the perfect light and the perfect purity of heaven.

Other terms and modes of expression besides sanctification and its cognates are used in Scripture to designate this state. As being a *new* state compared with the natural state of man, it is called the "new man," and the man who is the subject of it is said "to walk in newness of life." As being the result of a change which has its seat *in the inner spiritual nature*, it is called *ο εσω ανθρωπος*, "the inward man;" *ο εσω ημων*, "our inner part;" *ο κρυπτος της καρδιας ανθρωπος*, "the hidden man of the heart," expressions which do not, as they are often interpreted, refer merely to the intellectual and moral nature of man, but rather to that as the seat of the new spiritual life and condition of the believer. As being a restoration to man's primordial and normal state, the process by which it is effected is called *ανακαινωσις*, "a renewal," *ανακαινωσις Πνευματος Ἁγίου*; and the state itself is denominated, *νεος ανθρωπος ανακαινουμενος εις επιγνωσιν κατ εικονα του κτισαντος αυτου*, "the new man renewed into the knowledge according to the image of Him

that created him." As a restoration to the image of God, it is called *κοινωνία μετ αὐτου*, "communion with Him;" and believers as enjoying this privilege are said to be partakers of God's holiness, and partakers of a divine nature. All these varieties of expression conspire in this, that they represent the condition into which the believer is brought as one entirely different from the state in which he is by nature, and as characterized by deliverance from the power of evil and restoration to the image and likeness of God.

For the more precise elucidation of this doctrine the following observations may be made:—

*a.* Sanctification has a *positive* and a *negative* side. On the negative side it is the renunciation of sin in the love and power and practice of it; on the positive side it is the loving pursuit and hearty performance of all good. All who come after Christ must deny themselves and take up their cross; they must be as persons in whom the body of sin has been destroyed, so that they can no longer serve sin; they must have the flesh crucified, with its affections and lusts; they must cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit; they must go from the gracious forgiving presence of God as under a solemn obligation to sin no more, remembering that he that is born of God cannot sin. And whilst they are thus dead to sin and seek wholly to abstain from it, they must also be alive to righteousness and endeavour to follow after all goodness, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. Being by regeneration the children of God, they are commanded to be "imitators of God as dear children." As the existence of this changed state of heart and soul shows itself in the pursuit and performance of all that God enjoins, believers as the subjects of it are called *τεκνα υπακοῆς*, "children of obedience," and they are said to be "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father by sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Being made free from sin, they are to become the servants of God, and to have their fruit unto holiness; they are to yield themselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and their members as instruments of righteousness unto God. Having put off the old man, they are to put on the new man, which after

God is created in righteousness and true holiness. As they are to abstain from all sin, they are to aim at all holiness; "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise," they are to "think on these things" (Matt. xvi. 24; Rom. vi. 6; Gal. v. 21; 2 Cor. vii. 1; 1 John iii. 9; Eph. v. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1, 14; Rom. vi. 13, 22; Phil. iv. 8). This state of freedom from the power of sin and of conformity to the will of God is what theologians have termed *nova obedientia*, "new obedience."

b. The change thus effected is *universal*. By this it is meant that it embraces the entire man, body and soul. It is not a mere improvement of the outward conduct, nor is it a mere change of opinion or feeling. It is a renewal of the whole man. He is cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. He is sanctified wholly, body, soul, and spirit. His intellect is enlightened by the rays of divine truth, so that he who once was darkness is now light in the Lord. His affections are set on things above, which are at God's right hand, where Christ sitteth. The whole range of his active duties is brought under the influence of his religion, and he is taught that whether he eat or drink or whatsoever he does, he must do all to the glory of God (1 Thess. v. 23; Eph. v. 8; Col. iii. 2; 1 Cor. x. 31). "It affects and improves indiscriminately," says Dwight, "all the virtues of the Christian character; love to God and to mankind; faith, repentance, justice, truth, kindness, humility, forgiveness, charity, generosity, public spirit, meekness, patience, fortitude, temperance, moderation, candour, and charitableness of judgment. It influences ruling passions and appetites; habits of thought and affection, of language and practice. It prompts to all the acts of piety; to prayer, praise, attendance upon the sanctuary and its ordinances, our sanctification of the Sabbath, Christian communion, and Christian discipline."<sup>1</sup>

c. This change is *progressive*. It is not effected all at once; and when once commenced, it is its tendency to go steadily forward unto perfection. In asserting the believer's deliverance from sin we by no means intend to assert that he

<sup>1</sup> *Theology Explained and Improved*, p. 190, Ser. lxxxiii.

never sins. To such an assertion both the Bible and our own experience would stand directly opposed. The condition of the believer in this world is one of constant struggle to maintain the good that is within him against the pernicious influences which the evil that is around him has still power to exert over him. All through his career the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh ; and often times under the severity of the struggle he is ready to cry out, " O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? " Whatever progress he may have made in the divine life, something of the old carnal nature still lurks within him, and he has constant occasion to feel that the work of his spiritual renovation is yet far from complete. In what sense, then, can he be said to be delivered from sin ? To this it may be replied, that his deliverance from sin consists in his being freed from the bewitching and commanding power of sin. He is no longer indifferent to the evil of sin ; he feels it to be a thing not only pernicious in its consequences, but most hateful in itself, so that he endeavours to avoid it ; when it assails him he resists it ; and if at any time he is betrayed into it, the consciousness of this gives him pain and fills him with humiliation. He is no longer a lover of sin ; formerly he rolled it as a sweet morsel under his tongue, and he was tempted to the commission of it by the pleasure he felt in it ; but now the prevailing tendency of his nature is to recoil from it, the thought of it is painful to him, and he feels the commission of it to be no longer pleasant, but bitter and degrading. He is no longer a slave to sin ; once he was such, subject to the tyranny of evil lusts and passions, led captive by Satan at his pleasure, and hardly dreaming of the possibility of resisting the influences that were urging him on to transgression and folly ; but now he enjoys liberty from this, sin no more reigns in his heart as that he should obey it in the lusts thereof ; Christ has condemned sin in the flesh ; and the believer, having died with Christ to sin, has obtained a liberty, having died to that wherein he was held. Thus, though the believer still exemplifies the unhappy characteristic of our fallen race, that there is no man that liveth and sinneth not, it is nevertheless true that he is delivered from sin and is set upon a

course the consummation of which will be his entire and perfect and eternal freedom from all evil.

And, once entered on this course, his tendency is to advance in it, and it is only by such advance that the climax of his renovated state is to be reached. Unhappily, however, this advance is neither uniform nor uninterrupted. It is not uniform, because sometimes it advances in one part of his nature whilst it does not advance in another; and it is not uninterrupted, because many things occur which hinder him in his course, and sometimes turn him altogether aside from it. According to its true idea, sanctification is the rectification of the entire man, the growth in goodness of his whole nature, the development of a holy germ affecting all his powers and tendencies; and had this renovating power its perfect work, we should see the new man, the inward man, growing day by day in a perfect balance and symmetry of all its parts, and that going steadily onward to its glorious consummation. But for this purpose the process would require to be conducted *in vacuo*. Conducted as it is amid many disturbing and hostile influences, it is constantly interrupted, and its manifestations caused to be erratic and irregular. Hence we see in actual life spiritual phenomena which, if we neglect to take this into account, it might be difficult for us to explain. How often, *e.g.*, do we see men whose spiritual nature assumes a wholly one-sided character; men who advance rapidly in one department of spiritual attainment, but make little or no progress in any other; men whose judgments are enlightened in spiritual truth, but whose affections are not proportionately attracted by spiritual objects; or men whose hearts are filled with growing zeal, piety, and devotion, but whose judgments are not proportionally instructed in the principles of revealed truth? Familiarity with such phenomena prevents our being surprised by them, but in reality they are monstrosities as much so in the spiritual world as a child whose one side grew faster than the other would be in the natural world. Their existence indicates a want of perfect health and soundness, or the influence of disturbing causes that prevent the symmetrical and normal development of the new man. It is not desirable that such a state of things should exist, and the attention of

Christian people is to be called to it, and they should be exhorted to watch and strive against it; but so long as the process has to be conducted in our corrupted natures, and amid all the unfriendly influences by which we are surrounded here, it cannot be but that this more or less will be found characterizing the actual Christianity of men.

In asserting the progressive character of sanctification in the believer, then, due allowance must be made for these phenomena. As we do not expect the believer to become perfect all at once; as we recognize his life to be a race, a conflict, a growth amid pernicious and opposing influences, we must lay our account with seeing his course often retarded, often interrupted, sometimes for a season it may be altogether suspended; and we are not to be surprised should we sometimes find the irregular and unsymmetrical development which more or less belongs to all of us in some cases breaking out into manifestations which are not only eccentric, but even offensive. Still, withal it may be confidently affirmed that wherever the work of sanctification is truly begun it will go forward towards its consummation, and that by as certain a law as that which conducts the river to the ocean, notwithstanding its many windings and its many different states—now full to its banks, and now creeping with hardly distinguishable current among the stones that fill its bed.

*d.* This process, though thus ever tending to perfection, is never, so far as we can see, completed on earth, nor have we any reason from Scripture to expect that this should be the case. It is not meant by this to deny that believers are to place ultimate perfection before them as the end at which they aim, and with anything short of which they are not to rest contented; this were to lower the standard of their ambition, to weaken the motives to Christian exertion, to encourage a tendency to rest satisfied with low and partial attainments in the divine life, and to sanction the conduct of those who would make the impossibility of attaining perfection an excuse for ceasing to struggle against sin and to resist temptation. Nor is it meant to affirm that the impossibility of attaining to perfect holiness in this world is a *physical* impossibility, and therefore one that excuses us for not being perfect. On the contrary, we maintain that every Christian man *ought* to be

perfect—perfect as God is perfect, holy as God is holy ; and that the sole reason why he is not so is neither that this is in itself impossible, nor that any irresistible external power prevents it, nor that God arbitrarily withholds the necessary aid for the attainment of it, but that man's will is not constantly and supremely bent upon this as an end on the attainment of which all his faculties and resources are to be made to bear. The impossibility is a moral one, not a natural or extraneous one, and therefore one which adds to rather than diminishes the guilt of those whose conduct it affects. In fine, it is not meant that perfection is reached only in the heavenly state ; that is a state of unsullied perfection, and all there are perfect in holiness ; but it is not there that any are *made* perfect. Before any being can enter heaven he must *be* perfect, as into it entereth nothing that is evil ; all sin, all defilement, and all pollution must be removed from the soul *before* it can be admitted there. A soul that passes from its body with aught of the impurity or imperfection of earth attaching to it has that on it which must ever bar its entrance to the heavenly paradise. But this is not irreconcilable with the assertion that sinless perfection cannot be reached on earth, because that entire separation of the soul from every taint and spot of sin which is essential to its entrance into heaven may take place in the instant of its separation from the body at death. As it leaves the flesh, which is the seat of sin, it leaves sin also behind it, and passes into the presence of God pure as when He first breathed it into the man whom He had formed.

What we seek to oppose here is the doctrine of those who teach that it is possible for a redeemed sinner to become so perfectly a saint in this world as to live in it absolutely without sin, and who assert that such absolute sinless perfection actually has been attained by some. As regards the *fact* thus asserted, I believe it may be safely met by the counter assertion that no such case of sinless perfection has ever been substantiated whenever the proper tests have been applied. It is possible for a man to so surround himself with the admiration and confidence of others as that to them he shall appear a perfect saint ; but let such an one come under the impartial scrutiny of those who are not so blinded in his favour, and let him be

subjected to some of those severer tests of temper or of principle to which a man is liable to be exposed in this world, and it may be with almost certain confidence asserted that he will show that he has not yet attained, neither is already perfect. Nor is this to be wondered at. All such pretensions and expectations are founded, not upon the sure word of God, but on some fond and delusive fancies or conclusions of the human mind. Scripture presents to us but one perfect specimen of humanity; and whilst it calls us to admire that, and to make that our model and our aim, it takes care to show us in all the other instances it presents to us how vain it is for even the best of men and most devoted of God's servants to flatter himself with the expectation of fully reaching that end while encompassed with the frailties of the flesh and surrounded by the temptations of a wicked world. Had God presented to us a single instance in the Bible of a mere man like ourselves attaining to sinless perfection in this life, or had He given us a single assurance that such an attainment is fairly within the reach of His people here, it would be our duty to admit the possibility of such a thing being actually realized under favourable circumstances, and to make the attainment of it a distinct object of expectation, effort, and prayer for ourselves. But in the absence of any such assurance, and with the cases of such men as Abraham, Moses, David, Paul, and John before us to show that even those most highly favoured of God, and whose attainments in holiness and purity were the highest on record, yet fell far short of perfection; it can hardly be regarded as anything short of sinful presumption in any to pretend to have attained to such perfection, and as a mere fostering of carnal pride and self-confidence to teach that such perfection is within the reach of any in this life. Suffice it for us to know that ere the believer enters heaven all stains of earth's impurity shall be washed away from him, and he shall enter the presence of the Eternal to be presented by his Great High Priest "holy, and unblamable, and unreprouvable in His sight."

From the view we have obtained of the nature of sanctification, it is easy to see how that differs from justification, with which it has by some been confounded. The difference between the two has been admirably stated in a few sentences



by Dr. Wardlaw, and I cannot do better than cite his words:—

“The distinction lies simply in this, that the one blessing refers to [legal] state and condition, the other to personal character. Justification is the opposite of a state of guilt and condemnation; sanctification is the opposite of a state [character] of alienation of heart from God—the opposite of moral impurity and corruption. Justification consists in being judicially accepted of God; sanctification in being devoted to God, made His in heart, and fitted for His worship and service. Justification we possess on the ground of the righteousness of another placed to our account; sanctification is the infusion of the principles of righteousness into our souls. In justification we receive a title to heaven; in sanctification we are made meet for the enjoyment of heaven. Justification is an act of pardon or remission; sanctification is a progressive work of spiritual renovation.”<sup>1</sup>

Such is the distinction between justification and sanctification. It is a distinction so marked, and one so clearly recognized in Scripture, that the wonder is that any should have fallen into the mistake of identifying the two. But, as Cicero says of philosophers, that there is no opinion, however absurd, that has not found some one to defend it, so we may say of theologians, that there is no error so patent as not to have found some one to assert and defend it.

## (2.) *Sanctification—its Causes.*

Having considered the nature of sanctification, we have next to consider how it is produced or effected.

*a.* The *primary* and chief agent in producing sanctification is God Himself. This Scripture most distinctly and fully asserts. Our Lord prayed to God for His disciples that He would sanctify them. The apostle prayed for his brethren that “the very God of peace would sanctify them wholly,” and that their “whole spirit and soul and body might be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. v. 23). He gives thanks for them because God had “from the beginning chosen them to salvation through

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. iii. p. 108.

sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. ii. 13). St. Peter describes those to whom he wrote as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Ep. i. 2). St. Jude addresses those to whom he wrote as them that "are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ" (ver. 1). Believers are said to have been quickened from the death of sin by God, to be His workmanship created in Christ Jesus to good works, to be born of God, to live by the Spirit, to be led by the Spirit, to have the first-fruits of the Spirit, and such-like expressions, in all of which the agency of God in the regeneration and sanctification of believers is clearly recognized. And how could it be otherwise? If the change which a man experiences in entering on salvation is a being born again, a being created anew, how can this be effected save by Him who alone giveth life, and who alone can create?

(a) It is to the Holy Spirit, the third Person in the ever-blessed Trinity, that Scripture ascribes this as His special work. Not only are believers said generally to be sanctified by the Spirit, to live and walk by the Spirit, to be born of the Spirit, to be changed into the image of God by the Lord the Spirit; but when we come to look at the subject in detail, we find that every part of the new nature and character which the believer receives and bears is communicated to him by the Holy Spirit, that it is by the renewal of the Holy Ghost that he is brought into a state of salvation, and that it is by the abiding in him and the working in him of that divine Agent that his salvation is perfected, and that he is made complete in that holiness without which no man can see the Lord. Is it essential to that end that our carnal lusts and tendencies should be subdued and destroyed? "Ye through the Spirit," says the apostle, "do mortify the deeds of the body" (Rom. viii. 13). Is a sense of God's love dwelling in us and influencing us a part of the new nature? "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us" (Rom. v. 5). Is access to God one of the privileges of the regenerate? "We have access unto the Father by the one Spirit" (Eph. ii. 18). Is a sense

of sonship, and the feeling of children towards God as our Father, a characteristic of the renewed soul? "God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6). Is strength to resist temptation, overcome evil, and perform duty a privilege of the child of God? God strengthens "by His Spirit with might in the inner man" (Eph. iii. 16). Is prayer such as rises above the limits of natural devotion and becomes a true spiritual pleading with God? "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26). Is hope a privilege of the Christian, so that though once without hope he has now a good hope which cheers and animates him amid the trials and conflicts of life? "The God of hope shall fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xv. 13). Is God's presence and constant nearness to the soul the privilege of the true Christian? It is by His Spirit that God dwells in the hearts of His people, for "we are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22). Is calm and well-grounded assurance that we are His a blessed privilege of the believer? "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 16). God "hath given us the earnest of the Spirit" (2 Cor. v. 5). By His Spirit we "are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30). And, in fine, is it the believer's privilege to stand by the side of the tomb, and whether he commits to it the remains of some beloved friend who has fallen asleep in Jesus, or anticipates the time when he himself shall go down to it to mingle with the clods of the valley, to lift up his head with joy and look forward to the day when Christ shall appear to call His people from their graves to reign with Him in endless life? It is through the Spirit that he enjoys this good hope; for if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us (Rom. viii. 11). Thus, all through, from the commencement to the close, it is the Spirit that reneweth us.

The Holy Spirit thus fulfils to the people of God all that is implied in the designation under which Christ promised Him to the disciples when He said, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you *ἄλλον παρακλητον*, that He may abide with you, even the Spirit of truth" (John xiv. 16). We have no English word which fully expresses what the term *παράκλητος* denotes. In the A. V. it is rendered by Comforter and by Advocate; but neither of these adequately represents it. Derived from the passive of the verb *παρακαλεω*, it denotes one who is called in order to render some help or service to another, and thus is susceptible of various applications. A person may be called to represent another or to plead his cause, and so the word may be used of an advocate who represents a party at a judicial trial and pleads for him; accordingly, Jesus Christ, who represents His people, and makes intercession for them at the bar of God, is called their *παράκλητος* (1 John ii. 1); and in this sense the word is used by the classical writers, and by Philo Judæus. A person may be called to help another by teaching him, by giving him information, by leading him into the truth in any department; and so Jesus Christ was the *παρακλητος* of His disciples when with them on earth as their teacher, and it is specially in this sense that He calls the Holy Spirit "*another Paraclete*," who was to succeed Him, and carry forward the work He had begun, by testifying of Him and guiding them into all the truth (John xv. 26, xvi. 13). A person may be called to help another by fortifying him to endure trial, strengthening him to overcome difficulty, and consoling him under sorrow; and so the Holy Spirit, who gives strength and peace and consolation, acts the part of Paraclete to the people of Christ. The only English word that at all approximates to an adequate representation of the Greek is "helper;" but even this only partially represents it.

(b) But whilst the Holy Spirit is thus the prime Agent in the sanctification of men, we must beware of so conceiving of His agency as to ignore or deny the agency of men themselves in this matter. Man is not simply passive whilst the process of sanctification is going on in him. As an intelligent and moral agent it is only as he himself, in possession of right principles, wills to be holy, cultivates those affections which

tend to holiness, and subdues and resists those that have an opposite tendency, that he becomes holy and advances in sanctification. A divine harmony cannot be evoked from him simply by the strings of his nature being played upon by a power from without; these strings must spontaneously move, whilst at the same time they are touched and acted on by the Divine Spirit. Hence, while it is said that it is God that sanctifieth, it is also laid as a duty on believers, that as He that hath called them is holy, so they must be holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. i. 16). Whilst it is distinctly taught that it is by grace that men are saved, and that grace is sovereign and free, believers are at the same time exhorted to grow in grace as their own spontaneous act, and they are besought not to receive the grace of God in vain (2 Pet. iii. 18; 2 Cor. vi. 1). Whilst faith is said to be the gift of God, it is the man himself who must believe in order to be saved (Eph. ii. 8; Acts xvi. 31). Whilst it is through the Spirit that we are to mortify the deeds of the body so as to live, it is we who are to do this, we who, as the apostle elsewhere expresses it, are to mortify our members which are upon the earth, we who are to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts (Rom. viii. 13; Col. iii. 5; Gal. v. 24). Whilst all the graces of the renewed character are the fruit of the Spirit, it is we who are to bring forth this fruit so as to manifest it to the praise of the glory of God's grace (Phil. i. 11). There is thus, be it observed, a concurrence of willing and working between the Divine Spirit and the man himself in the matter of his sanctification. If it is God who works in us of His own good pleasure to will and to do, it is we who on this very account are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. ii. 12).

How it is that God works in us so as to influence our will and direct our actions, whilst it is we who will and we who act as free agents, we cannot tell; there is here a mystery which we cannot understand or explain. But certain it is that in the work of sanctification there is such a co-operation of the Divine Spirit and the human that the result is both man's work and God's work. As a profound thinker<sup>1</sup> has said,

<sup>1</sup> Duncan, *Colloquia Peripatetica*, p. 28.

“There is a true and a false synergia. That God works half and man the other half is false; that God works all, man does all, is true.” We must beware, however, of so representing this operation of the Spirit in the sanctification of men as to imagine that each individual volition is excited in the mind of the believer by the Holy Spirit, and each individual act is determined and directed by Him. I do not suppose that is what is meant by God’s working in us to will and to do. Practically we know that our acts are determined by our volitions, and our volitions are evoked by our judgments; as Edwards has sufficiently showed, it is that motive which, as it stands in the view of the mind, that is, as the mind judges, is the strongest that determines volition. But our volitions are not our will; they are mere casual or arbitrary exercises of the conative faculty. The will is the spiritual self-determining principle in man, a nature which is capable of being depraved and capable also of being restored and renovated as a whole. Now, the effect of sin on man’s will is to deprave it, to bring it into a state of unsoundness and disease; and this being the case, man has no power to restore himself. Having brought himself under the power of evil, he cannot originate a state of holiness for himself; any more than when the central life-power in his body is destroyed he can of himself revive. As has been justly said, “When an evil moral state has once been originated, and the will has once responsibly formed a sinful character and nature, a central radical change in the direction and tendency of this faculty is, from the very nature of the case, then out of its power. For the will is not merely the surface-faculty of single volitions over which the individual has arbitrary control, but also that central and inmost active principle into which all the powers of cognition and feeling are grafted, as into the very core and substance of the personality itself. So that when the will, in this full and adequate sense of the word, puts forth its sinful self-determination, it takes the whole soul along with it from the centre to the circumference, leaving no remainder of power in reserve, by which the existing direction of its movement can be reversed. The fall of the will, therefore, though a free and self-moved procedure, brings this faculty into such a relation to holiness that it is utterly impossible for it to

recover itself back into its primitive state: it being a contradiction to attribute a power of originating holiness to a faculty the *whole* of whose power is already absorbed in an unintermittent determination to sin.”<sup>1</sup>

Man, then, as a sinful being cannot recover himself, cannot effect a radical moral change in himself, so as from having a nature depraved and unholy to become holy and good. This can be effected only by that divine power by which all life, natural and spiritual, is originated; and this God effects by renewing the man in the spirit of his mind, regenerating him, making him a new creature in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit so works in the soul that the will is delivered from the evil bias under which it has been brought; the man is restored to moral freedom; and so is enabled to pursue the path of holiness and righteousness which is set before him, and thereby to work out his own salvation.

(c) This subject has much occupied the attention of German theologians. At the time of the Reformation the doctrine of Augustine as to man's passivity in the matter of conversion and sanctification was embraced by Luther, and at first also by Melanchthon, in its most rigid form. “As early,” says Mohler, “as the famous disputation at Leipsic, Luther maintained against Eck this doctrine, and compared man to a saw which, passive in the hand of the workman, must move hither and thither as he urges it.”<sup>2</sup> In his own writings, Luther at a later period compares fallen man to the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was changed, to the trunk of a tree, to a stone, to a statue wanting life, which has the use neither of eyes, nor ears, nor of any of the senses, nor of the heart.<sup>3</sup> Melanchthon, who, in the first edition of his *Loci Communes*, gave expression to equally rigid views, subsequently recoiled from them, and in the later editions of his work presents the modified doctrine which came to be designated the Synergistic from its asserting a *συνεργία* of the divine and the human will in the regeneration and sanctification of men. This doctrine the Lutheran Church rejected and condemned; but it has never ceased to find supporters

<sup>1</sup> Professor Shedd, *Literary Essays*, reprinted in Dickinson's *Theol. Quarterly*, April 1880, p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> *Symbolik*, p. 109, 5th ed.

<sup>3</sup> *In Genes. c. xix.*

and advocates among the divines of Germany. "In the first times of our Church," says Ullmann, "it was severely condemned; nevertheless it has always again emerged, and in each age had pious and thoughtful Christians who have accepted it. And that naturally; for there is an element of truth in it; it has its basis in the gospel and in the ethical consciousness." Ullmann proceeds to set forth what he regards as the truth on this point; and his statements seem to me so important that I feel constrained to present them to you in a translation of his words:—

"The classical passage in this relation is that of the Apostle Paul, Phil. ii. 12, 13: 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do,'—words which may be taken as the motto of each individual Christian life, and which we may here make the subject of a close examination.

"At first these words seem to contain a sharp contradiction. If we are to work out our salvation, it would seem as if it could not be said that God works in us to will and to do; and if God works in us to will and to do what is good, it appears, on the other hand, as if we might at our ease contemplate this work of God in us, and need not to strive thereby with fear and trembling; least of all can one believe that there lies a reason for our striving with fear and trembling in the fact that God works the willing and the performing; rather might one say this is what should raise us above all and every fear.

"We may safely assume that this contradiction, marked as it may seem on a superficial view, is only apparent. A man of the apostle's depth and power of thought could not place together two positions of so contradictory a character unless he had the most definite consciousness of their inner unity. This unity, indeed, is not exhibited in the passage itself, but we learn it from the whole connection of the Christian doctrine of salvation. What the gospel in its entirety teaches concerning the attainment of a condition of salvation is here expressed in two short clauses; and whilst these two clauses contain the fundamental results of the Christian life-experience, they are also rightly to be estimated only from the complex of the same.



“Christianity requires, in order that salvation may be effected in the man, the co-working of two different agents, God and man, grace and the personal will. Man needs God, but God can work salvation only in the man, the willing man. Without God, the fountain of life and blessedness, there is no full life and salvation thinkable; but without my consent, without decision of the mind within, the divinely-offered salvation cannot become my own. All that is good and glorious in man is effected by the co-operation of these two fundamental factors, the divine and the human, is a tissue woven of grace and free choice. But in this tissue grace is the web and free choice the woof, so that our ability and will to do anything by self-decision and free choice for our salvation rests on the creative and ordering will of the divine grace; and hence the apostle ascribes not only the doing, but the willing to God. As much as God is higher than man, so much higher is that which God does in and on us from the first beginning of our existence to its highest conceivable perfection, than what we ourselves do. The human vanishes to the pious contemplation before the divine, and consequently the latter is often by the apostle exclusively adduced.

“Let us go into this matter a little more closely.

“First of all, what the apostle says is absolutely true: our salvation is God’s work; He operates in us to will and to do. Can we on the profoundest reflection think it otherwise? The basis itself on which our whole higher life is developed, the spiritual and moral faculty, the Reason and Will, or however it be named, is a gift of God, a grace. It is not we that have made ourselves men, beings so richly endowed, in the image and likeness of God; it is the divine creative Will that has done this. Further, all that in the different stages and momenta of our life has acted on us, educating, enlightening, improving us, must in the last instance be referred to God and the order of things founded by Him; for from Him proceed all the formative, sustaining, and purifying powers of doctrine, of law, of moral and social intercourse, which from generation to generation, and from century to century, have operated on men; He determines the conditions under which each shall be born and grow up;

He guides, unseen by the bodily eye, but recognized by the spiritual eye, the life-course of each. Above all, what may be called a power for holiness, the gospel, the doctrine, the pattern and reconciling influence of the Saviour, is a free gift of divine love. In fact, every earnest man who has learned to know fundamentally his moral development must accord with the utterance, 'What have I which I have not received?' and so to have the right to treat the best which he has attained as not his own work, but rather as a gift from heaven. Hence, among all peoples, the thought, the conviction, that the highest attainments and deeds have proceeded from a divine inspiration and impulse. To the Christian especially it lies near to refer immediately to God what relates to his goodness and holiness. This comes essentially from faith, for it alone gives in the triumphant consciousness of the divine love the full power and joy of the good; but faith, the true, the genuine, is not man's, but God's work. For whence arises faith? Does it somehow produce itself out of itself? Is it man's thought, man's experience? He who should say this must know little of faith. No; it is a product of its object, of the creative spirit and life proceeding from this object; it proceeds from God and Christ, or from the Holy Spirit which unites the two. Faith is the vital apprehension of the whole inner essence of the divine, entire resignation to the divine, the inner fellowship with this in knowledge, love, and act. But I can apprehend a thing and can resign myself to it only when it exerts power over me; in this overmastering influence of the object on me lies properly what produces and determines my relation to it; in this lies the quickening force of my love to it and all that flows out of that love. The satisfaction and animation which nature or some genuine work of art evokes in me is not something produced by me, but is the effect of the sublime or beautiful object. So is also the living faith, though in us, not of us; rather, when the infinite greatness, holiness, and goodness of God, when the purity, glory, and love of Christ so shine into our hearts and minds that we cannot withdraw ourselves from the impression that our whole inner life is interpenetrated and dominated thereby, then do we believe. Faith is peace with God, but a peace with God which we

ourselves alone devise were no peace; God Himself must place in our hearts the Spirit who impels us to cry, Abba, Father. Faith is assurance of the forgiveness of sins; man, however, cannot of himself forgive sins, and he can have assurance of forgiveness only through divine witnesses and deeds which lay hold of him mightily, and incontrovertibly convince him. In all these relations it is not we who effect faith, but God Himself through the operation of His Spirit on the mind; Christ Himself who, as He presents Himself to us in the gospel, forms it in us. Now, if faith comes from God and Christ, and if again from faith, since it is the all-overcoming assurance of the divine love, is peace and communion with God, comes salvation and joy and power for all good, it is certain, the thing being viewed in its true grounds, that it is God who works in us to will and to do what is good, and we cannot deny that our salvation is a thing wrought in us by God, a divine work.

“But not less certain, on the other side, is it true that our salvation is not effected in us without ourselves; it is a personal thing, and requires therefore also our personal participation. Does God work in us as non-willing, and not rather as willing? Does He give us faith when we resist, and not rather when we yield ourselves to Him? Man alone of all beings of which we have any experience has a religion and belief, because he is a moral being; but a moral being cannot be thought without will and act, without personal, free, and independent life-development. Goodness undoubtedly is presented to man, both in the moral law and in the gospel, as something divinely given, but if it is to be his, man must determine himself to it; the blessings of salvation are offered to him, but he must lay hold of them in faith, which is never without an ethical impulse and determination. Faith is ever both God's work and man's act intermingled; and though the proper creative and productive energy is the divine power which effects faith, yet that the divine should become actually life in us, that Christ should be formed in us, can come to pass only if our will, our whole inner being, unites itself with the divine drawing. Only on this assumption have all religio-ethical exhortations and appeals of Scripture any meaning; only on

this assumption can blame be attached to what is evil as to unbelief." <sup>1</sup>

I have presented this long extract, not because I approve of every expression or statement in it, but because, on the whole, it appears to me to furnish an admirably clear and full statement of the true synergistic doctrine as held by many of the best theologians of the present day. I say the *true* synergistic doctrine, for, as already remarked, there is a false synergism against which we must be studiously on our guard. Such, for instance, is the Pelagian doctrine concerning grace. Pelagius held that man stands in need of divine help in order to follow a course of holiness and goodness; but he supposed that the divine grace was something external that comes upon man, and aids the efforts which he himself puts forth of his own will; he even thought that this grace might be merited by man. Pelagius had no idea of a development of goodness from a new principle implanted in the soul, and of a life divinely produced unfolding itself by a process of growth where the Divine Spirit and the human co-operated. He thought only of man's being helped by an outward force to do what he had willed to do. In opposition to this Augustine taught that not by law and doctrine sounding from without, "but by an internal, occult, marvellous, and ineffable power God operates in the hearts of men, not only revelations, but also good volitions." <sup>2</sup> "It was not the view of Augustine," as Hagenbach remarks, "that man is like a stone or a stick upon whom grace works externally; he could conceive of grace as working only in the sphere of freedom." <sup>3</sup> This is the true view to take of this subject. The freedom of man's will must ever be maintained, and we must ever hold that it is only as man wills to believe in Christ and to be holy that he is saved; but at the same time we must firmly hold that it is through grace that he thus wills and acts, that works not *upon* him, but *in* him to will and to do.

*b. Sanctification — its Secondary Cause.* We have seen that the Holy Spirit is the chief Agent in producing sanctification in the soul of man, the primary cause of all

<sup>1</sup> *Theologische Aphorismen, Studien und Kritiken*, 1844, pp. 163-169.

- *De Gratia Christi*, 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. of Doctrines*, i. 428, 5th ed.

goodness and holiness in the heart of one who is naturally sinful and ungodly. But the Holy Spirit is not the only Agent and Cause here; there is, besides, a secondary agent or cause which, in conjunction with the Spirit, operates this result. This is the truth or word of God as that is made known to us in the Bible, especially that word, living and vitalizing, which by the gospel is preached unto us. To this the sanctification of believers is ascribed by the sacred writers. Our Lord in praying for His disciples besought the Father to sanctify them by His truth, adding, "Thy word is truth" (John xvii. 17; see also Eph. v. 26; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 23, ii. 2).

(a) For the effecting of sanctification in men the truth or word of God is divinely adapted. It has in it a potency for this.

It is a doctrine according to godliness. It is the utterance of the mind of Him who is absolutely and perfectly holy. It is the embodiment of holy principles. It is a revelation to us of the divine perfections in all their fulness and in their harmony. It sets before us in the most striking manner the evil of sin, its ill desert, its pernicious tendency, its intrinsic hatefulness, its ruinous consequences. On the other hand, it presents to view the beauty of holiness, the excellency of truth and righteousness, the loveliness of moral goodness, the elevating and satisfying power of heavenly things as contrasted with the emptiness and vanity of all sublunary possessions and prospects, and the miserably disappointing result of all sinful indulgences and pursuits. In a word, it presents the things of God in all their excellence and in all their attractiveness, and the things of earth and of evil in all their deformity, worthlessness, and harmfulness. It has thus an internal fitness to wean the heart from the world and sin, to draw the soul to God, to enlighten the understanding in divine things, to lift up the affections to things above, to transform and renew the soul in the image of God, to withdraw the heart from all that is mean, ignoble or impure, to foster all holy affections and desires, and so to advance the work of sanctification in the soul.

This adaptation belongs to all truth as revealed to us in God's word. That word is throughout imbued with divine energy (see Heb. iv. 12; Rom. i. 16; Jer. xxiii. 29; Ps. xix. 7-9; 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17; 2 Thess. ii. 13).

(b) In representing the word as an agent or cause of sanctification along with, though subordinate to, the Holy Spirit, I have departed from the representation usually given of the relation of the word to the Spirit in the work of regeneration and sanctification of men. It is usual to speak of the word as the *instrument* of the Spirit, and as the *instrumental* cause of sanctification. But in what sense is the word the instrument of the Spirit? An instrument is that by means of which an intelligent agent effects a result. It is not supposed to be itself operative; its power to effect is conveyed to it from the agent by whom it is employed. But can it be said of the word that it is of itself inoperative, and can become effectual only as it is taken in hand, as it were, by the Spirit and applied to the man? This would imply that the word is defective, that it is impotent in itself to produce the effect it was designed to effect, and that it needs some power to be added to it in order to its becoming effective. But this would be tantamount to affirming that the word of God is not perfect truth, for that which needs something added to it ere it can become effective is not in itself perfect and complete. A slur is thus cast on divine revelation; and men are taught to impute the inefficiency of the gospel to make men holy to an inherent deficiency in the gospel itself, rather than to man's obstinate unwillingness to receive the truth in the love of it. Besides, how is it possible for additional power to be given to truth? "Additional power may be imparted to a physical cause which operates by contact and impulse. A battering-ram, when brought into gentle contact only with the walls of a citadel would effect no breach; but give to it the momentum which the strength of fifty or a hundred men can impart and it becomes irresistible."<sup>1</sup> But what thus holds in respect of material or physical causes becomes absurdity when applied to moral causes such as truth. A moral cause does not operate on the mind as a physical cause operates on matter; nor is it capable of being rendered more effective by any influence from without. Truth cannot be made more true, a motive cannot be made more moving in itself, than it really is. Obstacles may be removed, prejudices may be overcome, truth may be presented in a clearer light so as to

<sup>1</sup> Payne, *Lectures on Divine Sovereignty*, etc., p. 368.

be better discerned, and motives may be more immediately brought in contact with the mind ; but to represent truth as being made more powerful by a force exerted on it from without, is to confound the physical with the mental, and to assert what from the nature of things is impossible.

It is not meant by this to assert that the word or truth by itself apart from the Spirit can operate sanctification ; all that I seek to establish is that the word is an operative cause of sanctification along with the Spirit. The Spirit does not operate by or through the word ; nor is the word made operative by the Spirit. Both operate directly on the inner nature of the man : the Spirit by His own divine energy, the truth by its inherent power. The latter, however, is subordinate to the former. The Spirit must first work in order that the truth may work. Truth can act on the mind only as it is perceived to be truth, and is received in the love of it. It is possible to receive truth as a doctrine, as something taught, whilst it is not received as truth, whilst it is not seen and realized as truth. In this case, it is obvious, this truth as such is not really in contact with the mind, and consequently cannot operate effectually on it. There is something that obstructs the entrance of the truth in all its power into the mind ; and until this obstruction be removed, the man, whatever be the extent of his acquaintance with the truth as a doctrine, will remain practically uninfluenced by it. And here it is that the work of the Spirit comes in and is exerted in the matter of conversion and sanctification. The word is there waiting to exert its influence on the man ; but it is hindered, and cannot enter his mind because of some obstruction ; this obstruction the Holy Spirit, acting directly on the mind, removes ; and then the word enters in, and the entrance of the word, as the Psalmist expresses it, "giveth light."

Very instructive on the point now before us is the account given of the conversion of Lydia (Acts xvi. 14). Lydia was a religious woman ; she is described as one that worshipped God, a proselyte to the Jewish faith, and one who apparently was waiting for the kingdom of God and the coming of the Messiah. But she had not yet received the truth concerning Him as already come, and concerning His kingdom as already

established. This Paul preached to her, and as he preached she heard. Was this all? No; had this been all, Lydia would have gone away as she came, and the words of the apostle would have probably died out of her memory, or remained with her only as a pleasant story, or perhaps as an idle tale. But this was not permitted. The Lord, we are told, "opened her heart, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." Here we have the whole process placed before us. Paul preached the truth, Lydia heard the truth preached, the Lord opened her heart; in consequence of this she attended to what Paul preached, gave her mind to it, and so it entered into her, and she was converted by it. Observe, not a word is said here about God's acting in any way on the word which Paul preached; not a word as to His giving it force or strength to enter Lydia's mind, not a word as to His making it more luminous or impressive. This was not needed; what was needed was that Lydia should receive the truth as truth into her mind; and this was effected when the Lord opened her heart so that she attended to the things which the apostle spake.

"It may perhaps," says Dr. Wardlaw, "serve to explain satisfactorily the connection between knowledge and salvation, to observe that the right knowledge of anything means the knowledge of it as it actually is, *i.e.* as possessing the properties which really belong to it. . . . What, then, is the knowledge that is connected with salvation? I answer, it is the knowledge of the gospel as what it actually is, as possessing the attributes that really belong to it. What are these attributes? If the gospel be true, it is not properly known unless it be known as possessing the attribute of truth. If it be really suitable to the character of God and the exigencies of men, and thus excellent and glorious, it is not properly known unless it be known as thus suitable, thus excellent and glorious. To know the meaning of a proposition or declaration, and to know that proposition or declaration as true and as excellent, are obviously two very different things. The former may exist without either belief or approbation; nay, is essentially necessary to disbelief and disapprobation. The latter implies both belief and approbation; I might almost say, is belief and approbation; it being



by no means easy to distinguish between knowing a thing as true and belief, and between knowing a thing as excellent and approving it.”<sup>1</sup> Now, as the apostle tells us, “the natural man receiveth not the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned,” *i.e.* discerned in their true character, discerned as they are in the view of God Himself. But this discernment the natural man has not. Whatever it be, whether carnality, or sinfulness, or ungodliness, or by whatever other name it be called, that obscures the mind and obstructs its discernment of the things of God, this must be taken away before the man can receive these things as they really are. This the Holy Spirit can alone effect; and He effects it not by acting on the things of God, but by acting on the mind of man. When the heart is opened to receive the truth in the love of it, when the new heart and the right spirit is put within the man, when a relish for spiritual things is created in the soul, then the truth is discerned in all its beauty and excellence, and comes with all its renovating and sanctifying power on the man’s inner nature and whole being.

(c) The word of God is thus to be regarded as an operative agent in the sanctification of men, subordinate to the agency of the Divine Spirit, but possessing in itself a fitness and a potency to effect that result. And as it is a real and efficient agent in sanctification, so it is the only agent in conjunction with the Holy Spirit. It is necessary to make this remark, because not unfrequently other agencies are adduced as collateral with this. Thus, ordinances such as the Lord’s Supper, observances such as prayer and public worship and preaching of the gospel, providential occurrences, especially such as are of a disciplinary character, are often represented as efficient means of sanctification. There is need here for careful discrimination. It is perfectly true that ordinances and observances such as those above noted must be observed and attended to if we are to advance in holiness; and it is no less true that circumstances in God’s providence are to be used by us for the same end, more especially such as are of an afflictive character and tendency, for these are sent on the people of God expressly for their “profit, that they

<sup>1</sup> *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 767.

may be partakers of His holiness." But it is a mistake to suppose that these have in themselves, and apart from God's word, any fitness to produce or to advance holiness. They are serviceable to this end only as they prepare the mind for the proper reception of the truth, or tend to bring it more forcibly and vividly before the mind. The Lord's Supper is a means of grace, and no man who neglects the observance of it can reasonably hope to make progress in the divine life; but in what way does this ordinance help on our sanctification? Not, surely, by any fitness in the mere eating of bread and tasting of wine to make men holy; not through any magic influence in the ceremony acting on the souls of the communicants; but solely because by means of this observance the truth concerning the person and work of Christ, and our participation in Him and the benefits of His work, is brought to our recollection and forcibly presented to us. It is the truth, then, as brought before us by this ordinance, and not the ordinance itself, that operates for our sanctification. The same is true of all the other so-called means of grace; in themselves they have no sanctifying power; they become means of sanctification simply as they help to bring the truth which sanctifies forcibly to bear upon the mind. In the same way, affliction or any other providential visitation may become instrumental in our sanctification, not because such outward circumstances have any natural fitness to promote that result, but because they prepare the mind for the fuller reception, or the more adequate appreciation, of the truth which purifies and sanctifies. The truth thus remains the only operative cause of sanctification in connection with, and subordinate to, the Holy Spirit.

### (3.) *Sanctification—its Results.*

*a.* From considering the causes and means of sanctification, we pass to the consideration of its *results* and manifestations. These are what Scripture describes in general terms as good works—acts and habits in accordance with God's revealed will, performed and pursued from a regard to His authority, and in harmony of mind with Him. "Christ," says the apostle, "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us

from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works" (Tit. ii. 14). "We," he elsewhere says, "are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. ii. 10). From such statements we may infer with certainty—(a) That good works are the proper characteristic of the Christian life; in them the Christian is to walk; they are to be the habit of his life; (b) That the proper effect and evidence of the purifying of the people of Christ for Himself is, that they are zealous of good works—warmly affected towards these, and earnestly devoted to them; and (c) That it is for this that they have been created anew in Christ Jesus; they have become a divine *ποίημα*, and thereby have been fitted and adapted for good works, works well-pleasing to God.

b. The phrase "good works" in the N. T. is one of very general and comprehensive import. It designates all actions which an enlightened conscience would approve, or which, tried by the standard of morality, are deserving of commendation. It is applied by our Lord to His miracles of healing and beneficence showed to the Jews (John x. 32); it is applied to the becoming behaviour of a Christian matron who brings up her children well, is hospitable and beneficent, and whose seemly conduct is her great ornament (1 Tim. v. 10, ii. 10); it is applied to deeds of charity and acts of beneficence (Acts ix. 36); and it is applied to general good conduct, the conduct of one who is a pattern to the saints in all virtue and godliness (Tit. ii. 7). It embraces all that is enunciated in detail by the apostle when writing to the Philippians (Phil. iv. 8) and to Titus (Tit. ii. 11–14). This is the great lesson which the gospel of salvation teaches, and in this we have a clear, comprehensive, and sufficient description of all morality and goodness. These are to be taken, not specially, but generically, *i.e.* as standing each for a class of virtues, and not simply as designating one solitary virtue a-piece. By *sobriety*, *i.e.* as the word properly means, prudential moderation (*σωφρόνως*), that which is dictated by a wise regard to the proprieties of things, may be understood all virtue that man owes to himself; man's duty to himself being summed up in the gratification of his natural desires

and appetites in moderation and under prudential restraint ; in other words, in the temperate, moderate, prudent indulgence of the physical impulses of our nature ; under *righteousness* (*δικαίως*) is included all that we owe to our fellow-beings, all those feelings and actions which we are morally bound to entertain and render towards the beings around us according to their relations ; and by *godliness* (*ευσέβως*) we are to understand all those feelings and actions which we owe to God as our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer. Under these three heads may be registered the whole duty of man. And as the effecting of these virtues in men is the end of the gospel of grace made known to men, we may fairly conclude that the good works of which the people whom Christ purifies unto Himself are to be zealous, are those virtues which are comprehended under these three general designations.

As it is for good works that the people of God have been created anew, and as the effecting of these in them is the design of the gospel dispensation under which they have been brought, it is of *necessity* that they should "maintain good works." To this they are strenuously exhorted, both by our Lord and by His apostles (Matt. v. 16 ; Col. i. 10 ; Heb. x. 23, 24 ; 1 Pet. ii. 11, 12).

c. Good works are thus necessary ; but for what are they necessary ? Not, as the Roman Catholics teach, that they may merit increase of grace and eternal life,<sup>1</sup> which is an utterly unscriptural doctrine ; a doctrine in itself absurd, for as the apostle reasons, "If by grace, it is no more of works ; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace ; otherwise work is no more work" (Rom. xi. 6) ; and a doctrine misleading and pernicious, inasmuch as it tends to lead those who receive it away from Christ as the sole author of salvation, and from faith in Him as the sole medium of eternal life, to an endeavour to work out a righteousness of their own by which they may merit full and complete salvation. Good works are necessary, not only as the fruits and manifestations of the actuality of sanctification in the soul, but also as they are the indispensable means by which we are to work out our own salvation. They are the outgrowth and manifestation of a holy principle

<sup>1</sup> *Concil. Trid.*, cap. ii. can. 32.

within ; and as they proceed from this, so they react upon it, strengthening and deepening it and rendering more easy and sure its ultimate triumph over all the evil principles which sin has implanted in us. Without the steadfast, consistent, and persevering pursuit and practice of good works, the spiritual life will become languid and feeble within us. Nothing can supply their place in respect of this. "Neither," exclaims the eloquent Chrysostom, "neither baptism nor the remission of sins. nor knowledge, nor the communion of mysteries, nor the holy table, nor the enjoyment of the body, nor the fellowship of the blood,—no, not one of these can profit us if we do not lead a life right, and admirable, and removed from all sin."<sup>1</sup>

#### (4.) *Sanctification—its Relation to Salvation.*

As good works are necessary to sanctification, so also sanctification is itself necessary to salvation. *a.* Sanctification of believers is the grand end and design of the Saviour's propitiatory work (Tit. ii. 11–14 ; Eph. v. 25–27). He "gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people." *b.* The sanctification of believers is the object of the divine will. "This is the will of God, even our sanctification,"—His will both as that which He desires and that which He enjoins (1 Thess. iv. 3–7 ; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16). *c.* The sanctification of believers is the grand end and design of God's purposes of grace in redemption (2 Thess. ii. 13 ; 1 Pet. i. 2). *d.* The sanctification of believers is a necessary consequence of their faith in Christ and union with Him ; their faith works by love and overcomes the world ; Christ is made of God unto them sanctification ; he that is in Christ is a new man, created after God in righteousness and true holiness ; and he that abideth in Christ, and Christ in him, bringeth forth much fruit ; fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life (1 Cor. i. 30 ; Eph. iv. 24 ; John xv. 5 ; Rom. vi. 22). *e.* The sanctification of the believer is the necessary result of the energy and operation in him of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. i. 7 ; Eph. ii. 21, 22 ; Gal. v. 16–25). *f.* Finally, that sanctification is necessary,

<sup>1</sup> *In Dict. Pauli*, No. 6.

appears from the very nature of salvation. Salvation is deliverance, not so much from guilt and condemnation, as from the love and power and practice of sin. A sinner is not saved by being pardoned; he is pardoned that he may be saved; and he is saved when he is fully delivered from sin and made holy as God is holy. When that is attained, he receives the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul. Without this he cannot see God; without this he cannot enter heaven; without this he would be unfit to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. If a man, then, is to be saved in the full sense of that word, it must be by his being sanctified wholly, and by his "whole spirit and soul and body being preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. v. 23).

We may add that holiness is necessary to a man's being useful as a power for good in the world. It is only thus that the Christian can make his light shine before men, so that they, seeing his good works, may glorify his Father who is in heaven. It is the holy man who will be the most efficient good-doer in the world; who will be the most zealous for God and for the good of his fellow-men; who will exert the best influence on those around him; who will do most to raise others from what is degrading, debasing, and carnalizing to the pursuit of the true, the pure, and the godlike. As has been justly said, "The light of intellect is far less valuable and truly beautiful than the light of moral purity; and it is only when the fires of the former are directed and governed by the latter that they bring either good to men or glory to God."<sup>1</sup>

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[At page 221, vol. ii., it will be found that Dr. Alexander proposed to consider the subject of Soteriology under four principal heads: First, What God does *for* us and *apart from* us for our salvation; second, What God does *upon* us and *in* us to secure and advance our salvation; third, What God enables us *to do for ourselves* in the matter of our salvation; and fourth, What God secures to us as the result of our final triumph and the consummation of our salvation. The first of

<sup>1</sup> Payne, *Lectures on Divine Sovereignty*.

these has been discussed under the head of Election, and the second under that of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. As it has not been considered advisable to extend the present work beyond two volumes, the lectures under the third and fourth heads (which would fill an additional volume) have to be omitted; but a brief outline of their contents is here given. Under the third head, which he entitled "The Means of Grace," Dr. Alexander considered the following subjects: 1. The Word of God; 2. the Sacraments; 3. Worship; and 4. Activity. As these means "were appointed to be used in connection with the institution denominated the *Church of God*, embracing those for whom they are principally designed and adapted," he introduced the subject of the means of grace by an inquiry into the doctrine of Scripture concerning the Church. In one of his introductory lectures to theology, indeed, he embraced the whole subject of the means of grace under this latter designation—or Ecclesiology. Under the fourth head he discussed the doctrine of Scripture concerning the Last Things, or Eschatology, his lectures under this head consisting chiefly of an exposition of 1 Cor. xv.—ED.]





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3. Different designations of theology.
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## PART I.—THEOLOGY.

### Chapter I. Pp. 19-25.

#### Preliminary—THE RELATIONS OF NATURAL AND BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.

1. Both lead to the conclusion that it is only partially and by analogy that we can apprehend God.
2. While God is known in nature and

revelation by analogy and anthropomorphism, the Bible furnishes a just basis for these in the constitution of man.

3. Both nature and revelation declare the distinction of God from the world.
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1. Attributes of God not qualities superadded to the Divine Essence.
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3. Method by which we acquire a knowledge of divine attributes.
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- (i.) Protensive existence :
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  2. Unchangeableness.
- (ii.) Extensive existence omnipresence, etc.
- (iii.) Intensive existence :

<sup>1</sup> This table is designed to give a synoptical view of the whole work in the logical connection of all its parts. The signs I. (I.), i. (i.), 1 (1), a (a), indicate divisions and sub-divisions, each of which in successive order marks a division or head of that which precedes it. (I.) is used only in Parts III. and IV. The heads of "preliminary" sections are indicated by 1 (1) only.

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- (i.) Intelligence, which includes,
  1. In respect of object or compass—omniscience, which is

- (1.) Declared in Scripture,
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  - b. In respect to all the conditions of God's creatures,
  - c. In respect to all the thoughts and actions of men,
  - d. In respect to all things future, past, and present;
- (2.) Can be contemplated only negatively by the human mind;
- (3.) Is eternal;
- (4.) Is precise and minute as well as vast and all-embracing;
- (5.) Has been distinguished by divines as
  - a. *Scientia necessaria*,

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  - (2.) Most certain and distinct;
  - (3.) Intuitive, immediate, pure.
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- (ii.) Summary of the Catholic doctrine:

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3. As regards their unity in the Godhead, the three Persons are consubstantial.

4. As regards the distinction in the one Godhead, it is real and eternal, and is marked by certain properties peculiar to each Person, and not communicable. These properties are either internal or external. The internal are personal acts and notions, the former being

- (1.) That the Father generates the Son, etc., and breathes the Spirit.
- (2.) That the Son is begotten of the Father, and with the Father breathes the Spirit.
- (3.) That the Spirit proceedeth from the Father and the Son.

The personal notions are—

- (1.) Unbegottenness and paternity as peculiar to the Father.
- (2.) Spiration as belonging to the Father and the Son.
- (3.) Filiation as peculiar to the Son.
- (4.) Procession as peculiar to the Spirit.

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  - a. Such authority could not have resided in any priestly body of men, because
    - (a) Sacrifices were known and practised long before priesthood became a profession.
    - (b) Any benefit accruing to priests from sacrifice was insufficient to induce them to invent and inculcate such a usage.
    - (c) Even supposing some priests had invented sacrifice, this will not account for its universality.
  - b. The supposition of priestcraft as the source of sacrifice being excluded, the only other is that of a common father of the race, who could have derived it only from God.
2. The divine origin of Sacrifice proved from Scripture.
  - (1.) The divine approval of sacrifices.
  - (2.) Probable origin of sacrifice in the time of Adam.
  - (3.) Nothing in the Mosaic institute to indicate that sacrifice was newly appointed under it.
  - (4.) The view that sacrifice originated in the time of Adam best accounts for its existence and its transmission to his posterity.
- (ii.) *The Meaning and Import of Sacrifice.*
  1. *The Sacrifices of the Heathen.*
    - (1.) The idea of propitiation conspicuous in heathen sacrifices.
    - (2.) The vicious character of heathen sacrifices, shown especially in the prominence given to a. the blood, and b. to the willingness of the victim.
    - (3.) The offering in sacrifice regarded as a gift to the gods.
  2. *Patriarchal Sacrifices.*
    - (1.) The sacrifice of Abel, which was
      - a. Propitiatory, and
      - b. Had respect to the sacrifice of Christ.
    - (2.) Noah's sacrifice :
      - a. The oblation was exclusively an animal sacrifice.
      - b. The animals offered were ritually clean.
      - c. The offering was a burnt-offering.
      - d. The offering was acceptable to God.
    - (3.) The offering of Isaac by Abraham :
      - a. Objections to the view that Isaac was a type of Christ, and the substituted ram a type of the intermediate sacrifices of the Jewish economy :
        - (a) The Mosaic sacrifices being themselves typical, this view would make the ram the type of a type.
        - (b) If Isaac represented Christ, then Isaac must have represented God, who freely gave His Son, and received Him as a sacrifice ; whereas Abraham, in obedience to a command, offered his son as a sacrifice.
        - (c) Isaac was exempt from being sacrificed, whereas Christ was actually sacrificed.
      - b. The true typical character of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac :
        - (a) Isaac represented the Church of God.
        - (b) As his life was forfeited, so was that of the Church.
        - (c) As his life was saved by a substitute of God's own providing, so is the Church saved in like manner.
        - (d) As the ram saved Isaac by being his substitute, so Christ saves men by being their substitute.
  3. The sacrifices of Job :
    - a. They were propitiatory.
    - b. They were offered by Job as a priest interceding for his friends.

## VOL. II.

## Chapter XI. Pp. 1-21.

## SACRIFICE—Continued.

1. *Mosaic Sacrifices.*
  - (1.) Sacrificial offerings :
    - a. The burnt-offering.
    - b. The sin-offering.
    - c. The Passover :
    - d. The "sparing."
    - e. The sprinkling.
  - Connection of the Passover with the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt.
  - (d) The typical reference of the Passover to the deliverance to be brought by the Messiah.
- (2.) Mosaic sacrifices—their character and purpose.
  - a. They occupied the place of a divine institute.
  - b. They enabled men to draw nigh to God.
  - c. They had to do with sin.



- d. They made propitiation on account of sin.
- e. They were expiatory or propitiatory by being vicarious. Proofs and illustrations of this :—
  - (a) The cases of detected murder and of homicide.
  - (b) The ceremonial on the great day of Atonement.
  - (c) All cases in which hands were laid on the head of the victim.
  - (d) The word used to indicate the offering of a sacrifice.
  - (e) The prominence given to the "blood," in which is the "life" or "soul," in sacrifice.
  - (f) The sacrifice which expiated for the sinner was his representative as well as his substitute.

## Chapter XII. Pp. 21-36.

### 4. *Theories of Sacrifice.*

- (1.) The theory of sacrifice as a gift.
  - (2.) The theory of sacrifice as involving an actual transference of guilt.
  - (3.) The theory of sacrifice as being merely symbolical, of which there are four forms :—
    - a. That sacrifice was a symbol of reconciliation between God and man by being of the nature of a friendly meal, to which there are the objections :
      - (a) Admitting that part of every sacrifice was eaten by the worshipper, it was not eaten at the altar, but in his own dwelling.
      - (b) It was not the case that of all sacrifices offered a part was eaten by the offerer and his friends.
      - (c) In the case of the most important of all sacrifices, the burnt-offering, no part was eaten by the offerer.
    - b. The theory that sacrifice was a symbol of the abolition of sin and the reunion of the sinner with God, to which there are the objections—
      - (a) That the repeated declaration of Scripture is that reconciliation was made by sacrifice.
      - (b) If sacrifice was a symbol of reconciliation already made, it is difficult to see the use of it.
      - c. The theory that sacrifice was a symbol of man's return to God in penitence and self-consecration.
      - d. The theory of sacrifice as a gift whereby man endeavoured to make his imperfect consecration of himself to God complete.
  - (4.) Attempt to construct a just theory of sacrifice :
    - a. The facts of the case are those connected with man's relation as a sinner to God as Moral Governor.
    - b. Entire and unqualified consecration to God is the first and essential requisite in religion.
    - c. But in the case of the sinner this would mean yielding himself to the penalty of death denounced by God against sin.
    - d. The only way of escape from the penalty is the acceptance by God of something in lieu of the penalty that shall answer the same ends as would be answered by the infliction of it.
    - e. The question being one belonging to law, which views men as elements of one organic whole, if the ends of law be secured by something done by all or only one of that whole, the result is the same.
    - f. Hence emerges the doctrine of substitution, according to which a pure being voluntarily submitting to death may secure the pardon of those who had incurred that penalty.
    - g. By the intimation to our first parents of a Perfect Substitute, through whom all barriers to man's consecration of himself to God would be removed, there was provided a basis for a religious life.
    - h. In order to secure the preservation of these truths, sacrifice was instituted to represent in a scenic form the principles of religion in relation to a sinful creature, and by which men were reminded—
      - (a) That sin is a terrible evil ;
      - (b) That death is the penalty of sin ;
      - (c) That through a vicarious satisfaction to the law by means of a victim which God would accept, sin could be forgiven ; and
      - (d) That the law being satisfied, reconciliation is effected between God and the sinner.
- ### 5. *The apprehension by the Jewish people of the truths represented in sacrifice.*
- (1.) A pious Jew would naturally inquire what was specifically set forth in sacrifice.
  - (2.) Inasmuch as the ancient sacrifices are declared in the New Testament to have been a type of Christ, they could have been so only as they were so understood by those beholding them.
  - (3.) The large number of priests not engaged in the temple service would seem to imply that their function was to instruct the people in the law, and therefore concerning the meaning of its precepts.

- (4.) The prophets "gave witness" to Christ, and it may be assumed they did this by instructing the people concerning the intimations of Him given in sacrificial observances.
- (5.) The Old Testament saints received the forgiveness of sins for which the Mosaic institute provided no expiation, and this could therefore have been only on the ground of that atonement which it prefigured.

Chapter XIII. Pp. 37-50.

(iii.) *The Sacrifice of Christ.*

1. *Its relation to Ancient Sacrifices.*
  - (1.) The death of Christ accomplished in reality that which the ancient sacrifices only represented symbolically—the taking away of sin by a substitutionary propitiation.
    - a. The death of Christ is represented in Scripture as an event having an important purpose.
    - b. The end of Christ's death had reference to man's benefit.
    - c. It was designed to benefit man by taking away sin.
    - d. Christ took away sin by having it imputed to Him, and bearing the punishment due to it.
    - e. The special benefits represented as accruing to men through Christ are redemption from sin and reconciliation to God.
  - (2.) In the death of Christ there was an actual accomplishment of all that was predicted by Jewish sacrifices.
    - a. Passages in which Christ is said to have given Himself as a "ransom-price" for men.
    - b. Passages in which believers are represented as being "bought with a price."
    - c. Passages in which our Lord's work on behalf of men is spoken of as a propitiation.
    - d. Passages in which believers are said to be "partakers" of Christ's death.
2. *Names of Christ bearing on His Sacrificial Work:*
  - (1.) Saviour.
  - (2.) Captain or Author of salvation.
  - (3.) "He that sanctifieth."
  - (4.) Mediator.
  - (5.) Shepherd.

Chapter XIV. Pp. 50-54.

3. *Phrases descriptive of the Work of Christ:*
  - (1.) Lamb of God.
  - (2.) Ransom-price.
  - (3.) A Curse.
  - (4.) Sin.
  - (5.) Surety, Propitiation, Peace.

4. *Phrases designating the Design and Effect of the Work of Christ:*

- (1.) "For us."
- (2.) "For sins."
- (3.) Bearing and removing sin.
5. *Expressions setting forth the Benefits accruing to men from the Work of Christ:*
  - (1.) Acceptance with God.
  - (2.) Redemption.
  - (3.) Reconciliation, which includes the removal of obstacles to harmony with God, not only on the part of men, but also of God Himself.
    - a. The absence of statements to the effect that God is reconciled to man is accounted for by the fact that He is the Author of reconciliation.
    - b. Reconciliation of God to men is implied in the frequent statement that the anger of God is turned away by Christ.
    - c. The statement that our reconciliation to God is a bringing nigh of those afar off from Him implies obstacles to reconciliation on the part of God.
    - d. The emphasis laid on the death of Christ can be explained only on the assumption that the obstacles to reconciliation were of a judicial kind.
    - e. The references to reconciliation as a boon conferred by God indicate that there was something requiring to be removed on the part of God.
    - f. The argument that in Rom. v. 10 man's enmity to God is implied is inconclusive.
    - g. The passages in the N. T. in which "reconciliation" occurs are such as usually determine the meaning of it to be the removal of obstacles on the part of God.
    - h. The foregoing conclusions do not exclude the moral influence of Christ's death in drawing men to God.
6. *The testimony of non-evangelical theologians in support of the Scripture doctrine of the propitiatory merits of Christ as a sacrifice to God offered for men's sin.*

Chapter XV. Pp. 84-101.

(iv.) *Theories of Christ's Sacrifice—The Atonement.*

1. *History of Opinion.*
  - (1.) Opinions of the Fathers.
  - (2.) The view of Anselm, and its influence on succeeding theologians.
  - (3.) The view of Grotius, and the modification of Anselm's view involved in it.

- (4.) Summary of opinions since the time of Grotius; every theory since then proceeds on one or other of the following assumptions:—

- a. That the death of Christ was a satisfaction to God's justice for man's sin.
- b. That it was a ground or reason in the divine government on which sin could be forgiven.
- c. That it exerts so powerful a moral influence on men as to draw them from sin to God.

Chapter XVI. Pp. 101–112.

2. *Principal Theories of the Sacrifice of Christ.*

(1.) *The Hyper-Calvinistic Theory:*

- a. Statement of the theory: That the work of Christ was of the nature of a price paid for the release of man from penalties he had incurred.
- b. Statements and arguments adduced in explanation and support of the theory.
  - (a) The statements of Scripture of a transference of men's punishment to Christ.
  - (b) Christ endured all the punishment of sin due to us in the curse and sanction of the law.
  - (c) When God condemns sin, He condemns it in the very punishment due to the sinner.
  - (d) The whole penalty of sin is death, which Christ endured for us.
  - (e) In being made sin for us lay the very punishment of our sin upon Christ.
  - (f) His sufferings are so described as to indicate that He suffered what was threatened to sin.
  - (g) The benefits of the death of Christ are restricted to His own people only.
  - (h) For whom Christ died, for them He is sponsor, to free them from guilt.
  - (i) For whom Christ died, for them only does He intercede.
  - (j) For whom Christ died, for them only He merited grace and glory, etc.
  - (k) He died only for those whom God gave Him to be saved.
  - (l) Those for whom Christ died are those whom alone the Father loved, and was pleased to endow with spiritual blessings.
- c. Chief objections to this theory:
  - (a) That it is incompatible with the infinite value of the Saviour's propitiatory work.
  - (b) That it is inconsistent with those passages which state that Christ

was a propitiation for the sins of the world.

- (c) That the salvation of the non-elect becomes a natural impossibility.
- (d) That the invitations of the gospel are without an adequate basis.

Chapter XVII. Pp. 112–120.

(2.) *Arminian or Remonstrant Theory.*

- a. Summary of the views of Arminius and the Dutch Remonstrants:
  - (a) Christ died for all and each in such a way that His death is not only sufficient in itself in virtue of its intrinsic worth, but it was efficiently offered for all and each, so that by means of it God may act graciously towards the human race.
  - (b) Christ obtained for all and each restitution into a state of grace and salvation, so that no one shall be obnoxious to condemnation on account of original sin.
  - (c) Christ endured death for all without any definite purpose of saving any one.
  - (d) Christ obtained certainly salvation for no one, but only acquired for the Father plenary will and power to act with men *de novo*, and to prescribe what conditions He pleased, the fulfilment of which conditions depends on the free will of man.
  - (e) The impenetration of the death of Christ extends beyond the application of it.
- b. Arguments in support of the Remonstrant theory:
  - (a) Scripture expressly declares in many passages that Christ died for all men.
  - (b) Scripture expressly states that Christ's work had for its object the saving of the world, etc., which is incompatible with any limitation of those on whose behalf He suffered.
  - (c) Christ said He came to seek and save the "lost," which is incompatible with the view that He came to save only a part of the lost.
  - (d) In some passages the possibility of some perishing for whom Christ died is contemplated, and consequently Christ's death had respect to others than the elect who shall be saved.
  - (e) Scripture calls on all men to believe on Christ as an imperative duty, but we can believe in Him as a Saviour only as we regard His propitiatory work as valid for our salvation.

(f) If Christ did not die for all men, no one can be condemned for unbelief.

c. Objections to some of the arguments in support of the Remonstrant theory:

(a) In the argument based on the assumption that faith in Christ means faith that He died for us, and that such faith cannot be demanded except on the assumption that He died for us, it is overlooked that the warrant for faith is not our knowledge of what Christ did, but God's assurance that on the ground of what He did all who believe on Him shall be saved.

(b) While the Arminian theory does justice to the statements of Scripture respecting the relation of Christ's death to all men, it overlooks or sets aside the statements which declare that Christ "gave" Himself for some in a sense in which He did not give Himself for all, and in which there is a special reference to these in His atonement.

#### Chapter XVIII. Pp. 120-138.

(3.) *Moderate Calvinistic theories*, of which there are two principal forms, the one of which is that God, having of His sovereign grace determined to save a certain number of the human race, devised the atonement as the means of attaining that end; and the other, that God having in His rectoral capacity devised the atonement as a means of reconciling His mercy and His righteousness, did as a Sovereign determine to limit the universal remedy in its application to such only as it was His good pleasure to bring unto salvation.

a. Opinions of theologians under the former head.

Opinions under the latter.

Statement of the questions at issue between the two parties.

Is the atonement, both in its general design and special design, to be traced wholly to the sovereign love of God, or are we to distinguish between God as a ruler and as a sovereign, and refer the design of the atonement to Him as a ruler, and the application of it to His sovereignty?

Did the devising of the atonement precede, or did it follow, in the order of nature, the purpose of God to save a certain number of the human race?

Was the atonement made for sin or for sinners?

γ The answers of the one party would be that the atonement is to be referred wholly to the sovereign love of God, — that He determined to save a certain number, and in order to this provided the atonement; and that the atonement was not so much for sin as for sinners. The answers of the other party would be that the atonement is to be traced to the rectoral love of God, who devised the atonement as a means of manifesting His righteousness, being thus made for sin rather than for sinners, and that God is free to apply its benefits to all whom He is pleased to choose.

Remarks on the foregoing distinctions.

It is admitted on both sides that the work of Christ is of infinite sufficiency, but that its actual efficiency is determined by the purpose of God.

The specific purposed design of Christ was the salvation of His own people, but its aspect to the world at large is ecclasiastic.

This double reference of divine actings is seen in other of God's works.

Christ Jesus having, admittedly, appeared, acted, and suffered as a substitute for men, He could have been so only for those actually saved.

The representation in Scripture of Christ's sufferings as a price paid for the salvation of man leads to the same conclusion.

As God purposes only what He actually does, and as what He actually does is to save His people through the atonement, this must be regarded as His main design in providing it.

On the doctrine of an indefinite or universal atonement, it is not easy to see the necessity for the continuous agency of Christ on behalf of His people.

The view adopted — that the work of Christ, though of infinite value, and having many important ends to answer in the divine administration, was yet in its original purpose and main design intended to secure the redemption of Christ's own people.

General propositions regarding the twofold aspect of Christ's work.

The work of Christ has a general and a special design.

In the former it had respect to all men; in the latter, to the elect.

- (c) The former respects God as the moral Governor of all; the latter respects God as the gracious Father of His people.
- (d) The former respects the covenant of grace; the latter respects the covenant of redemption.
- (e) In virtue of the former, God continues to the race providential blessings forfeited by sin, the benefits of Christianity in its outward influences and social bearings; in virtue of the latter, God confers upon those whom He has chosen faith, repentance, pardon, justification, sanctification, and eternal life.
- (f) In virtue of the former, all men may be freely invited to come to Christ, because there is sufficiency in His atoning work to meet the case of all; in virtue of the latter, believers may be exhorted to confidence, gratitude, and obedience.

#### Chapter XIX. Pp. 138-164.

- (4.) *Recent theories of the sacrifice of Christ.*
  - a. The Socinian theory.
  - b. Theory of the design of Christ's work as a revelation to men of God the Father.
  - c. Theory of Dr. M'Leod Campbell—that Christ atoned for man's sin by making it His own, and by a sincere and adequate repentance making expiation for it.
- (a) It rests on two assumptions which are unintelligible—that Christ was identified with humanity, and that He made confession of man's sin with deep contrition and sincere repentance.
- (b) Admitting these assumptions, they furnish no expiation for sin.
- (c) If the sufferings of Christ were not propitiatory, they cannot be regarded as commending God's love to us.
- (d) On this theory it is impossible to account for the suffering and death of Christ.
- d. Theory of Dr. Bushnell—that God, by an act of self-sacrifice, was enabled to be at one with the sinner and forgive him; that forgiveness is obtained only when sin is remitted; and that remission of sin is not the cancelling of guilt, but the utter removal of sin from the sinner.
- (a) The view of remission of sins involved in this theory is unscriptural.
- (b) The assumption of the theory that "to justify" means to make

morally good is also unsupported by Scripture.

- (c) The theory wholly mistakes the nature of that which needed to be removed ere sin could be remitted, and God and the sinner reconciled.
- (d) It inverts the *ordo salutis* by representing sanctification as preceding justification, which is unscriptural.
- (e) It involves a denial of the necessity of divine influence in regeneration and sanctification, by representing the influence of Christ as operating directly through ordinary channels.
- e. Theory of Mr. Maurice—that Christ was identified with humanity, and that His work was one great act of self-sacrifice to illustrate the principle of self-sacrifice as due to God by all His intelligent creatures, and constituting their true dignity and excellence as moral beings.
- (a) Self-sacrifice has no moral value apart from the end of it.
- (b) The end of Christ's self-sacrifice being, according to the theory, the mere endurance of the pains of sacrifice, it is resolved into a mere example of suffering as an end in itself—both of which are unscriptural.
- f. Theory of Mr. F. Robertson—that Christ, as a partaker of humanity, suffered by coming into conflict with evil, and by His suffering overcame it.
- (a) Christ could not both have been overcome (or "torn in pieces") by evil, and have overcome it.
- (b) The sufferings of Christ being, according to the theory, such as came upon Him necessarily in His conflict with evil, there was nothing extraordinary in them.
- (c) The assumption of the theory, that evil can be crushed only by suffering from it, is supported by neither reason nor Scripture.
- (d) It is a misconception of the work of Christ to represent its primary end as the overcoming of evil.
- (c) The theory does not show in what way the sufferings of Christ were conducive to deliverance from evil.

#### Chapter XX. Pp. 165-176.

- 3. *Principles upon which a theory of the sacrifice of Christ may be constructed.*
- (1.) God, as the moral Governor of the universe, must always act in a manner perfectly consistent with

Himself, and with that government which is but an expression of Himself.

- (2.) Sin being abhorrent to His nature and a transgression of His law, He must ever act with regard to it so as to manifest His abhorrence of sin, and to uphold the stability and honour of His government.
- (3.) God is no less under obligation, from the perfection of His nature, to pity the sinner.
- (4.) We may therefore conclude that God will interpose for man's deliverance.
- (5.) Though it is not competent for us to determine in what way the mercy of God is to be reconciled with His abhorrence of sin and with His obligations to uphold His own law, it is possible for us to fix on certain conditions without which such reconciliation cannot be effected, such as—
  - a. That the mercy of God must be so exercised as to preserve entire the honour and authority of the law which has been broken.
  - b. That some adequate compensation must be made on behalf of the sinner which shall uphold the honour and authority of the law; and
  - c. That such adequate compensation can be made only through the vicarious agency of another.
- (6.) All these conditions are fulfilled in the person and work of Christ.

#### Chapter XXI. Pp. 176-187.

4. *The Moral Influence of the sacrifice of Christ.*
- (1.) Its accordance with man's deepest moral convictions.
- (2.) The view it gives of God fitted to influence man powerfully for good.
- (3.) The view it gives of the love of Christ calculated powerfully to affect the heart and lead to salvation.
- (4.) The view it gives of the evil of sin and the necessity of holiness fitted to exert a powerful moral influence on man.
5. *Summary of inferences respecting the Atonement:*
- (1.) As to the nature of the atonement;
- (2.) As to its necessity; and
- (3.) As to those for whose benefit it was made, in respect of its
  - a. Sufficiency, and in respect of its
  - b. Design.

#### Chapter XXII. Pp. 187-198.

- ii. **THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST.**
- (i.) *Priestly intercession in the Mosaic dispensation.*
- (ii.) *Christ's intercession.*
  1. The fact of it, as declared in Scripture.
  2. The nature of the intercession.
  3. For whom Christ intercedes.
  4. He is the only Intercessor.

#### Chapter XXIII. Pp. 198-212.

- II. **THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST.**
- III. **THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.**
  - i. The relation of Christ's kingdom to His priesthood.
  - ii. The distinction of His kingship from His divine sovereignty.
  - iii. The kingdom of Christ, as,
    - (i.) In its general administration, embracing the universe;
    - (ii.) In its special administration, identified with His Church, of which Christ is
      1. The Founder,
      2. Ruler, and
      3. Protector.
  - (iii.) The spirituality of Christ's kingdom.
  - (iv.) Its relation to earthly states or kingdoms.
  - (v.) The consummation of the kingdom of Christ.

### PART IV.—SOTERIOLOGY.

#### FIRST DIVISION. — THE DIVINE PURPOSE CONCERNING THE SALVATION OF MEN.

##### Chapter I. 213-221.

##### Preliminary—

1. *The Nature of Salvation.*
- (1.) It consists in the restoration of man to God's favour, and likeness to Him.
- (2.) Three things necessary to this:
  - a. The remission of Adam's guilt to the race.
  - b. The remission of sins to the individual sinner, and his acceptance into the divine favour.
  - c. The restoration of the sinner to the divine likeness.
2. *The Conditions of Salvation.*
- (1.) Man's salvation must come from God; for
  - a. The evils from which man suffers are such as to preclude his salvation originating with himself.
  - b. The removal of these evils involves action on the part of God, which only He Himself can determine.
  - c. The work of moral renovation must be the work of God.
- (2.) The methods pursued in accomplishing the salvation of man

must be such as shall do no violence to his natural constitution.

Chapter II. Pp. 221-228.

I. THE GENERAL BENEVOLENCE OF GOD, which is shown in

- i. The divine compassion for man.
- ii. The desire of God for the salvation of man.
- iii. The mission of His Son to men.
- iv. In the sparing of the race, and the preservation of the capacity for moral improvement and restoration.

Chapter III. Pp. 228-236.

II. THE SPECIAL BENEVOLENCE OF GOD.

(I.) ELECTION.

- i. *Classification of Opinions.* Opinions of
  - (i.) The Socinians and Lower Arminians.
  - (ii.) The High Calvinists.
  - (iii.) The Evangelical Arminians.
  - (iv.) The Moderate Calvinists.
- ii. *The Election of Israel.* Inferences from passages—
  - (i.) That Israel enjoyed peculiar privileges, and were the objects of a special love.
  - (ii.) These privileges and this love were common to all Israel.
  - (iii.) The blessings thus conferred, and the love thus shown, were all in consequence of an act of choice on the part of God.
  - (iv.) This choice was altogether sovereign.

Chapter IV. Pp. 237-285.

(II.) THE ELECTION OF BELIEVERS. Inferences from passages :

- i. Believers stand in a peculiar and endeared relation to God.
- ii. This special relation is the result of a choice or election of them by Him.
- iii. This election is eternal.
- iv. It is a choice of believers "in Christ."
- v. The election is purely sovereign. The opinion that it has its ground in God's foresight of the faith and obedience of certain persons is exposed to the following objections :—
  - (i.) It cannot be reconciled with the terms in Scripture affirming the perfect gratuitousness of election.
  - (ii.) It is irreconcilable with those passages which represent faith, piety, and holiness as ends contemplated in the election of believers.
  - (iii.) It is inconsistent with the repre-

sentation in Scripture of election as a difficult and mysterious subject.

- (iv.) It leads to Pelagianism, by making the act of man determine his own salvation.
- (v.) If this opinion be correct, it is difficult to understand to *what* the subjects of faith and obedience are elected.
- vi. The divine purpose in election had respect to the actual salvation of those elected.
  - i.) Proof passages.
  - (ii.) The opinion and arguments of those who hold that election is not to actual salvation, but to the means and opportunity of obtaining it :
    1. Argument from the analogy between the ancient Israel and the people of God.
    2. Argument that salvation being dependent on the right use of means, election can only be to these means.
  - (iii.) Objections to this view :
    1. It is incompatible with those statements of Scripture which represent salvation as an evidence of election, and
    2. With those statements which represent heaven as a place prepared from eternity for the people of Christ.
    3. No difficulties are removed, or advantages gained, by adopting this view.
- vii. The divine election is an election of persons, and not of communities or nations.
- viii. In election God had respect to men, not simply as creatures, but as fallen creatures.
- (i.) Theological dogmas arising from this distinction.
- ii.) Proof passages.
- (iii.) Summary of their testimony :
  1. They teach nothing incompatible with the doctrine that it is only for sin that men are doomed to perdition.
  2. There is nothing in them to show that God operates directly on the minds of any to cause them to be sinful.
  3. There is nothing in them supporting the doctrine that God decrees the ruin of any on the ground of their foreseen guilt.
  - a. There is no ground in them for the doctrine of a decree of preterition in reference to the unsaved.
  - b. What it is that God decrees in the case of the unsaved.

Chapter V. Pp. 286-296.

ix. *General Observations.*

- i.) Divine foreknowledge is founded upon divine predestination.
- c. Divine election is involved in the covenant of redemption.

The turning-point of the question between Calvinists and Arminians—Does the actual salvation of any sinner originate with himself or with God?

*The Practical Uses of the Doctrine of Election.*

Election not to be so conceived as to be confounded with fatalism.

It is in its practical bearings that the doctrine is referred to in Scripture, viz.:

As a motive to gratitude.

As enforcing humility.

3. As a strong inducement to practical godliness.

As a support under temptation, etc.

Chapter VI. Pp. 296-306.

SECOND DIVISION.—THE DIVINE PURPOSE IN ITS FULFILMENT.

I. THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

i. *Names given to the Holy Spirit.*

- (i.) The meaning of the term "Spirit" in the Scriptures.

- (ii.) The adjuncts by which this term is more clearly defined in Scripture:

1. "Spirit of God."

2. "Spirit of Christ."

3. "Holy Spirit."

Chapter VII. Pp. 306-318.

ii. *The Deity of the Holy Spirit.*

- (i.) The "Holy Spirit" and "Spirit of God" used interchangeably in Scripture.

- (ii.) Divine Omniscience ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

- (iii.) Boundless Power ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

- (iv.) The Holy Spirit is joined with the Father and the Son as the object of religious worship.

The Holy Spirit is represented as being sinned against by men.

The Holy Spirit is represented as the author of spiritual gifts to men.

- ii.) Objections to the Deity of the Holy Spirit:

1. That so little is said in Scripture of the adoration or worship of the Spirit.

2. That He is represented as being subordinate to the Father and the Son, as proceeding from them, and sent by them.

Chapter VIII. Pp. 319-329.

- ii. *The Relation of the Spirit to the*

*Church and the Son: The Prophecy of the Spirit.*

1. The Spirit of the Church.

2. The Spirit of the Church.

Chapter IX. Pp. 329-343.

i. *The Work of the Holy Spirit.*

- (i.) The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

1. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

2. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

- (ii.) The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

- (iii.) The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

- (iv.) The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

1. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

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20. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

21. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church.



- garded as impotent to effect that for which it is sent forth, but
- (2.) Scripture distinctly asserts that it is in itself sufficient to accomplish the end for which it is designed.
  - (3.) The word, to be effectual, must be applied so as to produce the result intended by it.
  - (4.) No additional power is given to the word itself so as to effect man's salvation.
  - (5.) The work of the Spirit is not in giving added power to the word, but in removing from the mind of man that which obstructs its operation.

#### Chapter XI. Pp. 361-369.

- (ii.) *The Design of the Spirit's Work: the ordo salutis.*
- (iii.) *The work of the Spirit in bringing men into Divine Sonship.*
  1. *Vocation or Calling.*
- (1.) The divine sonship to which men are called.
- (2.) What it is:
  - a. That those who enjoy it are the objects of God's special love.
  - b. That it implies resemblance to God.
  - c. That it implies that those who are the possessors of it are the objects of God's special care, protection, and blessing.
  - d. That they have secured a divine heirship.
- (3.) In what way a believer becomes a child of God: the doctrine of adoption, and objections to it.

#### Chapter XII. Pp. 370-384.

2. *Regeneration.*
- (1.) Description of it in the New Testament.  
The relation of regeneration to repentance and conversion.

#### Chapter XIII. Pp. 385-406.

3. *Justification.*
- (1.) Its nature.
  - a. The statements of Scripture regarding justification.
  - b. The view of justification presented by these statements.
- (a) The distinction between justification as an act and as a state.  
The distinction between universal and particular justification.
- (c) Both justification and the righteousness into which the sinner thereby enters are of a legal character.
- (2.) The ground of justification.
  - a. The statements of Scripture.
  - b. The connection between the enjoy-

ment of justification and the ground on which it is enjoyed.

- (a) Opinions of theologians:
  - α. That there was an *actual transfer* of guilt to Christ, and of Christ's righteousness to the sinner.
  - β. That there was an *imputation* of the sin of men to Christ, and of the righteousness of Christ to men.
  - γ. That men are *treated* as righteous for the sake of Christ.
  - δ. That men are actually *made* righteous through Christ.
- (b) Remarks on these views, to the last of which there are the objections—
  - α. While professedly opposed to the doctrine of imputation, it can escape from it only by the supposition that justification is by works.
  - β. It overlooks the necessity of cancelling past guilt.
  - γ. It implies that Christ had the germ of sin in Him in being made sin for us, even as (by the opinion) men are held to have the germ of righteousness by faith in Christ.
  - δ. It is opposed to the doctrine of Scripture that the death of Christ is the ground of justification.

#### Chapter XIV. Pp. 407-428.

- (3.) *The Medium of Justification: Faith.*
  - a. The Nature of Faith.
  - b. The Object of Faith—the Lord Jesus Christ.
- (a) The equivalent expressions for faith in the N. T. indicate that it is an act implying desire, choice, acquiescence, trust.
- (b) Mere belief being simply a kind of knowledge, more than this is required for salvation.
- (c) The prominence given in the O. T. to trust in God as the quality of those held to be righteous.
- (d) The stress our Lord laid on faith on the part of those on whose behalf He performed miracles.
- (e) The example of Abraham's faith, which was essentially trust in God.
  - c. What is implied in trust in Christ:
- (a) Having right thoughts concerning Him and His work, knowing the truth concerning Him, and holding it for true.
- (b) Realizing His Person, Agency, and sufficiency as a Saviour.
- (c) An earnest desire for salvation.
- (d) Yielding to Christ, and reposing with implicit confidence in Him for salvation.

(4.) *Summary of Opinion on the Doctrine of Justification by Faith.*

*a.* Views of theologians.

*b.* Remarks on these :

(a) Objection to the statement that reconciliation with God is effected by Christ fulfilling the law in the place of man.

(b) Objection to the view of faith which is given as being merely an intellectual act.

Chapter XV. Pp. 428-459.

4. *Sanctification.*

(1.) Its nature.

*a.* It has a positive and negative side, the change involved in it being a loving pursuit of the good, and a renunciation of sin in the love and practice of it.

*b.* The change involved in it is universal.

*c.* The change is progressive.

*d.* Though ever tending to perfection, the process of sanctification is never completed on earth.

(2.) Sanctification its causes.

*a.* The primary cause—God.

(a) Sanctification ascribed in Scripture to the Holy Spirit as His special work.

(b) The agency of man in his sanctification.

(c) Views of theologians regarding

divine and human agency in sanctification.

*b.* The secondary cause of sanctification—the divine word.

(a) Its power and adaptation as an agent in sanctification.

(b) The relation of the Spirit and Word in sanctification.

(c) The Word of God the only agent in conjunction with the Spirit in effecting sanctification.

(3.) Sanctification its results.

*a.* Description of these in Scripture.

(a) Good works are the proper characteristic of the Christian life.

(b) They are the proper effect and evidence of the purifying of the people of Christ for Himself.

(c) They are the end for which believers are created anew in Christ Jesus.

*b.* The import of the phrase “good works.”

*c.* The necessity of good works.

(4.) Sanctification its relation to salvation, in being

*a.* The end and design of Christ’s propitiatory work.

*b.* The object of the divine will.

*c.* The end and design of God’s purposes of grace in redemption.

*d.* A necessary consequence of faith in, and union with, Christ.

*e.* The necessary result of the energy and operation of the Holy Spirit.

*f.* Involved in the very nature of salvation.

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