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THE
NATURAL AND REVEALED
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THEOLOGY.

A SYSTEM OF LECTURES,

EMBRACING

THE DIVINE EXISTENCE AND ATTRIBUTES ; AUTHORITY OF THE
SCRIPTURES ; SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE ; INSTITUTIONS AND
ORDINANCES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BY

JOHN J. BUTLER, D. D.,

PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY IN THE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL AT NEW HAMPTON, N. H.

"Theologus in Scripturis nascitur."—Ancient maxim.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness : that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—PAUL.

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P R E F A C E.

The BIBLE is the source and fountain of all sound theology. No Christian would seek to substitute any other book in its place. But we are not precluded from arranging and unfolding its truths in the way best adapted to our circumstances. Nature furnishes the elements of all science; but it remains for the student and teacher to investigate and classify its phenomena. So in sacred literature, we explore its rich treasures, that we may obtain therefrom things new and old, for instruction and edification.

In our Theological Classes, in this Institution, for the last sixteen years, we have pursued different methods. A portion of the time we have used a text-book, with a course of lectures at the close, by way of review. In other years, the subjects have been discussed separately, without a text-book, with lectures interspersed. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages; but my experience, both here and elsewhere, convinces me that Theology can be taught most successfully by the aid of a treatise, embracing, substantially, the views of the instructor; so that each topic, being studied by the members,

may be discussed in the class, and more fully developed and illustrated. It is for the purpose of supplying, in a measure, our own wants in this respect, that I have undertaken to prepare this work.

The systems of Theology now before the public, with all their excellences, contain much that is not adapted to our needs, and much that we cannot endorse. While we would not cherish a sectarian spirit, it is our duty to contend earnestly for the faith of the gospel as we understand it.

In the treatment of these great subjects, I have endeavored to present them throughout in a Scriptural light. The true theologian is not only "born in the Scriptures," but also nourished and perfected in them. While availing myself freely of the aid of the eminent lights in religion and theology, both of ancient and modern times, I would make no uninspired man a model or master. CHRIST is our great TEACHER, and his word our only infallible rule of faith and practice.

I have sought to make this work *practical* to all. With such a range of topics, comprised in a single volume, there is necessity of much conciseness. I have labored, therefore, to make the treatment suggestive; so that, as each thought is susceptible of much expansion, the common reader, as well as the student, will be incited to further investigation. Still, I trust that, in each subject, the most essential truths are brought to view.

Without seeking for embellishment of style, or rigorous system, I have aimed to follow a natural order, and to adapt the whole to the wants of students, ministers, private Christians—indeed, of all sincere inquirers. To all such it is respectfully commended, with the hope that its careful perusal and study will not be found without avail.

A brief historical notice of the treatment of Christian Theology, in different systems, may not be inappropriate in this place. In the time of the apostles, and their immediate successors, religion was not taught scientifically, but in a simple and popular manner, as there were few learned men in the churches. But when the gospel became more generally diffused, and many of the votaries of science and philosophy were converted to Christianity, a change occurred in the mode of instruction.

“In the third century,” says Knapp, “many heathen who were versed in science and philosophy, became members of the Christian church. At the same time, learned men arose among the heathen in opposition to Christianity, and heretics, among Christians themselves, in opposition to the original principles and doctrines of the apostolical churches, from which they wished to advance to something more elevated and perfect. In order to this, they misinterpreted the writings of the apostles, parts of which, at this distance of time, had become obscure. In consequence of these circumstances, learning was soon needed in the statement and defence of Christianity. The learned men who had been converted from heathenism now applied the doctrines and terms of their philosophy to the truths of the Christian religion. This they did partly from the influence of habit, and partly from the desire of rendering Christianity, in this way, more popular. They also had the example of the Grecian Jews, who frequently, at that time, treated the Jewish religion in the same way. This was done by Justin the Martyr; and also by Pantaenus, Clemens, and Origen, the teachers of the catechetical school at Alexandria. They supposed that this was the best way to defend Christianity, not only against their learned heathen opponents, but also

against heretics. For the interpretation of the New Testament, also, literary knowledge was more becoming, more requisite, than formerly, since the language, customs, and whole mode of thinking had gradually changed since it was written. This department of learning was cultivated with great success, in the third century, by Origen, who gave tone to the scientific interpretation of the Scriptures."

Distinct subjects in religion and theology have been treated in all ages, but no complete system appears to have been composed until the sixth century. The first attempt of this kind is ascribed to Isidorus of Sevilla. Much more distinction, however, is awarded to John of Damascus, in the eighth century, who, for his celebrated works, was called the "Master of Sentences," i. e., of *opinions*—such systems at that time embracing little more than a collection of the opinions of distinguished men. The work of Abelard, in the twelfth century, is also prominent. But through all the period of the dark ages, as might be supposed, few valuable acquisitions were made to theological literature, while it was greatly corrupted by the discussion of irrelevant and frivolous topics.

With the revival of learning, and especially after the Reformation, the study of Theology was not only pursued with more vigor, but, in every way, more appropriately. Most of the prominent reformers were profound theologians, particularly Luther, Melancthon, and Knox. The works of Luther were quite voluminous. Calvin's works were still more extensive and systematic; bearing a relation to the modern church very similar to that sustained by those of Augustine in the ancient, both in their influence and in the character of their sentiments. The works of Arminius were also quite extensive, and did much to counteract the opposite doctrines of Calvin. The

writings of John Howe, Sherlock, Gill, Fletcher, Wesley, and others in England, with those of the Edwardses, Hopkins, &c., in this country, are well known, and need no special reference here. It should be remarked, that many of the best treatises on different doctrinal subjects, have been published separately, and never incorporated into a body of divinity.

Of the systems of Theology now before the public, I cannot here speak at length. The excellent work of Dr. Dwight has been used extensively, and much appreciated for its practical spirit. Being presented in sermons, it contains much of interest to the general reader, aside from the strict province of Theology. But, on the same account, its method is not so well adapted to scientific purposes. Dick's work is not exposed to this objection; and presents a very full, thorough, and comprehensive system. Hill's *Divinity*, in Great Britain, and Woods' *Theology*, are later, and, on this account, in some respects, better representatives of the old school of Calvinism; while those of Finney and Taylor represent the new school of Calvinism, and this as modified by the favorite views of those distinguished teachers. Watson's *Institutes* have, from their publication, been received as the standard of Methodism, both in England and America. We are not aware that any other similar work has been issued under its auspices. Mr. Lee's late treatise, published and adopted by the Wesleyans, contains many good sentiments, especially on the moral questions.

I have not been able, in this brief view, to notice the productions of the German and other continental theologians. The work of Dr. Knapp, Germany's most eminent evangelical theologian of modern times, should not, however, be passed without remark. His method throughout is strictly scientific, the style simple and direct, and the whole highly practical.

He avoids and exposes most of the errors into which so many of his countrymen have fallen; still it is to be deplored, that, on some of the most important subjects, his views are deficient and dangerous.

Whatever works of uninspired men may be consulted, the student cannot be too earnestly impressed with the importance of submitting all to the standard of God's Word. Go to the Bible first; make this your authoritative rule. Study the productions of men, only to enable you to understand better His mind and will, as revealed in the sacred Scriptures.

NEW HAMPTON, January, 1861.

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NATURAL AND REVEALED THEOLOGY.

LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Preparation for the Gospel Ministry. Necessity of Study. Ministers must be Called of God. Errors with regard to Preparation. Christian Theology Defined. How it should be Studied. Benefits of Studying Theology.

The object of the Gospel Ministry has been often misapprehended. In all ages, men have assumed it with little reflection, and unprepared for its solemn duties. Many have regarded it as a profession, designed merely for instructing the people in morals and religion, and to preserve the traditions and usages of the church. In their view the qualifications are such as are adapted to the office, viz. : natural capacity and education. Of supernatural endowments, they make little account. Such views and practice have had extensive prevalence, not only in Europe, but also in this country.

Many spiritual Christians, in view of the above named perversion, have gone to the other extreme, and denied the necessity of any exertion of our own to qualify ourselves for the sacred office. They urge, that since it is the prerogative of God to ap-

point his own ambassadors, and he is able to furnish them for the work, it is needless and even presumptuous for them to employ any human means of preparation. But they overlook the Divine economy on this subject. Under the Jewish dispensation, those called to the sacred office, were required to be thoroughly versed in the law. Hence, schools of the prophets are mentioned. See 1 Sam. xix. 20. 2 Kings ii. 3, 5, &c. We find fifty students of one of these schools assembled on a certain occasion. 2 Kings ii. 7.

Christ instructed his apostles. He could have endowed them miraculously in a moment; but he chose to keep them as his scholars three years, sending them forth to labor only occasionally, before he commissioned them to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to the nations. Paul enjoined upon Timothy, and by implication upon all young men called to this work, to *study* to show himself approved of God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Still some consider it wrong for those called of God to preach to spend time in study; and denominate them a *man-made* ministry. They would have them go forth as they are, depending wholly on God. If He was now wont to communicate with men by an audible voice, by angels, or by visions, as in ancient times—if Christ and the inspired apostles were now on earth, there would be more plausibility for such position; though they all used appropriate means. But since the age of miracles and of special inspiration is past, what must be the consequence of neglecting to use the means suited to our case?

Some good men, who have measurably imbibed this error, have still been useful, though they would have been much more useful, had they been guided by more enlightened and scriptural views. Others, however, acting upon such theories, have done much harm. They have not instructed sinners, or led them in the path of salvation, but have been in the way of those who would.

We cannot be too deeply impressed with the fact that the Gospel Ministry is Divinely constituted, that no one should assume its responsibilities but he that is called of God as was

Aaron, and that He qualifies and furnishes for the work. All this; however, does not, in any degree, supersede the use of means on their part, but should incite them the more to diligence and faithfulness, in view of the greatness of the work, and the aid they will receive, if true to their trust.

Those who have the ministry in view, should, at the outset, be guarded against certain dangerous errors :

1. That preparation for this work is a light thing. While listening to a successful minister, it may seem easy to preach a good sermon. Let those who think so try it. It may not be difficult for many to *talk* half an hour from a text of Scripture ; but to *preach* to the edification of an intelligent assembly, is quite different. Could we understand all that has conduced to make a successful preacher, the amount of labor expended in discipline and research; our estimate of the attending difficulties would soon be changed. Nothing valuable can be acquired without labor, and, as a general rule, those who labor hardest, succeed best.

To become a useful minister, requires the most earnest and faithful use of the means God has provided. One may obtain the name of minister, his credentials, and *perhaps* his livelihood, without such preparation. But the undertaking is unworthy and base. If a man is too proud or too lazy to apply all his energies to the work, let him never think of entering the ministry. Great as is the destitution, it is one, not of nominal, but of real laborers. True ministers of God have ever been humble, toiling, self-sacrificing, martyr-spirited ; and the same spirit is just as requisite now as ever ; and unless one is willing to become a martyr for the truth—feels somewhat as Paul did, when he exclaimed, I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, he may rest assured that God has not called him. Men require long and hard training to fit them for the common avocations of life. Is less required of him who is to be an ambassador of Christ to a sinful world ; to whom is committed the task of leading his fellow men from sin and death to holiness and heaven ?

2. Another error is, that there is any magical way of obtain-

point his own ambassadors, and he is able to furnish them for the work, it is needless and even presumptuous for them to employ any human means of preparation. But they overlook the Divine economy on this subject. Under the Jewish dispensation, those called to the sacred office, were required to be thoroughly versed in the law. Hence, schools of the prophets are mentioned. See 1 Sam. xix. 20. 2 Kings ii. 3, 5, &c. We find fifty students of one of these schools assembled on a certain occasion. 2 Kings ii. 7.

Christ instructed his apostles. He could have endowed them miraculously in a moment; but he chose to keep them as his scholars three years, sending them forth to labor only occasionally, before he commissioned them to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to the nations. Paul enjoined upon Timothy, and by implication upon all young men called to this work, to *study* to show himself approved of God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Still some consider it wrong for those called of God to preach to spend time in study; and denominate them a *man-made* ministry. They would have them go forth as they are, depending wholly on God. If He was now wont to communicate with men by an audible voice, by angels, or by visions, as in ancient times—if Christ and the inspired apostles were now on earth, there would be more plausibility for such position; though they all used appropriate means. But since the age of miracles and of special inspiration is past, what must be the consequence of neglecting to use the means suited to our case?

Some good men, who have measurably imbibed this error, have still been useful, though they would have been much more useful, had they been guided by more enlightened and scriptural views. Others, however, acting upon such theories, have done much harm. They have not instructed sinners, or led them in the path of salvation, but have been in the way of those who would.

We cannot be too deeply impressed with the fact that the Gospel Ministry is Divinely constituted, that no one should assume its responsibilities but he that is called of God as was

Aaron, and that He qualifies and furnishes for the work. All this, however, does not, in any degree, supersede the use of means on their part, but should incite them the more to diligence and faithfulness, in view of the greatness of the work, and the aid they will receive, if true to their trust.

Those who have the ministry in view, should, at the outset, be guarded against certain dangerous errors :

1. That preparation for this work is a light thing. While listening to a successful minister, it may seem easy to preach a good sermon. Let those who think so try it. It may not be difficult for many to *talk* half an hour from a text of Scripture ; but to *preach* to the edification of an intelligent assembly, is quite different. Could we understand all that has conduced to make a successful preacher, the amount of labor expended in discipline and research, our estimate of the attending difficulties would soon be changed. Nothing valuable can be acquired without labor, and, as a general rule, those who labor hardest, succeed best.

To become a useful minister, requires the most earnest and faithful use of the means God has provided. One may obtain the name of minister, his credentials, and *perhaps* his livelihood, without such preparation. But the undertaking is unworthy and base. If a man is too proud or too lazy to apply all his energies to the work, let him never think of entering the ministry. Great as is the destitution, it is one, not of nominal, but of real laborers. True ministers of God have ever been humble, toiling, self-sacrificing, martyr-spirited ; and the same spirit is just as requisite now as ever ; and unless one is willing to become a martyr for the truth—feels somewhat as Paul did, when he exclaimed, I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, he may rest assured that God has not called him. Men require long and hard training to fit them for the common avocations of life. Is less required of him who is to be an ambassador of Christ to a sinful world ; to whom is committed the task of leading his fellow men from sin and death to holiness and heaven ?

2. Another error is, that there is any magical way of obtain-

ing the qualifications. Let no one suppose that the fact of having the ministry in view, or attending school, or pursuing certain studies, will fit him for the sacred office. Some, with the best advantages, improve little, because they do not faithfully use their advantages. There are indeed differences in natural capacity. Still, there is but one path to usefulness. No short cuts, or patent rights, or labor-saving machinery will avail much here. They have been often tried, and found to minister only to quackery. Some indulge in vain notions on this subject, imagining that they shall be transformed, they know not how, into efficient and accomplished ministers. But there is no such magical or transforming process. Knowledge, which the priest's lips should keep, must be acquired by the use of appropriate means. There must be close, vigorous, persevering, self-application. Books, teachers, institutions may be of great advantage to the student, if faithfully used; otherwise they will be of little service to him. Nay, he may be positively injured, by obtaining a mere smattering, a knowledge that puffeth up, a philosophy falsely so called.

3. Another error is that of supposing that intellectual culture is sufficient. If active piety is necessary anywhere, it is so for the Gospel minister, and for the Christian student. Abstract study and scientific exercises will but lessen the spirit of devotion, unless the heart be at the same time enlisted in the work. But if the heart is fixed on God, the more we study, the more spiritual we may become. And how essential that this be so. You are constantly dealing with the truths of revelation—with matters of faith; and how can you discern spiritual things, unless yourselves are spiritual?

Besides, when his course of study is completed, and he goes forth to public labor, what is one to do without fervent piety, faith, consecration? That so many, thus destitute, have been put into the sacred office, is the main cause of the prejudice existing against education for the ministry. My great desire is, and ever has been, that those who go out from our Institutions shall add their names to the bright list of those who have shown

that religion and learning are not only compatible, but most naturally and closely allied: who have united to a well disciplined and furnished intellect, a heart deeply imbued with the Divine spirit, and have consecrated all to the blessed work of honoring Christ in the salvation of souls.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, to which I propose to invite your attention in the following course of lectures, may be denominated *the science of religion*. Its object is to present the principal truths of the Christian religion in a connected form. It relates especially to the scheme of Gospel Redemption,—to such subjects as have the most direct bearing upon the salvation of the soul.

In proceeding to the consideration of this subject, it may be remarked that one great source of instruction is the BIBLE, illustrated and confirmed by nature, and interpreted in the light of reason and experience. We come therefore to the Scriptures to learn what God has therein revealed. We use our own powers, with whatever helps we may have, to learn what he has revealed; and having learned this, it is for us implicitly to receive and practice it. The error with many is that they do not obtain their views from the Bible, but first construct a theory from their own notions or human tradition, and then resort to the Scriptures to obtain support for it. Thus they would exalt themselves, their reasonings and theories above the teachings of God. Not that human reason and Divine revelation ever conflict. Revelation often transcends reason—presents subjects which the human powers cannot fathom. All matters of scriptural revelation, which are level to our capacities, are and appear consistent with our reason, and it can pronounce no doctrine of the Bible absurd. The office of human reason, then, with reference to the truths of revelation, is simply to ascertain what God has taught; and then it is our duty to receive these teachings implicitly. To do otherwise is the height of presumption. When one does not regard the doctrines of the inspired word conclusive, but makes human speculation the ultimate standard, he plunges into a region of shade, darkness, and death, as the whole history

of philosophy shows. Go to the Bible as learners, divested, so far as possible, of prejudice, and thence derive every doctrine and system. It is for the interest of all alike to know and hold the truth, and the truth alone. If we hold a single sentiment contrary to Scripture, the sooner we renounce it the better.

Christian Theology should be studied *diligently*. It requires at least equal application as mathematics, languages, or any other department of study. If one can afford to be superficial anywhere, it is not, surely, in these matters of such transcendent importance. If, through the ignorance or carelessness of an attorney, a case is lost in court, and thousands of dollars are swept away, this may be esteemed a trifle: if, through lack of a physician's skill, health or even life is sacrificed, this is not essential; but if he who is set to watch for souls, misleads them to their eternal ruin, who shall declare the awful consequences?

Christian Theology should be studied *patiently*. The subjects presented involve numerous and great difficulties, which can be overcome only by earnest, patient, persevering research. There is no better time to enter upon them than now. A whole life will be exhausted while but upon their threshold; hence we cannot begin too early. Shrink from no obstacle; be diffident respecting your own attainments, obtain help from every quarter, bear criticism with manliness, turn all to good account, and ever press onward. Now we know but in part; but, if faithful, we shall know more hereafter.

It should be studied with *faith*. As before intimated, if any one needs active piety and faith, it is the theological student. Much of what he learns, he must take on the authority of God, and by faith. "The carnal man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." Each doctrine should, so far as it can, be tested by *our own experience*. The internal evidence is often the most satisfactory. It is not enough to have a theory. It is a great and good thing to be able to say, we know these things are so from our own experience.

It should be studied *prayerfully*. All our powers and attainments are very limited. The apostle Paul could well exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" We should feel our need of the Divine arm at every step. "To pray well," said Luther, "is to study well."

Let us, finally, consider some of the benefits to be derived from a course of theological study.

1. It tends to give us clear and definite views of each doctrine. By arranging the scriptural proofs together, comparing them with each other, and studying them as illustrated by Christian experience, we obtain well defined conceptions of each subject. True, in the limited time allotted us, we are not able to make a full investigation; but a good beginning may be made, and foundation laid for future labors.

2. Such a course of study is of great service in comprehending the system of scriptural doctrine as a whole. By studying these doctrines separately, and in their natural order, we the better learn their various bearings and relations. Such study guards against partial and prejudiced views—against unduly magnifying some truths to the neglect of others—and enables us to put a just estimate upon all. Correct views of Christian doctrine are of great importance, especially *to the religious teacher*. The world abounds with error on morals and religion;—error in innumerable forms, and of pernicious tendency. Such error the Gospel minister will encounter everywhere; and unless he has skill to expose and suppress it, his preaching will be of little avail. Not that he needs to be a perpetual controversialist. Were he never to come in conflict with any false teacher, and never to preach a controversial sermon, he would still need a thorough and discriminating acquaintance with the doctrines of Scripture, in all his ministrations. Indeed, these doctrines must furnish the basis and substance of his sermons.

3. The study of Christian Theology is of the highest importance in disciplining, enlarging, and liberalizing the mind. Its themes are the most practical and exalted that ever occupied the soul of man. The being and attributes of God—creation,

and original state of man, his temptation, fall, and consequences—the scheme of redemption, its author, method, conditions and results; the new life, its commencement and growth; the gospel, its introduction, its institutions, and ordinances; the final consummation on earth, and future, endless retributions. These subjects, while in their essentials, they are level to the smallest human capacities, afford ample scope for the most powerful minds forever. Nor are they mere theories; but throughout practical and essential to our highest well-being. To study such subjects aright must have the most happy influence upon us. In view of them, we see how great a privilege it is to be a Christian, and especially the minister of such a gospel—to have our time and energies devoted for life to the contemplation of these glorious realities, unfolding them to others, and winning them to the participation. Surely, he who desireth the office of a bishop, or minister of Christ, desires a good work.

PART I.

NATURAL THEOLOGY.

I shall not attempt, in the Lectures on the Existence and Attributes of God, to discuss fully the subject of Natural Theology ; but, mainly, present such considerations as shall give a general view of the evidences from nature, and at the same time show our need of a Divine revelation. And, in this connection, it will not be appropriate to treat of the scriptural evidences on that subject. Only some incidental references to them will be appended.

LECTURE II.

ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

Method of Treatment. Natural Proof. Demonstrative Argument. Argument from Cause. Objections of Hume and Others. Argument from Design. Objections. Pantheism. Historical Argument. Moral Argument. The Bible.

Different methods of arrangement have been adopted by writers on Theology. Some have treated first of the authority of the Scriptures, and then derived from them their main arguments for the Divine existence and attributes. But the more natural order is to consider the proofs of the existence of God prior to the examination of any revelation purporting to proceed from him.

The fundamental article in every religious belief relates to the existence of God. No religion could exist, even in name, without an acknowledgment of Deity. If there is no God, there is no religion.

Some assert that the existence of God cannot be proved without revelation. Then I ask, how is the authority of revelation to be established? Is it said that it contains intrinsic evidence of validity? But how is this question to be determined, especially in dealing with skeptics, except by an appeal to reason? And if an appeal is to be made to reason and the light of nature, it had better first be made in reference to the being of God. Then the way will be open to investigate the claims of any revelation said to proceed from him. In the Scriptures the existence

of God is not revealed, but presupposed. In the first sentence of the sacred Volume there is mention made of God without any proof or explanation. That the light of nature may be properly sought to direct our inquiries on this subject, is clear from express declarations of Scripture, as the following: "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they [the heathen] are without excuse. Rom. i. 20.

Some hold that the existence of God is a matter of consciousness. But consciousness relates only to the present operations of our own minds. We are not conscious, then, of the existence of any *other* being, if we are of our own. We may be conscious of our *belief* in God, but we are not conscious of his existence.

Others resort to demonstration,—the *a priori* argument. This has been stated in various ways. One of these, as stated by Dr. Samuel Clarke,* is this: "Space and duration are necessary ideas. They are not substances; and therefore must be modes or attributes of some being, and this being is God." But it has not been shown that space and duration necessarily exist; and if they did, it would not follow that they must be attributes of some being, nor do they necessarily *imply* the existence of any intelligent principle. Again, we do not know that space and duration are infinite; hence if they involved the existence of some rational being, he would not necessarily be infinite, and therefore not necessarily God.

Another mode of stating the argument is that the idea of God is a necessary idea, and that his non-existence is an absurdity.† Were this true, the argument used to substantiate it is too abstruse to be comprehended by most minds. The most acute logicians, however, have not been satisfied with the *a priori* argument under any form in which it has been presented; and for popular instruction at least, it had better not be adduced.

We may indeed admit that the Divine existence is not a matter of strict demonstration. This might be expected. As we are

* On the being and attributes of God. † Knapp's Theol. Sec. 15, (1).

free, and in a state of probation, we are not to look for absolute demonstration on such a subject. Were the truths in morals forced upon our regard, we should not be free. It is enough that the evidence be such as to satisfy candid minds.

Men do not require absolute certainty to guide them in the ordinary affairs of life. In most cases they have nothing more than a probability. The husbandman is not sure of a crop, however faithfully he may toil. But he is under as real obligation to plow in hope, as though he were sure of a plentiful harvest. Even where the probabilities are against an event, a prudent man feels bound to provide for contingencies. For instance, we often take an umbrella when we do not expect rain, merely because of the possibility. If we had only the probability that a fortune had fallen to us; or that unless we changed our residence, we should be seized by a contagion, we should as surely attend to these probabilities, as though they were certainties. If, then, we can be satisfied from rational considerations, that there is a God, we are as much bound to acknowledge him, as though his existence were a matter of consciousness, or of mathematical demonstration.

The existence of God has never been *disproved*. No one has ever attempted to disprove it. Many have found fault with the arguments adduced to prove it. Very little more have they been able to do. None but God could disprove the Divine existence: for if evidence of the being of God has not been exhibited to us, or to any within the circle of our knowledge, it may have been exhibited somewhere or to some one else. Unless, therefore, an individual has explored the universe, and knows all things—in other words, is God, he cannot disprove the Divine existence. He must, then, be a *fool*, who would *assert* that there is no God.

The argument generally relied on is called *a posteriori*, and is the argument from effect to cause. In this course of reasoning there must first be an admission of *begun existence*. We exist. There was a time when our existence began. So of all the various orders of being on earth. Now it is an axiom in morals that

there is no beginning or change of existence without an adequate cause. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. "From nothing, nothing springs." And the great First Cause of all things we denominate the SUPREME BEING, or GOD. Such is a concise statement of the argument.

To this argument there have been various objections. The most specious is that of Hume,* who builds on the hypothesis, that the relation of cause and effect is simple antecedence and sequence—that the highest notion of cause is that of an *invariable* antecedent. But this position is untenable.

1. The relation of simple antecedence to sequence is not the notion which men have of cause. Another idea always enters into their conception of cause, viz.: efficiency to produce the effect. It is true that the term cause is often used loosely. Superstitious people, for instance, say that a comet is the cause of war: they mean that its appearance is the *forerunner* of war. In a loose sense we say that heat causes water to boil, that abstinence is the cause of hunger, when we mean merely that these are the established antecedents or occasions of the given results. In all such cases, although aware that there is no efficiency in these antecedents to produce their sequents, we always know that there is a real efficiency somewhere. But proper cause is one that *produces* the effect.

2. The words used by all nations to denote cause, signify more than simple antecedence. And how came they to have such signification?

3. The idea of cause is one of the earliest developed in the human mind. Children have a curiosity to know the causes of the phenomena about them. Is this a mere curiosity to know what preceded? If one asks, what makes the car move, he wants to know the *cause*, not some mere antecedent.

4. We are conscious of being causes—of having power to produce effects. To a certain extent, at least, we are able to control the operations both of body and mind. Especially is this true of volition. We are conscious of being the cause and

* "Inquiry."

the only cause of our own volitions. Hence our feeling of responsibility. But it is said we cannot explain *how* the cause produces the effect. No matter. If we know that the cause does produce the effect, the explanation of the manner is not essential. Does one deny that grass grows, because he cannot describe the process of vegetation?

Another hypothesis to evade the force of the argument for a First Cause, is that of an infinite succession. This position Dwight met by wit rather than argument.* An infinite succession cannot be pronounced *impossible*. It is just as pertinent to ask who created God, as to ask who created the first being in an infinite series. Since something exists, something must have existed from eternity, and for ought we can determine there may have been an infinite series of being. But waving all metaphysics on a subject which is obviously beyond the province of human research, it is vastly more consistent with reason to admit a First Cause, self-existent, eternal, the Creator and Preserver of all things, than to admit an infinite series of each of the innumerable orders of being—an infinite series of men—of elephants, of every species of beast, bird, fish, insect. The Copernican system of Astronomy was adopted in preference to the Ptolemaic because of its simplicity, reasonableness, and practicalness. It was deemed more probable that the earth revolves, than that the sun, moon, and stars revolve about it every twenty-four hours. So it is more reasonable to suppose that the various orders of being proceed from a great First Cause, than that they exist in an infinite series. Since something must have existed from eternity, God may have so existed, and consequently uncaused—a position which the mind much more easily adopts, than the one that assumes so many series of being infinite and uncaused. It is also much more consonant with the common idea of cause. The question respecting the eternity of matter needs no discussion here. If the being of God is admitted, the existence of matter is readily accounted for.

Again, the existence of God is argued from the *marks* of de-

* Theology, Vol. I., pp. 90, 91.

sign in the universe. We are curiously and wonderfully made. Who that has studied the laws of nature and the structure of the physical system can doubt that the eye was *designed* for seeing; the ear for hearing; the hand for labor; the stomach for digesting food; the heart, veins, and arteries for the circulation of the blood? What *skill* is shown in the processes for the waste and renewal of the physical system, and its restorative power; the various offices of the bones, muscles, nerves, glands, and their adaptation to their various purposes. So of all the various orders of animal existence. How full of wonder also are the vegetable and mineral kingdoms. How nicely are all the departments of nature adapted to each other. Each animal, vegetable, and mineral is fitted to its sphere; every where there is a uniformity of general laws, yet an inconceivable variety. By the aid of the microscope* we may discover myriads of beings of regular, animated structure in a drop of water. And the telescope reveals innumerable worlds of vastly greater magnitude than our own. The mind is soon lost in such contemplations. This universe not only exists, but continues from age to age with all its complications and changes in exact order. Need we remark, that here are the strongest evidences of design, and consequently of a Designer?

The atheist replies, that these adaptations do not prove design, but that the use arose fortuitously from the adaptation. For instance, he contends, the web foot was not given to the goose with the design of its being aquatic, but the goose becomes aquatic by finding the web foot adapted to the water. On the same principle we might deny design in works of human art. We might assert that man has no design, but works at random. A watch is made not for keeping time rather than hammering stone; but we find it more convenient for keeping time than for hammering stone, and so use it accordingly. If we admit evidence of design in the works of human art, we must also in the works of nature.

* On the superiority of the Divine over human art see "Microscopic Wonders," Gen. Bap. Rep. for 1848, p. 176.

Another atheist asserts that fitness results gradually from use. But facts are all against this theory. Would a woodpecker's bill increase in length by pecking trees? What makes a goose web-footed? If paddling in water, then how came she to have the disposition to paddle?

Another ascribes fitness to *chance*. But what is chance? "The arrangement of things," he tells us, "must have been in some way, and why not as it is as well as in any other way?" And all this without any design or designer! This is like saying that, in a lottery, where there is but one prize to a thousand blanks, one is as likely to draw the prize as a blank; or that a mass of type, ink, and paper promiscuously thrown together, would be as likely to print the Bible, book, chapter, and verse precisely as it is, as though those materials were used by the most skilful compositor for that purpose!

Again, the existing order of things is ascribed to the laws of nature. But what are the laws of nature? They are but the ordinary mode of the Divine operations. Whatever agencies or instrumentalities intervene between the effect and its ultimate or producing cause, that cause must exist, and this great First Cause is God.

Another objection is the theory of Pantheism*—that the universe is God—that we are a part of God. This theory involves all the difficulties and absurdities already noticed, besides being opposed to our own consciousness. Our moral nature demands a personal deity. He who denies it consciously represses the best emotions of the heart.

Another branch of the doctrine is the historical argument. No nation or community of atheists has ever been found. No individual with powers developed has ever existed without the idea of God? How can this be accounted for without admitting the Divine existence? It is not enough to ascribe it to tradition; for how could the tradition originate? Nor to fancy; for fancy could never invent an idea which would become so prevalent, so

* Works of Spinoza, Fichte, &c.

uniform, so deep seated in our moral nature, so accordant with reason, observation, and experience.

Finally, if there is no God, there is no religion—no heaven or hell, no immortal state; we perish like the brutes, and all the noblest hopes and aspirations cherished by mankind in all ages are a delusion and a dream. Atheism not only blights the fondest hopes and chills the best affections of man, but it does violence to his entire moral nature, and removes the highest sanctions to morality and virtue. Knowing what infidelity is, and its history (take infidel France as an example), it may be fairly questioned whether society could be maintained under its sway—whether it could subsist without higher sanctions than men are able to impose on each other.

There is enough then in nature, without and within us, to establish the doctrine of God to the satisfaction of every candid mind, even without reference to revelation. Whether depraved men *would* have formed and retained proper conceptions of the Divine existence and character, is another question. If they had not, it would not have been from lack of evidence furnished from nature. God is manifest in his works. Thus may we look through nature up to nature's God.

It is not strictly pertinent here to allude to the Bible as a source of evidence, not having, yet, in these investigations, examined its claims. It may, however, be remarked, that God is the great central and pervading idea of the Bible. From the first sentence of its revelation to its last, He is everywhere pre-supposed, acknowledged, revered, as "THE HIGH AND LOFTY ONE THAT INHABITETH ETERNITY." Isa. lvii. 15.

LECTURE III.

DIVINE ATTRIBUTES—SPIRITUALITY, UNITY, ETERNITY, OMNIPOTENCE.

Definition of Attributes. Arguments for Spirituality of God. Objections. Proof of Divine Unity. Objections. Eternity of God. Proofs of the Omnipotence of God. Objections. Scripture References.

In our last subject we considered the evidences afforded by nature of the existence of God. We proceed to inquire respecting his attributes or character. On this subject also we confine our attention to the proofs furnished by nature. Having prosecuted the inquiry in this way, we shall be better prepared to investigate the claims of revelation.

An *attribute* is something that can be attributed or predicated. Thus extension, weight, malleability, fusibility are attributes of gold, because they are properties of that substance, belong to its nature. So thought, reason, imagination are attributes of mind, as they are predicable of all mind. Nothing but an essential property, no accidental one, is an attribute. It would not be proper to enumerate color as an attribute of matter, since it does not belong to all matter. So nothing is an attribute of God, but what is essential to his nature or character.

It should not be supposed that attributes are in fact separable. They are not. They are but different *manifestations* of the substance or nature—the *whole* substance or nature, in which they

inhere. Thus it is with matter and mind, and we have no reason to suppose it otherwise with God. A Divine attribute, then, is God as manifested in a certain way.

SPIRITUALITY OF GOD. This attribute is predicable of the Divine nature or essence. At the outset, we must disclaim ability to explain the *mode* of the Divine existence. We cannot explain the nature of matter, or the mode of our own existence. This, however, does not preclude us from investigating qualities and manifestations. Is, then, God a material being? It is not essential to this inquiry that we be able to explain the nature of matter. We know enough of it to enumerate its essential properties, as extension, solidity, divisibility, passivity. These properties preclude others, for instance, the last precludes activity or locomotion. Now, there is no evidence that either of the essential attributes of matter pertains to God. From the notices we take of the phenomena within the sphere of our observation, we make two grand divisions of being, viz.: matter and spirit. Whatever has positive existence is either material, or spiritual, or both. The being of God has been proved. We have no proof that any property essential to matter belongs to his nature. We conclude, therefore, that he is immaterial and spiritual.

We have seen also that God is the great First Cause. But we have no reason to believe that matter is cause. Its property of passivity or inertia forbids it. Matter, being wholly passive, may be an instrument, but not an inherent, efficient cause. Consciousness, too, declares all real efficiency to be in our spiritual, and not in our material, nature.

To this it is objected, that there is no difference between matter and spirit. To refute this we refer to the consciousness, the opinions, and the languages of mankind. It is objected again, that allowing there is a difference, we cannot fully define it. We admit that there may be properties both of mind and matter not yet discovered, and that there may be error in the classification of properties. But this does not practically affect the question. The division of phenomena into material and spiritual exists; and it is on the ground of this established division that God is declared to be a spiritual being.

Again, the works of nature exhibit marks of *design*. And as God is the author of nature, he must have been the Designer. Design implies intelligence. And intelligence is not an attribute of matter, but of mind. It is objected, that intelligence results from organization, since we know of no intelligence without organization. This, however, does not prove that there is none. This objection, if we were limited to the light of nature alone, might cause us to question whether God is a pure spirit; but it would never make us conclude that intelligence is an attribute of matter.

From the works of God it is evident that he is Cause, that he is intelligent, that he has intellect, sensibility, and will; and, hence, possesses spirituality, and, also, personality.

UNITY OF GOD. By this we mean that God is *one being*. This doctrine is opposed to Polytheism. Man is one in reference to species, but many in reference to individuals. But God is one individual being.

Proof. 1. There is no *necessity* of admitting more than one God. If he is self-existent, the First Cause, there is no necessity of supposing that there is more than one such being, since every event can be accounted for without it. It is unphilosophical to assign more causes than are adequate to any effect. The fact, then, that there is no necessity for admitting a plurality of gods, is an argument for the Divine unity.

2. There is no evidence of more than one God. The evidence that there is one God is full and conclusive, and there it stops. Polytheism may be adduced as a historical objection; but its various systems are so inconsistent with each other, and absurd, that it must be regarded as a perversion of the true doctrine. Most pagans have not regarded their gods as infinite; but have made one supreme, and the others subordinate to him. The farther you go back in authentic history, the nearer you find the pagan philosophy to the belief in Divine unity. The founders of most of the earlier sects, as Pythagoras, Thales, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle held, with some qualifications indeed, and taught, the doctrine of one God. Polytheism must be considered, therefore, as the offspring of corrupt men, in a degenerate

age. Proof is wanting of the existence of more than one God. If there were more, would not the evidence have been furnished?

3. It is difficult to admit more than one God. Are they opposed in counsel, then one must be superior: are they united, then why more than one? I do not say that a plurality of gods is impossible. Infinite mind does not preclude finite mind; and, for aught we can see, there might be a plurality of infinite minds. But the admission is difficult, and in the absence of evidence for it, it should not be made.

4. Unity of design and operation in the works of nature favors the belief in one God. If there were several gods, presiding over different elements and departments of the universe, we should expect to find a prevalence of diverse and opposite laws. But so far as human discovery has penetrated, there is a manifest uniformity in all the laws of nature. We have reason to believe that the light and heat emitted from the glimmering taper are of the same kind, and subject to the same laws, as those which proceed from the sun or the fixed stars; and that the particles of the flying mote adhere by the same law that holds the planets in their orbits, and controls the revolutions of the dimly-distant nebulae. And so through every department of animal, vegetable, and mineral existence. All this proves at least unity of counsel, and why not unity of being?

The only formidable objection to the Divine unity is *the existence of evil*. How can good and evil both exist under the administration of one infinite being? This objection gave rise to the system of Dualism. This was held by the Gnostics and Manicheans, at an early period of Christianity, being derived from the heathen philosophy. The Antinomian fatalists hold, even yet, to the eternity of Satan, and that the wicked are his literal progeny. Others hold to the eternity of matter, and that it is necessarily evil under every modification. Hence the origin of celibacy, monkery, and the various methods of bodily torture. All who hold these notions, advocate, as a consequence, the sys-

tem of absolute necessity, and deny human freedom and accountability; and this is enough to condemn them.

It must be admitted that without revelation this subject is beset with serious difficulties. The system of Dualism must be rejected on account of its vicious tendency, and its opposition to our consciousness of freedom and accountability. Besides, there is nothing in nature inconsistent with the doctrine of Divine unity. It is consistent with the dictates of reason to suppose that God made all things at first good—that he endowed an order of beings with moral powers, capable of obedience or disobedience, of virtue or vice. He might see it to be wise to create such beings. This being admitted, evil is incidental, though not necessary, to such a system. Such beings, free, finite, mutable, might sin. Thus evil can be accounted for without making God the author of it. In the light of reason alone this hypothesis is at least as probable as any other.

ETERNITY OF GOD. By this we mean, that there is neither beginning nor end of his existence.

Proof. If God's existence had a beginning, it must have had an author, according to the axiom, *ex nihilo nihil fit*. But if he had an author, he is not God—not the great First Cause, and we must seek for another, who is God. We must either admit that there is *one* adequate cause of begun existence, or fall back upon the theory of an infinite series of causes, which, to say the least, is a *moral* absurdity. The First Cause is plainly underived, self-existent, without beginning. If it is objected that we cannot conceive of an eternal being, I reply, this is owing to our finite, limited nature. We do not comprehend the *mode* of many things, which we yet believe.

Nor is there an end of the Divine existence. No cause can annihilate itself. Hence God cannot annihilate himself. If he could, there is no conceivable motive for his doing so. And as he is infinite Cause, nothing foreign from him can terminate his existence. He is, then, in the language of the Bible, “the high and lofty one that *inhabiteth eternity*,” who only hath a natural immortality.

OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD. By this attribute we denote infinite power. The idea of power being a simple one, it cannot be made plainer by definition ; but every one has a clear notion of it. It is essential to Cause.

Proof. God is Cause, therefore has efficiency or power. He is infinite Cause, hence has infinite power, is omnipotent. He is the cause of begun existence, the creator of this world and of all worlds, he made the soul of man, he ordained the laws of nature, and he upholds all things. Such a being must have boundless power. It is not meant that he *alone* has power—that he is the only cause in the universe. Our own consciousness forbids this. But he is the source of power. He is the First Cause. All other causes owe their origin to him.

It is objected, that there are some things which even God cannot do—as to make a thing be and not be at the same time, to make a part greater than its whole, to annihilate himself. But these imply no limitation of power, for they are not subjects of power. They are simply contradictions in terms, absurdities.

Again, it is objected that God cannot do wrong. This is owing to the infinite rectitude of his nature, not to any physical inability. The objection is founded on another absurdity.

The omnipotence of God being established, his *freedom* is inferred. He is controlled by no power external to himself. From the same premises we derive his *independence*.

We append a few Scripture references :

Spirituality of God. “God is a Spirit.” John iv. 24. 2 Cor. iii. 17. 1 Tim. i. 17.

Unity. “The Lord our God is one Lord.” Deut. vi. 4. “There is none other God but one.” 1 Cor. viii. 4.

Eternity. “From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.” Ps. xc. 2. Deut. xxxiii. 27. Rom. i. 20. Isa. lvii. 15.

Omnipotence. “The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” Rev. xix. 6. “I am the almighty God.” Gen. xvii. 1. “With God all things are possible.” Mark x. 27.

LECTURE IV.

DIVINE ATTRIBUTES, CONCLUDED.

Immutability of God. Succession. Omniscience of God. Consistent with Freedom. Omnipresence of God. Distinguished from Pantheism. Wisdom of God. His Benevolence. Objections Considered. His Justice. Scripture References.

IMMUTABILITY OF GOD. By this attribute we denote that God is unchangeable, without variableness or shadow of turning, in his constitution, or character.

Proof. Mutability implies imperfection. When a change takes place in a being, it is owing to his imperfection. If one is absolutely perfect, nothing can be added to him, nor can he change for the better; should anything be taken from him, or he change for the worse, he would cease to be perfect. But God is infinite, perfect; otherwise he would not be God; he would be inferior to Him who is perfect, and therefore God. Again, we argue his perfection from his being and attributes, as already considered. He who is the Self-existent, First Cause, Spiritual, One, Eternal, Omnipotent, cannot be imperfect.

Further, his works furnish evidence of his immutability. Every department of nature, in all ages and circumstances, evinces the uniformity and immutability of the Divine laws. Without any evidence to the contrary, we must, then, believe that God is immutable.

A change in the Divine administration is not inconsistent with this attribute. If creatures change from good to evil, or *vice versa*, the immutability of God requires that there be a corresponding change in his dealing with them. When in Scripture God is said to *repent*, no more is meant than that the altered condition of his creatures requires a change of administration in reference to them. The same faculty that loves good, hates evil.

The immutability of God does not make it necessary to suppose that we do not resemble him in any respect. It has been affirmed that God is so unlike us, that the Divine attributes can in no degree be illustrated by our own. It would be difficult, on this hypothesis, to see how we can have any knowledge or conception of God. True, he is far above us, he is infinite, while we are finite; therefore, with all our searching, we can never find him out to perfection. But to assert that we can know nothing of him, whom our moral natures demand as our God, is absurd. We should adopt no speculation that tends to make the Divine existence a mere abstraction. We should avoid this extreme, equally with that of supposing him to be altogether such a one as ourselves.

There has been much controversy on the question, whether there is *succession* in the Divine mind. In reflecting upon such a subject, we soon find a limit to human capacities. We cannot be positive in matters which we are unable to fathom. So far as we can see, there is succession with God relatively, that is, in reference to finite objects. He has established a succession in their existence, and this succession of course he perceives. But in his own being there is no succession. He is infinite in all his attributes. *All his knowledge is present*; he increases not in experience or in age. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity.

OMNISCIENCE OF GOD. The knowledge of God is infinite. That he possesses knowledge, is evident from his works. The marks of design in the universe prove a designer of the highest intelligence. Besides, we have already shown the *perfection* of

God. His knowledge, then, must be infinite, else he would not be God.

It has been objected to the Divine omniscience, that it cannot be reconciled with human freedom. That our moral acts are free, is a matter of consciousness. No theory whatever can be admitted which contravenes this fact. The omniscience of God must also be admitted. To deny that he has infinite knowledge, is to deny that he is God. Whether, then, these two truths can be reconciled in our minds, or not, they must both be admitted. But is there even an apparent inconsistency between them? I see none. I cannot perceive that the omniscience of God at all interferes with human freedom. Knowledge is according to fact. If our moral acts are free, they are known to be free. The knowledge of God cannot be the cause of our acts. Knowledge is not cause at all. Our acts are not performed because God knows them, but God knows them because they are performed. "But," says the objector, "if God knows that a moral being will act in a certain way, can he act differently?" Certainly he *can*. God knows that moral beings have the power of contrary choice, for he has endowed them with that power. Else they would not be moral beings. Now, to assert that his knowledge divests them of the power he has conferred on them, or is inconsistent with its exercise, cannot be admitted. If any one had chosen to act differently from what he does, then the act would have been known in that way. It is objected that this makes the knowledge of God dependent on our acts. Granted, so far as that knowledge relates to our acts. But this implies no limit of his knowledge. Those limit his knowledge who assert the contrary, viz. : that he cannot foreknow a free act.

Again, it is said, if the omniscience or foreknowledge of God does not *necessitate* our acts, it renders them certain—they *will be* so and so. What is meant by rendering them certain? No more than that they will be so and so, and he knows it; or foreknowledge is foreknowledge. True, they do take place, and so they might if they were not foreknown. An act must be in one

way or another, whether known, or foreknown, or neither. The mere knowledge of another being does not create it. *Men* of keen foresight and knowledge of human nature will predict, with great certainty, the state of the markets, the result of an election, and the like. An eminent English peer foretold at the outset the whole issue of the French Revolution. But who ever thought that his sagacity was the cause of the elevation and overthrow of Napoleon, and the restoration of the Bourbons? So men, endowed with the gift of prophecy, have foretold the destruction of proud cities, the revolutions of states and empires; but who ever supposed that the prophecy necessitated the events? We may be unable to conceive the *mode* of omniscience, but should not therefore deny the fact. God foreknows his own acts, but this does not destroy their freedom. With him, strictly, there is no *fore-knowledge*; his knowledge is all-present. He is the I AM.

OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD. He is present everywhere. This attribute is derived from omnipotence and omniscience, or it may be considered as a combination of the two. He who has infinite knowledge and power, who upholds and governs the universe, must be everywhere. We ascribe various effects to the properties of matter and the laws of nature; but these are not causes; they are at most but means and modes of the Divine operation. When, for instance, we assign a certain effect to attraction, we only classify, we do not explain the real cause. We do not suppose that matter is endued with efficient properties, which of themselves produce the various phenomena. To use a figure, we do not suppose that God made the universe, a vast machine duly contrived, wound it up, set it going, and that it runs on of itself. No such semi-infidel theory can be allowed for a moment. What we call material properties and laws, is God operating through matter in the various departments of nature.

The ubiquity of God is not to be confounded with Pantheism. He is everywhere, but not everything. Nor is he to be regarded as a merely universal acting power. As already shown, God is a being, has personality. "But how can he have personality, and yet exist everywhere at the same time?" We do not under-

take to explain the *mode* of the Divine existence. We cannot comprehend our own being ; why, then, expect to fathom Divinity? To limit the Divine wisdom and efficiency would involve a contradiction, hence the omnipresence of God must be admitted, although our finite powers cannot comprehend the mode of it. We believe many things, the *mode* of which we are unable to comprehend.

WISDOM OF GOD. Wisdom consists in the adaptation of proper means to worthy ends. That God possesses this attribute, is evident from his works. In whatever department of nature we take observation, and with whatever closeness of scrutiny, we find proofs of the highest wisdom. Whether we regard the simplicity of arrangement and operation, the variety of purposes subserved, or the excellence of the effects produced, we are impressed with the same conviction of wise design. We often admire the skill exhibited by men, the fertility of human invention, the complicated works of art. But how does all human skill sink into insignificance, when compared with the wisdom of Him who made, upholds, and governs the universe of matter and of mind ! A study of the Wisdom of God, as displayed in the works of nature, affords the highest instruction and satisfaction. Science has of late greatly multiplied the facilities for this study, and it is engaging the attention of increasing multitudes. When science is thus made the instrument of unfolding evidences, and giving us vivid conceptions of the Divine perfections, it becomes a most efficient handmaid of religion.

BENEVOLENCE OF GOD. Benevolence is synonymous with goodness ; and the doctrine of this attribute is, that God is infinitely good—that benevolence is the law of his nature.

Proof. That God is benevolent, and not malevolent, appears from his works. Here we discover innumerable evidences of benevolent design, which have been well set forth by writers on Natural Theology.* But God has been already shown to be infinite and perfect. Hence his benevolence or goodness must be infinite.

* Paley's and Chalmers' Works. Bridgewater Treatises.

It is objected, that we also find in nature marks of *malevolent* design, as earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes, sterility, venomous beasts, pestilence, pain, and death. How are these to be reconciled with infinite goodness? It must be admitted, that this subject is beset with difficulties when viewed in the light of reason alone. The following affirmations may, however, be made :

1. As things now appear, there is a great preponderance of good over evil, on the whole.

2. Much of the difficulty arises from our ignorance. In numerous instances, what men have supposed an evil, they have subsequently found to be good. The amount of natural evil has been greatly exaggerated. There is no proof of malevolent design in God.

3. Reason is able to suggest that evil arises from the violation of benevolent laws. This is clearly ascertained in a multitude of cases. True, we cannot trace all natural evil, to abuse; but this may be owing to our imperfect knowledge.

Still the question returns, why was evil of any kind, natural or moral, admitted at all? Evil is evil; nor can it be regarded as better, on the whole, than good would be in its place. To the objection, we reply, it cannot be an impeachment of the Divine benevolence to have a moral system, embracing free, accountable beings. This being admitted, it follows that evil is incidental to such a system. This is surely a rational hypothesis. After all, we feel the need of something better than unaided human reason to set this matter in a satisfactory light.

JUSTICE OF GOD. This attribute is to be considered in connection with the preceding. Benevolence, goodness, holiness, justice, truth, and faithfulness may be regarded rather as terms applicable to one Divine attribute, than descriptive of several. Justice is never opposed to goodness, but always in harmony with it. Justice in God relates wholly to moral beings, and denotes that he deals with them on principles of right.

Proof. 1. It is inferred from the other attributes, as immutability, omnipotence, wisdom.

2. Consciousness assures us that we do not suffer unjustly under the Divine administration. When we do wrong, we feel that we ought to suffer for it.

3. Observation and history afford much to illustrate the rectitude of the Divine proceedings.

The objection is, that there is not a perfect administration of justice in this world—that the innocent often suffer, while the guilty go unpunished. And this must be conceded. Here, again, shut up to natural reason, we find ourselves in the dark. We may conjecture that there is to be a future state, in which justice will be done to all; but we need authority to assure us. There is, indeed, no evidence in nature that God is unjust—that he has done injustice to any one, in a single instance. But there are difficulties in the existing state of things which make us earnestly desire clearer light than that of nature.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES.

Immutability of God. "I change not." Mal. iii. 6. James i. 17.

Omniscience. "His understanding is infinite." Ps. cxlvii. 5. Acts xv. 18. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

Omnipresence. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" Jere. xxiii. 24. Isa. lvii. 15. Ps. cxxxix. 7—12.

Wisdom. "The only wise God." 1 Tim. i. 17. Jude 25, Dan. ii. 20.

Benevolence. "God is love." 1 John iv. 16. Ps. cxlv. 9. xxv. 8.

Justice. "Just and right is he." Deut. xxxii. 4. Ps. xcii. 15. cxix. 137.

PART II.



NECESSITY AND AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE
REVELATION.

LECTURE V.

NECESSITY OF REVELATION, AND THE EVIDENCES NECESSARY TO AUTHENTICATE IT.

Preliminary Remarks. Is Revelation Necessary? Reasons for Expecting a Revelation. Evidences Necessary to Authorize it. Miracles discussed. Internal Evidences. Experience.

Revelation is the communication of truth before unknown. In this general sense the works of nature may be termed a revelation. Some of the most important subjects in morals, viz. : those relating to the Divine existence and perfections, we have already contemplated in the light of nature. We might proceed with others in the same manner, and thus go through the whole subject of morals, without consulting the Scriptures, as many philosophers have done. But we desist for two reasons :

1. Following the light of nature merely, we have already encountered serious and insurmountable obstacles ; and should we proceed to still more practical inquiries, we should meet with difficulties at every step.

2. A direct revelation from God has been professedly given ; and to say the least, it is presented to us under such circumstances, that it has strong claims to our careful attention. No one will deny that weighty considerations may be urged in its favor. As candid inquirers for truth, then, we are bound to

suspend further advances, until the claims of this revelation are canvassed. We need all the light we can obtain.

We do not contend that a direct revelation from God is absolutely necessary—that such a revelation is essential to any proper conception of moral truth—that without it man could know nothing of God, or of his own duty as a moral being. We have already seen that the Divine existence, and principal attributes may be proved from nature, and that they are presupposed in the Bible. Nature, under which term we include not only the external works of God, but also our own reason and conscience, —does make known to us much in regard to God and our duty,—enough to leave men without excuse for sin, if no direct communication beyond this had come from Jehovah.

In conceding that the necessity of a direct revelation was not absolute, we detract nothing from the value of this revelation. Were it absolutely necessary, it would be a matter of debt, not of grace. But this will not be claimed.

Still, there is a necessity of revelation. This necessity arises from man's fallen condition. Man does not do as well as he can. He does not profit as he might from the light of nature, and this creates a necessity on his part for a further, though gracious, dispensation. It may be safely affirmed that such is the depravity of fallen man, he would not, without a direct revelation, have sought and found the way of life. His need, then, is as *imperative*, as though it were absolute.

A direct revelation from God cannot be pronounced impossible. The works of nature are a revelation of him, and any other revelation from the same source, more immediate, explicit, and authoritative cannot be impossible. He who created the universe, with all its inhabitants, *can* adopt any method, consistent with wisdom, to make known to his rational creatures his own character and requirements.

And such a revelation must be deemed *desirable*. Allowing it is not indispensable, admitting that the light of nature, if rightly used, would be sufficient for our necessities, yet a fuller dis-

closure would greatly facilitate inquiry, and promote a practical acquaintance with the various departments of truth. Some of the reasons for expecting such a Divine communication may now be stated :

1. The importance of the subjects of morals and religion. They are not merely theoretical, but of the highest practical importance,—relating to our own moral character, relations, duties, and destiny. On such points our knowledge needs to be definite, because an error may lead to fatal consequences. Now these subjects, when viewed in the light of nature alone, are beset with very serious and painful difficulties ; which, although not such as to unsettle fundamental principles, it is very desirable to have removed.

2. It is of great consequence to have light on these subjects easily accessible to all. Natural Theology and ethics are more in the province of philosophical investigation. The mass of men have little opportunity or taste for abstract studies and laborious research. They need plain instruction.

3. The subject is moral, the proofs moral, and addressed to moral beings. Were this a matter of mathematical demonstration, were the evidences in nature such as to force assent and compliance, no more would be needed. But such is not the case. Hence the need of more light and motive. “ But this may also be resisted or neglected.” True, but those who do so will be the more guilty, and the Divine beneficence and justice the more conspicuous.

4. In these momentous concerns, men feel the need of something more authoritative than the deductions of their own unassisted reason. Each assumes his own right to judge for himself, and as no one is infallible, they are constantly exposed to error. Who shall decide in a case of controversy ? Evidently they need one who can speak with authority.

5. If there is a God, all created intelligences are his subjects. Now there are many points upon which the subjects of a moral government cannot be instructed by the light of nature alone.

There are other subjects, in relation to which nature affords a basis of instruction, but not so full and complete as would be desirable.

6. The moral state of the world shows the need of a direct revelation. As before remarked, men do not know as much as they might, nor do as well as they know. There is no subject in theology or morals which has not been zealously and perseveringly controverted; and that not by the ignorant only, but by the most profound thinkers. On almost every point, conflicting and opposite theories have not only been proposed, but at different periods, gained extensive prevalence. Nor have the characters of men been better than their theories. The history of mankind is a history of wickedness.

To place this matter in a strong light, consider what this world would have been without a verbal revelation from God. I ask not what it was *capable* of being. It might have been an unbroken Paradise, and every man might have been perfect in his generation. But what *would* the world have been? Contemplate the state of the heathen, who are without such revelation. They are in the lowest scale of moral degradation. So it has been in all ages, as universal history declares. Read the accounts furnished by travellers and missionaries, and then trace back authentic history indefinitely, and you have but one voice on the subject. All plainly shows, that without this revelation, darkness would have covered the earth, and gross darkness the people.

What, then, is the conclusion? Not that God was under obligation to make a revelation; but that such is the state of man, a revelation is greatly desirable, and from the known benevolence of God probable, and to be expected.

We now proceed to inquire what evidences are necessary to authenticate a revelation:

I. *Miracles.* Divine revelation is itself a miracle, being an immediate communication from God. Whenever any one has professed to make such communication, mankind have always required miracles as his credentials. The revelation, being itself

a miracle, does not require another miracle to confirm it to the mind of him who originally receives it. But others who have not witnessed it, demand the same evidence to satisfy their minds. They cannot receive it on mere testimony; they must be satisfied that it has been attested by miracles. It is not essential that we witness the miracle, but we must believe that miracles have been witnessed by others besides the one who communicates the revelation, and in attestation of that revelation.

Here we are met with philosophical objections against miracles. It has been asserted by *Hume* and others, that a miracle cannot be rendered credible. This subject, therefore, demands a careful examination. Miracles have always been relied on the world over as essential and sufficient to authenticate revelation; but they are not now wrought; hence, if they cannot be rendered credible to those who have not witnessed them, we must despair of authenticating revelation in the present age. The importance of the subject, therefore, demands for it the closest scrutiny.

A miracle is an event contrary to, or transcending, the ordinary laws of nature. It differs from a prodigy, which is something out of the common course of nature, but not against nature. An event may be extraordinary or strange to us, on account of our ignorance of its cause. A miracle, on the other hand, is a palpable contravention of known laws of nature. Should we see one born blind, instantly made to see by the application of clay and spittle, we should be able, from our knowledge of nature, to pronounce the event miraculous.

Now can an alleged miracle be rendered credible by testimony alone? This *Hume* denied, and I think justly. "We have found by experience," said he, "that testimony is sometimes false, but never that a miracle is true." So far as our experience goes, it asserts the uniformity of nature's laws. Confidence in testimony is indeed an original principle in the human mind, as well as is a belief in the uniformity of the laws of nature. In a conflict of the two, under supposable circumstances, the mind might be left in suspense. We might be unable to account for the testimony, but it alone would not satisfy us that there had

been a deviation from the established course of nature. It is, as already stated, an original principle of the human mind to believe in the uniformity of the laws of nature. There is, then, an antecedent probability against a *suspension* of any of these laws, and of course against a miracle. Now, in case of an alleged miracle, the mind would require that this antecedent probability be overcome, and a sufficient reason assigned for the miracle. This would be establishing an antecedent probability in favor of the miracle. Then the mind would be open to receive testimony to the fact, but not before.

A miracle cannot be pronounced impossible, as having no adequate cause. The existence of God being admitted, an adequate cause is furnished. God is the author of nature—its laws are but the ordinary mode of the Divine operation. To say that God never can or never does deviate from his ordinary mode of operation, is altogether assumption. Show a sufficient reason why he should deviate, and such deviation is neither impossible nor improbable.

We have already seen that mankind needed a revelation; and that the circumstances were such as to render it probable that one would be given. Miracles are the requisite external evidence to authenticate a revelation, and may be proved by testimony under such circumstances. All this does not prove either that miracles have been wrought, or a revelation given; but it opens the way for the reception of evidence in that direction.

II. *Internal Evidence.* A professed revelation, to be credible, must be reasonable. By this I do not mean, that it must be wholly comprehended by us. Nature is, in many respects, mysterious; and revelation, which deals with many higher subjects, and farther removed from the sphere of sense, might also be expected to contain mysteries. But it should not contain absurdities, nor what is of immoral tendency, or frivolous; and its essential principles must be level to the human understanding. It must be worthy of God, and of the design he had in making it. And of this, reason is to judge. Not perverted reason, any more than a vitiated taste, could decide upon the quality of

food. Revelation must commend itself to right reason, and an enlightened conscience. And corrupt as the world is, it is not destitute of such a standard. This test of internal evidence is of great consequence in detecting impostures; for, example, Mormonism. It is the office of reason, then, in this matter, to judge of the antecedent probability, the evidence of miracles, and the internal character of the revelation.

III. A Divine revelation will bear the test of *experiment*. Is a doctrine in physical science proposed? We test it by experiment. So it should be in morals and religion. A revelation from God will be confirmed by experience. If, then, there are those who have made trial of it, their personal experience will be a strong evidence. The tendency of a system, as shown from history, is an important proof, since it combines the experience of multitudes. Do you wish to determine whether the doctrine is true? Test it by your own experience. This was an argument of Christ with the Jews. "If ye will do his will, ye shall *know* of the doctrine." A revelation, when thus substantiated by Miracles, Reason, and Experience, may be expected to find confirmation from many collateral evidences; which, though not decisive of themselves, are weighty in connection with the other evidences. And when a Revelation is thus authenticated, we are bound to admit its authority unreservedly, as a direct exhibition of the will of God, and a part of his immutable law.

LECTURE VI.

AUTHENTICITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

The Bible no Common Book. Its Internal Character. The New Testament. Received by the whole Civilized World. Testimony of early Christian Writers—of Heathen Writers. Positive Institutions. Confirmations. Is it a Divine Revelation? Old Testament. Testimony and History of the Jews. Contemporaneous History. Internal Evidences. Ancient Versions, Translations, &c. Testimony of Christ and the Apostles. Objections mere Cavils.

Some writers take up the evidences relating to the character of the Scriptures under various heads, as authenticity, genuineness, credibility, authority. But as substantially the same considerations have to be adduced under each head, it is better to take the whole together. In considering this subject, therefore, I shall not only treat of the authorship of the sacred writings, and the time when they were composed, but of the general question: Are the Scriptures a Divine revelation?

The Bible can occupy the place of no common book. No middle ground can be taken respecting it. Its claims are such that it must either be received as the Word of God, or rejected as the basest forgery. It professes to give a history of mankind from their origin, to reveal the deepest mysteries, to unfold the highest principles of morality and religion, and to prescribe authoritative precepts for the conduct of human life. In their special province, the Scriptures are exclusive—they recognize no other writings as of equal authority, and condemn every doc-

trine which conflicts with their own. Unlike other professedly sacred books, the Scriptures claim the attention not of one nation or class only, but of all nations and all men. Its claims, then, must either be wholly acknowledged, or wholly rejected.

Again, if God has made a written revelation, it is contained in the Christian Scriptures. Should their claims be rejected, there is no other that would be received by any civilized, enlightened nation on the globe. No one would think for a moment of receiving the Hindoo Shasters, the writings of Confucius, the Koran of Mahomet, or the book of Mormon, as such revelation. The question is not between the Bible and some other system of religion, but between the Bible and no revealed religion. Strike out the Bible, and you leave a blank. Mankind are left to the light of nature alone. All the considerations in favor of a written revelation from God, then, are arguments for the Scriptures. We enter upon this investigation, therefore, with no antecedent probability against the Bible, but with a strong one in its favor.

It has been asserted, that we cannot examine this subject dispassionately, owing to the bias of education. This might be true, if the Scriptures were adapted exclusively to our peculiarities and interests. But such is not the fact. The question of receiving the Bible is no matter of state policy, nor does it appeal to any selfish interest. If it is right and best for America to adopt this religion, it is equally so for all other nations, and vice versa.

We begin with the New Testament. Suppose the collection of books composing this volume were now for the first time brought to light, say were found in some library of ancient books: how should we regard it? A cursory perusal would show it to be a remarkable production, and worthy of careful examination. From the language of its composition, being Hebraistic Greek, any one acquainted with Geography and History, would at once assign its origin among the Jews of Palestine, about eighteen centuries ago. The idiom and style would prove it to be the production of plain men in the common walks of

life. We should be introduced by it to one of the most remarkable personages of whom we ever read : with a character fully, vividly drawn, and consistent throughout. We should be presented from the lips of him and his associates with a system of morals, which in simplicity, directness, purity, and excellence, surpasses all others, even those of the most renowned sages and philosophers. We should also find in it a professed revelation from God respecting our spiritual condition and destiny ; describing our state of sin and wretchedness, and the way of deliverance from it ; treating lucidly of the character of God, our own immortality, and the way of salvation through Christ ; no part of which reason condemns ;—all this claiming Divine authority, implicit reception from all men, and asserting the establishment of its credibility through miracles. What must be our opinion of such a book ? Could it be fictitious ? Could this be true of a work comprising such varied and inimitable excellence, and claiming to be from God ? Reason would pronounce this impossible. The New Testament cannot be a forgery. It bears none of the characteristics of a forgery, and its contents utterly preclude the assumption.

Such is the internal character of the New Testament. It is such a book as the wants of mankind demand. Were, then, this volume now first discovered, as an anonymous production, we must pronounce it credible, so far as its internal character is concerned, and should expect to find external evidence to confirm it. It is important to consider well this subject of internal evidence. Every enlightened mind rejects the book of Mormon, the Koran, the sacred books of the heathen, and all mythology, on the ground of their internal character. No degree of external evidence would entitle them to our confidence. But with regard to the Christian Scriptures the very reverse is true. I would not assert that the internal evidence alone would be sufficient to authenticate them ; but it is such as to create a strong presumption in their favor.

But the New Testament has not appeared for the first time in

our age, it is not an anonymous production, it comes not to us destitute of authority. It is received as a Divine book by the whole enlightened world, and has been for many ages. These facts must be accounted for. If it were received by one nation only, it might be pronounced a matter of state policy with that nation. But here are many nations, having diverse, conflicting views, feelings, and interests; yet all receiving the Christian Scriptures as Divine. Had their reception by the whole civilized world been of recent date, there would be more room to doubt, either in regard to their authenticity, or the practical operation of their doctrines. But they have stood for many ages. They have been subjected to every test by friends and foes, the learned and the illiterate, of all parties and professions. Amid all the inventions and discoveries, all the progress in art, science, and literature, revolutions and changes; while states, empires, and systems have risen and fallen, the Scriptures have remained unaffected. How can these facts be accounted for, if the Scriptures are not authentic? Those who reject their claims are bound to account for this state of things—a task which infidels have never attempted. In ordinary cases general consent is deemed sufficient. The writings of Bacon, Augustine, Tacitus, Plato are universally ascribed to those authors respectively; and no one now thinks of questioning their genuineness. Where is the consistency of rejecting the Scriptures under circumstances equally decisive? They have been so long and so generally received by the civilized world, that their supporters are not obliged on any just principles to summon again the original witnesses in their favor. We are not now bound to prove them genuine, but skeptics are bound to prove that they are not. In this controversy they have the laboring oar.

Still we are willing to review the historical argument, for it is perfectly conclusive. On this subject,

I. We have a connected chain of Christian writers, extending from our own time to the days of the apostles. We begin with the contemporaries of the apostles. Of these we have six, por-

tions of whose writings are still extant. They are Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Papias.* They quote largely from the New Testament, narrate the principal events there recorded, and unqualifiedly attest their truth. Following these among numerous others, we have Justin Martyr, born about A. D., 89, Irenæus, who flourished soon after, then Clement of Alexandria, 16 years afterwards. Then followed Tertullian, and twenty-five years subsequently Origen, which brings us to the third century. From this period onward, the Christian Scriptures were as often quoted as they are by writers at the present day. The student may see how full, minute, and satisfactory the quotations from all the above writers are, by consulting Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, and the works of Lardner, Paley, and Horne. The writers above mentioned as attesting the Scriptures, lived in different countries remote from each other, were well informed, of unquestionable veracity, and had ample opportunity of knowing the truth of what they affirmed. Besides these references, Catalogues were made of the sacred writings, apologies in defence of them were presented to the rulers, and they were defended from the attacks of enemies. No book of similar antiquity has a tithe of the testimony in its favor that the New Testament has. On this ground alone, then, where is the consistency of acknowledging authentic the works of Herodotus, Xenophon, Cicero, and Livy, and rejecting those of Luke, John, Paul, and Peter?

II. But we rest not with this chain of Christian testimony, extending from the lifetime of Christ and the apostles to the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the civilized world, A. D. 325. We may refer to its enemies. Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny, celebrated heathen writers of the first century, expressly mention Christ, the principal incidents in his life, and the rise and diffusion of the Christian religion. Celsus, a heathen philosopher of the second century, wrote against Christianity, and in so doing refers to all the most important transactions

* The original of the "Apostolical Fathers" is still extant, and has been translated into English.

recorded in the New Testament; and asserts that he quoted these things from the Christian Scriptures. The same remarks will apply to Porphyry in the third century, and Julian in the fourth. All these writers admitted the genuineness of our sacred books, and the general truth of their contents, even of the miracles there recorded, which, however, they ascribed to magic. Had they been able to prove those books spurious, or their contents false, they would, of course, have done it. But if, with their ability, learning, and proximity to the events, they never called in question the genuineness or credibility of those works, how futile must be the efforts of modern skeptics in this direction.

III. Another evidence is furnished by the existence of positive institutions, viz.: Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the Christian Sabbath. These are standing memorials and evidences of the authenticity of the Scriptures of the New Testament. Their acknowledged prevalence and authority can not be accounted for, except as given in the sacred volume.

IV. Reference may also be made to the confirmation of their truth, furnished by contemporary history, geography, inscriptions, &c. Numerous incidental allusions have been so confirmed by these antiquities as to leave no reasonable doubt in the minds of the informed and candid respecting their truth. These confirmations are detailed at length by Hug, Horne, Paley, and others.

The question here arises, may it not be admitted that the Christian Scriptures were published at the time, and by the authors to whom they are ascribed, and the truth of their contents in general be allowed without crediting their authority as a Divine revelation? Plainly not, for the following considerations:

1. These writings claim to be of Divine authority, and bear no marks of a forgery.

2. We could not, on that hypothesis, account for the existence and prevalence of Christianity.

3. The accounts of miracles which they contain are well authenticated, not only by the testimony of early Christians, but

also of heathen opposers, as Celsus, Porphyry, &c. But we cannot admit the truth of the miracles without crediting the revelation as Divine.

4. Many of the prophecies they contain have received, and are receiving, an exact fulfilment.

5. Its contents. No wicked man could have forged such a production: no good man would have attempted it. It is, then, what it claims to be.

6. Its doctrines have been tested by the experience of thousands and millions. Their influence on the hearts and consciences, the lives and conduct of their votaries, their transforming, elevating tendency can have but one explanation. The Gospel is not a mere theory, or abstraction. Its practical tendency proves its Divine origin. In this regard it challenges all investigation, and proves itself as much above all systems of human device, as God is greater than man.

AUTHENTICITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. The books composing this volume are of high antiquity. They are extended, in the time of their publication, over one thousand years; ending four hundred years before Christ, and about the time of Herodotus, the father of Grecian history. Still they are amply attested. The following are some of the evidences of their authenticity:

I. They have been transmitted to us through the most scrupulous fidelity of the Jews, who have always maintained their authenticity and Divine authority. And this, notwithstanding these same Scriptures charge them with gross unbelief, ingratitude, and rebellion, and rejection from being God's peculiar people.

II. The whole Jewish polity was based on the events recorded in these Scriptures. Their civil and religious history, their rites, ceremonies, and institutions, are all interwoven with the Scriptures. A book, having such a connection with the very life of a nation, existing conspicuously for more than fifteen hundred years, could not be a forgery. As well might Blackstone's Commentaries, or the Constitution of the United States, be ac-

counted forgeries. With equal propriety might the existence of the Jews themselves be called in question.

III. Contemporaneous history confirms their authenticity. Manetho, Cheremon, Apollonius, Lysimachus, and other Egyptian historians mention Moses as the leader of the Jews, and the founder of their laws. Strabo, who flourished in the century before Christ, gives account of the law of Moses; and Justin, a Roman historian, devotes a chapter to the origin of the Jews. Both of these, so far as they go, are in corroboration of the Scriptures. Moses and the Jews are also mentioned more or less at length by Pliny, Tacitus, Juvenal, Longinus, Diodorus Siculus; and, indeed, as Justin Martyr observes, by most of the Greek historians, philosophers, and poets. Josephus gives a catalogue of the sacred books among the Jews, in which he enumerates the five books of Moses, thirteen of the Prophets, four of Hymns and Moral Precepts; and if, as critics maintain, Ruth is included in the book of Judges, and the Lamentations in Jeremiah, the number of books agrees with those of the Old Testament, as it is now received.

IV. We may cite the numerous ancient versions, translations, manuscripts, and catalogues of the Scriptures, extant in the principal languages of the civilized world. The Septuagint, a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek, made nearly three hundred years before the Christian era, is especially important, as it was in common use in the time of Christ and the apostles, and was generally quoted by them.

V. The prophecies contained in the Old Testament. Their fulfilment, even down to the present day, is a standing monument of their truth and Divine authority. We may also cite the miracles there recorded, the candor and faithfulness of its history and biography, and the striking confirmations incidentally furnished by history, geography, antiquities, monuments, inscriptions, scientific researches. Almost every new development in these brings additional evidence in its favor. Much has been done in this way during the last half century.

VI. The testimony of Christ and the apostles. They quote

from every part of the Old Testament, and refer to all the signal transactions there recorded. They give it their unequivocal sanction as the Word of God. To every believer in Christianity this must be decisive.

The objections to the authenticity of the Scriptures are mere cavils. No one has produced any evidence against their authenticity. All the labored efforts of infidels and skeptics have failed to excite just suspicion in reference to any portion of the Bible. Most of these objections do not relate to the proper evidences of their authenticity, but to the subject matter of their contents. Objections equally plausible might be made against any system of natural religion. They are in fact as unreasonable as they are irrelevant; and arise from the blindness and depravity of the heart. Those in every age, who have made the most thorough test of the validity of the sacred volume, are best satisfied that it is what it purports to be.

While, therefore, we do not deem it necessary to examine in detail the objections of infidels and skeptics, either ancient or modern; still we shall consider them—particularly those most specious—in connection with further investigations in regard to the sacred writings, in our next lectures, and especially in the one on the Difficulties of Scripture. See Lecture IX.

LECTURE VII.

MIRACLES OF SCRIPTURE.

Importance of the Subject. Miracles of Moses. Objections. Miracles of Christ. Spurious Miracles. Are Miracles ever Wrought for an Evil Purpose? Alleged Instances Examined. Miracles not now Wrought. Mormonism and Spiritualism.

In our previous investigations we have seen the necessity of Revelation, and that miracles are essential to authenticate it. We have taken a general view of the evidences for the genuineness and authority of the Scriptures, as such revelation. But Miracles and Prophecy are of such importance in establishing the credibility of the sacred writings, as to demand more specific attention. They are both denied by some who are professedly Christians. In this lecture your attention is invited to the miracles of Scripture.

The importance of this subject is seen from two considerations.

1. Miracles are the proper proof of a special Divine communication, and essential to establish its credibility.

2. The Scriptures contain numerous accounts of miracles. They form an important part of the sacred volume. We cannot reject these accounts without rejecting the Scriptures. In view of both these considerations, if miracles are not credible, the Bible is not to be received as a Divine revelation.

We cannot examine here all the accounts of miracles given in the Scriptures. We will consider those alleged to have been wrought by the founders of the two great dispensations, viz. : those wrought by Moses and Christ. If these are established, the question is settled.

I. Miracles of Moses.

Having proved the existence of God, it must be admitted that miracles are not impossible ; that from man's need of a revelation, they were to be expected ; and that no other book but the Bible has any claim to our regard as such revelation. That Moses wrought miracles, we adduce the following considerations.

1. We have the fact that Moses lived in that age, and professed to work miracles in confirmation of the Divine authority of his mission. This is attested by profane history.

2. The Scriptures assert that Moses wrought miracles. This none will deny. Hence, either the miracles were wrought, or the Scriptures are utterly unworthy of our confidence.

3. The miracles were such as could be fairly tested. Consider those wrought in Egypt. Moses' rod was changed to a serpent, and again to a rod ; all the running water in Egypt became blood ; the land was filled with frogs, with lice, with swarms of flies, and delivered therefrom at the word of Moses ; the cattle were destroyed ; the people were afflicted with boils ; the crops were cut off by hail, or devoured by locusts ; thick darkness prevailed for three days ; and finally all the first-born in Egypt were cut off in one night. These judgments came at the direction of Moses ; they affected the Egyptians only, while the Israelites remained unhurt ; several of them were mitigated or removed at the request of Moses, and they were all wrought in attestation of his claims as a Divine teacher.

Objectors adduce the pretended miracles of the Egyptian magicians. But these were evidently mere feats of jugglery. They extended to two or three only of the miracles which admitted of imitation ; and which they could easily counterfeit to the satisfaction of the selfish king. But the jugglers were soon

utterly confounded, and had to confess the finger of God in the miracles of Moses.

So in relation to the passage of the Red Sea. It cannot be resolved into a mere natural phenomenon. Those who would have us believe that the waters of a sea several miles in breadth could be heaped up by the wind, so as to afford a passage as on dry land to three millions of people, omit to mention that the waters were thus divided at the command of Moses, remained so until all the Israelites had passed, and then, at his word, instantly returned upon, and overwhelmed, their pursuers. This, too, was done in confirmation of his mission from God.

4. These miracles convinced those who witnessed them that Moses was Divinely commissioned. Every one acquainted with Jewish history, knows that the Israelites were not a credulous people. They required miracles at almost every step. They longed to return to Egypt, and were constrained to follow the direction of Moses, only by the most signal miracles. These miracles also convinced their oppressors, and made them release their grasp on them. When, afterwards, under the impulse of selfish infatuation, they attempted to bring the people back, one blow from the Almighty destroyed their entire host.

5. The account of these miracles was immediately published among those who witnessed them; and monuments were erected in their commemoration. The Passover and other ordinances and ceremonials of the Jews are perpetual memorials of their reality.

Now, what is there to oppose to this mass of evidence in favor of the miracles of Moses? Absolutely nothing. They were open to the world, and to them the eventful history of a conspicuous nation is to be ascribed. There is no evidence against them. If heathen historians and poets treated them contemptuously, this is no more than might be expected.

II. Miracles of Christ.

We will next consider the miracles of Christ. The Scriptures inform us that his birth was miraculous, that he healed the sick by a word, gave sight to the blind, raised the dead, cast out

demons, walked upon the water, stilled the tempest, and above all, raised himself from the dead. These accounts are either true or false. If true, then unquestionably miracles were wrought. If the accounts are false, the New Testament must be rejected as a gross imposition. There is no middle ground. We credit the miracles from the following considerations :

1. They were wrought to confirm the mission and authority of Christ and the apostles. A reason is thus assigned for them.

2. The authenticity of the accounts has been established in the clearest light, not only by the testimony of multitudes of Christians who witnessed them,* but also by the concession of their opponents. These miracles were such as could be fairly tested, as they were by the learned and the illiterate, rulers, and people, friends, enemies, and neutrals. None in that age doubted their reality. Some, it is true, ascribed them to magic, but all now admit that they cannot thus be accounted for. By every rule of evidence, therefore, they must be pronounced valid.

3. The revelation they attest is sustained by internal evidence. It is adapted to human wants. It is eminently a reasonable and practical system. It bears throughout the stamp of truth. Its doctrines have borne the test of experiment by millions in every condition of life. As a system of morals, it is vastly superior to any other.

4. Through the influence of these miracles, and by moral means alone, Christianity was established in the most enlightened nations, supplanted the popular religions that had stood for ages, obtained general prevalence, and continues to be the religion of the civilized world to this day.

Having established the validity of Scripture miracles, we will briefly examine some other alleged miracles. Passing over the fictions of Greek and Latin Mythology, which were always considered fabulous, and never credited as veritable history any more than Shakspeare's tragedies, or the Waverley novels ; also the responses of the heathen oracles, which are on a par with modern fortune telling ; we come to those of Pythagoras, Vespa-

* Some by more than *five thousand* people, as the feeding of the multitude.

sian, and Appollonius. As these obtained wide credence, they have often been cited by skeptics* as an offset to the miracles of Scripture. Here it should be observed that these skeptics do not quote the heathen miracles, because they believe in their reality, but to excite suspicion against the Christian miracles. But spurious miracles can no more invalidate real ones, than counterfeit money proves that there is no sound currency. There must be a sound currency, or there could be no counterfeit. So spurious miracles, obtaining extensive credence, remove the presumption against real ones, and constitute a strong circumstance in their favor.

The miracles ascribed to Pythagoras, Vespasian, and others, fail in all the essential points in which those of Scripture are authenticated. There was no antecedent probability in their favor; no good reason why they should be wrought; they went to confirm no great practical doctrine; they were not published until centuries after they were professedly wrought; of course could be subjected to no impartial scrutiny, and can be traced only to vague reports of uncertain origin. They encountered no particular opposition; but were published to gratify princes, and increase veneration for renowned heroes; when selfish interests would prompt to their reception, and they would gain a ready credence.

Similar remarks will apply to alleged Popish and Mahometan miracles.† No system of doctrine was based on them, or propagated through their instrumentality. Most of them could not be tested by the senses, and those that could might easily be falsified. They were open to no impartial inspection, and were first published to those only whose selfish interests would prompt to their reception.

Now to oppose such feats of jugglery to the miracles of Scripture, wrought to confirm a professed revelation from heaven of the highest character—wrought in open day, in the presence of multitudes of friends and enemies, subjected to the strictest tests,

* As Hume and Voltaire.

† For example, the pretended annual liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius.

and which secured for that revelation general prevalence throughout the civilized world, is the height of absurdity. It serves but to reveal the extremity to which unbelievers are driven to maintain a show of consistency.

There is another subject attended with more difficulty, viz. : apparent miracles of Scripture wrought for evil purposes. Of this description are the works of the Egyptian magicians in opposition to Moses, the raising of Samuel by the witch of Endor, those connected with Satan's temptation of Christ, and prophecies of those to be wrought by false Christs, false prophets, and the man of sin. Some hold that wicked men and evil spirits wrought real miracles, either by power from God, or through the aid of Satan. I do not deny that wicked men and devils are free agents, and that God often suffers them to accomplish their purposes ; nor do I deny that in some respects Satan has power above that of man, and exercises it. But a miracle, since it transcends the laws of nature, can be ascribed to no other than the author of nature. It must be wrought either by God himself, or through supernatural power conferred by him. Now, can it be supposed that an infinitely wise and holy God would work a miracle, either directly or indirectly, for an evil purpose ? If so, his kingdom is divided against itself, and the charge of the Pharisees, that Jesus cast out devils through Beelzebub, is not wholly without foundation.

It is not reasonable, therefore, to admit that miracles were ever wrought for an evil purpose. Nor do the Scriptures assert it. True, in the account of the feats of the magicians in Egypt, a superficial reading might give such impression ; but a more attentive study of the matter would correct it. The passage relates merely to the *appearance*, without design of asserting the fact. Besides, the magicians were so soon overcome and confounded, as to prove that they were jugglers, who, by taking advantage of the miracles wrought by Moses, were able, for a time, to impose upon the credulity of the selfish king and court. But there is no evidence that they wrought miracles. Egypt has ever been, even to this day, noted for jugglery. So Faust,

in his day, and Potter and others more recently, by the aid of ventriloquism and sleight of hand, have performed numerous feats which none of the witnesses could explain, though confessed by the performers to be wholly deceptive.

In the case of the witch of Endor, 1 Sam. xxviii., there is no good reason to believe that she raised Samuel. On the other hand, it is evident from her own amazement at his appearance, that God interposed in a signal manner to rebuke the presumption of the wicked king, and sent back the prophet to warn him of his approaching downfall. There is no sufficient ground for believing in the supernatural power of witches now, or at any former time. Satan himself has not miraculous power, and of course cannot confer it. God would not, on such creatures, and for such purposes as they pretend to employ it.

In the temptation of Christ, Matt. iv., there is no evidence that Satan wrought a miracle. *Stuart* and others suppose that those temptations were all made in the way of suggestion to the *mind* of Christ, while in the wilderness, without any bodily appearance or departure from the place. But admitting all the account will bear, it necessarily means no more than that Christ accompanied the tempter where an extensive survey of the surrounding country could be taken; and hence it involves no miracle. Such figures of speech are often used in the oriental languages.

The passages, Matt. xxiv. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 9, do not describe real miracles, as will appear from two remarks:

1. In the fulfilment of these prophecies, no miracles have been wrought, but the whole has been shown to be imposture.

2. The passages intimate their spuriousness. They are denominated "*lying wonders*," and the "*deceivableness of unrighteousness*." The marks by which true miracles are distinguished from all fictitious ones, are too plain to be mistaken. They can no more be confounded than Christ and Satan.

A single inquiry remains. How long did miracles continue? Doubtless through the apostolic age; possibly through one subsequent generation; although the evidence on this point is not decisive. As they were the special seal of the revelation made

in the Scriptures; they were continued long enough to confirm its authority. Longer than this they were not needed. Were they common in every age, they would cease to be miracles.

From Mark xvi. 17, 18; James v. 14, 15, some have argued that miracles are to be expected in all generations. This position is invalidated not only by the preceding considerations, but they prove too much for those who hold that theory. If these passages prove that miracles are wrought now, they prove that they are in the power of every believer; and not only so, but that in every case they constitute the proper evidence that one is a believer. But experience contradicts this conclusion. The best Christians and ministers, as Baxter, Watts, Whitefield, Payson, Page, Randall, never pretended to be able to work miracles. Were not they believers? Yet no such *signs* followed them. It is clear, therefore, that the above passages are not general in their application, but restricted to the age in which they were written, and to the authentication of Scripture.

We are, however, referred to the fact that some good men, as Wesley, have believed that miracles were wrought through their instrumentality. But good men are liable to mistake. What they accounted miraculous may not have been so. God may, and doubtless does, sometimes, in answer to prayer, bless means to the recovery of the sick, confer special favor on his people, and remarkable deliverance. But such things should not be accounted miraculous. We believe in a superintending Providence—that God upholds and governs all things, and is specially mindful of his saints; but all this neither implies a power on their part to work miracles, nor any *miraculous* interposition whatever.

Miracles are the appropriate seal of a special Divine revelation. To authenticate the Bible as that revelation, they were evidently wrought. There is no sufficient ground to believe that they were ever wrought for any other purpose.

We need not notice *Mormonism*, since it furnishes no grounds of antecedent probability in its favor; and its internal character, as abundantly shown, is such as to stamp the system with infamy.

Nor is there anything in modern *Spiritualism* to invalidate, or cast suspicion on, the miracles of Scripture. Its phenomena have never been shown to be supernatural. Much of deception and wickedness is mixed up with them, which may, at most, be safely classed with the miracles spoken of in Rev. xvi. 14. It is to be regretted that many well-meaning people have been led away by such delusions. There is no warrant for any substitutes for, or supplements to, the gospel. To the law and to the testimony : if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isa. viii. 20.

LECTURE VIII.

ON PROPHECY.

Prophecy Defined. Prophecies Relating to Christ. Those Relating to Nineveh —to Babylon—to the Jews. Christ's Prophecies. The Man of Sin. Objections. Double sense of Prophecy.

Prophecy has been defined: "A knowledge and manifestation of secret things, which a man knows not from his own sagacity, nor from the relation of others, but by an extraordinary revelation of God from heaven."* It is a species of miracle, and on some accounts it is more serviceable than other miracles. People living far from the time and place of the prediction, can witness its fulfilment, so that it becomes a standing and increasing miracle.

Prophecy cannot be pronounced impossible on *a priori* grounds. If God is omniscient, he can impart this gift, and with a sufficient motive, he would be expected to do so. A knowledge of the future is wisely withheld from the mass of men. The greatest natural sagacity and foresight are very circumscribed, and never infallible. Hence, if any man foretells events far remote, dependent on free agency, which could not have been foreseen by mere human power, and subsequent history attests the fulfilment of such prophecy; the finger of God must be acknowledged in the transaction. The avowed object of prophecy is to authenticate Scripture revelation.

* Witsius.

Do the Scriptures, then, contain prophecies? We cannot here notice them all, but will consider three classes:—I. Those relating to Christ. II. Those relating to certain ancient cities and nations. III. The prophecies of Christ and the apostles.

I. Prophecies relating to Christ.

1. Gen. iii. 15, "And I will put enmity between thee (the serpent) and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This passage and its connection cannot be accounted an allegory, since it has all the characteristics of a literal narrative. We might as well allegorize any other part of the Bible, as this. Nor does the passage denote a natural enmity between mankind and serpents. Such an interpretation in this connection is unworthy of serious refutation. Whatever was the *instrument* employed in the temptation of the progenitors of mankind, the grand agent was unquestionably Satan. So the Scriptures represent. In numerous passages he is styled the serpent, and the wicked are denominated his children or seed. And the seed of the woman as clearly denotes Christ. The passage relates, then, to the enmity existing between the devil and his servants, and Christ and his saints, so signally evinced from that day to the present. The prediction, "thou shalt bruise his heel," has been fulfilled in the sufferings of Christ and his followers under persecution. The other part, "it shall bruise thy head," was alluded to by Paul, Rom. xvi. 20, and its final consummation is pointed out in Rev. xx. 10.

2. Jacob's prophecy of Christ, Gen. xlix. 10. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Shiloh denotes the Messiah, as nearly all commentators, both Christian and Jewish, have maintained. The Jews, before the advent of Christ, uniformly gave it this interpretation. Now for the fulfilment. History records the existence of the tribe of Judah long after all the others had become extinct, so that it gave name to the whole nation, viz., Jews—the continuance of its own princes, lawgivers, and general polity, even during

the seventy years' captivity in Babylon and subsequent subjection to the Romans, up to the time of Christ;—and its utter overthrow and extinction within a century afterwards. That the gathering of the people has since been to the Shiloh's standard, needs here no proof.

3. Moses' prophecy of Christ, Deut. xviii. 15. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me." The Jews always understood this passage as denoting the Messiah; and so it is interpreted by Peter, Acts iii. 22, 23, and by Stephen, Acts vii. 37. Its fulfilment in the person of Jesus was decided. He, like Moses, was both a prophet and lawgiver; like him he was the founder of a Dispensation, and the resemblance between them may be shown in numerous striking particulars.*

4. David's prophecies of the Messiah. Several of the Psalms relate to Christ, as is proved not only by reference to the Jewish commentators, but also by the declaration of inspired writers in the New Testament. The Messianic Psalms are the ii., xvi., xlv., xcvi., and cii. See Heb. i., Acts ii. 31, &c.

5. Isaiah's prophecies. The most remarkable are Isa. ix. 6. "Unto us a child is born," &c., liii., lxi. 1, 2. The reference of these to Christ is proved, as the above, by the Jewish commentators, and the authority of the Saviour and his apostles. In reference to Isa. lxi. 1, 2, see Luke iv. 16—22. Of Isa. liii. see Acts viii. 30—35. And on the general subject, see Luke xxiv. 27, 44. No believer in the New Testament needs to be told that these prophecies were fulfilled.

The above cited prophecies, and others in the Old Testament, relating to Christ, taken together, furnish quite a full account of his lineage, birth, life, character, office, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, and the success of his doctrine. That these prophecies were written several hundred years before the Christian era, is proved by Jewish and other contemporary history. That they were fulfilled in Christ, every reader of the New Testament can see for himself; and they have been fulfilled in no

* Newton on the Prophecies, pp. 66—68.

other person. And they are such as *could* not have been fulfilled by the connivance of Christ and his friends. Two points are hereby established: the Messiahship of Jesus, and the Divine authority of the Old Testament Scriptures.

II. Prophecies relating to ancient cities and nations.

1. NINEVEH. This was the capital of the Assyrian empire, and one of the most renowned cities of antiquity. It contained about 600,000 inhabitants, or nearly as many as the city of New York at present. In the height of its prosperity, and in the strength of that mighty empire, the prophets foretold its utter destruction. Says Zephaniah, ii. 13—15: "He will stretch out his hand against the North, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds: for he shall uncover the cedar work. This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly; that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his head." The book of Nahum is occupied with a detail of her wickedness and her fate. Nothing, to human appearance, could have been more improbable than the fulfilment of the prophecy at that time; but it was verified in every particular. So complete has been the overthrow of that proud city, that its location cannot now be fully determined.

2. BABYLON. This city was larger and more renowned than Nineveh. It was fifteen miles square, had twenty-five brazen gates on each side, and a wall three hundred and fifty feet high, and eighty-seven feet thick, so that six chariots could go abreast on the top of it. In the midst of its splendor, Isaiah uttered the following prophecy, Isa. xiii. 19—22: "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to

generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there: But wild beasts of the desert shall be there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures: and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there." In other prophecies, this destruction is detailed with great minuteness. Cyrus first conquered this city, and threw down its wall. By successive devastations, it was laid waste, until every part of the prophecy has been literally fulfilled; the city has been swept as with the besom of destruction, and no monument of its ancient glory remains. Its very ruins have perished. The prophecies and their fulfilment, relating to Tyre, Egypt, &c., are equally decisive. These facts are established by the accounts given in Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, Xenophon, and the works of other historians and travellers.

3. THE JEWS. The xxviii. chap. of Deuteronomy is one of the most remarkable prophecies on record. It was written when the Jews were about entering the promised land, then rich and fertile, and themselves a great and powerful nation. In it, they are assured, that if they rebel against God, they shall incur his curse;—they shall be conquered and led captive, their land shall become desolate and barren, and they be dispersed throughout the earth; that they shall "become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations." All familiar with Jewish history, know that these prophecies have been literally fulfilled down to this day. And they are still more striking, when viewed in connection with the following:

III. The prophecies of Christ and the Apostles. As Jesus approached Jerusalem for the last time, and looked down upon its magnificence, he wept over and lamented its fate. See Matt. xxiv. 37—39. Luke xix. 41, 42. Of its temple he declared: "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Matt. xxiv. 2. Moses also foretold the circumstances of its dreadful siege, in the most vivid and striking manner;—the famine which would prevail to the degree that even the nearest relatives should contend with each other for food: and the tender and delicate woman would devour her own

children. Deut. xxviii. 52—57. The whole had an awful accomplishment. Titus, the Roman general, about A. D. 70, besieged, and utterly destroyed the city. The walls were demolished, the temple burned, the city laid waste, and *one million one hundred thousand* persons perished. The famine during the siege was shocking. Josephus relates that a woman, of noble birth, being driven to desperation by hunger and the outrage of the soldiers, who plundered her house, at last killed her own infant, cooked, and ate half of it, and presented the other half to the rapacious guards, when they came again and demanded food. Wars of the Jews, Book vi., chapter iii., sec. 4.

I will refer you in this place only to the predictions respecting the apostasy of the man of sin. Says Paul: "That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God;" 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, 7—10. See, also, 1 Tim. iv. 1—3. A bare rehearsal of these predictions is sufficient. That they relate to, and have an exact fulfilment in, the defection of the Romish church, and the assumptions of the Pope, and in no other way, can scarcely be doubted by any well informed and candid mind.

I have had to omit many striking prophecies, as those of Noah, Abraham, Daniel, and others. The prophecy of Daniel pointed out the first advent of Christ, and specified the year of its occurrence. Hence the general expectation of the Messiah, at the time Christ appeared.

It will be observed that the prophecies of Scripture are not a few isolated predictions; they form a complete chain from the Creation to the Christian Era. Their object, clearly, is to confirm the authority of Scripture revelation. Their centre and substance is Christ. To him, they, together with the types and ceremonials of the law in general, point. Reference is, indeed, made in them, to other nations besides the Jews, because of their intimate connection. But, as a whole, their purpose, evidently,

is to authenticate the Scriptures, and the scheme of Redemption therein revealed.

Objections to Prophecy.

1. "The future is wisely concealed from men." True, but to confirm a Revelation, God may disclose certain events beforehand. If miracles are credible, prophecy must be. Prophecy has the force of a standing miracle.

2. "It is so obscure as to subserve no practical end." Reply. Its fulfilment at least can be understood, and if this serves to confirm revelation, surely a practical purpose is subserved.

3. Some assert that prophecy would interfere with moral agency. Facts furnish the best answer to this objection. In all the prophecies and their exact fulfilment, there is no evidence of interference with moral agency. If God can foresee a free act, he can foretell it without destroying its character.

4. Others object that the Scripture prophecies were written *after* the event. This is disproved by contemporaneous Jewish and heathen history, which establishes the antiquity of the Scriptures, and fixes the date of the books long prior to the events predicted. Some of the prophecies, as those relating to the Jews, are receiving a fulfilment in our own day. Were they written after the event? The objection shows how accurately the prophecies have been fulfilled.

5. It is asserted that the passages were not designedly prophetic, but only happy conjecture, or poetic aspiration. But could these delineate the descent, birth, life, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, with the minuteness of history, hundreds and thousands of years before the events? The same question may be put with reference to the cities and nations of antiquity, especially the Jews. Conjecture and poetical aspiration deal in generalities; but Scripture prophecy has the minuteness of history. Again, those passages are professedly prophetic in the Old Testament, and they are claimed to be such in the New Testament: hence we cannot deny their prophetic character without rejecting the Bible as a forgery, and Christ and the apostles as impostors.

6. Another objection is, that Jesus and his disciples procured an apparent fulfilment of the prophecies relating to themselves. Then they were the basest impostors, a charge which few infidels even have the hardihood to make. But it was impossible. They could not have succeeded, had they tried. The prophecies related to events over which they had no control—events, too, of a miraculous character. Besides, who *procured* the fulfilment of the prophecies relating to Ishmael, Esau, Babylon, Nineveh, Tyre, Jerusalem, and the Jews; and who procures a fulfilment of those transpiring at this day?

7. Paine and others have made much of certain apparent discrepancies between prophecies and their fulfilment, as recorded in the Scriptures. Upon this objection I have three remarks to make.

1. There is no evidence, aside from the Bible, that a single prophecy in it has failed.

2. It is very improbable that the sacred writers would record a failure of their own prophecies. This is putting rather a low estimate on their common sense.

3. There is no real contradiction in the accounts. I cannot here go into detail on this subject, but refer you to the books where this objection is refuted.* The case of Zedekiah is the most frequently referred to. But, so far as the evidence goes, it shows a literal fulfilment of the prophecy; and that there is no real contradiction in the accounts. So of the prophecy respecting Egypt, interpreted in a general sense. These discrepancies, instead of weakening our confidence in Scriptural prophecy, greatly confirm it, as they show the artlessness and honesty of the sacred writers. They stated the simple truth without being careful to provide for difficulties. Impostors would have had no such discrepancies. The matter is so left that men will be satisfied, if they candidly examine it: but if any choose to cavil, and prefer darkness to light, they have their choice.

There has been much discussion respecting the *double sense* of prophecy. Some contend that many prophecies apply primarily

* See Newton on the Prophecies, and similar works.

and directly to one set of events, and secondarily to another. But I see no sufficient ground for such a principle of interpretation. Various applications and analogies may often be drawn from the same event. God frequently accomplishes a variety of ends by a single instrumentality. So it may be with prophecy. But this is different from assigning a double sense to any passage or word. If a prophecy directly relates to David, it does not to Christ; and vice versa; although it may be applied to the other by way of illustration. We may be in doubt as to which of two or more events a given prophecy relates; but we may be sure that it properly relates to but one, and should interpret it accordingly. Some, by assigning diverse senses to the same passage, and spiritualizing and mystifying Scripture, make the Bible a book of riddles, and do it great injustice. The Scriptures are to be interpreted according to the laws of human language, adapted to the understanding of plain men.

Prophecy demands the careful attention of the biblical student, and affords a very important and interesting field of research. It should not be studied to gratify a vain curiosity, or to apply for any fanciful purposes; for "no prophecy of the Scriptures is of any private interpretation;" but it should be studied for its bearing on the authority of Divine revelation. When thus studied with a candid, teachable spirit, it furnishes one of the most convincing proofs that the Bible is from God:—that his word will stand; and that one jot or tittle shall not pass from it, till all is fulfilled.

LECTURE IX.

DIFFICULTIES OF SCRIPTURE.

Nature of Objections. Alleged Discrepancies. Copiousness and Conciseness. Account said to be Unworthy of God. Scientific Difficulties. Portions charged as being Immoral. Difficulties Accounted for—their uses.

Various objections have been urged against the sacred volume. Before proceeding to examine these, I will make two remarks.

1. These objections are not made in a candid spirit. Most skeptics, in their assaults upon the Scriptures, have exhibited much prejudice and bitterness. This is especially true of such writers as Thomas Paine. Many of his objections could be easily refuted by almost any scholar in a Sabbath school. Yet they are proposed with such an air of confidence, and so chime in with what a wicked heart, restless of restraint, would be glad to believe, that they have had great influence over a multitude of inexperienced and superficial thinkers. But they are entitled to very little consideration. When a man puts forth a treatise on history, science, or politics, he is expected to do it with candor; and if this is obviously wanting, his work is regarded as an ebullition of personal spleen, undeserving the attention of dispassionate inquirers. Surely, in matters of religion, if anywhere, there is need of the strictest impartiality.

2. Scarcely any of the objections relate to the proper evidences of Christianity—they leave the proofs of the authenticity of the

Scriptures unaffected. Suppose, in a civil process, one of the parties, instead of impeaching the testimony of the witnesses, or rebutting the evidence with counter testimony, should resort to cavil, blackguardism, and magnifying trifling discrepancies, in order to divert attention from the real question at issue; what jury would give him a verdict on this ground? The effort would be regarded as sophistry, and the case would have to be decided by the evidence.

Now such is very much the position of Scripture opponents. Whether the Bible is assailed by the gross abuse of Paine and Voltaire, the subtilty of Hume, or the insidious thrusts of Gibbon, the general character of the assault is the same. It is not, then, that these objections are *worthy* of notice, that any attention is bestowed upon them at the present day. But however unfounded and irrelevant, they are grasped by many who either know not, or care not, to practice a just discrimination. They cannot, therefore, be wholly passed over in silence, lest some should deem them unanswerable. Again, there are real difficulties in Scripture—acknowledged and felt as such by candid and able critics.

Some have argued that a *revelation* should contain no mysteries or difficulties. To this it may be replied:

1. There are confessedly deep mysteries and difficulties in nature; and revelation coming from the God of nature, might also be expected to contain difficulties.

2. Revelation is not purposely obscure or difficult. The difficulty grows out of the subject-matter, and our feeble capacities. While in the condition of children, we can know but in part. Revelation is as plain as God could consistently make it. It renders the subjects of Natural Theology much clearer; and those peculiar to its own province, it unfolds sufficiently for all practical purposes. Its difficulties serve as a useful exercise to our energies and our faith.

There will not be time nor necessity for examining the difficulties of Scripture minutely. For this I refer you to commentaries. My remarks must be general.

I. Numerous discrepancies in names, dates, numbers, and places have been pointed out. Upon these it may be observed :

1. They affect no essential truth.

2. They show that there was no collusion between the sacred writers. Such discrepancies appear in all truthful plural testimony, and strengthen, rather than weaken, its force.

3. The style of the Scriptures generally is concise ; they were written in ages and countries remote from our own, and under the influence of usages with which we have but an imperfect acquaintance. Increasing light has removed many of these difficulties, and may yet remove them all.

4. Some of these discrepancies have doubtless arisen from the error of copyists. Mistakes in numbers, names, and dates are most liable to be made in this way.

5. Different writers, or the same writer at different times, may have viewed the same subject in diverse aspects. For example, in the case of the blind men restored to sight by Christ : Matt. xx. 29—34 ; Mark x. 46—52, one evangelist might mention both, and another, only the one who attracted most attention. Such diversity of statement increases the interest of the book, and the confidence of the candid in its veracity.*

II. Another difficulty relates to the copiousness of detail in some parts of the Bible, and the extreme conciseness of other parts. Now, as an objection this comes with an ill grace. Who knows best what should be copious and what concise in God's word ? Let the objector explain why so large a part of man's brief probation is occupied with unconscious infancy, the baubles of childhood, and the decrepitude of old age, or why so large a portion of the earth's surface is covered with barren deserts, sterile mountains, and eternal snow ? If he admits that nature, with all its difficulties, is from God, why may not revelation, with less difficulties, be also ?

With regard to the length of the details in the Pentateuch of rites and ceremonies, it is to be observed that these ceremonies constituted an essential part of a dispensation introductory to the

* See "Gausson on the Bible."

one under which we live, but widely different from it. The world was then in its infancy, a people were selected to be kept distinct from other nations for many ages, and to introduce the Messiah and the gospel. These rites and ceremonies subserved those purposes. If they were thus important, the record of them must be also. It serves to illustrate many passages in the gospel, which without it would be obscure. Besides, it exhibits the dealings of God for many ages, and under a great variety of circumstances, with the most remarkable nation that ever existed. These and similar considerations will easily reconcile any candid reader to the most tedious details of the sacred narrative.

The conciseness of other portions is as readily explained. Take, for instance, the accounts of the creation and fall of man, the future state, and the conditions of salvation. The Scriptures contain all that is essential on these topics; they wisely do not gratify, but repress, all vain curiosity on these momentous subjects; and unfold them in the most sublime, forcible, and practical manner. How in this respect are the Scriptures elevated above heathen Mythology, the Koran, and speculative philosophy.

III. Other accounts are said to be unworthy of God. One of these relates to the partaking of the forbidden fruit. Gen. iii. On this I observe, if God is the governor of the universe, he must require obedience of his subjects; and I see not why he might not ordain a simple test of that obedience, as well as one that should be more imposing. Simplicity is an element of true greatness. In partaking of the forbidden fruit, man rose in rebellion against his Maker, as much as though he had made direct war on him; hence the disastrous consequences which followed.

Again, it is said the various manifestations of God to men, his communications to them, and especially his incarnation, are unworthy of him. The objection is, that as he is the Lord of countless worlds, he would not take such notice of one in comparison of the whole so insignificant. This is overlooking the

fact that God is omniscient, omnipotent, infinite. If he notices the sparrow's fall, and numbers the hairs of our heads, which philosophy, as well as the Bible, concedes, will he not concern himself for the welfare of millions on millions of immortal beings, bearing his own moral image? Who can say also what influence the effects of sin here and the plan of redemption *may* not have exerted on other parts of the universe? * Were the dealings of God with men recorded in Scripture confined wholly to our species, they could not, on any just principles be pronounced unworthy of him. And when we consider the bearing which they *may* have on other worlds, all occasion of skepticism on this point disappears.

IV. Difficulties of a scientific nature. One of these is the mention of day and night before the creation of the sun. Gen. i. 3, 14—18. Much depends here on the interpretation of the passage. Again, little is known respecting the cause of light. If, as many critics believe, the account in Genesis does not relate to an absolute creation of the sun and stars at that time, but only to their then being brought to enlighten the earth, which was gradually prepared to receive their rays, every difficulty vanishes. At most, our ignorance should not be made the ground of charging absurdity upon the sacred writers. Again, it is said that the Scriptural representation conflicts with modern astronomy. It does so no more than popular language generally, even of philosophers. The Bible is written in popular style. The writers used the language which the people then used; any other mode of address would have been unintelligible. The popular style is still adapted to the visible appearance. The language of Scripture, rightly interpreted, does not conflict with the principles of astronomy; on the other hand, the Bible contains intimations of the great truths of that science.

Again, it is said that geology proves the world to have a much greater antiquity than the Bible assigns to it. To this it may be replied, that the science of geology is yet in its infancy, and

* Dick's "Philosophy of a Future State." His remarks on this topic, even if regarded as mere conjecture, are entitled to much weight.

geologists themselves are not agreed upon some of its fundamental principles. It would surely be great folly to distrust the Scriptures, because tyros in some science conjecture that they are opposed to their system. But allowing all that geologists claim for their science, there is not evidence sufficient to prove that the Bible contradicts its principles. Many of the ablest Biblical critics believe that the account of the creation in Gen. i. means no more than that God was the author of the material universe, and that at the time there specified in the six days, he *arranged* the world in its present form from preëxisting matter, and prepared it for the abode of its present orders of being.* Taking this view, there is no necessity of supposing that each day of creation was a thousand years, nor that petrifications and other mineral formations were created as they now appear. The Scriptural account is then consistent with scientific principles so far as developed. Once it was alleged that certain chronologies and mathematical calculations in the East disproved the Bible.† But further researches show that they tend to confirm it. So doubtless will it be with geology.

Some have objected to certain events as impossible; such as the sun standing still at the command of Joshua. Josh. x. 12, 13. To this it is sufficient to reply, that they are claimed to be miraculous. If miracles are admitted at all, these cannot be pronounced absurd. He who constituted the laws of nature, can suspend or change them. Besides, it is not necessary to suppose that the law of gravitation was suspended in the instance mentioned, or anything more than an *appearance* of the sun's standing still; since this might answer all the purposes of the miracle.

V. Portions of the Scriptures are charged with having an immoral tendency. This objection is made against but a small

* Hitchcock's Geology, pp. 350, 351. Some regard the six days of creation in the Mosaic account as not literal days of twenty-four hours, but periods of indefinite length. Dr. Knapp considers the Mosaic account as a kind of *pictorial description*. Theol. p. 178. With this agree substantially the views of Hugh Miller. It is enough to know that in several ways the representations of Scripture on this subject and the facts of science may be reconciled.

† As those of China, India, and Egypt. Knapp's Theol. p. 175. Later investigations have proved them wholly unfounded, and even "monstrous."

part of the sacred writings. The Bible, as a whole, has been pronounced an excellent book of morals by many who reject its claims as a Divine revelation. One portion is objected to as offensive to delicacy. On this point we should consider, that its language has the directness and simplicity characteristic of the ancient oriental idiom, and indeed, of the language of plain people generally. What are called the refinements of cultivated society, have induced much *false* delicacy, founded often on depravity. "To the pure all things are pure, but to the defiled is nothing pure." Those who are too delicate to have efforts made for the suppression of vice, will, of course, object to the plainness with which the Bible deals with human wickedness. The Scriptures give a faithful and impartial history of men, both of the righteous and the wicked; thus showing the native perverseness of the heart, and the necessity of a gracious provision. All this is obviously needed. No passage can be pointed out, whose *design* is bad, or whose tendency is really vicious. Men may abuse almost anything. The sins of good men are recorded, but not approbated.

Again, it is objected that God allowed practices in the Jews, now acknowledged wrong; for example, exterminating wars, retaliation, polygamy, and divorce. It is true that the Jewish dispensation differed widely from the gospel, as the state of mankind required. God deals with men according to their circumstances and condition. Persons in the different stages of life require varied treatment. So does the world, for it has had its infancy and growth. In the first periods of history, God directly administered the government. The government of the Jews was a theocracy. Now it is admitted that he authorized them to wage exterminating wars against their enemies, and to reduce them to servitude. But this was done to punish the wickedness of these nations, as is expressly declared. Deut. ix. 5. "Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land; but for the wickedness of those nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee." The abominable wickedness of the nations which the

Israelites dispossessed may be learned by reference to Leviticus xviii. and other passages. It was fit that such nations should be signally punished, and their fate made an example to the world. God can employ such agents in the accomplishment of his purposes as he sees proper. Sometimes he swallows up a city with all its inhabitants—men, women, and helpless infants, by an earthquake; sometimes he sweeps it with tempest, or sends the destroying pestilence. If he is not charged with injustice or cruelty in such instances, why should he be when producing like effects through human instrumentality? That course of procedure did not harden the Jews, it affords no just pretence for men unauthorized to take the sword of vengeance. It was a special case, in which God exercised a sovereign right.

The *imprecations* of holy men upon the wicked, Ps. xxxv. 6, Lam. iii. 64—66, were at most no more than prayers that, under aggravated circumstances, justice might be done, not to gratify private resentment, but for an entirely benevolent end. If it is right for the guilty to be punished, it cannot be wrong to pray for it. When God is said to harden men's hearts, Rom. ix. 18, no more is meant than to denote the *effect* which a perverse treatment of his gracious means has on them; so that what he designs for a savor of life unto life, becomes to them, through their wilful obstinacy, a savor of death unto death. In other instances, such as sending forth false prophets and lying spirits, no more is denoted than a permission or sufferance, without special interfering on his part.

In the preceding discussion, I have not attempted to notice all the difficulties, but only the leading ones. If these admit of a satisfactory explanation, the others will not be insisted on. The more this subject is investigated in a candid spirit, the more will the excellence of the sacred volume appear, and the more insignificant or ill founded the objections against it.

But, it may be asked, why are there any difficulties in the Scriptures? In reply, we ask, why are there difficulties in nature, why does sin exist, why do men imbibe unwarrantable prejudices, and turn blessings into curses?

In addition to all other considerations in regard to these difficulties, it may be observed that they promote research ; they afford an interesting and important field in which to task the mental energies. Nothing valuable is acquired without labor ; and generally the value of an acquisition is in proportion to the toil requisite for its attainment. We are to search the Scriptures as for hid treasures—we must strive, if we would enter in at the strait gate.

The difficulties of Scripture furnish also a moral test. The revelation of God does not come in such a way as to force our reception. If studied with a candid, teachable spirit, it will be a lamp to our feet, and a guide to our paths ; but if treated with captiousness, it is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. It is such that persons of the humblest capacities can comprehend all its essential truths. At the same time its resources are sufficient to task the loftiest intellect. It is eminently suited to the wants of man, and able to satisfy the demands of all honest inquirers. But if any are too wise to need its teachings, or too stupid to explore its treasures, or too vicious to practice its requirements, they can frame excuses enough for neglecting it. Thus men are left to their own choice, to make it to themselves a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. Such a revelation only, could God be expected to give to his moral and accountable creatures. If, upon a fair investigation of its claims, we are rationally convinced that the Bible is the word of God, we are bound to make it the standard in matters of religion. If it will not abide the test of sound reason, it is of course a nullity. It has been subjected to every conceivable test for hundreds and thousands of years ; and the suffrage of the wise and good in every age attests that it bears throughout the impress of Divinity.

LECTURE X.

INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Definition. Three Views. Inspiration of the Old Testament—of the New Testament. Objections Considered. Preservation of Scriptures. Agreement of Versions and Manuscripts. Labors of Critics.

The authenticity of the Scriptures has been already proved. We have seen that the books of the Old and New Testament are what they profess to be, viz.: the Word of God—a Divine revelation. The truth of their contents being thus established, it would seem at first view, that further inquiries respecting their claims are unnecessary; and that we might proceed at once to an examination of their doctrines. But another point requires our attention previously, viz.: the inspiration of the sacred volume. We might admit that the Bible is a genuine and authentic production, as we allow in regard to Goldsmith's histories, or Kent's Commentaries; we might also acknowledge its credibility and authority as a Divine revelation; without holding the truth respecting its inspiration. But in this case the Bible would be far from occupying its proper place in our esteem.

On this subject three general views have been held by those who admit the credibility of the Scriptures.

1. Some have placed them on a level with other authentic books, and rejected the claim to their inspiration altogether.

We may mention as examples, Priestly, the Rationalists of Germany, and many Unitarians.

2. Others hold that portions of the Scriptures, as the prophecies and special revelations in doctrine, were inspired, but that the historical portions, and all which they suppose might have been written without special Divine aid, are uninspired.

3. The remaining view, which has been generally adopted by the church, is that the whole of the Bible is inspired—that God so superintended its original publication, both in the *matter* and *manner*, as to secure it from error, as much as though every word of it had been written by his own finger.

By the inspiration of the Scriptures is not meant, that the Divine agency in their production was exclusive of human agency, nor that the writers while under the influence of the inspiration with which they wrote, were not moral agents. The writers to whom these books are ascribed were their real authors, wrote in their own style, and consequently with the variety which characterizes other writers. A revelation of God to man must, of course, be in human language; variety in its idiom and style would be suitable to its varied subject matter, to the wants of various classes of readers, and interesting to all. An inspired man would, of course, write in his own language: if an Englishman, he would write English; if a Moses, Isaiah, John, or Paul, he would write in his own style. Yet God could so superintend their work, as to secure it from error. The *mode* of this superintendence, we are not obliged to explain. It is sufficient that we have evidence of the *fact*.

Nor do we mean that all the matter of the Scriptures is of equal importance, or even true. Some of it is the language of wicked men and devils. There were reasons for recording their words and conduct on various occasions; and the record must be accurate. Neither is it claimed that the sacred writers were at all times infallible. The prophets and apostles were sometimes charged with sin; but when commissioned of God to compose the Scriptures, and while thus employed, they were infalli-

bly directed in their labor, so that this work of the Lord is perfect.

The *proof* of inspiration is derived from the sacred writers themselves. There are collateral evidences of great weight; still we rely chiefly on the statements made by these writers.

FIRST, IN RESPECT TO THE INSPIRATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Says the apostle Peter, 2 Peter ii. 21: "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Says the apostle Paul, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." These passages embrace the whole subject. By the former we have inspiration defined—that "holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." This relates as well to their writings as to their oral communications, as appears from the context. In the latter passage inspiration is predicated of "all Scripture." Some have attempted to explain away the force of the latter passage, but without avail. In whatever way it is construed on critical principles, the sentiment is the same, either directly or by implication, that the Scriptures as a whole are inspired. No inference can be justly derived from the passage, that part of the Scriptures is uninspired, but the contrary.

We may also notice the manner in which Christ and the apostles uniformly refer to the Scriptures of the Old Testament. They designate them "the Word of God," and always cite them as of unquestionable authority. They never raise a doubt respecting any sentiment they authorize, but always treat them as containing throughout the teaching of the Holy Ghost. To those who regard the authority of Christ and the apostles as decisive, the question respecting the inspiration of the Old Testament, then, is settled.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT is no less clearly established. This would be expected, from its relation to a more

complete and final dispensation. The gift of plenary inspiration Christ promised to his disciples, Mark xiii. 11. "But when they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." Now it cannot be supposed that they would be infallibly directed in their communications before the magistrates, and left to themselves in writing the Scriptures. Still they acted as moral agents in the free use of their own faculties in both instances.

Said Christ to his disciples, when about taking leave of them, John xiv. 26, xvi. 13: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." No one will question but these promises were fulfilled.

The apostles expressly claimed to be inspired. Says Paul, Gal. i. 11, 12: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me, is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by revelation of Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. ii. 10, 12, 13. "God hath revealed them (spiritual things) unto us by his Spirit. . . . Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, *not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*" Peter classes the writings of Paul with the other Scriptures. 2 Pet. iii. 16. A similar classification is frequently made. Eph. ii. 20: "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets." 2 Pet. iii. 2: "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." Such quotations might be multiplied indefinitely. If any credit is to be given to the veracity of the sacred writers, the question is settled.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE.

1. Plenary inspiration has been pronounced *unnecessary*. Much of the Old Testament is doubtless a compilation. The Chronicles are supposed to be taken mainly from the national records; part of the Proverbs from maxims previously in use; and other portions of a narrative character, it is said, might have been written by almost any one. On this principle we should need a new revelation to inform us what part of Scripture is inspired, and what uninspired. The historical portions of the Old Testament are of great importance, not only in themselves, but from their connection with the gospel. Now, whether compiled or not, to possess authority as a part of the Scriptures, designed for the use of mankind, they must have been brought to their present form and place under the special direction of the Holy Spirit. The whole work would be marred, if it did not bear throughout the impress of Jehovah.

Again, it is said that the Spirit's agency extended no farther than to the suggestion of the *thoughts*, and that the writers were left to themselves in expressing them. This cannot be admitted. The sacred writers were not infallible. Now if the thoughts only were suggested, and they were left to their own unaided powers in clothing them with language, they would be liable to make many mistakes. We should then be at liberty to criticise their work—point out an ill chosen epithet here, a faulty sentence there; and make alterations at pleasure. Controversy would arise, and confidence in the books themselves would soon be lost. While we admit that the sacred writers, in the free use of their faculties, wrote each in his characteristic style; we must still maintain that they were preserved from all error, of language even, so that their productions in the inspired volume are to be regarded, as they claim to be, THE WORD OF GOD.

2. Another objection relates to the difficulties of Scripture. There are passages which the wisest men do not profess fully to comprehend. But these difficulties arise more from the nature of the subject, and the feebleness of the human faculties, than from the manner of the communication. This is as plain as it

could wisely be made. Who would regard it as an improvement, if every subject in revelation were level to the capacity of a child? There are mysteries innumerable in nature. No marvel, then, that there are things in the dispensation of grace which angels desire to look into; which the prophets sought earnestly and in vain to explore, even in their own communications.

3. The imperfections and sins of some of the sacred writers have been alleged against a plenary inspiration.

REPLY. It is not claimed that these writers were infallible; but that when employed of God to communicate his Word, they would be preserved from error. The fact in regard to the matter revealed, without reference to the medium of communication, is, that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. The fact that a man was inspired at one time is not inconsistent with the fact of his being in error at another time.

4. We are told that the sacred writers sometimes expressly disclaimed inspiration in regard to a given point. Were this conceded, it would prove no more than special exceptions to a general rule. But there is not sufficient ground for making such exception. The chief passages of this kind are in the writings of Paul, as 1 Cor. vii. 6, 12, in respect to marriage. "I speak this by permission, and not of commandment. . . . To the rest speak I, not the Lord." Also verses 25, 40, "Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord, yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. But she is happier if she so abide after my judgment; and I think also that I have the Spirit of God." Here the apostle might be inspired to give *his advice*, rather than a positive command of God. He needed Divine direction in giving advice, as well as commands. 2 Cor. xi. 17: "That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly in this confidence of boasting." This denotes no more than that the apostle was under the necessity, in his circumstances, of pursuing a course in some respects different from what Christ pursued; and which, in certain aspects, might be regarded as foolish.

5. It is alleged that the New Testament writers misapplied passages quoted from the Old Testament. For example, Hos. xi. 1,* quoted Matt. ii. 15, Jer. xxxi. 15,† quoted Matt. ii. 17, 18. This charge, if valid, would not merely prove the writers in question uninspired, but impeach their integrity. But the difficulty is solved by understanding that the phrase *ἵνα πληρωθῆ* does not denote the accomplishment of a prediction, but a comparison of similar events. It was simply an *illustration*. This will apply to one class of passages.

The objection, as it lies against another class, such as prophecies relating to Christ in the Old Testament, must be met in another way. Here is a question of fact. Some assert that there are no prophecies relating to Christ in the Old Testament. The apostles and Christ himself assert that there are, and quote them. Which are we to credit, the authors of the New Testament, or these objectors? Admitting that some of these passages, in their connection, appear to have a different reference; is this sufficient to set aside the interpretation of them given by Christ and the apostles? We must, of course, either receive their explanation, or reject them from our confidence as expounders of the truth, and as spiritual guides.

The New Testament writers did not always make their quotations verbatim. They sometimes followed the Hebrew, sometimes the Septuagint, at other times gave the sentiment nearly in their own language, and at others still, made only an allusion to the passage. But this is not an objection of any force against their inspiration, since it is conformable to the usage of all writers; and no reason can be assigned, why they should not follow it. It greatly enhances the value of their productions.

6. Another objection is, that some things they wrote are of little consequence, and should not therefore be ascribed to inspiration. This objection suggests a very unsafe rule of procedure. All the parts of any system, natural or revealed, cannot possess intrinsically equal importance; yet all the parts may be essen-

* "And called my son out of Egypt." † "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children," &c.

tial. We do not disregard the common incidents of life, because, in themselves, they may be esteemed trivial. On the contrary they often have most important bearings. Who, then, is prepared to draw the line, and mark off those passages in the Bible which are of too little consequence to have needed the supervision of Jehovah? On this subject Wilson, in his evidences of Christianity,* has the following remarks: "The slightest details, and the most trifling directions, have practical uses connected with them. Some division of the church, in some age, has derived benefit from them. The genealogies are clearly of this sort. The salutations also. Even the counsel given to Timothy, to drink no longer water, but to use a little wine for his stomach's sake and often infirmities, has some relation to the friendship of the Apostle for Timothy, to the sympathy of Christians, and the duty of preserving the health of young and laborious ministers. In like manner, the direction to bring the cloak left at Troas, &c., has a connection with that prudence in managing our affairs, and that mutual serviceableness, which are no inconsiderable branches of Christian charity: while they both show that the apostles wrought no miracles for their personal ease or convenience."

7. Discrepancies. None of these have been shown to be real contradictions. In plural testimony, variations in unessential particulars rather strengthen than weaken the evidence. It shows there has not been collusion. The sacred writers exhibit throughout a disposition to state the simple truth, and there is a substantial agreement, wherever they relate the same events. Varieties in detail add interest to the accounts; and the candor with which facts, unfavorable as well as favorable to themselves, are given, is a high commendation of their work. If these variations are not inconsistent with the credibility of the Scriptures, they are not with their inspiration.

There is another point, not strictly pertaining to this subject, which may yet be noticed here. I refer to the *preservation* of the Scriptures, and the agreement in the numerous translations

* Lecture xiii. See also Gausсен.

and versions extant. The care of the Jews over the Old Testament Scriptures has already been mentioned. The Maronites were employed in copying the Scriptures, and their care and reverence for them are very striking. They counted each book, chapter, verse, word, and letter even. They could tell how many times each letter occurs; as that א, *aleph*, is found in the Bible 42,377 times, ב, *beth*, 38,218 times, &c. They could tell the middle letter of the Pentateuch, and of each book comprising it. They would admit of no erasure in their manuscripts, they would suffer no letter to be misplaced, and if the slightest mistake was made in copying, they would reject the skin or papyrus on which the mistake was made.

Says Dr. Gaussen: "Do we ask for a standard for the Old Testament? The famous Indian manuscript, recently deposited in the library of Cambridge, [Eng.] may furnish an example. It is now about thirty-three years since the pious and learned Claudius Buchanan, in visiting the western peninsula of India, saw in the hands of the black Jews of Malabar (believed to be the remnants of the tribes scattered at Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion), an immense scroll, composed of thirty-seven skins dyed red; forty-eight feet long, twenty-two inches wide, and which, in its perfect condition, must have been ninety English feet long. The Holy Scriptures had been copied on it by different hands. There were left a hundred and seventeen columns of beautiful writing; and nothing was wanting but Leviticus and a part of Deuteronomy. Buchanan procured this ancient and precious monument, which had been used in the worship of the synagogue, and he has recently deposited it in the Cambridge library. There are features which give satisfactory evidence that it was not a copy of a copy brought there by European Jews. Now Mr. Yeates has recently examined it with great attention, and has taken the pains to compare it, word for word, letter for letter, with our Hebrew edition of Van der Hooght. He has published the result of these researches. And what has he found? Even this: that there do not exist between the text of India and that of the West, more than forty petty differences,

of which not one is sufficiently serious to make the slightest change in the meaning and in the interpretation of our ancient text. Theopneusty, pp. 91, 92.

Almost incredible labor has been bestowed in comparing the ancient versions, translations, commentaries, and manuscripts, to ascertain the variations, and the true text. Houbigant's investigations on this subject occupy four folios; Michaelis spent thirty years upon the same work. Kennicott's great critical Bible was composed from the collection of 581 Hebrew manuscripts. Rossi's collation comprises 680 manuscripts.

The labor expended on the New Testament has been scarcely less in magnitude. The investigations of Mill, Bengel, Wetstein, and Griesbach extended to 335 manuscripts of the gospels alone. The work of Sholz comprises 674 manuscripts of the gospels, 200 of the Acts, 256 of Paul's epistles, and 93 of the Apocalypse. The same result has attended all these researches. It is true that the variations are numerous, but they are unessential. In reference to the labors of the individuals above named, a distinguished writer* observes: "They have discovered nothing, not even a solitary reading, which could cast doubt upon any passage before considered certain. All the variations, almost without exception, leave untouched the essential thoughts of each phrase, and affect only thoughts of secondary importance, such as the insertion or omission of an article or conjunction, the position of an adjective before or after a substantive, the greater or less exactness of a grammatical construction."

Such are some of the facts in the history of the Bible. It is impossible to tell how many thousand times the Old Testament has been copied within thirty-three hundred years, or the New Testament within eighteen hundred. The Bible has passed through the Greek, Latin, Salidic, Ethiopic, Arabic, Slavonic, Persian, Coptic, Syriac, Gothic, and Indian languages; as well as almost every modern language on the globe. It has come down to us through all the catastrophies of the Jews; the persecutions of Christianity by the heathen; the ignorance and

* Gaussen.

corruption of the nominal church ; the animosities of sects ; the convulsions of states and empires. It survives them all unscathed, unadulterated. Not that we claim for any of the translations the inspiration that pertains to the original ; but its preservation and transmission, not only in the original, but also in so many translations and versions, agreeing in every important particular, evince the care of our heavenly Father for his own word.

PART III.

THE DOCTRINES OF REVELATION.

We treat under this head those most direct and fundamental. The Church and its Ordinances are founded on the revelations of Scripture, though not so much on pure revelation. History and experience, as collateral evidences, are also admissible. We prefer to class under this part what we regard as matters of pure revelation.

LECTURE XI.

ON CHRIST.

Preliminary Remarks. Humanity of Christ. His Divinity—Titles—Attributes—Works—Worship. His Messiahship. Union of two Natures in Christ.

The present subject is one of *pure* revelation. Human reason alone can decide nothing respecting it. Antecedently to revelation, it could not assure us that there would be a Saviour, and, of course, could not pronounce upon his character. The subject is also beset with great difficulties. Although its essential features are obvious to all candid inquirers, there are in it depths which have never been fathomed, and mysteries which will, perhaps, never be unfolded to created intelligences. Those, therefore, who demand that every part of this doctrine shall be made level to their comprehension, will be pretty sure either to get humbled or offended. Several causes may be assigned for the diversity of sentiment, controversy, and errors respecting it.

1. There are great *difficulties* attending its investigation. The Scriptures term it a great mystery.

2. Many confound the *fact* with the *mode*. They are not satisfied with the truth revealed in the inspired writings, but must know the *quò modo*, the *manner* of it. But a similar procedure would involve the most common subject in insuperable difficulties.

3. False interpretation. Writers have taken liberties with the proof texts relating to this doctrine, which they do not take with

any other portion of the Scriptures, or with any other book. Yet none demands a more faithful interpretation.

4. Erroneous views of the province of human reason. Many have put their reason above the Bible, formed their theory first, and then adapted the Bible to it. They have resolved, in the face of the Scripture declarations, that it shall be no mystery, but only such as they can fully understand and explain.

5. Attempts to illustrate the doctrine by *analogies*; though it is evident that there are none which will adequately explain it.

6. Undue fondness for speculation to the neglect of essential truth.

7. Citation of irrelevant proof texts. It is not until these obstacles are removed, and the inquirer comes with a teachable spirit, and receives implicitly the declarations of the inspired word, that a right conclusion can be expected.

There are, as I conceive, three great truths in relation to Christ standing out clearly on the pages of Holy Writ: these it will be our first business to consider.

I. HE WAS A MAN.

1. Prophecy declared that he should be "a man of sorrows." Isa. liii. 3.

2. He styled himself a man. John ix. 40. "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth." His most common designation of himself was "Son of Man."

3. Numerous passages either assert or imply this truth. Paul speaks of "the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. ii. 5. He was the "offspring of David." Rev. xxii. 16. The man Jesus was made a little lower than the angels. Compare Ps. viii. 4, 5, with Heb. ii. 9. Men are his brethren, he and they are all of one, and he is made like them in all things. Heb. ii. 11, 17.

4. He had all the characteristics of a man. He was born of a woman, grew up like other children, "*increasing* in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Luke ii. 52. He ate, drank, slept, formed attachments, was tempted in all

points as we are, suffered, and died. All this proves that he was really a man, having a natural body and a rational soul.

The *Docetae* and other *Gnostics* denied that Christ had a real body, but asserted that he lived and suffered as a man only in *appearance*. They held that matter is necessarily evil, and as Christ was without sin, they supposed he could have no material body. But their premises were false, and the conclusion that rests on them falls. There is the same evidence that Christ had a human body, as that John or Paul had.

The *Arians* deny that Christ had a human soul. They maintain that he had a Divine soul united to a human body. To sustain their position they rely on the passages which represent him as "coming in the flesh," "taking flesh." But the term "flesh" in the Scriptures is often put for entire humanity. See Gen. vi. 13. Isa. xl. 5, 6. 1 Pet. i. 24. "All flesh had corrupted," &c. "All flesh shall see it." "All flesh is as grass." In Gethsemane, Jesus exclaimed, Matthew xxvi. 38: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." As this could not be said of his Divine nature, he must have had a human soul. Luke ii. 52: "Jesus increased in wisdom." This must refer to his human nature, as the wisdom of divinity cannot increase.

Finally, if he had not a human soul, he was not a man. All the evidences, therefore, showing that he was a man, prove that he had both a human body and a human soul.

II. HE WAS GOD.

This the *Socinians* deny, and assert that he was a mere man. They quote the passages which speak of him as man, and neglect or misconstrue those which relate to his Divine nature. But their theory is untenable. To show this we may refer to the passages which prove the preëxistence of Christ. He came down from heaven. John iii. 13. vi. 51, 62. He was before John the Baptist. John i. 30. He was before Abraham. John viii. 58. He existed before the flood. 1 Pet. iii. 18—20. He existed before the foundation of the world. John xvii. 5. He

claimed to be more than man. If this claim is ill-founded, he was an imposter.

The Arians also deny that he was God; although they admit that he was Divine. They reject the doctrine that he is God on account of its mystery and alleged absurdity. But what shall we say of their doctrine of an inferior God? Can any doctrine be more gross? Either Christ was created, or he was not. If created, he could not be Divine, unless we admit the pagan dogma of Divine propagation. If he was uncreated, we must either admit that he was the true God, or hold to a plurality of self-existent, eternal gods. The Arian hypothesis is opposed to both branches of the scriptural representation of Christ; for it denies that he was either true God, or true man.

We come now to the direct scriptural proof of the Divinity of Christ.

1. His titles. These are the highest and most specific to denote the true God. He is called JEHOVAH. The Jews termed this "*the incommunicable name,*" and never pronounced it, from their veneration for the Supreme Being. It is translated in the Septuagint by *Κύριος*, and in our version LORD, and is distinctly applied to Christ. See Jer. xxiii. 6.* Zech. xiv. 9. Heb. i. 8—10. "And thou, Lord, in the beginning," &c. Ps. cii. 25. Compare Isa. xl. 3, with Matt. iii. 3. Joel. ii. 32, with Rom. x. 13. Many distinguished theologians believe that the Divine being, so often manifested under the former dispensation, represented by the SHECHINAH, called the *Angel of Jehovah*, or more properly the *Angel-Jehovah*, *Messenger of the Covenant*, was Christ—the true God, but not the Father. See Watson's Institutes, Part II., Chap. XI. They confirm their position by reference to numerous passages in the Old Testament, and their application in the New Testament. This view was held by the earliest Christian writers, as Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and Tertullian. He is also called "the Mighty God," Isa. ix. 6. "Great God," Tit. ii. 13. 2 Pet. i. 1. "The true God," 1 John v. 20. "Over

* "This is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

all God blessed forever." Rom. ix. 5. "The Almighty." Rev. i. 18. Attempts have been made to set aside some of these passages on critical grounds, but without avail: the common rendering has been amply sustained.

I do not insist on the simple application of one or all these terms to Christ, but also on the *manner* of their application. Similar titles have sometimes been applied to inferior beings, but always in such a connection as to mark their import. Thus in Ps. lxxxii. 6, 7: "I have said ye are gods. . . . But ye shall die like men." But when titles of Divinity are given to Christ, they are applied in an unqualified manner, or with corroborations of their highest import. See Heb. i., and the passages in the Old Testament there quoted. When he is called God in John i. 1, it is immediately added, "All things were made by him." In Heb. i., in connection with his title, he is described as "upholding all things by the word of his power."

2. Divine attributes are ascribed to him.

Eternity. Col. i. 17, "He is before all things." Also Micah v. 2. Rev. xxii. 13.

Immutability. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." Heb. xiii. 8: i. 8—12.

Omnipotence. "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth." Col. i. 16, 17. Rev. i. 8. Heb. i. 3. Phil. iii. 21. 2 Pet. i. 3. Isa. ix. 6.

Omnipresence. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." John iii. 13. Matt. xviii. 20. xxviii. 20.

Omniscience. "Thou knowest all things." John xxi. 17. Matt. ix. 4. John ii. 24, 25. Matt. xi. 27, compare with 2 Chron. vi. 30. 1 Kings viii. 39. Ps. vii. 9. These passages prove just as conclusively that Christ is God, as the Scriptures prove that there is a God.

3. Christ is asserted to be *equal* with God. "Being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Phil. ii. 6, 10. Compare Isa. vi. 5, 9, 10, with John xii. 37—41. Isa. viii. 13, 14, with Acts iv. 10, 11. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.

Rev. xxii. 6. with Rev. xxii. 16. 2 Tim. iii. 16, with 1 Pet. i. 11. Here passages in one place relating to God, in others relate to Christ. So of the attributes.

4. The Divinity of Christ is argued from his works. He created and upholds the universe. John i. 3. "All things were made by him." Col. i. 16, 17. Heb. i. 10, 12. It is objected that Christ was but the *instrumental* cause of creation, and Heb. i. 2, is cited. "By (*διὰ*) whom also he made the worlds." But *διὰ* often denotes the efficient cause. See its use in Matt. xviii. 7. xxvi. 24. Acts xii. 9. Rom. iii. 27, &c. True, the phraseology in Heb. i. 2, is peculiar, and may be compared with Hosea i. 7, Gen. xix. 24. It is such language as might be fitly employed if Christ and the Father are one God. To suppose Divine attributes delegated to a finite being, is absurd. God created the universe. Gen. i. 1. Christ created the universe. John i. 3. Col. i. 16. Hence Christ is God.

5. Divine worship was claimed for, and rendered to, him. Christ demanded the same honor from all men, as they gave the Father. John v. 23. Angels and all other created beings were required to worship him. Heb. i. 6. Phil. ii. 10. Rev. v. 11—13. His disciples worshipped him. Luke xxiv. 52. 1 Cor. i. 2. The primitive Christians worshipped him as God. So Pliny declares in his letter to the emperor Trajan.

Two principal objections are made to the Divinity of Christ.

1. The Unity of God.

But we hold the unity of God as firmly as do objectors. We believe that the Father is God, that Christ is God, and yet that there is but one God. So the Scriptures teach. Whether we can comprehend the *mode* of their union in one God, or not, is not material. We believe many truths, the mode of which we do not comprehend.

2. Certain passages, it is said, imply that Christ is distinct from the Father and inferior to him. "My Father is greater than I." John xiv. 28. Rom. xvi. 27. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Mark xiii. 32. The objection is met by the consideration, that Christ was a real man, as well as true God. The texts referred to

relate either to his inferior nature, or to his character as Messiah, chiefly the latter.

III. HE WAS THE MESSIAH.

This truth no believer in the New Testament will dispute. The only question on this point relates to his character as the Messiah. With his *work* we have not now to do. We have proved from Scripture that Christ was a real man, and also the true God. But he was not two beings. He was one being. Divinity and humanity were then united in the person of Christ. The proof we will here briefly recapitulate.

1. Prophecy pointed out Christ as being both human and Divine. Isa. ix. 6. liii. 3. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. So the Jews understood it.

2. He claimed to be both God and man.

3. He had the attributes and performed the works both of God and man.

4. His titles prove the same.

5. Several passages directly assert that he was both God and man. John i. 1, 14. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." 1 Tim. iii. 16. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh."

Remarks on the phrase *Son of God*:—This is one of the titles applied to Christ. What is its import? Worcester and others have contended that it means that Christ was the literal Son of God, as Isaac was the son of Abraham. But this theory is gross. It is wholly opposed to the scriptural representation. The Scriptures declare that he was both God and man. This theory makes him neither God nor man.

Others understand the phrase *Son of God* to denote Christ's *eternal generation*. This theory once had extensive prevalence, and much ingenuity was shown in explaining and defending it. But it is untenable. It is unnecessary. The term *son* often denotes endearment, and has various other applications besides that of a literal relation. Again, the theory in question is absurd.

If Christ was really generated, he could not be eternal. The word father, understood literally, denotes priority in time.

The idea generally attached to it in the Scriptures is that of *office*. It designates the Messiah. It occurs in the prophecies respecting Jesus. The declaration was made to his mother. Luke i. 35, "That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." David prophesied of him under this title. Ps. ii. 7: "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Paul applies this passage to prove the Messiahship of Jesus, and asserts its fulfilment in him. Acts xiii. 32, 33: "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." The same title was applied to him at his baptism, and entrance on his office work. Matt. iii. 17. xvii. 5. John i. 34. In other passages it is made synonymous with the Christ or Messiah. Said Peter to the Saviour, Matt. xvi. 16: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Rom. i. 3, 4: "Declared to be the Son of God with power," &c., is also quoted in this connection; but many regard the phrase, "Son of God," in that passage, as denoting his Divine nature, as distinguished from his human nature, spoken of in the same passage. Still it speaks of the human and Divine as united in him as the Messiah, according to the usual Scriptural representation, "God manifest in the flesh."

In his capacity of Messiah or Mediator, the Son was sent by the Father, and was subordinate to him. This explains the fact of his confessed inferiority, John xiv. 28, his being able to do nothing of himself, his being ignorant of some things which the Father knew, his praying to the Father, and submission to him.

We learn from this examination, that two natures, one human, the other Divine, were united in the person of Christ. This truth furnishes an explanation of many passages otherwise obscure. Some passages relate to his humanity, others to his Di-

vinity, others to his complex nature, or the union of both in the Messiah; though in each case the language is not specific. The same usage is common. Thus we say man is *mortal*, meaning his body. Again, man is *immortal*, meaning his soul. Often a part is put for the whole. Thus, Gen. vi. 12: "All *flesh* had corrupted his way upon the earth." That is, all *men*. Acts xxvii. 37: "We were all in the ship, two hundred threescore and sixteen *souls*." That is, so many *persons*. So with Christ. Sometimes he is called God, sometimes man, sometimes God-man, or Messiah; and so his attributes and works are characterized.

How were two natures united in the person of Christ? This question has been made the theme of controversy for ages, has given rise to various sects and schisms. Some have rejected the doctrine as being impossible, absurd. But man has two natures incomprehensibly united. Why, then, reject the still greater mystery of godliness? Others adopt a theory which virtually denies the Divinity of Christ, and makes him a creature. This cannot be admitted without making the Saviour an impostor and the Bible a forgery. Others have used language tending to conceal the humanity of Christ. Thus Watts:

"When God the mighty Maker died
For man the creature's sin."

Such language is justly exceptionable. The papist notion of Mary being the mother of God is of a piece with it, though of course not so intended by the pious authors.

Various analogies have been employed to illustrate the *mode* of the union of two natures in Christ; but they must of course be inadequate. It is enough for us to know, that there is such a union. Its *mode* is a great mystery. It may never be solved; unquestionably it will not be to our view in the present life. Nor is there need of it. The doctrine of Christ as it is, is eminently practical, perhaps as well adapted to our present capacity and wants as it can be. If we reject it because there are mysteries connected with it, it shows our inconsistency; for we do not comprehend the *mode* of the most common objects of our

belief. Christ is presented to us in the gospel, not to gratify an idle curiosity, but to be our Saviour.

The doctrine of Scripture respecting Christ is plain. He was a perfect man. He was the true God. He was God-man, the Messiah, Mediator. This office of Mediator was assumed for a specific purpose, to be subsequently considered; and this office will be sustained until its purpose is accomplished. Christ shall reign until he has subdued all his foes. Then he will resign the office, quit the Mediatorial seat, and God will be all in all. 1 Cor. xv. 24—28: “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father. . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” So much is revealed. On various curious questions pertaining to this subject, speculation to a reasonable extent may be indulged, *as speculation*; mindful that secret things belong to God, and the revealed only to man.

LECTURE XII.

ON THE TRINITY.

Trinity in Unity. Deity of the Father. Divinity of the Son. Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit. Passages where the Three are Spoken of in Connection. Objections Considered. Illustration of the Doctrine. Its Practical Use.

It becomes us to approach the present subject with the deepest reverence and humility. None by searching can find out God. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite. Whatever he has revealed respecting himself we must implicitly receive. The speculations of men we are not bound to believe.

The Scriptures clearly reveal a trinity in unity in the Godhead—that is, there is but one God, one Divine being: yet in his infinite nature there are three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He is three, yet but one, though not in the same sense. So much do the Scriptures reveal. The *mode* of this existence is not revealed.

DEITY OF THE FATHER. That the Father is God, all admit. This appellation, however, does not always denote a distinction of the trinity. Frequently it is applied in general terms to God, as the Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor of men. This conforms to a common usage, especially among the ancient Eastern nations.

In other passages it denotes the relation of the Father to the Son. Christ often recognized this relation. He prayed to the Father, and received answers from him. John xi. 41, 42: "And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me." The Father bore witness to him: John v. and vi. Such passages as the following may also be consulted: John iii. 16: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Luke x. 22: "No man knoweth who the Son is but the Father; and who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." John v. 23. xvii. 23: "That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."

DIVINITY OF THE SON. This was proved in the lecture on Christ. The term Son, as there shown, sometimes denotes the Messiah. In that *office*, he was subordinate to the Father. Yet a divine nature and a human nature were united in the person of Christ. The Divine Logos, God the Son, was manifest in the flesh. John i. 1—14. In other passages the equality of the Son with the Father is distinctly asserted.

John v. 23: "That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. Phil. ii. 6: "Who, being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Luke x. 22: "No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." Romans i. 3, 4: "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead."

Here the distinction between the human and the Divine nature in Christ is clearly recognized.

THE DIVINITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. This is generally admitted, but his *personality* is denied by many. It is true that in numerous passages of Scripture, the term Spirit, as applied to God, does not denote a distinction in the trinity. It is used either in a general sense of the Divine nature, or with reference to some attribute or operation. But in numerous other passages

it does denote personality. John xv. 26: "The Spirit of truth which *proceedeth* from the Father, he shall *testify* of me." Also, Matt. xii. 31, 32, where the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is spoken of. We may refer also to all the passages where the office, attributes and work of the Holy Spirit are set forth.

John xiv. 26: "But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." xvi. 8, 13: "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:" "When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." 1 Cor. xii. 11: "But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

The DIVINITY of the Holy Spirit is also proved by reference to numerous passages.

Acts v. 3—5: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, * * * thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." 1 Cor. ii. 10: "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." "Heb. ix. 14: "Through the eternal Spirit." Also compare Isa. vi. 8, 9 with Acts xxviii. 25, 26. Also Ex. xvii. 7: Ps. xcv. 7—11, with Heb. iii. 7, 8. Also Jere. xxxi. 31—34 with Heb. x. 15. 1 Cor. ii. 11. xii. 6—11. Heb. ix. 14.

These passages clearly prove both the personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit.

We will now notice some passages in which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are mentioned in connection.

The three are mentioned in connection at the baptism of Jesus.

Matt. iii. 16, 17: "The heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Also John xv. 26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father," &c. All believers at their

baptism profess their faith in, and allegiance to, the trinity. Matt. xxviii. 19: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The apostolic benediction. 2 Cor. xiii. 14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."

1 Pet. i. 2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." This passage is important, not only as a confirmation of the doctrine, but as showing its practical application in man's redemption—the love of the Father as the procuring cause, the atonement of Christ the means, and the Holy Spirit the efficient agent in the redemption and salvation of men. This doctrine as presented in the Scriptures is no mere theory, but intimately connected with subjects of the highest practical consequence to mankind.

1 John v. 7, 8: "There are three that bear record in heaven," &c., is sometimes quoted as a proof text; but it is wanting in so many of the ancient manuscripts, that most critics regard it as doubtful. Of 150 manuscripts, only two contain it. The part considered doubtful is—"in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth." But whether the passage is to be received or not, is immaterial, since the doctrine is so abundantly sustained by other unquestionable passages. Other references might be made, but the above are sufficient. Taking into view the passages which prove the Divinity of each person separately and those which mention them in connection, the subject is presented in a very clear and satisfactory light. True, they do not explain the *mode*, but the fact has all the force that inspired testimony could give it. To reject it is to reject the Bible.

To the doctrine of the trinity, various objections are made, the principal of which we will here notice:

1. It is said to be inconsistent with the unity of God. But the charge cannot be maintained. Trinitarians are not Tritheists,

but firmly hold the Divine Unity. They hold that God is three in one sense, and one in another and different sense. They believe in the TRINITY IN UNITY. True, names are of very little consequence; but for one sect to claim the exclusive title of *Unitarians*, is as unwarrantable as for another sect to distinguish themselves by the appellation of *Christians*, or as it would be for a nation to assume the title of *men* to distinguish themselves from other nations.

2. Another objection is that the doctrine is a *mystery*. This we admit, for it is according to the Scriptural representation. If we held a theory on this subject, which divested it of all mystery, this fact would be enough to condemn it as unscriptural. Unless we resolve to reject all mysteries, the doctrine cannot be set aside on this ground. And if we reject all mysteries in revelation, we are in consistency bound to reject all the innumerable mysteries in nature; in a word, to become universal skeptics.

But it is asserted, that we cannot believe what we do not understand. I answer, we believe many things which we cannot *explain*, and the *mode* of which we do not understand. I believe that I have a soul and body united in one person, but *how* united, I do not understand. Children believe much on the authority of their superiors without understanding the manner. In many things men are but children. Wonderful indeed, if we are so wise, and our powers so great, that we can admit nothing that transcends our present capacities, even though backed by the authority of Jehovah.

3. The doctrine is said to be useless, a mere theory. If so, then right views of sin and its consequences, and the way of salvation through the Messiah, are mere theory and useless, for they are all inseparably connected with it. Never in the Scriptures is it presented as an abstraction, but always as it stands connected with matters of the highest practical importance. It is a doctrine clearly taught in the Scriptures, and cannot consistently be set aside without rejecting the Scriptures themselves. It has been found in practice, that those who discard this doctrine, have

soon after discarded the doctrines of Depravity, Atonement and Regeneration. See the case of Priestly. Originally, his views were sound on this subject. But he became an Arian, then a Socinian, then a Materialist, and finally confessed that he knew not what he believed.

4. It has also been assailed from the Scriptures. But so fallacious are the arguments employed, so forced the interpretations put upon the sacred oracles, that the candid inquirer can but be convinced of the futility of the objection from this source. Indeed, the objection does not assume the air of *plausibility*, without adopting palpably erroneous principles of interpretation, and exalting the objector's speculations above the Bible. Those who oppose the doctrine rely very little on the Bible for objections; but ground their assaults mainly on speculation. The Bible, with most of them, is but secondary.

Unitarians rely on the passages that refer to Christ as a man. But they prove nothing against us, since we hold that he was man, as well as God.

Again, they refer to his confessed inferiority to the Father, as John xiv. 28: "My Father is greater than I." Mark xiii. 32: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." John vi. 38: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." All such passages refer to his Messiahship. In this office, he was subordinate to the Father. But this does not prove him inferior in his Divine nature. An ambassador is, of course, in that office, subordinate to the one who appoints him; and, as such, knows only his instructions. Still in nature and capacity he may be equal, or superior, to the one who appoints him. See the subject of the Messiahship, and the phrase "Son of God," discussed Lecture xi. pp. 118, 119.

Various attempts have also been made to invalidate proof-texts on critical grounds. It is true, that irrelevant proof-texts are often cited, and such are generally assailed. We have not space here to go into this matter in detail, nor is it necessary, as we have not referred to doubtful passages. Where attempts have

been made to change the received texts, or alter the common version, in passages relating to this subject, they have in every instance failed. But on these points, we must refer to the Commentaries.

5. It has been alleged that the doctrine was derived from the Platonic Philosophy. It is true that Plato held to a sort of trinity—viz: the Supreme Being, the Demiurge, and the Soul of the world. The Egyptians had their trinity, Knuph, Phtha and Neith: the Hindoos have theirs, Brahma, Vishnu and Schiva. But the Scriptural doctrine was derived from none of them. There is not a particle of evidence that it was. Those theories may have been derived through tradition from revelation. Like other Pagan speculations however, they are in the main erroneous, growing out of their theory of *emanations*. It is certainly remarkable that among the heathen the idea of a divine Trinity should have been so prevalent. If it cannot be traced to revelation, it shows that the human mind is prepared in some measure for such a doctrine. The charge of obtaining our doctrine from Platonism has arisen from the fact, that the New Platonists, especially those who embraced Christianity, the Alexandrian Jews, and others in connection with those philosophers, made use of the Platonic Philosophy in explaining the scriptural doctrine of the Trinity. So they did in reference to almost every other scriptural doctrine. In this way you might credit almost every doctrine of Christianity to Plato, Aristotle or Zeno.

6. Another objection is, that the doctrine is not taught in the Old Testament. We admit that it is not distinctly taught there. Still in the view of many there are strong *intimations* of it.

1. The name of God is in the plural.
2. Plural pronouns are applied to him.

Gen. i. 26: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." xi. 7, "Let us go down, and there confound their language." Isa. vi. 8: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" It is indeed said, that these are but instances of *pluralis excellentiæ*, or the royal style. Yet who can say but the nature of the God-

head may have caused the phraseology and usage of the royal style? It is surely remarkable, that the noun GOD is in the plural, while the verb agreeing with it is in the singular. Thus Gen. i. 1 : בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים "God created."

3. Texts in which the name of God is repeated in a remarkable manner.

Gen. xix. 24 : "Then the LORD [Jehovah] rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD [Jehovah] out of heaven." Also, Dan. ix. 17. Also, the blessing of the high priest, Num. vi. 24—27 : "The LORD bless thee, and keep thee : The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee : The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Also, the prophet's vision of God. Isa. vi. 3 : "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts."

4. Texts in which the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are al-
luded to in connection.

Isa. xlviii. 16 : "And now the LORD GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me." Also, xxxiv. 16. Hag. ii. 5, 7.

5. Prophecies of the divinity of Christ.

Isa. ix. 6 : "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given : and the government shall be upon his shoulders : and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, [Heb. Father of eternity,] The Prince of Peace."

Many important truths are but faintly shadowed forth in the Old Testament which are distinctly brought to light in the gospel. Revelation was progressive, adapted to the capacities and wants of mankind : made at sundry times, and in divers manners. Heb. i. 1.

7. It is objected that the doctrine is not stated in the Scriptures with sufficient clearness. I admit it is not formally announced in any single text. But it should be considered that the Bible has not the form of a scientific treatise. It conforms more to nature than to art, and thus is better adapted to the mass of men. Yet taken as a whole, the Scriptures are very full and explicit on this subject. And if what they reveal respecting it is set aside,

the same disposition might set aside any clearer revelation, or even the Bible itself.

8. It is also objected that the earliest Christian Fathers did not clearly state and defend the doctrine. They had little occasion to, as in their day there was no controversy on the subject. For the most part they adopted the manner of the Scriptures, confining themselves to their simple statements of truth, and their practical bearings, without indulging much in speculation. But the Fathers were but uninspired men, and if some of them did adopt erroneous views of this subject, it is no more than they did on other subjects. In the main, however, their views accorded with the Scriptures. In the latter part of the second century we find the doctrine stated and defended almost precisely as it is by Trinitarians now. And their prompt rejection of Arianism in the fourth century, shows how well they were grounded in the truth.

Numerous attempts have been made to unfold the mystery of the Trinity; but they have all failed, and given rise to many errors. One of these was the theory of *Sabellius*, who made it merely a trinity of offices: as a man might be a governor, a general, and a citizen at the same time. But this is far from being the doctrine of the Scriptures. How could the scene at the Baptism of Jesus be explained on this theory: or the Son praying to and receiving answers from the Father?

On the *Sabellian* theory, how can we explain John i. 1, 14? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Also, v. 23: "That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." Especially, John xvii. 5: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." If there was not an eternal distinction between the Father and the Son, how could Christ speak of the glory which he had with the Father before the world was?

Another extreme consists in regarding the three as really distinct beings, having only a *nature* in common; as all men partake of human nature. But this is *Tritheism*. Almost every

position between these two extremes has been proposed, but without avail. The Scriptures do not undertake to unfold the mystery. Why then should we. The common representation is that there are three *persons*, *ὑποστάσεις* in one *being*, *οὐσία* and that these persons are equal, *ἰσοούσιοι*, *ἰσοι* thus constituting the Godhead. Here the term *person* must have a different signification from *being*, else we have the absurdity of three Gods, yet but one God.

But what the distinction is, denoted by *persons* in the Godhead, we may frankly confess, we know not. The Scriptures do not explain the distinction: they do not even apply the term *persons* to it. Still as this term is in common use, it may be retained to designate the Scriptural distinction. The doctrine of Scripture is, that the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God, yet there is but one God. In other words, there is a distinction in the Godhead, which is a basis for the application of these names, and of the pronouns I, thou, he, to them. Each performs distinct works in the scheme of human redemption and salvation. The Father sends the Son; the Son takes flesh and makes the atonement; the Spirit convicts, renews, sanctifies. They are not to be confounded with each other. The Father is not the Son or the Spirit; the Son is not the Father or Spirit; the Spirit is not the Father or Son. Neither is to be regarded as God *exclusive* of the others; but THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE ONE GOD. To carry it farther is a vain attempt to be wise above what is written. The doctrine is one of pure revelation, and should be received just as it stands in the sacred oracles. Its practical application is seen in the scheme of human Redemption.

LECTURE XIII.

ON ANGELS.

Different Theories. General View. Of Good Angels—their number—Employment—Connection with Different Elements—Guardians—Intercessors. Evil Spirits—their Origin—Number—Leader—Power—Employment—Residence—Punishment. Personality of Satan. Demoniical Possessions. Two Theories Discussed. Frivolous Questions.

Belief in an order of beings, or orders of being between God and man, is common to all nations, and all ages. The mass of men have had much superstition mingled with their views on the subject. The popular fancies respecting apparitions, ghosts, witches, conjurers, &c., are well known. Ancient Mythology also abounds with accounts of superhuman beings, and marvellous tales of their exploits. Hence many of the learned have been disposed to treat the whole matter with contempt, and to question the existence of any class of intelligences between God and man.

As with the existence of these beings, so of their acts, we find the same extreme views entertained. Some ascribe almost every event, even the most trivial, to their agency; others deny that there is any such agency whatever. It is important, then, that we ascertain the truth on the subject; and, since it is clear that every attempt to settle it by human speculation will be futile, we must resort to the fountain of revelation. And the there question has additional interest from its connection with other doctrines.

The existence of angels is recognized in numerous passages of Scripture. The information respecting them, may be classed under several heads.

1. They are represented as spiritual beings. Heb. i. 14: "Are they not all ministering spirits?" They have the power of assuming bodies, and under various appearances have exhibited themselves to men. But it appears from the Scriptural representation, that, in their essential nature, they are pure or incorporeal spirits.

2. In rank they are superior to men. 2 Pet. ii. 11: "Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might." Man, in his original state, was made "a little lower than the angels." Ps. viii.

4. Their superiority consists in higher mental endowments. Reasoning from analogy, we believe them susceptible of indefinite improvement. They are also free moral agents. From these considerations, the distinction in titles given them, (see Col. i. 16, where they are supposed to be referred to under the designation of "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers,") and the gradation of inferior beings, we conclude that there are different orders or ranks of angels. Thus a vast chain of created being is made out from the highest to the lowest.

3. Angels were created by God, and are subject to him. This appears from the fact that he is the creator and governor of the universe. Various positions have been taken in regard to the *time* of their creation. Some place it on the sixth day in connection with the creation of man; others on the fourth day, with that of the sun and moon; others believe their creation to have been anterior to that of our world; and this is the prevalent opinion. No mention is made of their creation in connection with that of our world and of man; but intimations are given of their previous existence. There is no good reason for limiting created intelligences to our world, and the brief period of its existence.

4. Two great divisions of angels are exhibited in the Bible. 1. Good angels. 2. Evil angels. Upon each of these divisions several remarks may be made.

OF GOOD ANGELS.

1. They are very numerous. "Thousand thousands ministered unto him." Dan. vii. 10. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." Ps. lxxviii. 17. "Ye are come to an innumerable company of angels." Heb. xii. 22. "Thinkest thou not that I can now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Matt. xxvi. 53. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, (*Gr. living beings,*) and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." Rev. v. 11.

2. They accompany God, and do his will. See the texts quoted under the last head, also, Matt. xxiv. 31: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." xiii. 41: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity."

The law was given to Moses through them.

Acts vii. 53: "Who have received the law by the disposition of angels." Gal. iii. 19: "Wherefore then serveth the law? it was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator."

They will sit with Christ in the final Judgment.

Matt. xxv. 31: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." 1 Thess. iv. 16: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." Also 2 Thess. i. 7—9.

3. They are special ministers of justice. They were agents employed at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Gen. chaps. xviii and xix. In that of Jericho; Josh. v. 13, 14: ch. vi. In the plague inflicted on Israel in consequence of numbering the people.

2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17: "And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented him of the

evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand."

In the overthrow of the Assyrian host.

2 Kings xix. 35: "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians, a hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses."

In the death of Herod.

Acts xii. 23: "And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the Ghost."

In the various calamities mentioned in the Apocalypse. Rev. chs. vii., xi. and xvi.

4. They are mentioned in connection with various material elements. In Rev. vii. 1, 2, they have the control of the four winds. In chap. xiv. 18, mention is made of one that had power over fire. Also xvi. 7. In Rev. xix. 17, we have an angel standing in the sun. In Ps. civ. 4, they are spoken of as being "a flaming fire;" and in 2 Kings ii. 11, as having a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, doubtless figurative expressions.

5. They are the guardians of individuals. The angel Gabriel was sent to Zacharias, Luke i. 11—20. To Mary, 26—38. To Joseph, Matt. i. 20, 21: ii. 13, 19, 20. They ministered to Jesus on various occasions, as in his temptation in the wilderness. Matt. iv. 11. In his agony in Gethsemane, Luke xxii. 43. They were at his sepulchre, Matt. xxviii. 2—7: Matt. xvi. 5—7. At his ascension, Acts i. 10, 11: John i. 51. Little ones, or Christians, are said to have angels, Matt. xviii. 10. Also in Heb. i. 14, we are informed that they are "All ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Also Ps. xxxiv. 7. An angel delivered Peter from prison. Acts xii. 7—15. They appeared to Jacob.

Gen. xxxii. 1, 2: "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him: And when Jacob saw them, he said, this is God's host."

And to Elisha, 2 Kings vi. 17.

Some suppose that each person has a guardian angel; but of this there is not proof. They appear to be commissioned for this purpose when occasion requires.

6. They are the guardians of nations. Of the Israelites.

Ex. xiv. 19: "And the angel of God which went before the camp of Israel, removed, and went before them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face and stood behind them."

xxiii. 20: "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared." Also xxxiii. 2; Num. xx. 16; Isa. lxiii. 9.

One assisted Daniel: chs. x., xii. 1. They protected Jerusalem: Zech. i. 8—14: iii. 1, 2.

7. They are intercessors for men.

Zech. i. 12, 13: "Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years? And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words." Also Job xxxiii. 23, 24.

Two of special note are mentioned by name, Michael and Gabriel; the former of whom is termed the archangel. Jude. 14.

EVIL ANGELS.

1. Their origin. They were created good, but fell. Jude 6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." 2 Pet. ii. 4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment." From these passages it appears that they were once in a state of probation, and on some occasion, not revealed, transgressed, and forfeited that holy place. There is no evidence that they will ever be restored. Some regard their fall from heaven as incredible; but what more *reasonable* account of their origin can be furnished? Besides, the Scripture testimony on the subject, though brief, is decisive.

2. They are numerous.

Mark v. 9: "And he answered, saying, My name is Legion; for we are many." Matt. xii. 26: "And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself, how then shall his kingdom stand." Also xxv. 41.

Men are often misled by them.

3. One of them is prominent—he is called Satan. 1 Chron. xxi. 1; Job i. 2; Zech. iii. 1, 2. He is also called the Tempter, the Destroyer, or Apollyon, the Serpent, the Devil. It should be observed that in the original Scriptures, *Diabolus*, properly rendered Devil, is never found in the plural. It may, therefore, be considered a proper name, the same as Satan, and the chief of the fallen spirits. This appears from Rev. xii. 7—9: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great Dragon was cast out, that old Serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." He, undoubtedly, was the one who seduced our first parents, tempted our Saviour in the wilderness, and is the grand agent in all sorts of wickedness; the instigator to sin in men and other evil spirits. Not that he is the only instigator to wickedness, else he would be omnipresent, whereas he is but a finite being. He has many angels, or assistants. Beelzebub is of note among them, a chief of demons.

4. They have great power. In 2 Cor. iv. 4: "The God of this world," doubtless meaning Satan, is said to have blinded the minds of unbelievers. In other passages he is denominated the prince of this world. John xii. 31: xiv. 30. The titles of office, put for their occupants, denote the power of the fallen spirits. Eph. vi. 12: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood [i. e. mere men] but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." [Margin, wicked spirits in heavenly places.] Satan's great power in persecuting the church is predicted Rev. xii.,

and to deceive the nations, xx. 8. Yet their influence is not irresistible. Says James iv. 7: "Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you." 1 Pet. v. 8, 9; Eph. iv. 27.

5. They are sometimes allowed or employed to inflict evil on men. Satan was permitted to afflict Job. One was a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets: 1 Kings xxii. 21—23. Paul speaks of delivering an offender unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh: 1 Cor. v. 5. So were Hymenæus and Alexander delivered: 1 Tim. i. 20. Satan's seat is mentioned in connection with the martyrdom of Antipas: Rev. ii. 13. The power of the dragon and his persecutions are mentioned Rev. xiii.

6. Several places are denoted as their residence before the final Judgment: (1.) The Abyss, as it is commonly rendered in our version, "*the bottomless pit.*" Apollyon is called the angel of this place: Rev. ix. 11. See also xi. 7; xvii. 8. Satan is cast into it, and kept there a thousand years: Rev. xx. 1, 3. The demons that entered the swine besought that they might not be sent thither. Original of Luke viii. 31. (2.) Deserts: Matt. iv. xii. 43. (3.) The Air: Eph. ii. 2: vi. 12.

7. They will endure eternal punishment. Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels: Matt. xxv. 41. Thither they were cast from heaven: 2 Pet. ii. 4. "If God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell," &c. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Rev. xx. 10. "After the general judgment the revelator saw that death and hell, together with all whose names had no place in the book of life were cast into the lake of fire: xx. 14, 15.

Such, in general, is the Scriptural representation. And it may be remarked here that the treatment of this subject by the sacred writers, affords a strong confirmation of the truth of the Bible. In all ages men have been prone to indulge extravagant notions of invisible beings. We need only mention the stories of gods, genii, heroes, sylphs, fairies, &c. But in all the accounts of angels in the Bible, there is nothing absurd or superstitious.

The whole is rational and consistent. This shows that book to be Divine.

Some have denied that invisible spirits, whether good or evil, have access to the human mind. But God has such access, and it is not impossible for them to have. The Scriptures are decisive as to the *fact*. Angels in heaven are interested in human affairs, rejoice over repenting sinners, and record their names. They are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, and have, in numerous instances recorded, interposed in their behalf. So evil spirits are busy in their malignant designs. Our adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour; he is the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. He put it into the heart of Judas to betray Jesus.

The personality of Satan, and other evil spirits, is denied by some. They construe the language of Scripture on the subject, either as used by way of accommodation, or as personification. But neither position is tenable. No such accommodation is employed by the sacred writers. It would be a direct countenance of error. Nor can it be explained as personification. Evil spirits are set forth as real beings, are fully described, their works denoted, men are warned against their devices, and their final doom is declared. We might almost as well deny the existence of any other beings mentioned in the Bible. If, as some would have us believe, the devil is only the personification of evil, we ask who tempted Christ in the wilderness?

It is doubtless true, that some ascribe more than they should to the agency of invisible beings. What can be explained on natural principles, should not be needlessly ascribed to supernatural causes. In many cases we cannot discriminate with certainty between the two agencies. Never does their influence destroy our freedom. We are always responsible for our own conduct. Still, it can scarcely be doubted, that wicked men are assisted in devising and executing their schemes by evil spirits, and that good men are exposed to numerous temptations and trials from the same source. Bad as the depraved heart is, it cannot be believed that men would be guilty of all the enormities

they are, were they not seduced and instigated by beings still more malignant and sagacious than themselves. And it may be reasonably supposed, that good men are greatly aided in their benevolent exertions, and in their afflictions and conflicts, by ministering spirits from above.

Before the present subject is concluded, some remarks should be made on the demoniacal possessions mentioned in the New Testament. Two opinions have been entertained respecting them.

1. That they were cases of natural disease merely, though having some peculiarities—that the people, from a superstitious habit of ascribing nearly all extraordinary phenomena to invisible beings, attributed these diseases to such agency; and that Christ, and the apostles, not deeming it a matter of serious consequence, used language accommodated to their views, without exposing the error. Thus, for parallel examples, *lunacy* derives its name from supposing it to be produced by the influence of the *moon*, (*luna*;) and philosophers yet speak of the sun's rising and setting.*

It may be objected to this view, that the Scriptural account of demoniacal possessions is inconsistent with the supposition that they were cases of mere natural disease. Not only were the demoniacs described as possessed, that demons had entered into them, and were cast out from them; but the demons knew Christ, and declared his true character, while the mass of the people were ignorant of it. They conversed with Christ, he spoke to them as persons, and afterwards of them in private to his disciples. When accused by the Jews of being in league with Beelzebub, he assured them that he cast out devils by the finger of God. All this is inconsistent with the idea that Christ treated them as instances of mere natural disease. To hold otherwise, is to make him countenance error by his works and words, a kind of accommodation of which he was never chargeable. In case of the terms *lunacy*, *sunrise*, &c., which first arose from misconception, but are still retained, no one is misled by their use. But the obvious import, both of the words and actions of Christ, and the

* Jahn's *Archæology*.

Apostles, was such as to indicate their belief in real demoniacal possessions.

2. The other opinion is that which regards them as real cases of demoniacal possession. There are, indeed, some difficulties attending this view. The belief in demoniacal possessions prevailed extensively in many nations, both before and after the coming of Christ. This must have been mainly founded in error. Still for special reasons existing at that time, i. e., to exhibit in a striking manner the power of Christ over evil spirits, they might have been allowed to afflict men in the very way that they had before been erroneously supposed to do. This would be no sanction of the former error, yet would have great influence over the minds of the people. Nor does the fact that manifestations in our day resembling those possessions, yet known to be natural, exist, prove that those were not produced by supernatural causes. The difficulties here alluded to are much less than those attending the other opinion. It is not to be supposed that evil spirits actually *inhabited* the bodies of men; but that in the case of the demoniacs, they had them completely under their influence. And these possessions appear to have been chiefly, if not wholly, confined to the age of Christ and the apostles.

We have no good reason to suppose that these or other miracles occur at the present day. Whatever accounts there have been of miracles since that period, they are not entitled to credit, as no sufficient motive can be assigned for their existence. This does not preclude our belief in remarkable instances of answer to prayer at the present day, but they should not be accounted miraculous.

Formerly many frivolous questions were discussed respecting angels; as whether one can occupy two places at the same time; whether a possible angel is greater than a real man; what language they speak, whether Hebrew or some other, in allusion to 1 Cor. xiii. 1: "Though I speak with the tongues of men, and of angels." The Scriptures countenance no such vain speculation. They ever treat the doctrine with reason and soberness, and in reference to its practical bearing on the condition and destiny of man. We should study it in the same spirit.

LECTURE XIV.

DIVINE PURPOSES AND PROVIDENCE.

Three Theories. History of the Doctrine of Decrees. High and Low Calvinists. Arguments of Calvinists Examined. Decrees Unconditional, and those Conditional. Providence. Definitions. Proofs. Objections Considered. Importance of the Doctrine.

The subject of Divine purposes or decrees has been a fruitful source of controversy in the church from the time of Augustine to the present. The basis of these discussions is to be found in metaphysics and philosophy, rather than in the doctrine of Scripture. Men in all ages have speculated largely on the government of the world, and the freedom of moral beings. In almost every period there have been three theories respecting it.

1. That of *Fatè*. In the earliest writings of this class, not only men, but the gods, are supposed to be under the control of the fates. What their notion of the fates was, cannot be precisely determined. They were not persons, but a sort of *abstraction*, corresponding somewhat to our ideas of destiny, or the laws of being. The notion was but imperfectly developed, and not well defined. But it furnished a basis for many conceptions of Homer, Herodotus, Aristotle, Plato, and the Stoics. It was a fundamental article in the creed of Mahomet and his numerous followers, and prevails in the notions of almost every Pagan sect. Its resemblance to a theory of extensive prevalence in the Church is strongly marked.

2. Another theory is that of *Chance*. This is also an abstraction of an atheistical character. Epicurus may be mentioned as the most noted among its earliest representatives. These are the extremes, usually found in company, and often nearly or quite meeting. Both are alike subversive of sound morality, as they are inconsistent with any proper responsibility.

3. The medium of these extreme positions is that which holds that the perfect government of the world is in the hands of God, yet maintains the full freedom and accountability of man. This is the only theory of the subject, that can be formally adopted by Christian Theologians. But in defining and explaining it, they differ widely from each other. That the speculations of philosophy have had much to do in the construction of the various systems extant, no one acquainted with their history will deny.

The father of the modern doctrine of decrees was Augustine, in the fourth century. In his controversy with Pelagius, who denied man's dependence on grace for salvation, Augustine broached a new system; one not only differing from, but directly opposed to, the doctrine which the primitive fathers, as Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria and Origin, uniformly taught.* Augustine's system comprehended absolute, or unconditional and universal, decrees, fatal necessity, and irresistible grace; and denied the freedom of the human will. The talents and influence of the author obtained for the system many advocates, although it never gained the entire ascendancy.

The controversy was renewed in the ninth century, by a French monk, named Gottschalk, a supporter of Augustine's views. The theory was finally condemned as heretical by the council at Chiersy, A. D., 849. Knapp's Theol. 127, 8. It was again advocated by Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century, and by Jansenius in the seventeenth. The Dominicans and Jansenists in the Catholic church, hold it to this day.

Early in the Reformation, the same controversy came up. Luther and Melancthon at first favored Augustine's views, but

* Knapp's Theol. pp. 127, 458.

afterwards rejected them. Zwingli never received them. The system of Augustine has never been adopted by the majority of the Lutheran church. In the Reformed church, Augustinism was advocated by Calvin, and opposed by Arminius. The views of the latter were condemned in the Synod at Dort, in 1618, and Calvinism established as an article in the faith of the Dutch church. The controversy, however, did not end there. It continued until the system of Calvin was subverted and almost annihilated. There is now scarcely a vestige of Calvinism remaining in the Netherlands: the Theological School of Geneva itself is now Arminian. In Scotland, Knox embraced the system of Augustine, and it has been held ever since with great tenacity by the Scotch church. The English church has been divided from the beginning—some of her most distinguished names being found on both sides. On the side of Calvinism were Turretin, Twisse, Gill, and Toplady; while Jeremy Taylor, Sherlock, Whitby, and Heber supported Arminianism. The Puritans were mostly Calvinists. The great body of the English clergy are now Arminians. There are very few of the Calvinistic persuasion in Germany. They are at present chiefly confined to Scotland and the United States. Such is a brief historical outline of the subject.

The article of Decrees has been variously defined. Its supporters are divided into two general classes. High and Low Calvinists, though there is among them almost every shade of belief. The High Calvinists hold that the Divine decrees are absolute and unconditional, extending alike to all things and all events. They deny the efficiency of second causes, and allow but one real cause in the Universe. They also maintain that God is the author of all evil and sin. Such were the views of Hopkins and Emmons in this country, and Twisse and others in England.

We make the following quotations from standard Old School Calvinists, to exhibit at large their sentiments:

PRESIDENT EDWARDS ON DECREES AND ELECTION.

“The sin of crucifying Christ being foreordained of God in his decree; hence is a clear argument, that all the sins

of men are foreordained and ordered by a wise Providence." Works, Vol. V., pp. 358-9.

"Sin is an evil, yet the futuration of sin, or that sin should be future, is not an evil thing. Evil is an evil thing, and yet it may be a good thing that evil should exist in the world." p. 363.

"The foreknowledge of God will necessarily infer a decree: For God could not foreknow that things would be, unless he had decreed that they should be: and that because things would not be future, unless he had decreed they should be." p. 367.

"But for God to warn men to beware of damnation, though he has absolutely determined that they shall not be damned, is exactly parallel with his exhorting men to seek salvation, though he has actually determined that they shall not be saved. p. 377.

"God decrees all things, and even all sins." p. 378.

DR. DWIGHT.

"That all things, both beings and events, exist in exact accordance with the purpose, pleasure, or what is commonly called The Decrees of God." Ser. XIV.

"What is commonly intended by the Decrees of God, is that choice or pleasure of the Divine Mind, eternally and unchangeably inherent in it, by which all things are brought into being."

"The theology of a part of this country appears to me to be verging, insensibly, perhaps, to those who are chiefly concerned, but with no very gradual step, towards a Pantheism, differing, materially, in one particular only from that of Spinoza." Ser. XV.

We quote more fully from *Dr. Hopkins*, on account of the prominence which his system long occupied in New England.

VIEWS OF SAMUEL HOPKINS, D. D., ON DECREES. ED. BOSTON, 1793.

"Indeed, everything which is properly an effect, has its foundation in the purpose or decree of God, as its original cause, without which it could not have taken place. And every such effect is fixed and made sure of existence by the Divine decree, and infallibly connected with it."

SYSTEM OF DIVINITY, CHAP. IV., P. 106.

“For the futuration or futurity of all things, depends upon the decrees of God; by these every created existence, and every event, with all their circumstances, are fixed and made certain; and in consequence of their being thus decreed, they are the objects of foreknowledge; for they could not be known to be future, unless they were so; and they were made so by the Divine decree, and nothing else. If we may so speak, God foreknew all things that were to come to pass, by knowing his own purpose and decrees, by which their existence was made certain. Had God decreed nothing respecting future existences, by creation and providence, there could have been no foreknowledge of anything whatever.” p. 110.

“Thus whatsoever comes to pass from the beginning of time to eternity is foreordained, and fixed from eternity by the infinitely wise counsel and unchangeable purpose of God.” p. 114.

“For if liberty and moral agency consist in the exercise of will and choice, or voluntary exertions; which is all the liberty of which we are, or can be, conscious, can have any conception, or is possible, as has been shown; then the absolute fixedness and certainty of all events is perfectly consistent with liberty: For though all events be decreed, and every motion and exercise of the will, and all moral actions, be determined from eternity, this is so far from destroying the liberty of man, that it establishes it, and makes it certain, viz., that he shall thus will and choose.” p. 134.

“Whence cometh evil?”

This question cannot be answered, on any plan, to the satisfaction of a rational, inquisitive mind, or the difficulty in any measure solved, unless it be supposed and granted, *That all the evil which does take place, is necessary for the greatest possible general good, and therefore, on the whole, all things considered, wisest and best that it should exist just as it does.*” p. 137.

“There can be nothing take place under the care and government of an infinitely powerful, wise, and good Being, that is not, on the whole, wisest and best; that is, for the general

good ; therefore, though there be things which are *in themselves evil*, even in their own nature and tendency ; such are sin and misery ; yet considered in their connection with the whole, and as they are necessary in the best system, to accomplish the greatest good, the most important and best ends, they are, in this view, desirable, good, and not evil. And in this view, ‘There is no *absolute evil* in the universe.’ There are evils, *in themselves considered* ; but considered as connected with the whole, they are not evil, but good. As *shades* are necessary in a picture, to render it most complete and beautiful, they are in this view and connection, desirable ; and the picture would be imperfect and marred, were they not included in it ; yet considered separately and unconnected with the whole, they have no beauty, but deformity, and are very disagreeable : So moral evil is, in itself considered, in its own nature and tendency, most odious, hurtful and undesirable ; but in the hands of omnipotence, infinite wisdom and goodness, it may be introduced into the most perfect plan and system, and so disposed, and counteracted in its nature and tendency, as to be a necessary part of it, in order to render it most complete and desirable.” pp. 140, 141.

“Without the sin of man, there had been no place for the most perfect exercise of his (God’s) goodness.” Bates, p. 141.

“1. That God does superintend and direct with regard to every instance of sin : He orders how much sin there shall be, and effectually restrains and prevents all that which he would not have take place. Men are, with respect to this, absolutely under his direction and control.

4. From this it follows, that the sin of man is the means of a good which so far overbalances the evil of sin, and all the evil consequences of it, that it is desirable, on this account, that it should take place : Therefore there is more good in the universe, and this is a better world, than could possibly have existed, had no evil come into it ; and every instance of sin and evil is conducive and necessary to the greatest possible good of the whole. p. 149.

“And in their Confession of Faith [the Westminster Assem-

bly], they say, ‘ God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct, dispose and govern all creatures, actions and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness and mercy.’ The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his providence ; that it extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men, *and that not by a bare permission*, but such as hath joined with a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering, and governing them, in a manifold dispensation, to his own holy ends.” It is here asserted that God hath foreordained, decreed and willed the existence of moral evil ; for this has come to pass. *ib.* 165.

“ 1. According to Divine revelation, God superintends, orders and directs in all the actions of men, and in every instance of sin ; so that his hand and agency is to be seen and acknowledged in men’s sinful actions, and the events depending on them, as really and as much as in any events and actions whatever.” *ib.* p. 166.

“ 2. The holy Scriptures represent God, as in some way or other, moving, exciting, and stirring men up to do that which is sinful, and which, in itself considered, and as done by them, is very displeasing to him.” *ib.* p. 172.

“ 3. Agreeable to the last particular, the Scriptures represent God as moving the hearts of all men, just as he pleases ; and even when they do that which is sinful.” p. 173.

On the passage, Isa. xlv. 5—7, “ Does not God, in these words, expressly take to himself this character, and assert that he is the origin and cause of all evil ? If so, then we have no reason to be afraid to think and speak of him as such : but may consider ourselves as promoting true piety, and the honor of the only true God, while we believe and assert, that all evil is the consequence of his determination and will, that it shall exist, and is wholly dependent upon it, as without his will that it should take place, it could no more exist, than anything else whatever.” p. 182.

“They, therefore, who hold to only a *bare permission* respecting the existence of sin, do depart from those who have been properly called Calvinists; and do not agree with the confession of faith composed by said Assembly of Divines, or with those numerous churches and divines who do assent, or have assented to that confession of faith, in England, Scotland, Ireland and America.” p. 215.

The low Calvinists hold that the decrees of God are absolute, yet that they include conditions. They admit the efficiency of second causes, and the freedom of man. They hold that God produces all good, and *permits* evil. They have often been charged with inconsistency—with holding views irreconcilable with each other. Many of them admit that they cannot reconcile their own views of the decrees of God, and the freedom of man, and pronounce the subject a mystery.

The supporters of this system admit that the term decree is not used by them in the Scriptural sense. The sacred writers apply it to special determinations and enactments relating to single objects, rather than to a general determination or plan, as employed by them. See Dwight's Theol., Vol. I, Sermon '14. Dwight's definition of the doctrine is: “That all things, both beings and events, exist in exact accordance with the purpose, pleasure, or what is commonly called the decrees of God.” Theol. Vol. I., p. 238. The definition given by the Westminster Assembly is, that “God has foreordained whatever comes to pass.” Such formularies are generally adopted by its supporters.

Proof. 1. Its advocates refer to the omniscience, omnipotence, and sovereignty of God. They infer that he has a perfect *plan* for the government of the universe, and hence that no event can occur in opposition to his will. Objectors, while they admit that God administers a perfect government, and secures the highest possible good of the universe on the whole, deny the inference that every event, especially in the moral world, is in accordance with his will. Sin is everywhere in the Scriptures represented as being offensive to God. To suppose two wills in God, one secret, approving and causing sin, the other revealed,

condemning and denouncing it, is absurd. Why, then, does sin exist? Not in order to be overruled for good. True, good may be occasioned by it. But to assert that in any case sin is better than holiness would be in its place, is to make sin equal to, or better than, holiness at least in that instance, and to destroy all real distinction between virtue and vice—in direct opposition to the Scriptures and conscience. Nor can we admit that sin exists because it is a *necessary* means of securing the highest good of the universe; for this supposition would involve a limitation both of the power and goodness of God.

A more reasonable, as well as scriptural, account of the matter is this: For wise reasons God chose to have a moral system, i. e., to create moral beings, having real efficiency, and a power of contrary choice, though dependent upon, and responsible to, him. To such a system sin, though not necessary, is incidental. In other words, if there are moral beings, they *may* sin. God saw that it would be better to have the moral system with the sin incidental to it, than not to have the system. On the whole, it is the best possible system, not *on account of* the sin it contains, but *in spite of it*. On this view we see that God may be a perfect moral governor, and the highest possible good of the universe be secured; yet all sin be a real evil, opposed both to the welfare of the universe, and to the Divine will.

2. Reliance is placed on the passages which assert that God “works all things after the counsel of his own will,” that he does “his pleasure, in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth.” Eph. i. 11; Isa. xlvi. 10; Dan. iv. 35. These passages relate to what God does, not what man does. God is independent, he is the governor of the universe, and will bring rebels to justice. But these facts do not prove that all the conduct of his creatures is agreeable to his will. Human governments secure their general purpose, though they do not secure the perfect obedience of all their subjects.

3. Other passages ascribe evil directly to him. “I create evil.” Isa. xlv. 7. In this passage evil means punishment. Cruden. “Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears

heavy," &c. Isa. vi. 10; Mark iv. 12. A parallel passage will best explain these. "Their eyes *they have closed*." Matt. xiii. 13—15. Blessings abused become curses: what was designed of God to be to us a savor of life unto life, becomes to us, by our perversion of it, a savor of death unto death. "Hath not the potter power over the clay," &c. Rom. ix. 21, 22. This is explained in Jer. xviii. 1—10: "The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it: If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." No passage, probably, has been oftener quoted by the advocates of predestination than Rom. ix. 21, 22; but when explained in the light of Jere. xviii. 1—10, above, which is but an expansion of the same thought, it is seen not only to afford that theory no support, but to teach the opposite sentiment, viz., that the destiny of man depends upon his own voluntary conduct.

Acts ii. 23: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Christ was delivered to suffer (Acts iii. 18), to make an atonement for the world. John iii. 16; i. 29. Those who crucified him did it of their own will, else it could not have been with *wicked* hands. Such are the strongest

passages of Scripture adduced by the advocates of this doctrine ; but fairly interpreted, they give it no support.

4. Finally, it is argued that God could not accomplish his varied designs, could not direct the affairs of the universe, without being the author of every event. This is the same as asserting that God could not have a moral system, could not govern free, moral, accountable beings. It is the same as denying that there is, or can be, any moral government. But there are such governments among men, sustained by appropriate sanctions. Human rulers govern their subjects without producing their actions. Every man is held responsible for his own conduct. So also in the government of God. He governs the universe, but he is not the author of sin.

The doctrine of decrees, here noticed, is but an offshoot of the old system of fate, and is of pernicious tendency. True, it has been held by great and good men, though they never carried it out in practice. With good men it is mainly a theory. They allow it to have very little practical influence over themselves. Others, however, carry it out to its legitimate consequences, make it a cloak for sin, and thus it becomes subversive of true religion and sound morality. On this account its influence is to be deprecated.

The decrees of God may be divided into two classes :

1. Unconditional decrees ; as to create the world, to give Christ to make atonement.

2. Conditional decrees ; as to save those who endure in obedience to him to the end, to cast off those who persist in impenitence.

The decree, in its application to an individual agent, may be illustrated by the following syllogism :

Major : Whoever believes in Christ to the end of his life, shall be saved. [Will of God.]

Minor : Paul will believe to the end of his life. [Foreknowledge.]

Conclusion : Therefore Paul will be saved. [Decree.]

Knapp's Theol., 127.

Thus is the decree, so far as it relates to moral beings, conditioned, and founded on God's foreknowledge of the free acts of his accountable creatures. Every man is therefore responsible for himself, and the author of his own destiny. At the same time, God is the rightful ruler and sovereign of the universe.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD denotes his *provision* for the highest good of the universe—that he preserves and governs all beings and all things. This doctrine is proved from three sources.

I. *From reason.*

It is implied in the perfections of God. He created all things, he upholds all things. It requires the same power to *uphold* as to create; hence this preservation of creatures is denominated a continual creation. Were God to withdraw his supporting hand for a moment, all things would be annihilated. Not only are all beings and things sustained by him, but all their faculties and attributes. Such must be true of all objects that have not the ground of their existence in themselves: they must be wholly and continually dependent on the Great First Cause.

Some have denied this *immediate* supervision of God over his works, and constructed what may be termed a *mechanical* theory. Instead of making all things directly and continually dependent on God, they suppose that he has so constituted the powers of nature, that they continue and act of themselves; as the clock, when wound up, and put in motion, goes until it runs down. This theory is based on two misapprehensions:

1. That it is inconsistent with the *dignity* of God to be constantly occupied with the minute affairs of the universe.* This is making him altogether such a one as ourselves. To deny him this complete supervision of his works, would be to deny that he is Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent—that he is the infinite God.

2. It is also based on erroneous views of the attributes of being, and of the laws of nature. Some speak of them as though

* Even *Jerome* remarked: "The Divine majesty cannot stoop so low as to interest itself to know how many vermin are each moment produced on the earth, and how many perish; how many flies, fleas, and gnats there are; how many fishes the sea contains." Com. on Heb.

they were independent of God. This is a great error. The laws of nature are but modes of the Divine operation. We give them the name of laws, because of their *uniformity*. All created being, its attributes, and all the laws of nature, are constantly upheld and directed by the Almighty hand. Col. i. 17: "By him all things consist." Heb. i. 3: "Upholding all things by the word of his power."

II. The doctrine of providence is proved from experience. The history of the world, from the beginning, shows that God has presided over all its affairs. He has controlled the elements, and the laws and operations of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. I need only refer to the principles of natural theology, as developed in treatises on the various departments of the physical world to prove this, so far as irrational objects are concerned. And the providence of God in respect to moral beings is sufficiently obvious, not only from the laws of their being, and their outward circumstances generally, but from numerous express provisions for their welfare, as revelation, religious institutions, the Reformation.

III. From the Scriptures, which should be chiefly relied on in proof of this doctrine. The principal passages are the following: Ps. viii. 3: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained." Also Ps. xix; xc. 3: "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men." xci. 3: "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence." civ. 13, 14: "He watereth the hills from his chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth." cxxxix. 3, 16: "Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Matt. vi. 26, 30: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into

barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith." x. 29, 30: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." Acts xvii. 24, 25: "God that made the world, and all things therein. . . . seeing he giveth to all life and breath, and all things." James i. 17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." See also 1 Cor. iv. 7; Ex. iv. 11; Isa. xlvi. 10; Dan. iv. 35; Eph. i. 11.

These passages, with other texts with which they may be compared, teach the following truths:

1. That the Providence of God is *universal*. He is the Creator, Preserver, and rightful Governor of all creatures and all things. All are continually and entirely dependent on him. οὐδὲν ἀνευ Θεοῦ. "Nothing without God," who upholds and governs all.

2. Providence extends to the most *minute* objects and events.

3. It secures the *highest welfare* of the universe on the whole, and thereby brings the greatest possible glory to God.

4. It is adapted to the *nature of different objects*. As respects material things and irrational creatures, it is absolute and irresistible—in the former expressed by "laws of nature," and "attributes;" in the latter termed instinct. So that devout men have expressed the truth in asserting that God is seen in all his works. As Edwards. If one observes the established law, he enjoys its benefit; if he violates it, he suffers its penalty.

In the affairs of moral beings, Providence controls many things absolutely, though righteously; as their descent, birth, constitutional powers, external circumstances. All such things are regulated by established laws. This applies to all circumstances beyond their control. Still, as moral beings, they are *free*. Providence does not at all infringe upon the moral agency of any

one. God ever treats moral beings as such, and holds them responsible for all their conduct. Even the suicide acts under Providence, which sustains his powers, though free and accountable, as all men are for their conduct.*

5. Providence is to be divided into general and special. General providence is exhibited in his upholding all things, and

* Says Dr. Knapp : " From what has now been said, it appears (a) that God is the First Cause of all the powers which his creatures possess. (b) That God may be said, in a certain sense, to co-operate with the free actions of men, since he grants them the powers necessary to action, even to free action, and continually preserves the powers which he has given; and moreover is able to overrule their evil actions so as to make them promote the greatest good. But (c) since this language is liable to misapprehension, and might be understood in such a sense as would be inconsistent with the freedom of the will, and would represent God as the author and promoter of sin, it is better to make an accurate distinction between the *powers* themselves granted to moral beings, and the *exercise* of these powers in free actions. The powers of action come from God; but he has left the use and exercise of those powers to moral beings. . . . Thus, for example, when a man opens his mouth to lie or to forswear, God grants him the power at that very moment to open his mouth and to speak; but the *use* of this power is left to the man himself, and he might open his mouth to speak the truth and glorify God." Thebl., 242, 3.

Again he remarks on the *termination* of human life; " However contingent the time of our death may appear, it is still at the disposal of God. Job xiv. 5: 'Thou hast appointed his bounds which he cannot pass.' Ps. xc. 3: . . . These texts, however, and others of a similar nature, have been often erroneously supposed to imply an unconditional decree of God respecting the life and death of every man. Against this erroneous opinion, the Christian teacher should carefully guard his hearers. It may encourage the most rash and foolhardy undertakings; and when it is thoroughly believed and consistently carried out into action, it must lead to the neglect of the proper means of recovery from sickness, and of the necessary precautions against approaching danger. . . . The purpose of God is a conditional one, founded upon a knowledge of all the circumstances into which the individual who is the object of it would come, and also upon the knowledge of all his free actions. God foresees how the body of every man will be constituted; in what situation it will be placed; of what character his moral actions will be, and what consequences will flow from them. And from his foreknowledge of all these circumstances respecting him, God forms his purpose, fixing the termination of his life." ib. 243, 4.

In another place: " Even good men often bring upon themselves the sufferings which they endure by their own fault; they do not in all cases act according to the law of duty and the rules of prudence: and in such cases they cannot justly ask to be excepted from the common lot of faulty and injudicious men, and must expect to endure the unhappy consequences of their errors and follies. Christ says, Luke xvi. 8, 'The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light'—i. e., those whose affections are fixed upon the world, the worldly-minded, are often more wise with regard to the things of time than those whose affections are fixed upon heaven are with regard to heavenly treasures. The former have more care for their welfare in the present life than the latter for their blessedness in the world to come. Should pious and good men exhibit the same zeal and prudence which worldly men exhibit in managing their worldly affairs, how much would they accomplish for their own advantage and that of others! But since they do not always come up to this standard, they must suffer the evil consequences of their delinquency." ib. 251.

regulating the laws which pertain to them. Special providence is a departure from his ordinary operations, as in miracles and particular interpositions. That there are special interpositions of Providence, even in our own times, cannot well be doubted; although we may not be able to determine the instances with certainty.

The doctrine of Providence has been objected to as inconsistent with the existence of natural and moral evil.

1. This objection is met by reference to human ignorance. Many of these evils are only apparent, and go to confirm the doctrine of Providence. Much that has been said of the unequal and unjust distribution of good and evil in this world is manifestly erroneous. See Knapp's Theol., 249—252.

2. A great part of evil is the consequence of sin—of the violation of natural and moral laws. If Providence is not inconsistent with moral agency, neither is it with sin and its consequences.

3. The present is a state of probation—men do not meet a full retribution in this life.

The doctrine of Providence should be carefully distinguished from three things:

1. From *Pantheism*. God is *in* all things, but he is not all things, nor are all things God.

2. From *Fatalism*. He governs the universe: but over moral beings his government is moral.

3. From *necessity*. The acts of the brutes are necessitated; but the acts of moral beings are free. They are the authors of their own conduct, and alone responsible for it.

Providence, when regarded in the Scriptural and practical light, conduces much to piety.

1. It gives us elevated conceptions of God.

2. It induces humility in us, by making us feel our dependence.

3. It cherishes filial feelings towards God as our constant father and friend.

4. It increases our sense of obligation to love and serve him.

5. It tends to console us in adversity, and to render us peaceful and happy, under the assurance that a wise Providence overrules the affairs of the world; and that all things work together for good to them that love God.

Confusion has existed in the minds of some from want of discrimination on this subject.

1. From confounding God's Providence over the material world, and brute animals, with its exercise towards moral beings, as though its methods were the same in both cases.

2. From confounding general and special Providence. Even the latter does not infringe upon the freedom of moral beings, but is wisely adapted to it. Where proper regard is had to these distinctions, the subject is freed of most of its difficulties. It is a doctrine very precious to the believer.

LECTURE XV.

ON MORAL AGENCY.

Physical and Moral Agency distinguished. Proofs that Man is a Moral Agent—from Consciousness—from the Bible. In what Moral Agency consists—Intellect, Sensibility, Conscience, Will. Edwards' Theory. Process of Moral Action. Freedom of the Will. Power of Contrary Choice. Objections considered.

An agent in the primary sense [Lat. *ago*] is an actor. Whatever acts is an agent, and the office of one acting is termed *agency*. There are two kinds of agency.

1. *Physical agency*. Such is the agency of all material substances—the fluids, metals, and imponderables; also, of brute animals. Thus we have water power, chemical affinity, the agency of steam, wind, electricity. All these are mere material agents. Brute animals differ widely from them, being sentient, locomotive, and not wholly material. Still, they are necessary agents—right and wrong are not predicable of their actions. What properties, as affinity or gravitation, are to inanimate matter, instinct is to them. It is their law, and necessitates their acts. This may be cultivated, though to a limited extent.

2. *Moral agency*. Here the term moral is used in distinction from physical, and applies to all rational beings; to those of whose conduct right and wrong may be predicated. The words moral and morality are often applied to the social relation; and thus used in distinction from piety. In this distinction, piety relates to our duty to God; and morality, to our duty to man.

But the word *moral* is also used in a more general sense, as applicable to an accountable being, in distinction from physical as applied to brute animals and matter. This is the distinction to be made between moral agency and physical agency. Moral beings are subject to moral law; physical beings and substances, to physical law.

What is the difference between moral law and physical law? Both pertain to the government of God. Physical law is wholly dependent on his will, he created it, upholds and regulates it; he has a sovereign and absolute control of it. That iron is harder than lead, that water descends, that sulphuric acid combines with potassium, are wholly owing to the constitution which God has given these substances. Not so with moral law. It is immutable and independent of the will of any being whatever. That benevolence is right and selfishness is wrong, arise from no enactment or constitution of things. No appointment or constitution of things could make it right to render evil for good; any more than it could make two equal to five. We might have been created malevolent beings—still malevolence would have been wrong. Moral distinctions are as immutable as mathematical distinctions.

Now, a moral being is one subject to moral law,—one under obligation to do right, and to refrain from wrong; and of course capable of doing right or wrong. If one had not the power of contrary choice, he could not be responsible for his conduct. But more of this presently.

We are moral beings.

Proof. 1. From *consciousness*. We are conscious of being free, of being the authors of our own conduct, and responsible for it. We feel approved when we do right, and guilty for doing wrong. We have a sense of futurity, a desire for perpetual improvement, and a presentiment of retribution beyond the present life. These feelings are not the fruit of education, but are radical in our moral nature. We are as sure that we are moral and accountable beings, as we are of our existence. True, some have denied their freedom and accountability, and that there is any essential

distinction between virtue and vice. So some have denied that there is any spiritual existence, others, that there is any material world. But these were mere theorizers, dreamers, who dwelt among shadows, and made doubting their chief glory. Yet they, at least in all their ordinary affairs, had little regard for their theory, but managed their own affairs, and treated others on the principle, that every man is free and responsible for his conduct. We may, then, set it down as an established truth, that a consciousness of moral freedom and accountability is universal among mankind.

2. From *the Bible*. This doctrine is not formally taught in the Scriptures, but is everywhere implied, taken for granted. In every part of the inspired volume, in every dispensation, the moral agency of mankind is fully recognized. Man was created in the image of God, Gen. i. 27, and made lord of the creation, v. 28. God also gave him a law with an adequate penalty annexed. Ch. ii. 16, 17. The moral power thus conferred on man was never lost, though often abused. In the fall, man did not lose his moral agency. In the patriarchal dispensation, God was the direct lawgiver of the people; he communed with them personally, or by the intervention of messengers. He prescribed the laws, administered them, and punished the violators. Under the legal dispensation, a written law was communicated, embracing fundamental principles. Although special privileges were conferred on the Jews, yet all nations were regarded as his moral subjects, and held responsible to the government of God. Under the gospel, the moral agency and accountability of mankind are still more clearly seen. Their depraved condition, the remedial provision made for them, the terms of reconciliation to the Divine favor, all are based on the idea of the moral agency of the whole human family.

It will not be necessary to specify on a subject so well known. All the laws given by Jehovah to man, all the exhortations, warnings, denunciations, the infliction of punishment, all the Divine dealings with him, recognize man's moral agency. Among the numerous passages, the following may be consulted: Gen. i.

27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." ii. 16, 17: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Deut. xxx. 19: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." Josh. xxiv. 14, 15: "Now, therefore, fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve." Mark xvi. 15, 16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Luke xiii. 34: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not." John v. 40: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Acts vii. 51: "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." Rev. xxii. 17: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." See also Isa. i. 16—20; Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17; Acts ii. 37—40; iii. 19; x. 34, 35; xvi. 30, 31; Eph. iv. 30; Luke x. 42. It would be difficult to see how the Scriptures could set this subject in a clearer light.

We might here dismiss this subject. But it has long been made a theme of metaphysical discussion, so that, in a great degree, the doctrine itself is involved in the explanation. It becomes necessary, therefore, to examine it more in detail, to go into an analysis of the subject.

In what, then, does moral agency consist? What powers are essential to constitute man a moral being? I answer:

1. A spiritual and immortal nature. By his spiritual nature

man is distinguished from the clod : by the immortal principle, from the brute.

2. The intellect, understanding, reasoning faculty. This is the eye, the light of the mind. In idiots this faculty is not developed; in the insane it is disordered. Its natural development and action are essential to the moral agency of the subject.

3. The sensibility, heart, moral feelings. This is the seat of the emotions, desires, affections, passions.

4. Conscience. This faculty partakes both of perception and feeling. Its office is to discriminate between moral right and wrong, in ourselves and others, and to have appropriate feelings, viz., of complacency for right, and of compunction and disapprobation of wrong. Some regard conscience as the mere result of education. This is incorrect. We might as well assert the same of any other original faculty of the mind. Conscience may be undeveloped, or perverted; and the same is true of any other human faculty. There is the same ground for believing it to be an original power as any other, viz., its early, uniform, and universal presence in moral beings, equally with the judgment, memory, or consciousness. When unperverted and enlightened, its decisions are as uniform as those of the reason, or any other faculty. On account of existing diversities in exercise, we might as well deny that *tastes*, both mental and corporeal, are original powers, as to deny it of the conscience.

5. Free Will. This is the power of contrary choice or self-determination. It is *the* efficient power of the mind. In fact, will is the only proper *cause* in the universe. The will of God is the great first cause, and it is by virtue of the will that he is cause. Created moral beings are second causes, and it is by virtue of the will that they are causes.

Some philosophical systems,—Edwards' for example,—do away with will as a distinct faculty. They include it under the *affections*, asserting that “the will is always as the most agreeable,” and confound volition with the last desire. This theory not only denies the existence of will as a distinct faculty, but also denies real freedom to man. The action of the sensi-

bility—the affections and desires—is necessitated. They have no power of contrary choice. When an object is apprehended by them, it governs their action by necessary laws, over which they have no control. If an object is apprehended as lovely, it must be loved; as hateful, it must be hated; as desirable, it must be desired; and so on. The sensibility has no self-determining power. So of the intellect and of the conscience. There is no real freedom, no power of contrary choice in either of these faculties. They may act as they are acted upon, or according to the laws of necessity that govern them; and so may brutes, steam, acids. Neither have real efficiency or moral power in themselves. But consciousness asserts that we have real efficiency; a power of contrary choice; and the Scriptures recognize it. And such power not being found in the intellect, sensibility, or conscience, must reside in a distinct faculty—the will. Denial of will as distinct from the affections, is a fundamental error in mental philosophy. It is relinquished by most modern systems, as those of *Upham* and *Day*. The will is now generally regarded as a distinct faculty. That it is such appears from consciousness, common usage, and the uniform Scriptural representation.

The process in moral action may here be stated :

1. There must be an action of the intellect—some object must be perceived.

2. An action of the sensibility, in the direction either of favor or aversion.

3. Conscience pronounces upon the moral quality of the action proposed.

4. An act of the will called volition.

Here several remarks may be made :

1. Volition is the last act in the series.

2. Volition is always preceded by the action of the other faculties. They are the established antecedents.

3. No mental process is strictly free but volition. The action of all the other faculties but the will is necessitated.

4. No mental process up to volition possesses any moral char-

acter. An object may be perceived, desired, and judged by conscience, but without an act of the will, there is no moral act performed. The *character* of the mind may indeed be determined by the action of the sensibilities, but there is no sinful or holy act without volition.

Take a case for illustration. One sees an article of value. This is no sin. He may desire it without committing sin. Conscience may decide that he ought not to have it: still no sin is committed. But if, after knowing he ought not to have it, he endeavors to obtain it, he commits sin; because this endeavor implies an act of the will. Or if, after knowing the wrong, he cherishes a desire for it, he commits sin; for cherishing desire for a forbidden object is voluntary. We here see under what circumstances desires are sinful; just so far as they are cherished by the will, or are voluntary. No involuntary act or state is either sinful or holy.

5. The will is the moral faculty. It is the ultimate tribunal, and the executive power in man. It is our proper personality, as active and accountable beings. I do so and so. I can, or cannot do this or that. *I* is the will.* That an act be moral it must be free—that is, we must have the power of contrary choice respecting it. No one is to blame for doing what he could not but do, or for not doing what he is unable to do. Ability is a measure of responsibility. We are responsible just in the degree that we are able. Of this all are conscious. All governments uniformly recognize this principle, and so do men

* Tappan on the Will.

“The will is free. In saying so, I mean to assert, not merely that it is free to act as it pleases—indeed, it may be hindered from action, as when I will to move my arm, and it refuses to obey because of paralysis, I claim for it an anterior and a higher power, a power in the mind to choose, and, when it chooses, a consciousness that it might choose otherwise. This truth is revealed to us by immediate consciousness, and is not to be set aside by any other truth whatever. It is a first truth, equal to the highest, to no one of which it will ever yield. . . . It is a truth which may be expressed in words. It is so expressed when we say, the mind has in itself the power of choice. . . . It is in the sanctuary of the will, that freedom alone is to be found. . . . Moral good lies in the region of the will. By this I mean that every truly virtuous act must be a voluntary one. Sin is a quality of voluntary acts. It always resides in some mental affection or act in which there is the exercise of free will.” M’Cosh’s *Intuitions of the Mind*, p. 308 et. seq.

in their individual treatment of each other. Sin and holiness are therefore strictly predicable of the acts of will. All holiness and all sin are voluntary.

The doctrine of will, as here developed, is simple, and accordant with experience, besides being in harmony with every other department of truth. There is, however, another view of the subject too prevalent to be passed in silence. It is the theory that makes will determined wholly by motives—that it is free only in the sense of acting—that it has power only in the sense of putting forth volitions.* But as before seen, mere acting or producing effects, is no evidence of real efficiency or freedom in the actor. Mere natural agents act, produce effects, but only as instruments; they have no real freedom or power.

It is said, however, that the action of the will is different from that of irresponsible agents, for it is the faculty of a moral being; it acts in relation to moral objects, and in view of conscience. It is said that the action of the will may be as necessary as the action of a chemical substance in contact with another for which it has affinity, yet its act be moral—sinful or holy, because the act of a moral being—one having moral faculties, and subject to moral law. In other words, that the character of an act does not at all depend upon the freedom of the will.

Now, this is assuming the very theory to be proved—that there can be a moral, accountable being without the power of contrary choice, self-determination, free will. But consciousness precludes this assumption. If I am compelled to put forth a certain volition, so that I cannot help putting it forth, I should neither be praiseworthy nor blameworthy for that volition, any more than for any other necessary act. Again, consciousness determines respecting the fact. It definitely declares that the will is not determined by motives. It can act in the direction of what is perceived and felt to be the weaker motive, or it can suspend its action until other motives are called up. The will is not determined by motives, but determines itself in view of motives. It makes motives the ground of its action, but selects them as a

* Edwards on the Will.

sovereign. Sometimes it acts from motives furnished by the sensibility, sometimes from those furnished by the reason; sometimes it acts from what the mind perceives to be intrinsically the stronger motive, sometimes the weaker.* On no other principle could one ever feel self-approved or self-condemned, or practice self-denial, or be praiseworthy or blameworthy. On no other principle can the sin of Adam, or of the angels, or, indeed, any sin, be explained. In every such case there is a volition put forth consciously in the direction of the weaker motive.

In volition the will determines itself not by a volition, but directly. The acts of the will are volitions. The *causes* of will's acting so and so are not to be found in the motive, but in the will itself. Will is cause, motive the reason. Will is the only proper *cause*. Will is therefore free—that is, self-determined. In every moral choice, other circumstances apart from itself remaining the same, the will might have made a different, or even opposite choice. This is what is meant by its power of contrary choice.†

Intellect, moral sensibilities, conscience, and will, then, constitute moral agency. All are essential to it, though the will is more especially the moral faculty.

Several objections are urged against the doctrine of moral agency as here explained.

1. That it makes man independent of God. This we deny. It is entirely consistent with man's dependence on God for his existence, his powers, and the continuance and vigor of them. Besides, we are responsible to him for all our conduct. Is it impossible for God to govern free beings? Is government inconsistent with freedom? Are all who are under law slaves? The doctrines of real freedom and entire dependence are in perfect harmony.

2. That it contradicts foreknowledge. But cannot God foresee a free act? Does knowing an act to be free destroy its freedom? The foreknowledge of God relates as much to his own acts as to those of others. It can relate as well to free acts as to necessary ones.

* Upham on the Will. † Tappan on the Will.

3. That in many things we are not free, as in regard to our birth, constitution, external circumstances. I reply, we are free so far as we are responsible. God requires according to what we have.

4. It is objected that some moral beings are not free. Many affirm that sinners are not free to do good. But this view is opposed to reason, consciousness, and the Bible. The *cannot* of sinners is their *will not*. True, the sinner can make no atonement for his sins, or recover himself from his lost estate. But he can do his duty, what God requires him to do.

The government of God extends over all moral beings; and all are under an unchangeable obligation to do right. No one is under the necessity of committing a single sin. All in this world, or in any other, have the ability to do their duty. This is a moral axiom. There is no reason to doubt but even the lost are ever sinning as well as ever suffering. Much more, therefore, must it be allowed, that all, in a state of probation, are free to obey and live, or to sin and perish in their sins.

LECTURE XVI.

CREATION AND ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN.

Importance of Self-Knowledge. Its Sources. Mosaic account of the Creation of Man. Meaning of the phrase, "Image of God." Man's Original Physical Condition. The Soul—its Immateriality—Immortality. Of how many Parts does Man Consist? Garden of Eden. Man originally a Moral Agent. Moral Character formed. Propagation of the Soul.

Γινώθι σεαυτόν. "Know thyself," is an ancient precept of profound wisdom. It is surely as important to know ourselves, as to be familiar with any other department of knowledge. Nor would this seem to be a difficult field of study. But experience proves the contrary. Scarcely any subject has been more neglected, or is beset with greater difficulties, than the science of man. But it must be studied. It is the height of folly to be absorbed in the acquisition of wealth, in the strife of politics, or in the investigations of general science, and remain in darkness respecting our own condition: to be shrewd observers of others, and yet ignorant of ourselves: to be intent on matters of confessedly trifling moment, and neglect the questions of vital consequence to our eternal well-being. Such inconsistencies and paradoxes, however, are not rare.

There are several sources from which we may derive knowledge of ourselves:

1. From *Consciousness*. This informs us of our present mental states and exercises. We cannot determine from it abso-

lutely our moral condition, owing to the deceitfulness of the heart.

2. *Observation.* Human nature is essentially the same in all men, though discrimination is to be exercised respecting existing diversities.

3. *History.* No individual is isolated. The whole human race constitute one great family. To know ourselves well, we should trace the history of man to its origin.

To do this subject justice, we must study mankind from the creation down, through all their varied circumstances, to the present. We must study them in the various stages of their progress in civilization, the arts and sciences, in the cultivation of the earth, the care of flocks, the operations of manufacture, merchandize, and commerce; in all their civil, political, social, and religious relations. Combined with this study, there should be a diligent observance and careful comparison of men in all circles, in the sphere of our acquaintance. And the whole must be brought home to our own business and bosoms, with impartial and faithful self-examination. Nor should any complain of the greatness of this undertaking. The present life will not have been spent in vain, if in it we learn how to live. There is a life beyond, to which this is but the portal.

We are, on the present occasion, to consider THE CREATION AND ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN. The only reliable history of this subject is that given in the Scriptures. Numerous other professed histories of this matter are extant, but none of them are properly authenticated. Most of them are evidently fabulous, and abound with absurdities. The Scriptures, as we have already seen, are proved to be a revelation from God, and are hence entitled to our entire confidence. They treat directly of this subject.

An account of the creation of man is given, Gen. i. 26—28: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the

earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Also ii. 7—25. In the first instance it is given very concisely as the work of the sixth day. In the second it is repeated more at length as the foundation of the subsequent narrative. There is no evidence that any rational beings ever existed on the earth previously.

According to Scripture, Adam and Eve were the progenitors of the whole human family. Some, in view of existing diversities of form, feature, complexion, language, &c., have denied that all mankind sprung from one parent stock. But others, including the most celebrated naturalists, as Blumenbach and Agassiz, have maintained the opposite. They have been led by scientific investigations to believe in the unity of mankind. Existing diversities have been occasioned by circumstances of climate, country, and habit, as in many species of the lower animals. The testimony of Scripture is decisive as to the unity of the human species. Paul asserted before the high court of Athens, without fear of contradiction, that God "hath made of *one blood* all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." Acts xvii. 26.

We are informed that man was made "in the image of God." Gen. i. 27. Concerning the meaning of the phrase, "image of God," in this connection, there has been much controversy. Some argue that it denotes primitive holiness, which man lost by the fall; and in support of their position quote Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10. "Put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him." These passages will hardly authorize the theory in question. The language is simply that of *illustration*. That man has not lost essentially the image of God in which he was created, is evident from the following: Gen. ix. 6. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man

shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man." James, iii. 9. "Therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God." Also 1 Cor. xi. 7. These passages show that, since the fall, man is still made in the image of God. That before the fall he bore the Divine image *eminently*, is doubtless true.

Others make the phrase refer to the dominion given to man over the brute animals; but this dominion resulted as a natural consequence of his superior endowments. The image spoken of could not be a corporeal resemblance, for God is a spirit. But one explanation remains, and it is the one most obvious on the face of the narrative, viz. : that man was made in the *moral* image of God. God has the moral faculties of will, conscience, intelligence and sensibility. So has man, and he alone of all creatures on the earth. There was a resemblance, also, to God in man's original uprightness. God is holy; so the human faculties were all created good, adapted to virtue. Man first formed a holy moral character, and this primitive purity may be referred to particularly in such passages as Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10, above. Then he eminently resembled God. Still, as before observed, man did not, in the fall, lose the essential image of God. He was created a moral being. He has continued to be a moral being since the fall.

Man was created with a complex nature. God formed his body from the ground, and imparted to him A LIVING SOUL. Gen. ii. 7. That the body is material, is unquestioned. But was it created mortal, or subject to death? Evidently not, else death would not have been as it was, the penalty for transgression. Gen. ii. 17: "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." iii. 17—19: "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: . . . dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Rom. v. 12: "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." 1 Cor. xv. 21: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

Whatever else may be referred to in these and parallel passages, they evidently include in their meaning the death of the body, as the penalty for original sin.

Man had not, however, a necessary immortality. The fruit of the tree of life was the appointed *condition* of sustaining his corporeal immortality. This appears from the fact that after he had sinned, he was denied access to this tree, lest he should partake and live forever. Gen. iii. 22—24: "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." It appears, therefore, that if he had not sinned, the fruit of the tree of life would have sustained his natural life forever, as common food sustains it for a season. By being cut off from it, he became subject to death.

The soul is *immaterial*. Some deny this, but from no good reason. It has none of the essential properties of matter with which we are acquainted; and so far as we can discover, its attributes are wholly unlike those of matter. Nor is it a mere result of material organization. Such an assumption does not follow from the fact of its intimate connection with, and dependence upon, the bodily powers in this life. Revelation shows the contrary. God is an incorporeal spirit, so are the angels; so may man exist between death and the resurrection, as the Scriptures affirm.

The soul is *immortal*. It was made at first a LIVING soul. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul was held by most of the ancient heathen philosophers, though few of them were fully confirmed in it. Nature gives strong intimations of it. It was understood, in a degree, under the Jewish dispensation; though it was reserved for the gospel to bring it fully to light. There it is clearly revealed.

We refer to a few more of the proof texts. Eccl. iii. 21 : “Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth.” xii. 7 : “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was : and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

Luke xii. 4, 5 : “And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear : Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell.”

Matt. xxv. 46 : “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment : but the righteous into life eternal.”

2 Cor. v. 1, 8 : “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”

For further discussion of this subject, see Lectures XXXI. and XXXIV.

There has been considerable discussion respecting the constitution of man. One opinion entertained is, that man has three parts—a body, a soul, and a spirit;* in Greek, Σῶμα, Ψυχή, Πνεῦμα. In support of this position, such passages are cited as Luke i. 46, 47 : “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced,” &c. See also 1 Thess. v. 23 ; Heb. iv. 12, where the three are mentioned in connection. But these passages do not authorize the theory. They are but intensive expressions, denoting the entire powers, as Luke x. 27 : “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.” Or they may be used to denote different faculties, as we speak of the mind and heart, or the intellect, sensibility, and will. The terms soul and spirit, both in the Greek and Hebrew, are used interchangeably. In various passages the word soul must be referred to the immortal part, as Ezek. xviii. 4 : “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” Matt. x. 28 : “And fear not them which kill the body, but are

* Technically termed *Trichotomy*.

not able to kill the soul : but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." It cannot denote, then, the mere animal life. The other opinion, which we regard as the Scriptural one, is, that man has two parts—a mortal body, and an immortal soul or spirit ; and it is the union of these that constitutes natural life.

Adam was created a *man*, not an infant ; consequently his faculties were not developed in the ordinary way. He was fitted for the sphere of activity in which he was to move ; though we are not to suppose that he had all the knowledge and endowments which are acquired by culture and experience. He had an articulate language ; for he gave names to the brutes, and held converse with his Maker. He cultivated the earth, and partook of its fruits. There is no evidence that animal food was eaten until after the flood. The animals around him were tame and inoffensive. There was then neither moral evil nor natural evil in the world.

The place of man's original abode is not known. The tract of country, denominated the Garden of Eden, is now most generally supposed to have been within the bounds of modern Armenia. The four rivers mentioned in Gen. ii., as proceeding from the one that watered the garden, are believed to approach within thirty or forty miles of each other, in modern Armenia, and may have originally had one source.

To Adam was given woman as a help-meet. She was formed in a miraculous manner, from man, to be his companion and equal. Gen. ii. 18—24.

Man was created capable of obeying God, of keeping the Divine law. His endowments were ample, and his powers susceptible of unlimited improvement. He was placed at the head of terrestrial beings, made but little lower than the angels, with an exalted sphere, and most favorable circumstances for the development and exercise of his faculties. His duty is comprised in three particulars :

1. To himself. To cultivate, discipline, and invigorate all

his bodily and mental energies; and to direct them in the appropriate channels of activity. Labor is the duty of all. Especially should attention be given to the moral powers.

2. His duty to his fellow creatures. This is to love them as himself, to seek their highest good, one and all.

3. His duty to God. To love him supremely. To yield implicit obedience to all his laws, positive, natural and moral. The Bible sums up the whole duty of man in one word, *love*, Rom. xiii. 10, or the exercise of impartial benevolence.

Such was man as he came from the hand of his Creator. Such was the purpose of God in his creation, and to such an exercise were all the human powers adapted. Whatever we now find in his nature, experience, or conduct, at variance with this representation, must be referred to an *abuse* of the constitution and laws first given to man. And his duty still remains the same. Reference, then, to our original state will throw much light upon our present duty.

The original state of man was one of rectitude. God made him upright. Eccl. vii. 29; Gen. i. 31: "And God saw every thing that he had made: and behold it was very good." By this we do not understand that he was created *holy*, in the proper sense of that term; for holiness is strictly predicable of voluntary acts and states alone. Moral character is not created, but formed by the responsible agent.

Man was made a moral agent; he had the power of contrary choice; else a moral law would not have been given him. He was originally the same moral being that he is now, having the same natural faculties. True, he had not sinned, and, of course, felt none of the effects of sin. But he was susceptible of temptation, otherwise he could not have been tempted. Does any one contend that a susceptibility to temptation is a moral imperfection? If so, then Christ was morally imperfect, for he was tempted in all points as we are. Heb. iv. 15. Milton's statement of this subject is clear and Scriptural. He represents God as saying of man:—

“I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all the ethereal powers
 And spirits, both them who stood and them who failed.
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,
 Where only what they needs must do appeared,
 Not what they would ?

They therefore, as to right belonged,
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
 As if predestination over-ruled
 Their will, dispos'd, by absolute decree,
 Or high foreknowledge. They themselves decreed
 Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.”

—PARADISE LOST, Book III.

Man, in his state of original rectitude, had no sinful bias. He was naturally disposed to good, to love and serve God. Still he was able to obey or to disobey; he was capable of vice as well as of virtue; else he would not have been a moral, accountable being. His moral destiny was put in his own hands. He could obey and live, or sin and die.

A single point demands a closing paragraph. The origin of the soul is referred to God. Eccl. xii. 7: “God who gave it.” The question relates to the *time* and *manner* of its creation. With the theory of the pre-existence of souls, we have no concern, as it finds few advocates among Christian theologians.* There are two main opinions on the subject:

1. That God creates the soul at the moment of birth. The principal objection to this theory is, that it is difficult to reconcile it with the Scriptural doctrine of native depravity.

2. The second opinion is, that souls, like bodies, are *propagated*. This is objected to as favoring the materiality of the soul; but it is not necessarily so. It is well known, that mental and moral traits, almost equally with physical ones, are often inherited; though the appearance of this is frequently to be

* The theory of the *pre-existence* of souls, as held by Pythagoras, Plato, and the Jewish Cabalists, has recently been revived by Dr. E. Beecher, in his “Conflict,” and “Concord of Ages;” but it is too manifestly visionary to excite much attention.

ascribed to education. As this is not a matter of revelation, nor within the province of philosophy, nothing positive can be asserted respecting it. Still, it is most generally believed, that the intimations both of Scripture and reason favor the theory of the propagation of the soul.

LECTURE XVII.

TEMPTATION AND FALL OF MAN.

Different Methods of Interpreting Gen. iii. Arguments for the Literal Constitution. Test of Man's Obedience. The Serpent. Nature and Mode of the Temptation. Consequences of the First Sin—to the Serpent—to Man. Death—Temporal—Moral—Eternal. Natural Ability and Gracious Ability.

The Scriptural account of the temptation and fall of man is contained in the third chapter of Genesis. It will be proper, at the outset, to make some remarks upon the internal character of this portion of Scripture. Some regard the whole account as a *mythos*, an allegory, designed for moral instruction, such as to show the evil of improperly gratifying the sensual nature. But this mode of interpreting Scripture is very loose and dangerous. If we are at liberty to regard as allegory, or figurative representation, whatever does not suit our fancy as a narrative, the whole Bible is liable to be perverted. One may suppose that the account of the Fall is figurative, another that the history of Moses is figurative, another that the life of Christ is figurative. Such is indeed the practical result. *Strauss*, in Germany, has already published a book,* in which he treats of Christ as a mere allegorical personage. But this is wholly opposed to every correct principle of Scriptural interpretation. We have shown, on former occasions, that the Bible is subject to the same laws of interpretation, as any other authentic book.

* "Life of Jesus."

We admit that there are figurative passages in the Bible. The question now before us is, is this account of the temptation and fall of man one. That it is, is wholly assumption; for there is nothing in the account itself or in any other part of Scripture, which proves it to be figurative. It is asserted, indeed, that the account, as a literal narrative, is unworthy of the Bible, and of God. This, also, must be regarded as the conceit of those who make the assertion: for the great body of the wisest and best men, who receive the Scriptures as a Divine revelation, take no such view of the passage in question, but consider it a literal narrative.

In support of the literal construction, the following considerations may be urged:

1. It is proposed to us in its place in the inspired volume as a literal narrative, without any marks of a parable, allegory, or other figure.

2. It occupies an important place in Scripture, and forms a part of the fundamental history of man.

3. There is no intimation in any part of Scripture, that this important passage is figurative.

4. The passage as a whole, and various parts of it, are frequently, and in a variety of connections, referred to by the sacred writers, and always as a narrative of facts. Says Job xxxi. 33: "If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding iniquity in my bosom." Here allusion is made to Adam's concealing himself among the trees of the garden, after the transgression. In Rom. v. 12—19, Paul draws a parallel between Adam's sin and its effects, and the obedience of Christ and its results. If the latter is literal, so must the former be. See also 1 Cor. xv. 22: "As in Adam all die," &c. In addressing the Corinthians, the same apostle remarks: 2 Cor. xi. 3: "I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." In his epistle to Timothy, he founds an argument for the subjection of woman on the same account. 1 Tim. ii. 13, 14: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam

was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Other passages might be cited, but these are sufficient to evince the judgment of the inspired writers on the subject. We must, then, regard the account as a narrative of facts.

We have previously seen, that man was created a moral being. He was capable of virtue or vice, of obedience to God, or of disobedience. We learn, also, that he formed a holy character ; for a season he rendered obedience to the Divine law, and lived on terms of communion and intimacy with his Maker.

He was placed in a state of probation. God suffered his virtue to be tried. This fact, with the circumstances of the temptation and its result, we gather from the Scriptural account.

The fruit of "the tree of knowledge" was prohibited to man on pain of death. This was a test of his obedience. Of the nature of the tree of knowledge, or of its fruit, we have no definite information. From its being put in opposition to the tree of life, which sustained man's physical immortality, some have supposed its fruit to have been poisonous and even infectious. Nothing of this, however, is intimated either here or elsewhere in Scripture. All we learn from the inspired word respecting it, is, that it was a test of man's obedience. It is immaterial, so far as we can discover, what that test should be. God required of man perfect obedience. Here was a palpable test of his obedience, and this is enough for us to know. It might be called "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," from the use made of it in man's probation, and from the consequences of violating the injunction respecting it.

The agent in the temptation was the serpent. Ch. iii. 1. It was evidently not the serpent, as at present existing ; for it is there described as being the most sagacious of all the brute animals. From the curse subsequently pronounced upon it, it appears that primarily it did not crawl, but was degraded from its primitive condition. From the present state of serpents, then, we cannot determine their former powers. It is reasonable to conclude, that it was, of all the beasts, the most like man, and

his most intimate companion. Hence it was made the instrument of his temptation.

Still it cannot be supposed that any brute animal was the principal agent in the temptation of man. The Scriptures ascribe this work to *Satan*, the prince of fallen spirits, the grand adversary of God and man. In allusion to this the Devil or Satan is often called the serpent and "the old serpent." Rev. xii 9; 12—17; xx. 2. He was "a murderer from the beginning," and "a liar." John viii. 44. It appears, then, that Satan was the real tempter, but used the serpent as the instrument of the temptation. This view involves no greater difficulty than the demoniacal possessions recorded in the New Testament, or the speaking of the ass upon which Balaam rode. Num. xxii. 28. Eve exhibited no surprise at the speaking of the serpent, which is to be attributed to her inexperience, and familiarity with the brutes. Children talk with their pet animals; and, in the early stages of society, fables narrated in that style, like *Æsop's*, have unbounded popularity.

Respecting the nature and manner of the temptation, different views have been entertained. Some consider it a case of deception merely—that Adam and Eve, being inexperienced and artless, were deceived. But this cannot be admitted for various reasons:

1. This very excuse was plead in justification by both Adam and Eve without avail.
2. Their duty was clearly revealed to them.
3. Their transgression was known and voluntary.
4. They suffered a fearful penalty.

It may be admitted that they were in a degree inexperienced, but they knew they ought to obey God, and were therefore inexcusable in the transgression.

But how could beings upright and holy sin? That they were holy, and that they sinned, are unquestionable facts. But the explanation, in the view of many, is involved in great difficulty. Some say, God produced the evil volitions in them. Others, that he changed their moral disposition and character, before

they committed the offence. But this is to charge the Almighty with being the author of sin—is unscriptural, and wrong. Others are satisfied with saying, that God *permitted* them to be overcome by the temptation. If this means, that he suffered them to be assaulted by a temptation, which they could not resist, then how could they be to blame for yielding to it? If it means, that they were able to resist, but chose to yield, then so much should be stated. The fact is, they were free moral beings, endowed with the power of choice. They could obey or disobey God, as they chose. Hence they could commit sin. This frees the subject from serious difficulty. It is indeed strange, that with such strong motives to obedience, and so unworthy ones to disobedience, they should violate the Divine commandment; and so is the conduct of men now, even the best men, mysterious. Every sin is unreasonable; yet rational beings do commit sin.

In that temptation the appeal was made to the sensual nature of man. The forbidden fruit was regarded as good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and desirable to make one wise. Thus it appealed to “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.” 1. John ii. 16. Reason and conscience, the higher powers of the soul, condemned the act as wrong, and dissuaded from it. The lower propensities urged to its commission. The will decided in favor of the lower propensities; and thus and then the sin was committed.

We are not to suppose that the propensities, previous to this gratification, were depraved, or sinful. They, as well as all the other powers with which man was endowed, were good, capable of a right use. The perversion of them from their original design, their improper gratification, their abuse, was sin. Man, in his original state, was indeed susceptible of temptation. So was Christ. He was tempted in all points as we are, yet was without sin. A voluntary gratification of desire for an object known to be forbidden, was the first sin; and, indeed, it is a description of all sin. Sin consists in a voluntary subjection of the higher to the lower principles of our nature, an exaltation of sense above reason.

Man might have resisted the temptation, and not sinned. Temptation is not sin; but yielding to it is sin. Had man never yielded to temptation, he would never have committed sin.

The consequences of the first transgression, to those concerned in it, will be learned from the penalty threatened and the curse subsequently pronounced. The serpent was debased, degraded from his original condition, to a reptile. This is pointed out in ch. iii., v. 14: "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." The following verse contains the curse pronounced upon the old serpent, i. e., the Devil: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." His seed is the wicked. See John viii. 44: "Ye are of your father the Devil." The seed of the woman is Christ. Gal. iii. 16: "And to thy seed, which is Christ." And here is the first announcement of the Messiah. Satan bruises the heel in procuring the crucifixion of Christ, John xiii. 2: "The Devil having now put into the head of Judas Iscariot to betray him;" and in persecuting his followers. But Satan's head shall be bruised, as he shall shortly be trodden under foot, Rom. xvi. 20: "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly;" and finally cast into the lake of fire. Matt. xxv. 41: "Into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels. Rev. xx. 10: "And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever."

The penalty to man was death. This we understand to include three things:

1. Temporal death. He then became subject to toil, pain, disease, and natural death. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou

return." Gen. iii. 19: "In Adam all die." 1 Cor. xv. 22. To this it is objected that Adam did not suffer temporal death *in the day* that he partook of the forbidden fruit. I reply, he then became *mortal*, or subject to death. He was then separated from God, and denied access to the tree of life. This death of the body, consequent upon the first transgression, would have been irremediable and perpetual, had there been no gracious provision. It is "in Christ" that all are made alive in the resurrection. 1 Cor. xv. 22, latter clause.

2. But the consequences of the first transgression were not confined to temporal death. Man's *moral* state and character were changed. Before, he was holy. Then, he became a sinner. Before, he had communion with his Maker; then, he was driven from his presence. He lost his purity and innocence; and also his disposition to love and serve God. He did not cease to be a moral agent; he did not lose the power of choice, or the ability to do right or wrong. But, as before, he was disposed to good, then he became disposed to evil. This was, therefore, a moral death, a "death in trespasses and in sins." Eph. ii. 1.

3. Eternal death. So the Scriptures plainly teach. Rom. vi. 23: "The wages of sin is death." Ezek. xviii. 4: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Eternal death is included in the penalty for sin; not for a certain amount of sin, but for one sin, since the law requires perfect obedience. Had there been no gracious provision, therefore, Adam and Eve must have suffered the pains of eternal death.

Before dismissing the present subject, I wish to make a few more remarks upon the consequences of Adam's sin to himself. It is the more important that this subject should be thoroughly investigated, as the ablest writers have differed much respecting it. I can here only introduce the subject, to be more fully discussed hereafter. One class of theologians, including many Calvinists and Arminians, and both Calvin and Arminius themselves, have held that when Adam sinned, he lost ability to do good—that he was still capable of vice, but not of virtue.

Arminius, however, held that a *gracious* ability was given him, which Calvin denied. Others maintain that in the fall man did not lose the *ability* to obey God, and do right, but only the *disposition*. Still they admit that he became a sinner, exposed to the penalty of the law, unable to make atonement for his sins, or to recover himself from his fallen state.

If Adam, after he sinned, was *unable* to obey God, then he was no longer a moral being. A moral being is one who has the power of choice, who can do right or wrong. If one had not ability to do right, neither would he have ability to do wrong; he would not be a moral being.

If Adam was unable to obey God, then he was not under obligation to obey him. It is one of the plainest dictates of reason and conscience, as well as Scriptural doctrine, that no one is under obligation to do what he has not ability to do; or to blame for doing what he cannot help doing. Ability is commensurate with responsibility everywhere.

Others tell us he had a *gracious* ability. I ask how it could be gracious? If Adam, after sinning, was still under obligation to obey God, he must, as a matter of *right*, have had ability to obey. He might not have ability to make amends for his past sins; hence, if ever released from their penalty, that must be of grace. He might not have ability to recover, of himself, from his fallen state; he might not be able to do all that he would have been able to do, if he had not sinned; but he must have been able to do his duty—what God required him to do.

There are, as I conceive, two extreme positions that have been taken on this subject. One is, that when Adam sinned, he lost ability to do right, to obey God, ceased to be a moral agent. The other is, that, in the fall, he lost nothing but his innocence—that after the fall he could, of himself, do all that he could before.

The Scriptural view, as it seems to me, is that man never lost *ability* to obey God. Fallen man can make no atonement for his sins, he cannot recover himself, he cannot regenerate himself, he cannot, while remaining in a sinful state, exercise holy affec-

tions ; but he can do his duty, and what he cannot do of himself alone, he can accomplish through the influences of the Holy Spirit. He can yield to those influences. He can obey God. He cannot save himself, but he can yield to be saved by Divine grace. Adam, by transgression, became a fallen, ruined, helpless being ; but he did not cease to be a moral being, responsible to God. He was still able to do, either directly or indirectly, i. e., through the proffered aid of the Holy Spirit, all that God required him to do. Grace was indeed afforded him, but he must have possessed natural ability to avail himself of that grace.

LECTURE XVIII.

ON MORAL DISTINCTIONS.

Foundation of Moral Obligation. Immutability of Moral Distinctions. Nature of Holiness and Sin. The Moral Law. Benevolence. Selfishness. Different kinds of Sin.

Every one is conscious of a difference in the quality of moral actions. Some acts, both internal and external, are right, others wrong. Our first inquiry will respect the ground of this difference. What is the foundation of moral obligation? What makes an action right?

Some reply, its utility or expediency. Now there can be no doubt that a right act is useful and expedient; and that whatever is useful and expedient on the whole, is right. Still it cannot justly be affirmed that its utility constitutes its right. It would be more accurate to say, its right constitutes its utility. The doctrine of expediency is liable to lead to pernicious results. Our powers are limited. We can determine but little respecting the bearings of an act upon ourselves, much less upon the universe. Besides, we are exposed to the influence of prejudice. To assume, therefore, to decide upon the quality of moral actions, in ourselves or others, by their supposed utility, would be to introduce great difficulty and confusion into the system of morals, if not utterly to subvert its foundation.

Others add to the foregoing definition the explanation and sanction of law. In their view, law is the foundation of moral

obligation. That is right which is according to law. Here, if law denotes enactment, as it is understood to in such connections, there is at least a transposition of terms. The most that can be affirmed is, that law is founded on right; not that right is founded on law. Law is discriminating, not creative. Its province is to discern between right and wrong, prescribe rules, and affix appropriate motives and sanctions. This is its only legitimate authority: all beyond is assumption and usurpation. Nor can it be admitted that human law is infallible in its decisions. Who will deny that many human enactments have been unjust and oppressive? Who could contemplate the streets of Paris, on St. Bartholomew's eve, deluged with the blood of the unoffending Huguenots, without feeling that the rights of humanity had been grossly outraged? What man of correct moral principle can view the bondage under which millions groan in our own land as right? Yet such things are done under the fiat of legislation. They are according to law. Besides, experience proves the absurdity of this position, since without any material change of circumstances, enactments often conflict with each other; so that the infallibility of law is like the infallibility of the Popes, who abrogate and anathematize each other's decisions.

Real law is indeed founded on right, and is, hence, in all cases, binding; but, of course, it is not itself the *foundation* of obligation. Much less is that which is law only in name.

But we are referred to one law which is not thus exceptionable, viz.: the law of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, or in any other way. Here again we admit that the Divine will is the standard of right, and that in whatever manner it is made known, all moral beings are under obligation to conform to it. But this does not prove that the will of God is the foundation of right; that mere will can make an act right or wrong. The will of God may be safely referred to to decide what is right or wrong; but it does not *create* the distinction. Else it would be the merest truism to say, God does right. He could make right wrong or wrong right at pleasure. But in the Scriptures, God often makes appeals to show that his conduct is right; thereby

showing that were it the opposite of what it is, it would be wrong.

One conclusion only remains, viz. : that the distinction of right and wrong is ultimate, necessary, and immutable. Although God created all things, and constituted all their relations, he did not create right and wrong. The distinction could not be created. There could not be a moral universe without the existence of right, and the possibility of wrong. All admit that mathematical truths are necessary and immutable. It would be absurd to deny the necessary distinction between a square and a circle ; or to assert that the three angles of a triangle are greater or less than two right angles. The same may be affirmed of fundamental moral distinctions. It is impossible even for God to cause a thing to be and not to be at the same time, to make a truth a falsehood, or a falsehood a truth ; or make it right to exercise ingratitude towards a benefactor.

It is objected, that all men have not the same notions of morality—that what some consider right, others regard as wrong. This proceeds from error of judgment, or perversion of the faculties ; but does not disprove the reality of immutable moral distinctions. It is an important argument in support of the immutability of moral distinctions, that mankind have been agreed respecting the fundamental principles in morals. That virtue is better than vice, that gratitude is due to a benefactor, that treachery is base, and so on, are propositions that command universal assent, even in a depraved world. All existing discrepancies of judgment and moral feeling can be traced to ignorance or perversion. The structure of language, the laws and usages of society, and universal history, show that the difference between right and wrong is perceived and felt to be ultimate, necessary, and immutable.

What must be regarded as conclusive in the argument, is the fact already intimated, that the law of morals may be applied to God. The standard of right may be applied even to the Divine will. It is proper to say, that the Divine conduct is right, and that if it were the opposite of what it is, it would be wrong.

The Scriptures speak familiarly on this subject, justifying the ways of God, by appeals to reason and a sense of right; thus implying that were they otherwise, they would not be equitable. Gen. xviii. 25: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Ezek. xviii. 25: "Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear, now, O house of Israel: Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?" Isa. i. 18: "Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." But if the will of God is the foundation of the distinction between right and wrong, then he could annihilate the distinction, or change one to the other. Then it would not be true, as the Scriptures declare, that it is impossible for God to lie. Heb. vi. 18.

The fundamental distinctions, in morals, then, are necessary and immutable. Of course they depend on no accidents, legislation, or will. To suppose that right could be different from what it is, or wrong different from what it is, would be absurd. There are various ways of ascertaining what right or wrong is. But it is one thing to seek the *evidence* that a thing is right or wrong, and quite another to ask for the *cause* of its being so. The first is entirely proper, the latter absurd. To ask *why* virtue is right, is as absurd as to ask why two and two are equal to four.

After this preliminary discussion, the way is open to the investigation of our present subject. It is important that this fundamental question respecting the immutability of moral distinctions should be settled at the outset. For if the distinction between virtue and vice is only conventional, or founded on expediency, the effort to establish any principles in the case would be hopeless.

It cannot be doubted that much of the vagueness and looseness, both theoretical and practical; with which the whole subject of morals has been regarded by multitudes, must be ascribed to erroneous views of these fundamental principles.

Holiness denotes conformity to moral right. Sin is a violation of moral law, or a want of conformity to it. A moral law is a

command to subjects, issued by a rightful moral governor, with adequate sanctions. Obedience to such law is holiness; disobedience to it is sin. The original terms קדוש and ἅγιος translated *holy*, signify, primarily pure, clean, in a moral sense. From this meaning are derived the renderings sacred, set apart, consecrated, sanctified, and, remotely and figuratively, they denote mere ceremonial purity. The opposite, sin, signifies *moral impurity*, expressed in our version and in the original by a variety of terms. It is obvious that holiness and sin pertain exclusively to our moral nature. Nothing merely physical is either sinful or holy.

Holiness and sin are terms expressive of our moral or spiritual condition. Strictly speaking moral *acts* alone are sinful or holy; although the terms are also applied to moral states, and moral beings. Every moral act, state, and being is either sinful or holy—there is no neutral ground. It is essential to a moral act,

1. That it be the act of a moral being—no other is capable of it. But all the acts of moral beings are not moral acts.

2. Hence there must be light and opportunity. An act might be sinful in one being which would not be sinful if committed by another. If one has not light, and has not had opportunity to obtain it, in a given case, he might mistake, but he would not sin in that case. Hence, the more the light and opportunity enjoyed, the greater the magnitude of the offence. No moral being is without a degree of light and opportunity; else he would not be accountable. And every one is accountable for what he has. Those who live under the gospel, are accountable for its light: those under the law, for that; and those who have no revealed law, are accountable for the light of nature.

3. Every moral act is voluntary. The intellect enlightens; the sensibility excites; reason and conscience discriminate in regard to duty; the will decides. The will, then, is the governing power. No involuntary act is either sinful or holy; none is such but a voluntary act. Every voluntary moral act

conformed to right, is holy ; every voluntary moral act not conformed to right, is sinful.*

The seat of the moral affections is denominated the heart. But these affections are voluntary. Involuntary affections are not moral. Holiness, as before seen, is a Divine attribute. It must be the same in *kind*, both in God and man.

The written law is an *expression* of moral obligation. As already seen, the obligation does not depend on any enactment. Still there is a great utility in proper formulas. Such a formula was the law of the ten commandments, communicated through Moses, Ex. xx. 2—17, binding on all men, both before and since its promulgation. In the New Testament, it is comprehended in two general precepts, love to God, and love to our neighbor, Matt. xxii. 37—40, or in one word, love, Rom. xiii. 10. Love is the sum of moral obligation, the fulfilling of the law. It is also called benevolence—good willing. It implies, that we seek the highest good of all beings. As it is impartial, its highest exercise is towards God, since he possesses infinite excellence. We are required to love God with the whole heart, i. e., supremely. We are to regard the rights and interests of all other beings, according to their respective claims on us. We should love our neighbor as ourselves, and do to him as we would have a right to expect him to do for us, if we were in his circumstances, and he in ours. We are not required to bestow the same affection or attention upon all ; but to act appropriately to our relations and circumstances—to have a proper regard to our own interests—to those of our families, to the community in which we dwell, to those more remote, and to all moral beings. Such is disinterested benevolence, or holiness. Love, though exercised towards so many different objects, is still the same ; there is no conflict,

* Some assert that the moral character of an act lies wholly in the intention. This is not strictly accurate, since we are accountable for our intentions. We are under obligation to have the best intentions possible, with the light and opportunities we enjoy. Paul was sincere in persecuting Jesus, yet he had to repent of it, because he might have known better. When our intentions are conformed to the best light we can obtain, we are justified in exercising them, not otherwise. And in this case, the intention gives character to the outward act.

since its exercise, as to manner and degree, is according to right. The difference is not in the principle, but in the objects towards which it is exercised. In respect to God and all holy beings, it is a love of complacency—towards the wicked, our enemies, it is a love of pity.

The opposite of disinterested benevolence is selfishness. This is a supreme regard to our own supposed interests—a regard exclusive of the interests of others, except as secondary to our own. The selfish man, instead of loving all beings as he ought, really loves himself alone, and is reckless of the rights of others. Self is his god, his own will is his law. He would sacrifice the universe, if possible, to his own aggrandizement. Some confound selfishness with self-love. But self-love, in a proper degree, is a good principle. It is right for us to love ourselves, to cherish our own interests—we should do wrong if we did not. Selfishness is excessive self-love—so inordinate as to trample on the rights of others. So far from being the same as self-love, it is inconsistent with it. Selfishness sacrifices the good of the possessor equally or more than that of others. This is the Scriptural view. “The wages of sin is death.”

That benevolence is holiness, and selfishness sin, is obvious. If an individual really loved God and all other beings as he ought (this love inducing, of course, the appropriate action), he would do right in all things. And if all moral beings did so, there would be no sin. Each would then love God supremely, cherish his own true interests, and love all men as himself. There would be no moral evil in the world, and earth would be a paradise. There would be no war, slavery, intemperance, lewdness, pride, envy, extortion, or excess; but all would tend to promote each other's welfare. God is infinitely benevolent. Benevolence is the law of his nature. “God is love.” 1 John iv. 8. Christ was benevolent. He exhibited it throughout his mission, life on the earth, sufferings, and death; and still exhibits it in his intercession for men. All holy beings are benevolent just in the degree that they are holy. “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and the

widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James i. 27.

Selfishness is the opposite. It is reckless of right. It lies at the foundation of all impiety and wickedness, in individuals, communities, and nations. If universally prevalent, there would be no good—the universe would be a hell. "The love of money is the root of all evil." 1 Tim. vi. 10. Selfishness is strikingly displayed in the parable of the foolish man, who congratulated himself on having much goods laid up for many years; and said to his soul, "Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." The same will stand for the final condemnation of those on the left hand. "I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat," &c. "Inasmuch as ye did it not to the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me." Matt. xxv. 42—45.

The sin of omission is neglecting our duty; the sin of commission is doing something forbidden. Being both voluntary, they are positive transgressions, and not susceptible of a material distinction.

Secret sins are those confined to ourselves. Presumptuous sins are those committed under aggravating circumstances.

Sins of ignorance, if the ignorance is unavoidable, are strictly not sins, but mistakes. Sins of infirmity arise from constitutional weaknesses. Their turpitude is in proportion to their voluntariness.

A violation of the Divine law is termed sin; an offence against human law is crime. Sin cherished to a habit is vice.

The unpardonable sin, or sin against the Holy Ghost, so far as it can be committed at the present day, consists in obstinately rejecting the proffers of grace, until they are withdrawn. When the Holy Spirit leaves a sinner, his case is hopeless. Every impenitent soul is constantly liable to grieve him finally away. Some, we have reason to believe, long before death, have sinned away their day of grace, and been given over to hardness of heart, and inevitable ruin.

LECTURE XIX.

HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

Proofs of Universal Depravity—War—Slavery—Idolatry—Immorality—Scriptural Testimony. Depravity total—Definition and Proof. Depravity native. Objections. Proof. Not in the Body merely, but in the Soul. Depravity Hereditary. Theories considered.

Of all the subjects which the student in theology has to investigate, none comes so painfully within the cognizance of individual experience as the one now before us. It is one, however, of great practical importance, as a right view of it is essential to any correct system of Christian doctrine. Here we have little occasion for abstruse and speculative theories. We must study the subject as it is asserted by experience, and revealed by the Searcher of hearts.

I. We inquire, in the first place, for *the general facts* respecting our moral condition. If we consult history, we find recorded the prevalence of wickedness in all ages, and among all nations. What do men hold dearer than life? Yet the history of our race is written in blood. We need not describe the horrors of war—the field of carnage; the confused strife; garments rolled in blood; the sufferings and vices of the camp; the army in its march; cities burned; fields laid waste; homes desolated; widows and orphans; the shattered physical and moral constitutions of survivors. Yet the annals of history are filled with war.

Notice, also, the prevalence of injustice and oppression. The

mass of mankind have adopted the maxim that "might makes right." The stronger subdue the weaker, and grind them in oppression. Slavery, in almost every revolting form, has had wide prevalence. Nor is it confined to chattel slavery. The same principle abounds yet more. Men acknowledge, in theory, the doctrine of natural rights, the equality of the whole species, yet violate those rights at every opportunity. Every act of fraud, injustice and oppression, is of the same nature as slavery. Notice, also, intemperance, licentiousness, and every species of vice; how degrading, yet voluntary, and awfully prevalent.

Having considered the most obvious facts in regard to man's conduct to his fellows and himself, next take account of his relation to God. Here the first fact that meets us, is idolatry in all its gross forms—pervading almost the entire world—the enlightened and refined, as well as barbarous portions—enrolling among its votaries renowned poets and philosophers, as well as the most ignorant and superstitious. In its main features the same, whether worshipping fictions of the imagination; or the sun, moon, and planets; fire, water, rivers, plants, and vegetables, blocks and stones; or, as in modern infidel nations, goddesses of reason. All alike tends to efface the knowledge of the true God from the mind, to pervert the understanding, and corrupt the morals. One small nation only, forms an exception, during the first forty centuries of the world's existence; and they were an unbelieving, stiff-necked, rebellious people. Nor has the moral condition of the world been materially improved since. After all that the gospel has done, it is still true in respect to the great mass, that "darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people."

You may take now the moral law as delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai; and you will find that mankind have universally violated its precepts. Every man is self-condemned. There is not a man upon earth, there never was one, who can say with a clear conscience, I never sinned—nay, who is not obliged to confess that he has virtually, in thought or deed, violated every commandment of the decalogue—not inadvertently, but know-

ingly ; not a few times, but wilfully and obstinately in innumerable instances. These are humbling truths, but truths which every honest man has to acknowledge.

The ancient philosophers and moralists felt and confessed the great facts respecting human depravity—they endeavored to prescribe a remedy, but failed, and gave up in despair. After all human expedients had been exhausted, in the fulness of time, God himself appeared in the person of Jesus Christ to accomplish our salvation. Our Saviour promulgated a code of morals of unexceptionable character, exemplified it in his own blameless life, and sanctioned it by numerous miracles. To say nothing of the higher nature of the gospel scheme, it must be allowed that, contemplated merely as a plan for the moral renovation of mankind, no one could be better adapted to that design. It was perfect and entire, wanting nothing, and proclaimed under the most favorable circumstances. Yet how has it been treated? As a general truth, it has been either neglected, rejected, or grossly perverted. Here and there one has received it, and realized its rich benefits—while the mass of men are as bad or worse than if the scheme of grace had never been devised, or made known.

The testimony of Scripture coincides throughout with human experience on this subject. Before the flood, it is declared, Gen. vi. 5 : “ God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of man’s heart was only evil continually.” Afterwards, when establishing his covenant with him, he repeated, Gen. viii. 21, that “ the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth.” The Psalmist, describing the state of the world in his time, asserts, Ps. xiv. 2, 3, that “ they are altogether become filthy ; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” The prophet Jeremiah declares, xvii. 9, that “ the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” The current Scriptural representation is, that men are “ destitute of the love of God,” “ servants of sin,” “ dead in trespasses and sins,” “ all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” “ the whole world has become guilty before him,”

and without an entire moral change, or regeneration, none can obtain acceptance with God, or find salvation. John v. 42: "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." Rom. viii. 7: "The carnal mind is enmity against God." John iii. 6: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Gal. v. 19—21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." See also 2 Chron. vi. 36; Ps. li. 5; Eccl. vii. 20; Isa. i. 5, 6; John iii. 3; Rom. iii. 9, et. seq.

In whatever aspect, then, we view this subject—whether we consult our own experience, or observation, the confessions of men, the works of statesmen, poets, and moralists; the laws and usages of society, the history of ancient and modern nations, civilized and savage, Jews, Pagans, Mohammedans, and nominal Christians; whether in regard to the efforts of professed reformers, or the efforts of men to reform themselves; the character and reception of the Bible, the Saviour, and the influences of the Holy Spirit; or finally, receive the testimony of Scripture, express and implied—all declare the universal sinfulness of mankind; so that it is strictly according to truth that God "has concluded all in unbelief," and sin. Rom. xi. 32; iii. 9. Such is man without the renewing, sanctifying grace of God. And he should know it. All means for saving the sinner will be fruitless, unless he is convinced of his sinfulness. It is not mere improvement that he needs, but *moral transformation*.

II. We have seen that human depravity is *universal*. We remark, in the second place, that it is *total*. By this we do not mean that all are as bad as they can be. There are degrees in wickedness. The exemplary moralist is not as depraved as the one who, with equal light, has become desperately vicious,—a pirate, or midnight assassin. We freely admit that many impenitent persons have amiable qualities, and do many praiseworthy deeds; but these do not constitute them holy, or give them any degree of holiness. Many who, as fathers, husbands, mem-

bers of society, patriots, and philanthropists, have manifested a very commendable spirit, have yet been indifferent to religion, and even avowed infidels. Piety consists in supreme love to God, impartial love to man, and unreserved devotion to the Divine will. And this no one has without the renewing grace of God. What Christ said to the Jewish moralists, is applicable to every unregenerate man. John v. 42: "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." In regard to moral character, there are but two classes, the righteous and the wicked. No man can at the same time serve God and Mammon. Every man is either sinful or holy. There is no middle or neutral state. No unrenewed man, then, possesses any degree of holiness, but is wholly depraved.

Again, when we affirm that man is totally depraved, we do not mean that he is degraded from his rank as a man. He has not, indeed, the uprightness and purity which Adam possessed before the fall. It is true, also, that, by reason of sin, the human powers have been greatly disordered, obscured, enfeebled, vitiated in their exercise. Yet man is still a moral being. If the servant of sin, he is voluntarily so. He is able to obey God, or disobey him. Life and death are still set before him. He can still do whatever God requires him to do. Not that he can atone for his sins, or regenerate himself; nor is he required to; but he can yield to gracious influences, whereby he may be made holy. All unregenerate men are totally depraved, in the sense that they are without holiness, and under the dominion of sin.

PROOF.

1. Our own experience. Every Christian acknowledges that such was his state before regeneration.

2. The confessions of men in general. The more they know of their own hearts, the more do they feel their sinfulness—that apart from grace there is nothing morally good in them.

3. The atonement. This would not have been necessary, had not man been utterly fallen and depraved; or had he been able to recover himself without it. As Christ died for all, we must infer the fallen, lost state of all.

4. The necessity of regeneration. This the Scriptures decidedly affirm. John iii. 3: "Except a man [i. e., any man] be born again," &c. Regeneration is an entire moral change. And as this is essential to the salvation of every sinner, all sinners are totally depraved.

5. The current Scriptural representation of the state of unrenewed men. They are described as "having no hope," "at enmity against God," "dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. ii. 12; Rom. viii. 7; Eph. ii. 1.

III. Human depravity is *native*. Before the fall, man was by nature holy; he delighted in God and spiritual things. Since the fall, he is disposed to evil; he has a fallen nature, a corrupt propensity, he is wilful, selfish. This inclination or disposition to evil is not acquired, but is native, and manifest in the earliest moral developments.

The doctrine of native depravity has been strenuously opposed by Pelagians, Socinians, and Unitarians; but has always been received by all evangelical denominations. Objectors quote the language of Christ respecting little children. Matt. xviii. 3: "Except ye be converted and become as little children." xix. 14: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Reference is here made to the humility and docility of children; not to assert that they are fit subjects for the kingdom of heaven, as is evident from the context.

We are informed that at this time the disciples came to Jesus with the question, "Who is the *greatest* in the kingdom of heaven?" To rebuke their pride, and give them an example of humility, he placed a little child in their midst; and taught them the necessity of renouncing their selfish aspirations, and being *in this respect* like little children. So, also, when little children (according to a custom) were brought for his blessing, he taught his disciples a similar lesson. He did not assert that little children are members of the kingdom of heaven; but said, "of such" τοιοῦτων, i. e., of those *like* or *resembling* them in these respects. Says *Barnes* in his Notes on the above passages: "Children are, to a great extent, destitute of ambition, pride, and haughtiness.

They are characteristically humble and teachable. By requiring his disciples to be *like them*, he did not intend to express any opinion about the native moral character of children, but simply that, *in these respects*, they should become like them. . . . He does not say *of these infants*, but of such persons as *resembled* them, or were *like* them in temper, was the kingdom of heaven made up."

Again, it is asserted that they are harmless and innocent. We admit they are not guilty of actual sin, for they are not capable of it. But they have a fallen nature, a corrupt propensity. Nor can this be ascribed wholly to bodily infirmity and the influence of bad example. For these will not account for the evil propensity so early manifest in them, nor for the fact that all who come to the period of accountability, sin as their first moral act, and continue sinners until renewed by the grace of God. If children are good by nature, could not one, at least, have been trained up holy, so as not to have needed the atonement of Christ, or regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and thus have convicted the Scripture of falsehood?*

We do not assert, the Scriptures do not assert, that infants are actual sinners. They are incapable of moral exercises; consequently are neither sinful nor holy. But they possess the elements of a moral nature, and that a fallen nature, so that it is certain, that as soon as developed, without the sanctifying grace of God, its first moral exercises will be sinful. This fallen state, this corrupt propensity in them, is what is denominated their native depravity. But they do not incur guilt as actual transgressors, until they come to choose for themselves as accountable agents.

Proof of Native Depravity. Ps. li. 5: "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Iviii. 3:

* Even heathen philosophers, by the study of human nature, came to the same conclusion. *Plato* in his *Meno*, says that "children *by nature* are not good; for in that case, it would only be necessary to shut them up, in order to keep them good."

Cicero also expresses strongly the same sentiment: "We seem to have sucked in error almost with the nurse's milk." "*Pæne cum lacte nutricis errorem suxisse videmur.*" *Tusculan Questions*, iii. 1.

“The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.” These passages prove, at least, that children commit sin as soon as they are capable of it. Paul asserts that his brethren were “*by nature* the children of wrath, even as others.” Eph. ii. 3. We may refer, also, to those passages which assert the necessity of regeneration in order to salvation.

We do not affirm, then, that men are guilty of Adam’s sin, or guilty for having the nature with which they are born, or guilty for aught but their own actual sins. Nor do we hold that when they come to the period of accountability, they are under the necessity of sinning—have not the power of choice between good and evil. But we do hold that human nature is fallen; and that such is the natural propensity to evil, that all, without exception, do sin as soon as they are able to, and continue in sin until renewed by Divine grace.

We cannot admit the dogma that human nature is not fallen; that it is still as upright and pure as it was in Adam before the fall. All experience and Scripture contradict it. Nor can we allow that the evil is confined wholly or chiefly to the body. This opinion has indeed had extensive prevalence. Witness the bodily tortures of the heathen, fasts, celibacy, and various penances of Mohammedans and Catholics. All such superstitions grew out of the practice of assigning depravity to the body, and is much of a piece with the old Gnostic theory of the inherent evil of matter. The whole is pointedly condemned by Scripture. 1 Tim. iv. 1—4: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.” We are not required to destroy or torture any of our

faculties; or to subvert any of the institutions which God has ordained. We are to use the world, not abuse it.

Those who make depravity wholly or mainly bodily, overlook a primary truth in regard to the human constitution, viz., that the soul, not the body, is the moral and accountable part. All the moral powers pertain to the soul. The body is but the instrument of the mind. No moral exercise, then, can be predicated of the body, or any of its functions. True, the bodily powers are affected by sin, but the mind or soul only is accountable.

We design to go into no philosophical analysis of this subject. The Bible does not. But both experience and Scripture are clear on the point that, before we become morally accountable, we have a propensity or disposition to evil. In infancy the moral nature exists but in the germ and undeveloped; yet it is such that, without a change, it is certain that when the subject comes to the years of accountability, he will form a sinful character. As Christ died for all, and as mankind receive, at least, as great benefit from Christ as injury from Adam (Rom. v. 12—19), we infer that all dying in infancy are saved through Christ. Those, simply passive in the fall by Adam, are passive in the restoration by Christ. But those who become actual sinners, do so by their own volition; consequently, if saved by Christ, it must be on condition of voluntary obedience to him.

We close the discussion on these points by a few references. Says *Arminius*, "Private Disputations:" "But since the tenor of the covenant into which God entered with our first parents was this, that if they continued in the favor and grace of God, by the observance of that precept and others, the gifts which had been conferred upon them should be transmitted to their posterity, by the like Divine grace which they had received; but if they should render themselves unworthy of these favors, through disobedience, that their posterity should likewise be deprived of them, and should be liable to the contrary evils; hence it followed, that all men, who were to be naturally

propagated from them have become obnoxious to death, temporal and eternal, and have been destitute of that gift of the Holy Spirit, or of original righteousness. This punishment [or consequence] is usually called a privation of the image of God, and original sin" [or native depravity].

Says *Watson, Theol. Institutes*, Part II., Chap. XVIII., p. 360: "It is only, then, by the Scriptural account of the natural and hereditary corruption of the human race, commonly called original sin, that these facts are fully accounted for; and as the facts themselves cannot be denied, such an interpretation of the Scripture as we have given above is, therefore, abundantly confirmed.

As the fact of a natural inclination to evil cannot be successfully combatted, some have taken a milder view of the case; and, allowing these tendencies to various excesses, account for them by their being natural tendencies to what is pleasing, and so, for this reason, they deny them to be sinful, until they are complied with and approved by the will. This appears to be the view of Limborch, and some later divines of the Arminian school, who, on this and other points, very materially departed from the tenets of their master. Nothing, however, is to be gained by this notion, when strictly examined; for, let it be granted that these propensities are to things naturally pleasing, and that, in excess, they are out of their proper order; yet, as it happens that, as soon as every person comes to years to know that they are wrong, as being contrary to the Divine law, he yet chooses them, and thus without dispute, makes them sins; this universal compliance of the *will* with what is known to be evil is also to be accounted for, as well as the natural tendency to sinful gratifications. Now, as we have proved the universality of sin, this universal tendency of the will to choose and sanction the natural propensity to unlawful gratification is the proof of a natural state of mind not only defective, but corrupt, which is what we contend for. If it is said, that these natural propensities to various evils in children are not sinful before they have the consent of the will, all that can be maintained is that they are not

actual sins, which no one asserts ; but as a universal choice of evil, when accountableness takes place, proves a universal pravity of the will, previous to the actual choice, then it inevitably follows, that, though infants do not commit actual sin, yet that theirs is a sinful nature."

Finney, Theology, Lecture XXXV., pp. 450, 451, 453, lays down and establishes the following propositions :

"V. Mankind are both physically and morally depraved.

VI. Subsequent to the commencement of moral agency and previous to regeneration, the moral depravity of mankind is universal.

VII. The moral depravity of the unregenerate moral agents of our race, is total."

IV. *How is Native Depravity to be accounted for?* Whence arises this universal propensity or bias to evil? This is a matter which cannot be determined by human speculation. Divine revelation alone can settle it. And the sacred oracles are explicit on the subject. They represent that *Adam* was created upright. He sinned and fell, and in consequence all his posterity are born with a nature fallen and corrupt, like his after the fall. These facts are recognized throughout the Bible. It will be sufficient to refer to a single passage, Rom. v. 12—19. There we are taught that "by one man sin entered into the world," "through the offence of one many be dead," "by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation," "by one man's disobedience the many [i. e., all] were made sinners." In these various ways, in the course of a few sentences, does the apostle affirm the connection of Adam's sin with the fallen condition of his posterity. Such connection, then, cannot be denied without denying the authority of this part of the inspired oracles.

We do not understand this connection, according to the theory of Edwards, that Adam and all his posterity constituted but one moral person, like a tree and its branches ; so that his act was theirs, and they literally sinned in him. This theory is inconsistent with our individual personality and accountability, and is opposed both to consciousness and Scripture.

Nor that the sin of Adam is imputed to his posterity, so that they are guilty of, and condemned for, his sin. This is impossible. The evil consequences of one's conduct may, and often do, affect his posterity ; but they are not responsible for his conduct. The Scriptures no where teach that any one is guilty of other than his own sins, but the contrary. That mankind have *suffered* in consequence of Adam's sin, no believer in revelation can deny ; but that they are *punished* for that sin, the Scriptures no where assert.

The *manner* of the connection between the sin of Adam and the fallen condition of his posterity, we do not attempt to explain. We rest upon the Scriptural declaration of the *fact*. Adam was upright : he sinned, and fell : in consequence all his posterity are in a fallen state ; both the bodily and mental powers are weakened, disordered ; the propensity to evil predominates ; so that all, as soon as the moral powers are developed, choose the ways of sin, and continue in sin, until renewed by Divine grace. Still, none are guilty or condemned for aught but their own voluntary transgressions.

LECTURE XX.

NECESSITY OF THE ATONEMENT.

God's Moral Government. The Moral Law and its Sanctions. Modes of obtaining Peace with God. Sacrifices—their History and Object. Christ's Sacrifice. Moral Reformation Insufficient. Repentance and Faith. Christ our only Hope. In what Sense the Atonement of Christ is Necessary.

God exercises a moral government over the universe of rational beings. All moral beings are responsible to him. Moral government implies three things: 1. Moral subjects; 2. A moral governor; 3. Moral laws. Government must have authority—its laws must have adequate sanctions. Justice is an attribute of all good government. If the rights of subjects may be infringed with impunity, either by the unreasonable exactions of the rulers, or through laxity of discipline, government is at an end—confidence ceases, and despotism or anarchy succeeds.

That government is accounted best, under whose administration there is the most intelligence, loyalty and virtue, and the least crime. No moral government can be required to prevent all evil among its subjects. If the government is moral, evil must be incidental to it. Nor is it any reflection upon God that he has a moral government, since it is evidently better than a merely physical one would be in its place. Indeed, a government of moral beings must be moral.

The principles of God's moral government are to be learned

from the Bible; though reason, within its province, strictly accords with it.

We have already seen that God is infinite in all his perfections. It follows that his government of the universe must propose the best ends, and employ the best means, for their accomplishment—in other words, its character and administration are the best possible. We are not under the necessity of supposing that this government is limited to our world. It is not improbable that ours is but one among innumerable worlds, the abodes of moral intelligences. It may be that sin has marred but few of those worlds—perhaps none but this, while unbroken harmony pervades all others. And who can tell how much the dreadful effects of sin in this system may have operated by way of warning to prevent its commission in other worlds?

As holiness is the greatest excellence, so sin is the greatest evil. To prevent its commission, God would of course employ the best means. Those under a moral system must consist in rendering the highest rewards to virtue, and the severest punishments to vice. Such is the Divine plan. No stronger inducements to rectitude can be conceived of than those which God set forth in his original law; and eternal punishment made the penalty for the first transgression, is the most powerful motive to deter moral beings from the commission of sin.

We have already considered the creation, primitive state, and fall of man, and its direful consequences. As the penalty for sin was death, temporal, spiritual and eternal, we have seen that all mankind have exposed themselves to it. All have sinned; and come short of the glory of God; and it would have been just, if he had left all to endure the merited punishment, without any gracious provision. Justice—the honor and authority of his government—demanded that the dignity of his violated law should be maintained. No one could estimate the consequence of neglecting the claims of justice. When Dr. Dodd, of England, was under sentence of death for forgery, petitions for his pardon poured in from every quarter; but the answer was, that however the throne might be disposed to clemency, a

signal punishment must be inflicted, or the commercial credit of the country was ruined. Dodd must die, not a sacrifice to private feeling, but to public justice. So with God—he has infinite compassion even for the guilty; but he could not suffer sin to be committed with impunity, without hazarding the safety of the universe, and the stability of his throne.

Had the government been able to devise any means whereby its authority and the credit of the country could have been preserved without the execution of Dodd, such means would doubtless have been put in requisition. Could Washington have otherwise maintained discipline in the army, and the integrity of the cause, he would not have signed the death-warrant of Andre. Could Darius have found any way of relieving Daniel, consistent with his decree, he would gladly have done so, for he toiled till the going down of the sun before he ordered him to be cast into the den of lions. Now, it cannot be presumed that the law of God is less fixed than those of human legislators, or that he is less inflexible in its execution. Why, then, was not the exact penalty for the violated law inflicted on every individual of the guilty race of man? The reason must be found in the fact that the wisdom of God infinitely exceeds all human forecast.

How, then, can sinful man be just with the Holy God? This is a question of the highest practical moment. The sinfulness and ill desert of mankind have been universally recognized, and yet a hope has been cherished, that in some way sin would be pardoned and the guilty restored. Some of the ways by which it has been supposed that this might be accomplished, will now be noticed :

I. *By sacrifices.* These have been common to all nations, and they have always been offered for the purpose of rendering Deity propitious to offending man. The opinions with regard to the mode of their efficacy have been various. In the earliest stages of society, among rude and uncultivated nations, men seem to have regarded God as a being so like themselves, that he could be rendered placable by gifts. Many of the heathens supposed that the gods were invisibly present at the sacrifices, and partook of

the offerings; hence they made oblations both of food and drink. In Homer's *Iliad*,* we have account of Jupiter and the rest of the gods going from Olympus to an Ethiopian festival that lasted twelve days:

An advance upon these gross conceptions was that of regarding the sacrifices as thank-offerings. Ernesti, Doederlein, and others have supposed that such was their original design; and it doubtless was an important part. But their origin clearly was in the feelings of guilt that pervaded the hearts of men. They endured various evils, they felt self-condemned, and therefore concluded that the gods were incensed against them. To appease their wrath, these sacrifices were made, sometimes of vegetables, oftener of beasts, and in extreme cases, of men. Human sacrifices were not unfrequent among our Druid ancestors and other barbarous tribes; they were offered by the Greeks and Romans in case of great calamities, and also by the Jews in the period of their degeneracy, although expressly forbidden by the law of Moses. The heathen notions of sacrifices, perverted as they were, had a foundation in the wants of fallen man.

Sacrifices have been offered by Divine appointment from the first. They existed as early as the time of Abel, if not before. Noah offered them on leaving the ark; they were continued among the patriarchs, and were made very prominent under the Jewish dispensation. These sacrifices were adapted to the infant state of society, which required sensible representations. They afforded a visible test of obedience, which would be less liable to be counterfeit, than at a more advanced period. They also served to distinguish the Jews from other nations. These offerings were required to be presented from pure motives, as we see from the rejection of Cain's sacrifice, and the charges so often made against the hypocritical Jews. Ps. l. 8; li. ; Isa. i. ; Jer. vi. 20; Amos v. 22. The ancient sacrifices were also typical of him "who should appear to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. vii. ; ix. 26.

It is obvious that sacrifices could not remove guilt or atone for

* I. 423, seq.; xxiii, 206, 207.

sin. They were never authorized with this view; but for a ceremonial and civil use. I refer, of course, to the sacrifices which men offer. The sacrifice of Christ constituted the only valid expiation. Heb. x. 4: "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." ix. 12—14: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh [ceremonially]: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

II. Another supposed means of obtaining peace with God is *moral reformation*. I say reformation, for no one pretends that his whole life has been blameless. But the idea has obtained, to a considerable extent, that present obedience will render us acceptable to God. The Scriptures recognize the *possibility* of justification by works of law. Lev. xviii. 5; Rom. x. 5: "Ye shall keep my statutes, and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them." But the law requires perfect obedience, and makes no provision for transgression. He who offends in a single point, is guilty of violating the law as a whole, and exposes himself to its penalty. And as all are sinners, by deeds of law no flesh can be justified." Romans iii. 20. God has a claim on all our services from the beginning; no one at any moment can render to God more than he owes to him. The folly of all pretences to works of supererogation, then, is manifest. Could an individual, from this moment onward, forever, render perfect obedience, this would not atone for one of his past offences.

But the futility of this scheme is still more manifest, when we consider that no one does thoroughly reform himself—no one, without grace, renders such obedience as the law requires; so that if past sins were remitted, no one would then be saved on the ground of works. 'We see how the sinner's way is hedged

up—he is absolutely unable to atone for past sins, and he does not render present obedience. In this view, then, his case is utterly hopeless. Yet how many have hoped to be saved by their own works. Here is one of the chief obstacles in the way of salvation. Proud man would not be a debtor even to his Maker, but would secure whatever he obtains by his own exertions. This disposition exhibits itself in numberless and often unsuspected ways; and requires the keenest search, even of those possessing spiritual discernment, to detect all its subterfuges. But the sinner must be driven from these strongholds of error; he must be brought to see himself ruined and helpless, before he can be savingly benefited.

III. Another ground on which many have hoped for salvation, is that of *repentance and faith*. This, also, is an unsafe reliance. In the first place, there would be great room for doubt respecting the genuineness of these exercises. There is a sorrow which is of the world, and there is a faith that is dead. Now as the heart is deceitful above all things, and in nothing more so than in self-flattery, how easily might a counterfeit repentance and faith be taken for the true. Then, suppose them real, how could repentance and faith constitute a sufficient ground of the sinner's acceptance with God. They cannot avail as works, since, as we have already seen, no sinner is, or can be, saved on that ground. It will be observed, that we are not now speaking of repentance and faith as *conditions*, but as *grounds* of justification; and, as thus viewed, they are obviously inadequate. Suppose any human government should proclaim, that repentance might procure the release of all future offenders, such government could not stand—its authority would be destroyed. As to faith in such a government, it would be out of the question. But is God less careful for the honor of his government than earthly rulers for theirs? Has he less forecast? How could repentance for past offences atone for them; how recompense the injured; what security afford against a repetition of the crime? Suppose a criminal, in one of our courts, should plead penitence and confidence in the court, as a ground of acquittal, what would such

plea avail him? The judge would assure him that such effort is vain. He has violated the law, and must suffer its penalty.

Yet numbers, it is to be feared, even within the pale of the church, have no better grounds of reliance for salvation than those above specified. They have a theoretical religion—a religion made up of superficial, counterfeit morality, a selfish sorrow for sin on account of its consequences, and a speculative acknowledgment of the truth. Their religion has no good foundation—it leaves the fountain of their motives and conduct unchanged, and makes them, at best, but whited sepulchres. Publicans and harlots are nearer the kingdom of heaven than they are.

We see that human works are insufficient to secure man's salvation. Other means are requisite. And this leads us directly to the *necessity of the atonement by Christ*. He is the only name given under heaven whereby we can be saved. Without this provision of grace through Him, every sinner must have perished.

In an important respect the atonement was not *absolutely* necessary. It was not needed before the fall, nor would it ever have been needed, had mankind maintained their allegiance to God. And now, although man is by nature fallen and depraved, he is still a moral agent, capable of obeying God. God holds none of us accountable for Adam's sin, or guilty for having the constitution with which we are born. He never has punished, nor will he ever punish any being for other than his own sins—voluntary, actual sins. This is explicitly asserted in the xviii. of Ezekiel, and other passages, in opposition to the sentiments of false teachers. Many have affirmed that God might justly have left all the human race to inevitable ruin on account of Adam's sin; but the Scriptures teach no such doctrine. He might have left them to the consequences of their own course, without any gracious provision, in which case all who come to be actual sinners would inevitably perish; but this is quite another thing from punishing eternally all mankind for the sin of their progenitors, or for any circumstance which they could not avoid.

It may be objected, that this view eclipses the glory of the atonement, in making it not absolutely necessary. Let us com-

pare. On the objector's hypothesis, the whole race of man were exposed to inevitable destruction without any fault of their own [Adam and Eve of course excepted], but under an arrangement that God had constituted; and to avert this doom, he provided the atonement. On our hypothesis, all were exposed to eternal death, not for Adam's sin, not for the constitution God gave them, either directly or by inheritance, nor for sins necessarily committed, which indeed would not be sins, but for their own voluntary transgressions; and the atonement was provided, that they might be saved from their own sins.

Such is human depravity that all do sin, not of necessity, but freely, as soon as they are able to, and all would continue in sin forever, were there no Divine interposition in their behalf. Does it diminish the grace of the atonement, that it was provided under these circumstances? When God might so justly have left men to the consequences of their own sins, is not his compassion exhibited in the strongest light in providing a Redeemer? And such is the Scriptural representation. Christ died, not for the deserving, not for those whose circumstances demanded his compassion as a matter of equity; but for the ungodly and for sinners. Rom. v. 6, 8. True, it extends to all those affected by the fall—all the human family. Those who die before they come to years of accountability, being passive in the fall, are passive in the restoration. They are saved through Christ.

The atonement is absolutely essential to the salvation of actual sinners. They cannot atone for their sins, they cannot renew their own hearts. Had there been no atonement, our progenitors must have perished eternally, and all their posterity who became sinners, if they had had a posterity. What would have been the precise state of things, without the atonement, is a matter of simple conjecture; since inspiration is silent respecting it, but contains a prediction of a triumphant Messiah even in connection with the curse denounced upon the first transgression. Gen. iii. 15. It is hazardous to frame theories on mere conjecture. We should consult facts as they are. We have no right to suppose, that God would have suffered one part of the

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existing constitution of things to exist without the other; or, that he would have allowed of the connection between the acts of Adam, and the state of his posterity, without also making a remedial system available to them.

The atonement is a gracious provision. Man was created upright, and might have continued in obedience. He transgressed and fell, and exposed himself to eternal death. All sinners are exposed to punishment for their sins, without any hope of remedy in themselves. All are by nature fallen, and all sinners justly deserve the wrath of God, and must have perished forever, like the apostate angels, had he not, in infinite mercy, interposed in their behalf.

LECTURE XXI.

NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT.

The atonement *vicarious*. Christ died *for* men—Bore their Sins—was a Sacrifice—a Ransom—a Propitiation—our only Saviour. False Theories Exposed. Objections considered. Doctrine of the Messiah. Limited Atonement Unscriptural. Meaning of General Atonement. Proofs of General Atonement. Extracts from Jenkyn. Terms equal to all.

Under previous subjects, we have considered man's fallen state, and the need of a gracious provision in order to his salvation. All believers in revelation hold that this provision consists mainly in the gift of Christ; although with regard to its bearings on the human condition, and the mode of its operation, there has been great diversity of sentiment. Fortunately for those vitally interested in the matter, it is not a mere theory, or a question to be settled by the disputes of men; but it is so unfolded in the sacred oracles, and confirmed by experience, that the honest inquirer, under every circumstance, may readily obtain all essential instruction respecting it.

The common representation of this doctrine is, that the sufferings of Christ were *vicarious*, that is, in our stead. Sinners are exposed to the penalty of the Divine law, and must suffer it, but for the merits of Christ. He interposes in their behalf, offers himself a sacrifice instead of the infliction on them which the violated law demands, and thus opens the way for their deliver-

ance. The proof texts of this doctrine may be classified under several heads.

1. Those which speak of Christ's suffering and dying *for* men. Isaiah, in the prophetic style, says of him; liii. 5: "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Said our Saviour: John x. 15: "I lay down my life for the sheep." At the institution of the Eucharist, he remarked: Matt. xxvi. 28: "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

The doctrine is taught in many passages of the apostles: Rom. iv. 25: "Who was delivered *for* our offences." v. 6—10: "When we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly." 1 Cor. xv. 3: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." 2 Cor. v. 14: "Because we thus judge, that if one died for *all*, then were all dead." 1 Pet. iii. 18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust."

Some have endeavored to show that the prepositions *avtl* and *υπερ*, rendered *for* in the above passages, mean *on account of*, not *instead of*, thus doing away with the idea of substitution, and making the design of Christ's death indefinite. But this construction does not suit the obvious sense of the passages, and their context. Parallel usage may also be referred to. 2 Sam. xviii. 33: "Would God I had died *for* thee." (Sept. *avtl σου*) Matt. ii. 22: "Archelaus did reign in Judea (*avtl*) *in the room of* his father Herod." Luke xi. 11: "Will he (*avtl*) *for* a fish give him a serpent?" John xi. 50: "Nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die (*υπερ*) *for* the people." These prepositions may then denote substitution. Even Priestly admits that Christ's dying *for* us, signifies *instead of*, though he considered the language figurative.

2. Texts which speak of Christ's being treated as a *sinner*." 2 Cor. v. 21: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." Gal. iii. 13. Deut. xxi. 22, 23: "Christ hath

redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

3. Those which speak of Christ's bearing the sins of men. Isa. liii. 4, 11: "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." "He shall bear their iniquities." These texts are referred to in connection with Christ's healing the sick. Matt. viii. 17. But this was done mainly by way of *illustration*, not as denoting their original design, as is evident from the language of Peter. 1 Pet. ii. 24: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness;" "by whose stripes ye were healed." John i. 29: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away (beareth) the sin of the world." Heb. ix. 28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."

4. Those which represent the death of Christ as a *sacrifice*. He is often spoken of under the figure of a lamb. Also as a paschal sacrifice, 1 Cor. v. 7: "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." Also those which mention the blood of Christ. Acts xx. 28: "The church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." Heb. ix. 22: "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." x. 19: "Into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." 1 Pet. i. 19: "With the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot."

The sacrifices offered under the former dispensation were expiatory, and typical of Christ's great sacrifice. Such was their principal design, as is evident from the account of them in the Old Testament, and from the remarks of the apostles. Says Paul, in allusion to Christ, whom he denominates our great high priest: Heb. vii. 27: "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself." Again, comparing the sacrifices under the law with that of Christ, he observes: Heb. ix. 13, 14: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more

shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" A prominent object in the epistle to the Hebrews, is to exhibit the *priesthood* of Christ.

5. Other passages speak of Christ as a *Ransom* or *Redeemer*. Matt. xx. 28: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." 1 Tim. ii. 6: "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Eph. i. 7: "In whom we have redemption through His blood." Rev. v. 9: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Also 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

The words employed in the above passages are *λυτρώω* and its derivatives, which signify to pay a price, or a price paid for the deliverance of one from slavery or death.

6. In other passages the death of Christ is set forth as propitiatory. Rom. iii. 25: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." 1 John ii. 2; iv. 10: "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

The word *ἱλάσκω*, from which the terms rendered propitiation in these passages are derived, means to turn away wrath, as will be seen by reference to authorities. Rom. v. 8—11. "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For 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." Also Col. i. 21, 22. 2 Cor. v. 19. Eph. ii. 16.

The verb *καταλλάσσω*, used in these passages, signifies, both in Jewish and other writers, "to reconcile one who is angry or displeased with us." Nor does the reconciliation pertain wholly to the sinner. It means that, by the atonement of Christ, a provision was made whereby the claims of the violated law might be met, and pardon dispensed. True, the sinner's heart must be changed, in order that the benefits of the atonement may accrue to him. We might also cite the passages relating to Christ as Mediator. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Indeed, the propitiatory atonement

was the great work of the Messiah. Upon this the whole scheme of grace is founded. The Bible is full of it. It is the theme upon which the sacred writers perpetually dwell by type, prophecy, history, doctrine. The atonement of Christ is the very focus of Scriptural revelation—the substance of the Gospel.

7. Accordingly we mention, as the last head, that our salvation is ascribed to Christ alone. Acts xiii. 38: "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." 1 Cor. vi. 11. 1 John ii. 12: "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts iv. 12: "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

We see how abundant is the testimony of Scripture to the expiatory character of Christ's work. He died *for* us; though pure, he was treated with the greatest ignominy; he bore our sins, and, though possessing unparalleled fortitude, he was nearly crushed under the weight; he was the Antitype, which the sacrifices of the former dispensation prefigured, and offered himself once for all; he gave himself as a ransom to meet the demands of the violated law, that sinners might be released from its penalty; he thus propitiated the Divine favor, and made a way possible whereby God could be just and the justifier of believers in Jesus; and finally, all who are saved, are saved through his merits. In these and other ways, directly and indirectly, is this subject set forth in the Scriptures—not as a mere theory, but as a stupendous *fact*—a scheme whose efficacy has been tested by multitudes, and which in its bearings upon the welfare of created intelligences, probably transcends any other transaction in the universe.

We have thus proved the vicarious nature of the atonement. It should not, however, be represented as a strict commercial transaction. We are not to suppose that the sufferings of Christ were the same in kind, degree, or amount, that sinners would have endured, if he had not offered himself for them—or that

he endured the exact penalty of the law. This could not have been, as he was personally guiltless; nor do the Scriptures teach any thing of the kind. They represent his sufferings as an *equivalent* for those of sinners, so that by this provision the authority of the law is sustained equally as if all had been left to perish. As in the case of the king of the Locrians;* his submitting to the loss of one of his own eyes, in addition to the putting out of one of his offending son's eyes, sustained the law, and deterred from its violation equally as if the penalty had been inflicted according to the letter of the law.

Extreme and erroneous positions have been assumed on this subject. Some have represented the sufferings of Christ as not merely *equivalent* to the penalty of the law, but as literally and even unconditionally *cancelling* its claims; have thus made the pardon and salvation of the redeemed inevitable, and in this way laid the foundation for Antinomianism and Universalism. All this is foreign from the Scriptural view, and from the experience of Christians.

Others have gone to the other extreme, holding up Christ, in respect to his life, doctrine, sufferings, and death, as a mere model for our imitation. This view is, if possible, still more at variance with the Bible, and more pernicious in its tendency. Christ did indeed set us a perfect example—this was one object of his mission into the world. This truth should not be forgotten or lightly esteemed, especially when there is so little of consistent *practice* among even professed Christians. Let the great truth be duly enforced, that none are Christians except so far as they are *Christlike*. At the same time we must not overlook the other parts of Christ's work. He set us a perfect example,

* ZELEUCUS a lawgiver of the Locrians, in Italy, and one of the disciples of Pythagoras, 550 B. C. He was very humane, and at the same time very austere, and he attempted to enforce the laws more by inspiring shame than dread. He had decreed that a person guilty of adultery should lose both his eyes. His philosophy was called to a trial when he was informed that his son was an adulterer. He ordered the law to be executed; the people interfered, but Zaleucus resisted, and rather than violate his own institutions, he commanded one of his own eyes, and one of those of his son, to be put out. This made such an impression upon the people, that while Zaleucus presided over the Locrians, no person was again found guilty of adultery."—LEMPRIERE'S CLASSICAL DICTIONARY, p. 664.

but that was not all : he offered himself *a sacrifice to God in our stead*, and thereby rendered it consistent for God to bestow pardon.

By the atonement he laid the only sure foundation for our hopes—for our repentance, faith, holiness, and salvation. The doctrine of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ lies at the very basis of the gospel scheme. To say that the sufferings of Christ were on his own account, would be doing his character the greatest injustice. To represent them as those of a martyr merely, would be to degrade him below many other men. And to regard them in the light of example only, would be wholly unaccountable to reason, and unauthorized by revelation. But when we receive the plain account which the inspired writers with one voice give, that he submitted to his humiliation to make a way whereby God could be just and justify the believer, all is consistent with reason, experience, and the Divine word.

The atonement has been opposed on the alleged ground of its representing God as naturally unmerciful, and Christ as suffering unjustly. But these objections are easily answered. It was God himself who devised the plan of atonement. John iii. 16 : “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.” 1 John iv. 10 : “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

In respect to the other particular, it is sufficient to observe that the sufferings of Christ were voluntary. Ps. xl. 7, 8 : “Then said I, Lo, I come ; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.” John x. 17, 18 : “Therefore doth my 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.” No one will assume that it is wrong for one being to suffer voluntarily for the good of another. Instances of this occur every where. Take as an example the sufferings of a mother for her offspring. Who ever thought of charging wrong upon nature, or the God of nature, for such a state of things ?

Some have taught that the sufferings of Christ atoned for the sins of believers, and that his obedience was imputed as their righteousness. But this theory is unauthorized by Scripture. Christ's whole mission is to be taken together—his life, instructions, sufferings, death, and resurrection were each essential to his character as Messiah, and the work of atonement he wrought.

The SECOND in the adorable trinity humbled himself, assumed human nature, and in this complex character, God-man, he became Mediator, opened a way for the reconciliation of sinners with God, set up a spiritual kingdom, into which he gathers all who yield allegiance to him. This kingdom is destined to gain a universal triumph, and will finally be yielded up to the Father, the office of Mediator will cease, and the Mediator himself become subject to him who is all in all. 1 Cor. xv. 24—28 : “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father ; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” Divinity, as such, cannot suffer, yet the atonement was rendered valid from the fact that Divinity and humanity were united in the person of the Saviour.

The doctrine respecting the Messiah had a gradual development in the progress of the different dispensations. His advent was alluded to even in the garden of Eden ; it was more definitely announced by Moses ; his great sacrifice was shadowed forth by various parts of the legal ritual ; and the circumstances of his advent, character, doctrine, sufferings, death, and spiritual reign were made the theme of the whole line of prophets from Moses to Malachi. But it was reserved to the gospel itself to make a full development of the wonderful plan of redemption. In the person of Jesus -Christ all the ancient types and prophecies had an exact fulfilment. He proved himself by numerous incontestible evidences to be the true Messiah ; his kingdom is

established, and he shall reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

The chief difficulties with reference to the *extent* of the atonement, have arisen from erroneous views of the general subject. If the atonement is regarded as the literal payment of a debt to Divine justice, then it must release the debtors from their obligations, and secure their salvation unconditionally. With this theory, to be consistent, we must either go into Universalism, or hold to a limited atonement. In our view this whole representation is unauthorized. The Scriptures do not treat sin as a literal debt, nor the atonement as a strict commercial transaction. All this has sprung from human theorizing.

Others advocate a limited atonement from a speculative view of the covenant of redemption. According to them, God covenanted with Christ to give him, as the reward of his sufferings, a definite number of mankind (*the elect*), and for these, and these only, did he atone. In support of this sentiment, it is argued, that if Christ died for all, then, so far as a part are concerned, he died in vain. It is alleged, also, that the Divine purpose extends only to the salvation of a part.

Now we conceive these views to be wholly foreign from the Scriptural representation of the subject. Besides, it is confounding the atonement with its results, and with other doctrines and theories. The atonement is a gracious provision, made to render it proper for God to pardon the guilty. Without it, not a sinner could have been pardoned. It required the atonement—the whole of it—to open the way for the salvation of one sinner. And the same provision that opened the way for the pardon of one, opened the way for the pardon of all. The atonement did not *secure* the pardon of any; it only opened the way whereby they might be pardoned.

CONSIDERATIONS IN SUPPORT OF GENERAL ATONEMENT.

1. All mankind were under condemnation, exposed to the penalty of the law. Rom. iii. 9—23: "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none

that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way," &c.

2. The benevolence of God extended to all alike. Rom. iii. 29: "Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? yes, of the Gentiles also." John iii. 16, 17: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. . . That THE WORLD through him MIGHT be saved." Also Acts x. 34.

3. The provisions of grace were adequate to the ruin of the fall. The remedy was as extensive as the disease. Rom. v. 12—19: . . . "Therefore, 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." The atonement does not unconditionally repair the ruin occasioned by the fall; but provides means of restoration. It puts all in a salvable state, just as original sin brought all into a fallen state. The first transgression made none of Adam's posterity actual sinners; neither does the atonement make any actually righteous. The passage (Rom. v. 12—19) shows that the blessings proffered by Christ are as great and extensive as the evil done to us by Adam.* But the consequences of Adam's sin extend to all his posterity. Hence the atonement is general.

4. It is expressly affirmed that Christ died for all. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, 19: "Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all," &c. Heb. ii. 9: "That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." It is indeed said that Christ died for his own, but this was not exclusive of the rest, as is directly stated. 1 Tim. iv. 10: "We trust in the living God who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." 1 John ii. 2: "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

5. The invitations of the gospel are made to all indiscriminately. Isa. xlv. 22: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the

* Stuart on Rom. v. 12—19.

ends of the earth." Mark xvi. 15: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Rev. xxii. 17: "Who-soever will, let him take the water of life freely." These invitations are of course sincere.

6. The influences of grace, and of the Holy Spirit, are bestowed on all. John i. 9: "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." xvi. 7, 8: "And when he [the Comforter] is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

7. The gospel is good tidings and a blessing to all. Gen. xii. 3: "And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Luke ii. 10: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." See also Gen. xxii. 18. Gal. iii. 8.

8. All are required to exercise faith in Christ as their Saviour, which would be unreasonable if the atonement were limited. It would be requiring some to believe a lie.

9. Destruction is denounced on some whom the Lord had bought. 2 Pet. ii. 1: "Denying the Lord that bought them."

It is manifest, then, that the atonement was provided for all; and if any are lost, it is because they reject its overtures. If any refuse to avail themselves of its benefits, it will profit them nothing. They must suffer the full penalty of the law; and besides, their criminality will be greatly enhanced by their wilful rejection of the provisions of grace.

We subjoin some extracts from Mr. Jenkyn, an excellent author, of the Calvinistic persuasion, yet an advocate of General Atonement.

"The apostles declare, in language the most distinct and unequivocal, that the death of Christ was a ransom for all, and a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, that he tasted death for every man, and that God, consequently, was in him reconciling the world unto himself. Yea, they openly declared that persons who denied or renounced the Lord who had bought *them*, would, notwithstanding, meet with a damnation that slumbered not. Yet this universal aspect of the atonement is never

supposed to have shocked the minds, or clashed with the doctrines of the primitive churches. In all the apostolical writings, there is no hint given that the churches had any narrow views of the design of the death of Christ; and no reply is given to any objection which might imply a misapprehension of such an unshackled, unqualified, and unlimited testimony concerning the extent of the atonement." Jenkyn on the Atonement, p. 21.

"Let any of my readers suppose themselves standing by the margin of the fiery gulf of woe, and asking the miserable spirits of wicked men, 'Why were *you* lost, were *you* sinners *too great* to be saved?' The voices of a thousand awakened consciences would break on your ears: 'No, sinners as great as we were have been saved from this place of torment—we perished for no other reason than the neglect of so great salvation—we would not be gathered.'" Page 252.

"The destruction of sinners is never ascribed to an arbitrary perfection of God, never to a secret decree, never to an exclusive edict, but totally and thoroughly to their own love of sin. It is one of the bitterest ingredients in the cup of those who are lost, that they cannot ascribe an iota of their torments to any but to themselves.

The evidences which I have thus enumerated, prove to my own mind, that the provisions of the atonement contemplate the salvation of all men as truly possible. The gospel is an authoritative warrant to induce every sinner to believe that *his* salvation is a possible case. This gospel is a document signed by God for this purpose, and may be pleaded with God by every suppliant for mercy. It encourages every sinner to apply for mercy at the throne of grace. The sinner's warrant for acceptance is not that he is one of the elect—that he has some previous fitness—that he feels love to the Divine government; his only warrant is, that the gospel of the God that cannot lie, assures him that, 'Him that cometh He will in no wise cast out.' It assures him individually that 'God sent his Son to the world, not to condemn the world, but that THE WORLD THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED.'" Page 254.

All who shall be finally saved, will be saved through the merits of Christ—those who lived before his advent into the world, as well as those who have lived since—those who have no knowledge of the Saviour, as well as those who have. In consequence of the atonement, God can justly dispense pardon to all on the conditions which he wisely prescribes—conditions not indeed uniform to all, but equitable, and adapted to the various circumstances of men. Nor can it be justly alleged, that the atonement is provided in vain in respect to the finally lost; since it was really designed for their benefit, was available to them, and its saving efficacy is not realized through their own fault. Thus is the impartial benevolence of God exhibited, and the finally impenitent will be wholly without excuse.

LECTURE XXII.

JUSTIFICATION.

History of the Doctrine. Meaning of Gospel Justification. Not Arbitrary. The Atonement of Christ the Ground of Justification. Faith the Condition. Holiness the Fruit. Views of Paul and James Considered. Faith and Works Both Essential.

Luther styled the doctrine of Justification, *Articulus aut stantis aut cadentis Ecclesia*—"The test of a standing or a falling church." It has ever been a cardinal point in religious controversy. The great aim of our Saviour's teaching, while on the earth, was to exhibit, both to the self-righteous Jew, and the earthly-wise Gentile, the true and only way of Justification with God. The apostles dwelt much on the same theme, and had many sharp conflicts, even with professed Christians, on the subject. Soon after the age of the apostles, the mass of the nominal church departed from the faith of the Gospel, and sought justification by their own works; and so continued until the Reformation under Wickliffe, Luther, Zuingle, Knox, and others. Those acquainted with the history of the Reformation know, that the doctrine of justification formed its basis, and was intimately blended with it throughout. The same, essentially, may be said in reference to the second Reformation under Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, Randall and others. No doctrine has more distinguished the preaching of true ministers from false teachers of every grade.

Justification is explained by critics to be a law term, signifying *acquittal*. In its application as a Scriptural term it implies, that the sinner, being on trial for his offences, is on some ground released, and restored to the Divine complacency. That men, in a state of nature, are sinners, under condemnation both from the Divine law and their own consciences, we have previously seen ; and that some of them are delivered from this condemnation, and brought into a state of reconciliation with God, is evident, both from Scripture and experience. Once they were at enmity with God, God was angry with them, his wrath abode upon them ; now his anger is turned away, his peace rests upon them, and they become his spiritual children. Now, the transition from this state of hostility to that of reconciliation, is implied by justification.

In regard to the strict definition of this term, we remark, it is not the same as salvation, a term of wider import. Nor should it be confounded with regeneration, though regeneration invariably accompanies it. Justification is an act of God *toward* us ; regeneration denotes a work wrought *in* us.

Nor is it strictly synonymous with pardon or forgiveness. One might be justified without being forgiven, or vice versa ; although such is not the *fact* with regard to the sinner.

Nor is its Scriptural sense the same as the ordinary signification of the word, viz., *approbation*. God is of purer eyes than to approve of the sinner's conduct. Hab. i. 13. Nor does he overlook the fact of the sinner's real guilt. His judgment is ever "according to truth." Rom. ii. 2. But justification is a righteous and merciful transaction, not against law, but in harmony with it, whereby God treats the sinner *as though* he were righteous. The ground of this procedure we are now to discuss.

1. We inquire then, in the first place, if the act of justification is an arbitrary one on the part of God—performed without any consideration ? Clearly not. God deals righteously with his moral creatures. He does not annul moral law, does not remove its sanctions. He could not do so consistently. He could not absolve the sinner, and deliver him from the penalty

of the law without an adequate consideration. Justification is indeed gratuitous—by free grace. By this it is not meant that grace is dispensed without *any* consideration; but without its being merited by the sinner.

2. We inquire, then, what is the ground of justification? This is evidently the atonement of Christ. This the Scriptures plainly teach. Rom. iii. 24—26: “Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” The passages are too numerous to be cited which show that the atonement of Christ is the ground, and the only ground, of the sinner’s acceptance with God.

We do not understand that Christ’s personal righteousness is imputed to the sinner, and that this constitutes his justification. No such doctrine of imputation is taught in the Scriptures. God never imputes either the sin or holiness of one being to another; nor does he punish or reward one for the deeds of another. The passage most relied on by the advocates of the theory of imputation, is Rom. v. 19: “As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” But the sentiment here is, that, as by Adam all are brought into a *fallen* state, so by Christ all are brought into a *salvable* state. The doctrine is substantially the same as that contained in the previous verse: “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.”

We are not to believe then, that the obedience of Christ was imputed to men; but that in consideration of this obedience God can justly dispense pardon to believers, and accept them for Christ’s sake. When Zaleucus* submitted to the loss of one of his own eyes, and thereby rendered it proper for him to absolve his son in part, the son’s adultery did not become the father’s crime; nor did the father’s virtue become the son’s. Such transfer of personal character and conduct is impossible. The personal righteousness of Christ cannot become the personal righteous-

* See p. 222.

ness of any other being. But in view of this righteousness, God can pardon the repenting sinner, and bless him as freely as though he had not sinned. Zaleucus could thenceforth treat his son as though the offence had not been committed.

We have seen under a former subject (the Necessity of the Atonement), that nothing which the sinner does is the ground of his justification. He cannot merit pardon or absolve himself from guilt. The sinner can place God under no obligation to him. He owes his entire service to God from the first. Hence justification is all of grace. Repentance, faith, and works are wholly excluded as grounds of acceptance with God. We say nothing now about their place as *conditions*; but they do not constitute the ground, or any part of the ground, of justification. This foundation is furnished by the atonement of Christ alone.

3. Is justification conditional? Is it conditioned upon the sinner's acts? If so, what are the conditions? Since all are sinners, and a part only become justified; either in this matter God proceeds arbitrarily and partially, or the work is conditional to the sinner. But the Scriptures are clear to the point that none are justified but on certain conditions being complied with by them.

Is *holiness* a condition of justification? If so, the individual is holy before he is justified. What, then, are we to do with such passages as the following? Rom. v. 10; Gal. ii. 17: "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Again, how are any to become holy, but through Christ?

It should not be supposed that persons may be justified, and still remain enemies to God. Their moral state is changed *at the time* of their justification. Holiness does not precede justification, but such a state of mind is induced in the sinner, that it is consistent for God to pardon him.

It should be remembered that the impenitent, though dead in sin, destitute of holiness, are yet moral agents—possessing understanding, feeling, conscience, and will—they are capable of reasoning correctly on moral subjects, and of obeying the com-

mands of God. Otherwise, they would not be accountable. It should also be considered, that, although the wrath of God abides on the sinner, He still regards him with a love of pity, and earnestly desires his salvation—is not willing that *any* should perish. He has not only provided a way of reconciliation through Christ, but he employs many gracious means to win the sinner to embrace the offers of salvation. The Holy Spirit enlightens and convinces all of their lost condition, their need of a Saviour, and of the way of salvation. It convinces all that they ought to repent, forsake sin, and yield to the operations of grace. When this is done, and adequate motives are presented, the sinner decides for himself, either to yield or refuse. God forces none to become his servants. All who engage in his service are volunteers.

One condition of justification is repentance. Mark i. 4: “The baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins.” Luke xxiv. 47: Acts v. 31: “That repentance and remission of sins should be preached.”

Another condition, and which, by way of eminence, is styled *the* condition of justification, is Faith. The doctrine of justification by faith, is taught in every part of the Scriptures. A large part of the epistles to the Romans and Galatians is occupied with a statement and defence of this doctrine. It will not be necessary, therefore, to cite particular passages. I will barely quote the conclusion of one of the apostle Paul’s arguments: Rom. v. 1: “Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

4. What is the relation of works to justification? On this question reference is usually made to the sentiments of Paul and James. In the opinion of some there is a contradiction between them. Says Paul: Rom. iii. 20, 22—28; Gal. ii, 16: “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed, by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, which

is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe. . . . Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

James, among other things, remarks : James ii. 14, 17, 24 : "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? Faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone. . . . Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

Here, say some, is a palpable contradiction. Paul concludes that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. James asserts that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Some have considered the two sentiments utterly irreconcilable. On this account Luther rejected the epistle of James from the canon of Scripture. Others have sought to reconcile them—a part, to reconcile James to Paul ; a part, Paul to James ; another part, to compromise their views. Some have supposed that Paul wrote to correct an error taught by James ; some, that James wrote to counteract what he esteemed an error in Paul ; others, that he wrote to oppose a perversion which had been made of Paul's doctrine. The latter opinion is the most probable.

There is, however, no contradiction between them. Paul's doctrine is, that the sinner is justified by faith, not by works. The Pharisees held that justification is by works, not by faith. In opposition to them, Paul maintained that salvation is by grace, through Christ ; and that faith is the condition required of us. But he did not make faith *exclusive* of good works. He, as much as others, insisted on them as fruits and evidences of true faith.

James is opposing those who are relying on a mere speculative or dead faith, which, as he justly contends, can profit nothing. True faith is a living, operative principle—its fruits are good works. When these do not exist, there is no real faith, justification or salvation. Both, then, harmonize with each other, and with the whole tenor of Scripture.

No more discrepancy exists between Paul and James, than be-

tween different parts of the Saviour's doctrine. He made faith the condition of salvation. Mark xvi. 16: "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." John iii. 18, 36: "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John vi. 29: "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." He insisted on faith as much as Paul did.

So, also, and even with more explicitness and force than James, did he show that good works are essential, as proofs of faith and Christian character. Matt. vii. 15—21: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits: Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." John xiv. 12, 15, 23: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. If ye love me, keep my commandments. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me he will keep my words."

It would be easy to show that the same sentiments are taught in every portion of the Old and New Testament, without any contradiction.

Christ is the *ground* of hope—he has made the way possible

for the sinner to be pardoned. Faith is the condition on which pardon is bestowed, regeneration is the invariable accompaniment, and obedience to the Divine law, or good works, uniformly follow.

The whole is of grace—none of them would be realized without its interposition. No one can do more than his duty. There is a great reward *in* obedience, not *for* obedience. Grace is the foundation not only of our future salvation, but of all present good in us. When good fruit is not found in the life, grace does not reign in the heart. Christ, grace, holiness, are therefore inseparable.

LECTURE XXIII.

REPENTANCE.

Definition. What is Essential to Repentance—Reflection. View of the Evil of Sin, the Heart and Conscience Moved, Sorrow for Sin, Confession of Sin, Renouncement of it. Popish and other Perversions of it. Motives to Repentance—Terrors of the Law, the Goodness of God. Repentance Essential. Its Fruits.

The Hebrew term, most specifically denoting repentance, is **נָחַם**, the import of which is much the same as the English Repent. **שׁוּב** resembles it, and is so rendered in the Septuagint; but it more strictly means to *turn*, convert. In Greek there are two words translated *repent* in our version, viz., *μεταμέλομαι* and *μετανοέω*, the former of which is much less frequently used, and less expressive. Some regard the former as denoting superficial repentance, as that of Judas; the latter, genuine and effective repentance. They are, however, sometimes used interchangeably, only the latter is the stronger term. The distinction referred to is denoted in Scripture by the expression, “sorrow of the world,” and “godly sorrow.” 2 Cor. v. 10.

There is no English word that expresses fully the meaning of these terms, or of the doctrine derived from them. The Greek *μετανοεία*, the most explicit and comprehensive, signifies literally, *an after view*. It implies a change of views, feelings, and purposes, including regret for the past, and amendment for the future. It is highly significant, and is generally employed in

the New Testament in reference to this subject. We will now consider several things essential to true repentance.

1. *Reflection.* Says the Psalmist: Ps. cxix. 59: "*I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.*" Sinners will not reflect upon their spiritual condition. Faithful self-examination brings up their sins, and disturbs their self-complacency. Hence they avoid it. But when they come to reflect seriously on these matters, an important step is taken. Until they do this, there is no hope for them.

2. Another requisite of true repentance, is a right view of *the evil of sin*. If sin is regarded as a light thing, to be easily excused, there will be no godly sorrow for it. Sin must be viewed, not as a calamity or a general evil, but a grievous wrong, as rebellion against the holy God and his righteous government, without aught to excuse or extenuate it. The tendency of sin, of every sin, is to undermine the foundations of virtue and happiness, and to endanger the welfare of the universe. There must not only be a vivid apprehension of the enormity of sin in general, but conviction must come to the individual's own heart and conscience. He must see himself to be a sinner. His own sins must appear exceeding sinful. He must see that he has no degree of holiness, that there is no moral goodness in him; but he is utterly vile in his own sight; and how much more, then, in the eye of the heart-searching Jehovah! He has left the great work for which he was created, undone. His whole life has been a series of transgressions. He has perverted and prostituted his noble energies. He has been sacrificing the interests of eternity and time too, to base, selfish indulgences. There must be this personal, subduing, abasing view of sin, or there will be no effectual work of grace on the heart. The sinner must see that he is guilty, justly condemned, and exposed to eternal ruin. He must know the truth in his case, before he will apply for a remedy.

3. There must not only be an intellectual apprehension of guilt, but the heart must be affected and conscience aroused. The individual must come to feel sin to be loathsome and detest-

able. We are not now speaking of the exercises of the renewed heart, but of a sinner under the operations of grace. Though he has not yet broken his bonds—he is still voluntarily a servant of sin ; yet he can see and feel that sin is hateful, and that he ought to forsake it, and will forsake it. He must see the turpitude of sin, not only in view of its penalty, but in view of what it is in itself—that it is evil and only evil continually, now and forever.

4. Another requisite is *sorrow for sin*. If the sinner has the exercises of mind before described, he will have deep grief that he has sinned. To have no such grief, would be to justify himself. Here discrimination is necessary. Godly sorrow is not a transient emotion, but a deep abasement and anguish of heart. Too much stress should not be put on the outward manifestation. Some have thought they must torture themselves, do penance, shed many tears ; and thus atone for their sins. But this is not required. The sinner can make no atonement, or merit anything, or make himself better. Christ has prepared the way. Still the sinner must have pungent sorrow for his sins—not the sorrow of the culprit, who regrets merely that he has been detected and brought to justice. The awakened sinner does doubtless consider the fearful consequences, and this is one motive that excites him to action ; but this is not the only motive, else there is no true repentance. There must be contrition of heart in view of the *wrong* of sin, its ruinous consequences to others as well as ourselves, and its heinousness as committed against God.

5. There must be *confession of sin*. Prov. xxviii. 13 : “ He that covereth his sins shall not prosper : but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” Matt. x. 32. This confession must be appropriate to the circumstances. Wrongs done to individuals should be confessed to them, and reparation made where possible. Public offences may require a public confession. But the chief confession must be made to God, for all sin is committed against him.

David, though guilty of a heinous crime against society, was so engrossed with the view of it as committed against God, that

he exclaimed, Ps. li. 3, 4: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." "I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me." In another place he gives the following account of his experience: Ps. xxxii. 3, 5: "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me; my moisture is turned into the drouth of summer. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." Such is the spirit which every sincere penitent will have. He will make full confession of his sins without palliation.

6. Renoucement of sin. Sin must not only be seen in its true light, and loathed, and sorrowed for, and confessed, but forever renounced. Were it possible to have all the other exercises, they would avail nothing while sin is retained. Indeed this would prove them to be deceptive and worthless. So essential is this requisite of turning from transgression to the service of God, that it often stands for the work of repentance—being the result and substance of the whole.

The doctrine of repentance has been greatly perverted. Some have made it consist in austerities, physical tortures, and sufferings. The Papists make penitence synonymous with *doing penance*, i. e., saying mass, fasting, and giving money to the priest. Confession is made not to God, but to the priest. Joined with this is the blasphemous doctrine of receiving absolution from past sins, and indulgences for the future from the same source, at a given price. Thus has the man of sin "exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thess. ii. 4. Nor have such pernicious sentiments been confined to the heathen and Papists: many others have perverted the Scriptural doctrine of repentance in a similar way, though not to the same degree. Some have supposed that certain outward manifestations constitute repentance. Others have made it consist in external ceremonies. All this is wide of the truth.

Repentance is not a bodily, but a spiritual, work. It relates primarily and mainly to the heart. When it is sincere and thorough, the outward manifestations are unessential. They differ in persons of different temperaments and habits. But whenever repentance is not of the heart, and thorough, be the appearances what they may, it is worthless.

The *subjects* of repentance are sinners. It relates wholly to sin, i. e., we repent of nothing but sin. Said Christ, Matt. ix. 13 : " I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The term is not, however, always used in the same sense. In the application under which we have been considering it, it is prior to regeneration. It is the exercise of one under the operations of grace, but still unrenewed. Thus regarded, it has not the nature of holiness, although it results in holiness. " Godly sorrow worketh repentance *unto* salvation." The main part of it is also a concomitant of regeneration, and not to be separated from it in the order of time. Repentance, even in the most restricted sense, is not confined to the unrenewed. David, long after his conversion, had deep repentance. So had Job. None, while in a state of probation, are free from temptation, or from the liability of sinning. And if the holy sin, they must repent, and obtain forgiveness, or perish.

After what has been said, it is obvious to remark that all repentance is not effectual. Esau repented of his folly too late. Heb. xii. 16 : He found no place of repentance, [that is, no way of changing his father's mind,] though he sought it carefully with tears. Judas Iscariot had a knowledge of his sin, and compunctions of conscience in view of it, and even confessed his guilt ; yet he did not bring forth the fruits of genuine repentance, but added sin to sin. It is to be feared that much which passes for repentance is superficial.

In Scripture God is often said to repent. This implies no change in the immutable mind ; but only a change in his dealing with men, appropriate to their altered circumstances. The blessings bestowed on the faithful are withheld, when they become unfaithful. The punishments threatened the wicked are not in-

flicted, when they break off their sins. This procedure on the part of God is termed repentance; not that God obtains any new views, or is in any degree mutable, but there is a change in his administration.

It is the sinner that repents. Sinners are commanded to repent. The Scriptures and experience prove that sinners do repent. True, Christ is said to "give repentance." Acts v. 31. By this we are not to suppose that he repents for the sinner, but that he has opened the way whereby sin may be repented of and forgiven. It is true, also, that without gracious influence no sinner would repent, notwithstanding the atonement of Christ. So that in this important sense God is the author of repentance, though it is the sinner, not God, that repents.

The *motives* to repentance are two-fold.

1. The terrors of the law. When the sinner is brought to see his true character and condition, he finds himself exposed, and justly, to eternal ruin. Here is a very strong motive to a reflecting mind for renouncing sin. Joined with this are the rewards promised to obedience. "This do, and thou shalt live." Some have doubtless made too much of the motive drawn from personal considerations. Others have swerved to the other extreme, regarding that motive as an improper one to affect the mind in this duty. But the prophets, apostles, and Christ frequently appealed to it, and so may we. Provided we speak the truth in love, judiciously, it is entirely proper to preach both the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God.

2. Another motive to repentance is its propriety. In view of the goodness of God to them, sinners ought to repent. This is a proper argument to be employed, and one that the sinner can appreciate. There is power in love to subdue the obdurate. Many have made too little use of this motive in their addresses to the impenitent. If any thing will affect the hard and stubborn heart, it is the love of Christ. This is well shown in the labors of the Moravian missionaries among the Greenlanders. The same principle is illustrated in the efforts of Reformers to

reclaim inebriates. "The goodness of God leadeth to repentance." Rom. ii. 4.

Repentance is essential to salvation. So Christ affirmed, Luke xiii. 3: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Nor is this an arbitrary requirement. In the nature of the case it is essential to salvation. Sin is as inconsistent with happiness, as with holiness. That one under the dominion of sin could be happy in the presence of the holy God, is absurd. But there can be no deliverance either from the guilt or the power of sin without true repentance. Never until there is a just view and feeling of the evil of sin, deep contrition, and utter renouncement of it, is the soul prepared for spiritual exercises, and holy joy. Repentance is indeed a hard thing to the sinner. He would sooner undertake almost any other work. Yet, in its adaptation to human wants, it strikingly exhibits the Divine wisdom and benevolence; and the remembrance of that bitter cup, that anguish of heart, will be an occasion of grateful emotion to the redeemed forever.

The evidences of repentance are its *fruits*. These are a contrite and obedient heart, a disposition to confess and forsake sin, and, so far as possible, to make restitution; and a godly life. Genuine repentance is "*unto* salvation," 2 Cor. vii. 10,—by which we understand that its *tendency* is to salvation—it is the beginning of the salvation enjoyed here, and which, with continued faithfulness, will result in final salvation. That passage no more proves that all who once truly repent will be finally saved, than Titus ii. 11 proves universal salvation. Repentance is essential as the first step, but, to avail finally, it must be followed up by obedience to the end.

LECTURE XXIV.

ON FAITH.

Faith the Condition of Justification and Salvation. Its Requisites. Perception of the Truth. Voluntary Reception of it. Trust or Reliance. Objects of Faith. Natural Religion. The Scriptures—Historical Parts—Doctrines—Precepts—Promises—Christ. Faith a New Eye—A New Feeling—A New Life. Perversions of Faith. Campbellism. Unbelief.

Faith is a term of various significance and application. We give Webster's principal definitions of the word :

“1. Belief; the assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another, resting on his authority and veracity, without other evidence; the judgment that what another states or testifies is the truth. I have strong *faith* or no *faith* in the testimony of a witness, or in what a historian narrates.

2. The assent of the mind to the truth of a proposition advanced by another; belief, on probable evidence of any kind.

3. In *theology*, the assent of the mind or understanding to the truth of what God has revealed. Simple belief of the Scriptures, of the being and perfections of God, and of the existence, character and doctrines of Christ, founded on the testimony of the sacred writers, is called *historical* or *speculative* faith, a faith little distinguished from the belief of the existence and achievements of Alexander or of Cæsar.

4. *Evangelical*, *justifying* or *saving* *faith*, is the assent of the mind to the truth of Divine revelation, on the authority of God's

testimony, accompanied with a cordial assent of the will or approbation of the heart; an entire confidence or trust in God's character and declarations, and in the character and doctrines of Christ, with an unreserved surrender of the will to his guidance, and dependence on his merits for salvation. In other words, that firm belief of God's testimony and of the truth of the gospel, which influences the will and leads to an entire reliance on Christ for salvation."

Our present purpose is to discuss the subject of gospel faith.

Faith is the condition of gospel justification, as we have before seen. Rom. v. 1: "Therefore being justified by faith," &c. It is an essential requisite to salvation. Heb. xi. 6: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." 1 Pet. i. 9: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." This subject, being one of pure revelation, must be studied in the light of the sacred oracles. Let us now inquire what are the essential requisites of gospel faith.

1. Intellectual *perception* of the truth. Faith is not a blind impulse. It must have an object which the mind apprehends. The understanding must be enlightened, the heart impressed, conscience aroused, and thus voluntary action induced rationally, or there can be no true faith. This fact has often been overlooked, and faith regarded as an impulse of the sensibility. In that case it would have no moral character, and would be of no avail.

But what knowledge is necessary? Is it a knowledge of the sciences, mental or physical? If so, the mass of men are excluded. No. Science, however useful in its sphere, can make no one wise unto salvation. It is a great mistake to confound natural with spiritual discernment. One may have the most exalted faculties, he may have deeply penetrated the mysteries of nature, and yet be entirely ignorant of the way of life and salvation. The Scriptures are very explicit on this point. 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he

that is spiritual judgeth all things." One having the feeblest intellect, and the most limited advantages, may yet have all the knowledge essential to saving faith.

What is required, is spiritual knowledge—a knowledge of our moral condition, obligation, wants. The individual must know that he is a sinner, condemned, helpless, exposed to ruin, and that Christ is his only helper. There must be definite knowledge on these points. It may not exist in a systematic form, or to the same degree in all. It will be appropriate to the circumstances, to the light and opportunity enjoyed.

2. There must be a *voluntary reception* of the truth. It must not only be perceived, but received by the mind. Truth in moral subjects may be clearly perceived, yet practically rejected. This is unbelief. Many neglect and reject the plainest truth. They sin against the clearest convictions of their own reason and conscience. Nor is it essential to the guilt of unbelief, that the truth be actually perceived. One who has opportunity to know, but will not use it, is equally guilty with the one who abuses his knowledge. Assent to moral truth is generally voluntary. It is not so in relation to mathematical truth ; this compels assent, where its terms are comprehended. But the will has much to do in the reception of moral truth. Here, often, considerations of weight may be urged on both sides ; and to arrive at correct results, there must be a candid and thorough examination of the subject. There is not a single point in morals, respecting which error has not been entertained. So much for the process by which the conclusion is reached. Even then belief is voluntary. The mind may perceive that evidence greatly preponderates in a certain direction ; yet then it can dismiss a large portion from the preponderating scale, magnify that in the other, and thus come to believe a lie. So great is the influence of prejudice or recklessness. But the disposition essential to faith is the opposite. It implies a sincere desire both to know and practice the truth, the whole truth, and nothing else. Then, when apprehended, it will be cordially received.

3. The principal element of saving faith is *trust or reliance*.

By this it becomes a more practical individual concern. The other requisites mentioned are more general. One may know the truth, and assent to it, without specially appropriating it to himself. Now it is the highest exercise of faith to adapt the truth to our individual wants. He who has a proper sense of his condition feels the need of a sure ground of reliance for salvation. He is conscious of guilt, and of his inability to save himself. He can devise no plan of deliverance. Salvation by works being impossible to the sinner, faith in Christ is the only condition. He is "shut up unto the faith." Gal. iii. 23. As salvation is wholly of grace, there must be implicit reliance on the gospel provision, an entire yielding of the heart to Christ, and reliance on him as our only Saviour.

We will next enumerate the different objects which Christian faith embraces. In general terms we may say, it embraces all moral truth. But to be specific :

1. It embraces the principles of natural religion—such as the being and attributes of God, and our accountability.

2. It embraces the Scriptures, as a whole, as a Divine revelation adapted to our needs ; our only infallible rule of faith and practice in spiritual things.

3. It embraces the historical parts of Scripture as an inspired account of man's state by nature, of the way by which he may be delivered from sin, and attain eternal life.

4. Faith embraces all the doctrines peculiar to revelation, and which are practically received by those only who have spiritual discernment.

5. It embraces the Scriptural precepts—those which enjoin various duties to be done.

6. It also embraces the Divine promises. It assumes that God is true, and that whatever he has promised he will be faithful to perform.

There is a natural faith exercised by all persons in every variety of circumstance from the cradle to the grave. But it is rarely an unwavering reliance. Trust in the Divine promises may be entire. We may be assured that if we claim a promise,

complying with its condition, it will be strictly fulfilled. Thus does faith appropriate all the Divine promises.

7. The crowning act of faith—its sum and substance—is its embracing Christ. All moral truth—all revelation—the historical, typical, doctrinal, and preceptive parts of the Bible, and the Divine promises—all converge to one focus in Christ. Take Christ out of the Bible, and it would be but a common book. Without Christ the world would be a moral chaos, a hopeless wreck. Christ is our only and all-sufficient Saviour. On him the believer relies for the forgiveness of his sins, for deliverance from their power, for holy affections, for spiritual strength, for growth in every grace, for perseverance in obedience, and for final salvation. All his confidence at present, and all his hope for the future, rest on Christ.

On the nature of gospel faith, and of its opposite, unbelief, Mr. Finney remarks :

“WHAT EVANGELICAL FAITH IS.

Since the Bible uniformly represents saving or evangelical faith as a virtue, we know that it must be a phenomenon of will. It must consist, too, in something more than a mere executive volition, as distinguished from choice or intention. It is an efficient state of mind, and therefore it must consist in the heart or will's embracing the truth. It is the will's closing in with the truths of the gospel. It is the soul's act of yielding itself up or committing itself to the truths of the evangelical system. It is a trusting in Christ, a committing the soul and the whole being to him in his various offices and relations to men. It is a confiding in him and in what is revealed of him in his word and providence, and by his Spirit.

The same word that is so often rendered faith, in the New Testament, is also rendered commit ; as in John ii. 24 : ‘But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men.’ Luke xvi. 11—‘If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?’ In these passages the word rendered commit is the same word as that which is rendered faith. It is a confiding

in God and in Christ as revealed in the Bible and in reason. It is a receiving of the testimony of God concerning Himself and concerning all things of which he has spoken. It is a receiving of Christ for just what he is represented to be in his gospel and an unqualified surrender of the will and of the whole being to Him.

WHAT UNBELIEF IS.

The term as used in the Bible, in those passages that represent it as a sin, must designate a phenomenon of will. It must be a voluntary state of mind. It must be the opposite of evangelical faith. Faith is the will's reception and unbelief is the will's rejection of truth. Faith is the soul's confiding in truth and in the God of truth. Unbelief is the soul's withholding confidence from truth and the God of truth. It is the heart's rejection of evidence and a refusal to be influenced by it. It is the will in the attitude of opposition to truth perceived or evidence presented. It must be a voluntary *state or attitude* of the will as distinguished from a mere volition or executive act of the will. Volition may, and often does, give forth, through words and deeds, expressions and manifestations of unbelief. But the volition is only a result of unbelief, and not identical with it. Unbelief is a deeper and more efficient state of mind than mere volition. It is the will in its profoundest opposition to the truth and will of God." Systematic Theol. Vol. 3, pp. 79, 80, 86.

Faith is *a new eye* to the mind. It is in spiritual things what the bodily eye is in natural things. The impenitent are without faith, and consequently spiritually blind. 2 Cor. iv. 4: "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." It is not denied that the sinner may have a correct intellectual apprehension of many moral truths; but he does not conform in his heart and life to these intellectual convictions, hence they soon lose their force and reality to him. There are many other moral subjects of which he has no right apprehension, and cannot have while

destitute of faith. Sinners, even fallen spirits, have a sort of faith—they believe; but their faith is inoperative, “dead.” James ii. 19, 20.

Faith is not only a new eye, but *a new feeling*. No one without faith has the feelings appropriate to the various relations of a moral being. He has not right feelings in view of himself as a sinner, right feelings towards the Divine law, towards God, or his fellow man. He may have some proper feeling on these subjects, but it is extremely defective. This should not be understood physically, but morally, spiritually. Faith not only enlightens the understanding, but enlivens the sensibility in respect to spiritual things. Hence Paul defines faith to be “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Heb. xi. 1. It supplies the place of evidence; and gives substance and reality to things which would otherwise be faint and inoperative, if not wholly unperceived, and unfelt. Gospel faith is no merely natural exercise. True, it implies the use of the natural powers.* Still it is distinct from and above nature. A man of the most exalted mind may be destitute of Christian faith; and one with the feeblest natural endowments may be strong in the faith. Not that mental power is an obstacle to faith. Some of the ablest and wisest men have been the most devout. Paul united the profundity of the philosopher with the simplicity of a child.

Faith is *a new life*. The believer has new views, feelings, affections, desires, motives, principles of action. “He walks by faith, not by sight.” Sometimes his way is hedged up—clouds and darkness surround him; then his only light is faith. He needs faith, also, in the brightest prosperity; without it he is soon bewildered. Faith brings temporal things to appear in their true light, and eternal things. The believer, though weak

* “In N. T. πίστις [faith] as spoken in reference to God and Divine things, to Christ and his Gospel, becomes, in some measure, a technical word, especially in the writings of Paul, denoting that *faith*, that confiding *belief*, which is the essential trait of Christian life and character, i. e., *gospel faith*, *Christian faith*.”—ROBINSON'S NEW TEST. LEX. ART. ΠΙΣΤΙΣ.

in himself, is strong in Christ. He will never be overcome, so long as he exercises faith. The cause why many make so little spiritual advancement, or fall by temptation, is that they are weak in faith. They try to walk by sight, and in their own strength, to make themselves better. Efforts for self-improvement should be made, but not without faith in Christ. Many strive to improve in their own strength, without seeking help from on high, fail, and then despond. But would they renounce self, plead the Divine promises, and use the appointed means in faith, they would prevail. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John v. 4.

The "world" are without the life of faith, insensible to spiritual things, "dead *in* trespasses and sins." Believers are dead *to* sin. Theirs is a life of faith. So the apostle : Gal. ii. 20 : "I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God."

The doctrine of faith has been greatly perverted. Some have regarded it as mere feeling—a kind of blind, fanatical impulse. Some have contended that faith may exist in the heart without holiness of life—that there may be saving faith without obedience. So the Antinomians. One passage of Scripture is sufficient to set aside all such theories. "Faith without works is dead."

Others make faith a mere intellectual operation. The system of *Alexander Campbell*, for example, includes this as one of its fundamental articles. He uses the term faith more in the heathen than in the Christian sense. He says : "*Faith* ranked amongst the fruits of the Spirit, is *fidelity*, associated with temperance and meekness." Bib. Rep., Jan., 1839, p. 100.

He further affirms that saving faith is "in its nature *purely historical*, consisting in the belief of a few simple facts, and not doctrines ; that there neither was, nor could there possibly be, any difference between that belief of the gospel which is requisite to the salvation of the soul, and that credence which we usually with readiness yield to any other authenticated history." Ib.

He relates the following in illustration of his views: "When he was a young man he read 'three histories'—one of Asia, one of Africa, and one of the United States. He believed them all. His faith, he tells us, in the history of the United States, was fully equal to that faith which the gospel requires, and which is connected with salvation; for he was thereby led to leave his own country, and come to this." *Ib.* One more quotation will suffice. "Is Jesus the Nazarene, the Son of God, the Apostle of the Father, the Saviour of men? When this question is answered in the affirmative, our duty, our salvation, and our happiness are ascertained and determined." *Bib. Rep.* 1839, p. 101, quotation from the "Millennial Harbinger."

According to this view, saving faith is a mere intellectual operation—an assent of the mind to certain truths. This the unrenewed man may have, the most vicious, and even devils. Such a system may well dispense with the divinity and atonement of Christ, the Trinity, and the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, as it does. This evidently is not the doctrine of Christ, but "another gospel." The belief in Christ which the gospel requires, not only includes all that Campbell claims for it, but much more. It is a cordial submission to, trust in, and reliance on, Christ for salvation. As such it is connected with that entire moral change which the gospel reveals.

Faith, like repentance, is used in a wider and in a more restricted sense. In its most restricted sense, or in its beginning, it is a condition of forgiveness and regeneration, and therefore in the order of nature precedes them. The sinner would never be pardoned and renewed, did he not renounce self, submit to Christ, and place his whole reliance on him. And this through the operation of grace he is able to do. But this faith is only the beginning—its exercise continues after regeneration, through life, and we have reason to believe forever.

Faith may be lost. Persons may depart from the faith, and make shipwreck, as did Hymenæus, Alexander, and others. 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; iv. 1. The life of faith must continue as long as the natural life, or there is no salvation.

Faith is a moral, and, of course, a voluntary exercise. All men are required to exercise it, and neglect of this requirement is sin. This, of course, applies to those who have come to the period of accountability. Infants and idiots are not condemned for the want of it, since they are neither capable of belief nor unbelief. "To believe not" in Scripture, is "to disbelieve." Nor are those heathen to whom Christ has not been revealed condemned for not believing in him. God requires only according to what he has given. All who are saved are saved through Christ. Those to whom he has been revealed must believe in him. Those to whom he has not been revealed must follow the light they have.

LECTURE XXV.

NATURE OF REGENERATION.

Importance of this Doctrine, especially to Ministers. Proof Passages Attested by Experience. ^vWhat Regeneration is not. What it is. A Change in the Governing Purpose—Affections—Moral Disposition. Adoption. Views of Watson and Woods. Requisites. Conviction—Repentance—Faith. Two Agencies in Regeneration. It is Supernatural—Entire—Instantaneous. Necessary to Obedience, and to Salvation.

Our present subject is one of the highest individual importance. No one needs to be studied with a more earnest self-inspection. All are liable to deception respecting it. At the same time it is a matter of vital consequence to every one.

The gospel minister, especially, needs to have a thorough experimental acquaintance with this doctrine. His great business is to seek the salvation of souls; but how can he teach others what he has no practical knowledge of himself? He is constantly laboring among sinners; he preaches to them, visits them at their homes, attends them in the chamber of sickness; he is called to labor in revivals, and to direct inquirers to the Saviour. How can he perform these duties without being a renewed man, without a deep experience of spiritual things? He should not only have such experience, but ability to explain the way of life, and to direct others therein.

There are two great sources of instruction on regeneration—the Bible, and experience. These should be impartially and

faithfully appealed to ; and they are sufficient. Theories unsupported by them are worthless.

We will first cite some of the Scriptural passages relating to this doctrine. Ps. li. 10 : " Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26 : " Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean : from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." John iii. 3 : " Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Acts iii. 19 : " Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Eph. ii. 1 : " You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Titus iii. 5 : " He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." 2 Cor. v. 17 : " If any man be in Christ he is a new creature : old things are passed away ; behold all things are become new." See also Deut. x. 16 ; Isa. i. 16—18 ; Ezek. xviii. 31 ; Matt. i. 21, iii. 11, xviii. 3 ; Col. iii. 1, 3 ; 1 Pet. i. 3 ; James i. 18. Reference may also be made to the experience of Paul, the jailer, and the multitudes at Pentecost. The above and similar passages clearly teach the doctrine of regeneration, so that it cannot be denied without rejecting the authority of the Bible.

No doctrine of Scripture is better attested by experience. Multitudes in every age of the world, and in every circumstance in life, have testified to its reality from their own experience. To refuse assent to it, then, is to discard every rational source of evidence, and to become a universal skeptic. Yet so depraved is the human heart, that many remain in practical ignorance of this great subject.

It will be observed, that the sacred writers generally employ figurative language to explain this doctrine. This method is not only in conformity to the ancient mode of representation, but it is adapted to this subject. The doctrine is one of a deep, spiritual, and mysterious nature. Hence figures must be used in de-

scribing it. And such figures are employed as are best adapted to exhibit the truth in a clear and impressive light. Plain language is also intermingled, so that, when the subject is properly investigated, especially as illustrated by Christian experience, there need be no essential mistake respecting it. Care should be used to interpret figures as figures, and plain language as plain language. In explaining this doctrine we should be careful not to be led astray by the theories and systems of men. Here the Bible and experience constitute our only safe guide. We should also avoid the use of *hackneyed* terms. In explaining this and kindred subjects, frequently stereotyped expressions are employed, which have very little real significance either to teacher or learner. We should seek to have as definite an apprehension as possible of every term used. After all, no form of words can fully describe this great change. It is better *felt* than expressed.

In remarking upon the *nature* of regeneration, I observe negatively,

1. It is not a mere change in *profession*, as from Judaism, Paganism, or Skepticism to Christianity. Such changes have been denominated regeneration, but not Scripturally. A change of opinion does, indeed, take place in regeneration, and often, too, without it. But regeneration is a much deeper and more radical change.

2. It is not baptism, nor wrought by baptism. The error of making regeneration synonymous with baptism, early crept into the Catholic church, and has prevailed there ever since. Many Episcopalian and Lutheran churches also hold to baptismal regeneration. But this is wholly unscriptural and dangerous. Baptism is but the outward sign. It is required, not in order to regenerate, but as a profession of a regenerate state already attained. It is no more regeneration, than a garment or badge is a man.

3. It is not merely a change in external conduct and habits. The profligate may be reformed without being regenerated. Many have overcome various vices, and become useful and re-

spected citizens, who were still destitute of piety, had not the love of God supreme in their hearts.

4. Nor is it a physical change—a destruction of old faculties, and a creation of new ones, or an infusion of any new physical principle. To build up such a theory from a literal construction of some figurative passages of Scripture, is not only doing injustice to the general current of Scripture, but tends to make the whole subject confused and gross. The renewed man has the same physical constitution, the same body, the same intellect, sensibility, will, conscience, reason, memory, imagination, as before his renewal. He has the same natural powers, though their state and condition, their direction and employment, are changed.

Affirmatively, regeneration is an internal moral change, and may be variously indicated.

1. It is a change in the *governing purpose* of the mind. This, in the unrenewed mind, is *selfishness*; in the new man, it is *benevolence*. The former is controlled by a supreme regard to self; the latter exercises impartial love to all. He governs his conduct by motives of right, not of selfish expediency.

2. It is a change in the supreme object of affection. These objects among men are two—God and the world—and these are direct opposites and irreconcilable to each other. “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” The carnal mind is set on worldly objects, the spiritual mind is set on heavenly things. One makes a god of this world, and has no rational object beyond the present life. The other uses this world, not abusing it, as auxiliary to a higher and eternal good.

3. Regeneration is a change in the moral disposition. The disposition of the wicked is to sin. In their reason and conscience they may approve right, but in their hearts they love the ways of transgression; and their evil propensities have the dominion over them. Their highest relish is for the pleasures of sin. The righteous, on the contrary, love holiness—they love God and duty. They love what they once hated, and are averse

to those things in which they formerly took most delight. They retain the same constitutional faculties, but make a different use of them. Their thoughts and feelings flow in a new channel. They have new emotions, desires, aspirations, motives, aims. Before, their moral disposition was sinful; now, it is holy.

4. In regeneration we receive *adoption*, become spiritually children of God, partakers of the Divine nature, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. In proof we adduce Rom. viii. 15, 16, 17: "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." 2 Pet. . 4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature."

Says *Mr. Watson*: "Adoption, then, is that act by which we who were alienated, and enemies, and disinherited, are made the sons of God, and heirs of his eternal glory. 'If children then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ;' where it is to be remarked, that it is not in our own right, nor in right of any work done in us, or which we ourselves do, though it be an evangelical work, that we become heirs, but *jointly with him*, and in his right.

To this state belong freedom from a servile spirit; we are not servants but sons; the special love and care of God our heavenly Father; a filial confidence in him; free access to him at all times and in all circumstances; the title to the heavenly inheritance; and the Spirit of adoption, or the witness of the Holy Spirit to our adoption, which is the foundation of all the comfort we can derive from those privileges, as it is the only means by which we can know that they are ours." Theol. Inst., Chap. xxiv., p. 455.

Dr. Woods, in his translation of Knapp's Theology, remarks:

"In the older writers of the English church (as well as in the ancient fathers, and the most devout and spiritual writers of other nations), we frequently meet with the idea, that the relation existing between man and God, denoted by *sonship*, is not merely

a relation of *feeling*, but also of *nature*. This is sometimes illustrated by saying that we are not adopted by God into his family in the same manner in which a wealthy benefactor sometimes adopts a destitute and orphan child, conferring upon him great privileges, and giving him the name of *son*, to which he has no natural title. In such a case, this name would denote only that the person on whom it was conferred held the same place in the affections of the benefactor, and exercised in return the same feelings of gratitude and dutiful reverence, as an own son would in similar circumstances. And this seems to be the more general sense in which this appellation was used in reference to the friends and worshippers of God before the Christian dispensation, and to those few who, like the devout Cornelius, are found fearing God even in the midst of heathenism. But this term, when applied to believers in the New Testament, has a superior meaning, and points to the gift of the Spirit of adoption, which, in the highest sense, is peculiar to the Christian dispensation, and consequent upon the completion of Christ's work. By being born of God, and receiving this peculiar grace, the Spirit of adoption, believers become partakers of 'the Divine nature,' and possessed of an internal principle, the fruits of which are the love and obedience in which the essential nature of sonship is sometimes placed, but which are in reality only the signs or effects of that new life in which it really consists." Knapp's Theol., p. 416.

By way of further description, we may notice the process that occurs in regeneration—some things essential to it.

1. There must be deep conviction of sin. The sinner must feel his entire sinfulness—that he is justly exposed to eternal punishment. No conviction which does not expose his sins in their true light, will result in any saving change.

2. Repentance—a godly sorrow for sin, confession, and renouncement of it.

3. Faith in Christ. All reliance on his own good works or strength must be relinquished, and his whole trust be in the Saviour.

4. Unreserved consecration to God. The sinner usually makes many resorts before he submits to God. He seeks to stifle his convictions, to procrastinate, to reform, do penance, and the like—but all is ineffectual. He must see his own guilt and helplessness, the pride of his heart must be subdued, he must give up his own way and all reliance on himself, and yield wholly to Christ. Not that he is to cease acting as a moral agent, sink into a passive state, and do nothing. He has all the powers he ever had; the moral law has its full claims upon him; he must be active, he must *strive*, or he will perish. But he must come in the appointed way. He must seek God, and submit to the cross of Christ. It is not required that any one be willing to be lost. No one could be, and if he could, it would be impious. The sinner must desire salvation, but be willing to be saved in God's way.

The Scriptures contain much, partly by way of allusion, partly by more direct detail, in explanation of the way in which a sinner becomes holy. A vivid account of the exercises of an awakened sinner is given in the vii. of Romans. This passage has been often obscured by interpreting it as descriptive of Christian experience. That it does have an application to many professed Christians, is too obvious to be denied, though it was evidently not the design of the apostle to hold it up as a model of Christian experience. He clearly designed it as descriptive of the exercises of an awakened sinner under the law, and the course by which he is brought to submit to be saved by grace. In this light it is rich in instruction on our subject. See also the history of the conversion of Paul and the jailer.

Two agencies are concerned in regeneration—the agency of God and that of man. Both are indispensable. The sinner is not passive, but active and voluntary, in the change, else it would not be a moral work. The sinner must do his own duty. God will not do it for him. But he cannot save himself, or renew his own heart. This is the special prerogative of the Holy Spirit. John i. 13: “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” iii. 5:

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“Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” 2 Thess. ii. 13: “God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” 1 Cor. vi. 11: “But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” Gal. v. 22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,” &c. The sinner *turns*, yields, submits to God; but regeneration itself is the work of the Holy Spirit. Some additional remarks may here be made.

1. Regeneration is *supernatural*. It is not wrought, nor can it be wrought, by mere human power. The agency of the Holy Spirit is indispensable—it is his work.

2. It is an *entire* moral change. There are but two moral states, a state of sinfulness, and a state of holiness. Every person is either dead to God and alive in sin, or dead to sin and alive to God. All the Scriptural representation, both literal and figurative, is decisive on this point. Some of the most explicit proof-texts are the following: Rom. vi. 18, 19, 22: “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. But now being made free from sin,” &c. Eph. ii. 1: “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” Rom. vi. 2, 11: “How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

At regeneration, therefore, the subject ceases to be sinful, and becomes holy.

3. It is an *instantaneous* change. There may be preliminaries, concomitants, and consequents; but as every moral being, at any point of time, is either sinful or holy, there must be a specific period when the transition from sin to holiness takes place.

The figures by which the Scriptures indicate regeneration, are diverse and striking. They set it forth as a circumcision of the heart, a cleansing, a new birth, a resurrection, a new creation.

These, as before remarked, should not be interpreted literally; still, they are highly expressive and forcible. They denote the radical and entire moral change, whereby old things pass away, and all things become new. 2 Cor. v. 17. They indicate that the old life of sin has ceased, and a new spiritual life commenced—the life of faith and holiness.

Before, the higher powers of the mind were subject to the lower propensities; the heart was averse to God, and devoted to sin. Now, the will is in harmony with reason, conscience, and the Divine will; the world and self are renounced, and sin loathed; the heart is set on God, it loves the truth and duty, delights in the Scriptures, in the sanctuary, the people of God, and in doing good. Heaven is the believer's home, Christ his model and sole reliance, and the Bible his rule of faith and practice. Such a change of character and conduct is indicated by the Scriptural figures denoting regeneration.

Regeneration is *necessary* in two respects:

1. It is necessary in order for one to render acceptable service to God. No unrenewed man, *as such*, can keep the Divine law. It is as impossible as for a bad tree to bear good fruit, a corrupt fountain to send forth sweet water, or for one to be both sinful and holy at the same time. None of the works of sinners, therefore, have the nature of holiness. Without this consecration of the whole being to God, all efforts at reform, and works of charity, are ineffectual to produce regeneration. One may have a reputation as a most amiable moralist, a profound philosopher, or philanthropist, and even if possible work miracles, yet without that Divine love imparted in regeneration, he would be in the sight of God but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. 1 Cor. xiii.

2. Without regeneration there is no salvation. In no other way is the soul delivered from the power of sin. The present life is our only probation. Those, therefore, who die without this change, will remain in sin and consequent wretchedness forever. The impenitent man has no pleasure in spiritual things on earth, and he would not even in heaven. Heaven or hell be-

gins here, in the breast of each individual. The assignment of heaven to the righteous, and of hell to the wicked, is not arbitrary, but necessary in the nature of things. God is holy, heaven is holy, its inhabitants are holy ; of course it is suited to none but holy beings. The wicked acquire those principles, habits, and states, which render them unfit for any place or society but that of hell. If we would be prepared for heaven hereafter, we must have a heavenly life here.

LECTURE XXVI.

MEANS AND EVIDENCES OF REGENERATION.

God uses Means in Renewing the Heart. Proof. Moral Truth the Means. God the Author. Influences of the Spirit not Irresistible. The Sinner uses Means. Proof. Objections. Not to Depend on Means. Evidences of Regeneration. Some suppose they are not Christians when they are. Causes. Others think themselves Christians when they are not. Valid Evidences. The Life. Moral Consciousness. Witness of the Spirit. Importance of Self-Examination.

Means may be considered with reference to God, and also to the sinner ; and they have been denied in both respects.

We inquire, then, in the first place, does God use means in renewing the heart? That God renews the heart, we have already seen, but does he employ means, or perform the work without means? Those who regard the change as physical, and the sinner as entirely passive in it, contend that God changes the heart by his direct omnipotence, and creates a new spiritual life in the soul, as he created the world from nought. But the sinner is not physically dead ; he is a moral agent, and acquires no new faculties in regeneration. God, therefore, deals with him as a moral agent. So the Scriptures represent, everywhere using *motives* to induce men to repent. But this question is explicitly settled by the sacred writers. 1 Pet. i. 22, 23: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, *by the word of God.*" James i. 18: "Of his own will begat he us, *with the word of truth.*" *Moral truth*, then, is the means which God employs in regeneration.

We are not, however, to conclude that truth is the *efficient cause* of the change. The Scriptures uniformly ascribe this to the Holy Spirit. If the truth alone were sufficient, the agency of the Spirit would not be indispensable; and men might literally convert souls. But the truth, and every kind of human agency, are to be regarded only as *means*. Paul speaks of some whom he had begotten in the gospel; but he was only the instrument, as he assures us, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7: "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So, then, neither is he that planteth *any thing*, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

As in natural things, it is not the labors of the husbandman, nor the warm sun, nor the genial showers, that give life and growth to vegetation; so in spiritual things, the excellency of the power is not of man, nor any means, but of God. He who makes the corn grow, who causes food to nourish, and medicine to heal, he, and he only, renews the heart. We cannot explain the process. The Saviour did not, the Bible does not, experience does not. It is a great mystery. The fact and the effects are manifest. Further we are unable to penetrate. We are authorized to say that the Holy Spirit regenerates, and that he uses means. *How* he performs the work, we attempt not to show. It is sufficient to affirm with the sacred writers. It is not a physical change, nor the result of mere moral suasion. Rational motives, means adapted to the nature of mind, are employed; yet the change is *supernatural*. The Spirit's efficiency, over and above all means, is indispensable.

Is the Spirit's influence in regeneration irresistible? If so, it is difficult to see how the change can be a moral one, or the subject a moral being. Nor in that case would the operations of grace be impartial, since some are not regenerated. The Bible plainly teaches that the Spirit's influence is not irresistible. Acts vii. 51: "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." God *desires* the salvation of all, 1 Tim. ii. 4, employs means for the salvation of all, and actually does save all but those who refuse to be saved.

It is not necessary to maintain that all have the same amount of gracious influence. It is sufficient that all have enough to secure their salvation, if they will yield to it. Regeneration is a special work, but it is wrought in the hearts of those only who voluntarily submit to God. He convicts, the sinner accepts or refuses, and in case of his accepting the overtures of mercy, his heart is renewed by Divine grace. It is not the fault of God that a part of mankind are not renewed and saved. He does all he wisely can for the salvation of each one. But some will not come unto him that they may have life.

We inquire, in the second place, if the sinner uses means in regeneration. This is denied of course by those who hold that he is passive in regeneration. But that position cannot be sustained, as we have already seen. It is also denied by those who hold that the sinner renews his own heart. Some infer from such passages as Ezek. xviii. 31 : "Make you a new heart and a new spirit," James iv. 8 : "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded," that sinners are required to renew their own hearts. But these passages indicate no more than a voluntary submission of the heart to God, and not its absolute regeneration. The sinner has indeed an indispensable part to act, or he will never be regenerated. But his simple volition will not accomplish the work. The Scriptures uniformly ascribe it to the Holy Spirit.

Though the sinner's agency in submission is indispensable, yet that it is God who regenerates the heart, is evident from such passages as the following : John i. 13 : "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John iii. 5 : "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." James i. 18 : "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." See also Ps. li. 10 ; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26 ; Eph. ii. 1.

This subject needs a careful discrimination. The sinner is not required to use means *in order to* repent, or to fit him to repent, though he may use means in repenting. The means he uses are truth, godly sorrow, prayer, faith. He is not required to read

the Bible, hear the gospel, pray, &c., in order to obtain a right heart; but to do these and all other duties *with* a right heart. Thus should we exhort him—not simply to use means, especially such means as he may use and still remain unregenerate; but exhort him to repent, to submit unreservedly to God. This he can and must do, if saved, and in doing it he will use the requisite means. But the danger of exhorting him to use means is, that he may rest on the means, and stop short of salvation.

It is unquestionable that God has appointed means of grace. These it is the duty of the sinner to use, and these he must use, or never be saved.

1. He must put himself in the way of gracious influences, and give attention to the truth revealed to his mind. Truth, unless attended to, can have no salutary influence.

2. He must yield to, obey the truth. Here is the question for him to decide: will he follow the light of reason, the convictions of conscience and of the Holy Spirit, or not?

3. He must pray, repent, exercise faith. It is objected that these are the doings of the regenerate only. Proverbs xv. 8: "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to God." Reply: This does not relate to the penitent sinner, but to the hypocrite and self-righteous. The passage is parallel in sense with Prov. xxviii. 9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." Sinners, in numerous instances in Scripture, are exhorted to pray, repent, and believe on Christ. Are they, then, exhorted to impossibilities? Prayer, repentance, and faith under the operation of the Holy Spirit, and with a contrite and yielding heart, are not abomination. The prayer of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner," that of Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" the repentance of the Ninevites under the preaching of Jonah, the faith of that father, who cried, "Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief," were neither an abomination, nor unavailing. Such exercises of the sinner before regeneration are not indeed meritorious, they are not strictly holy, since they proceed from a heart not yet renewed. But they arise under the operations of

grace, they come from a heart struggling with sin, and making the surrender to God. Hence they are acceptable to him. They must be performed by the sinner, or he will never be saved. The difficulty in comprehending this point arises mainly from the fact, that what God does and what the sinner does are so intermingled and contemporaneous. The awakened sinner struggles hard against God, and these struggles are sin; but there is a point of yielding and submission, and at this point the Spirit renews the heart. No time intervenes after entire submission, before regeneration. So that really conversion (what the sinner does, *turning*) and regeneration (the work of the Holy Spirit) are contemporaneous. Still, in the order of nature, (not of time), acceptable prayer, repentance, and faith, in their restricted sense, precede regeneration.

God uses means with sinners, we should use means to lead them to repentance, and exhort them to use means. They are capable of appreciating rational motives, they can choose or refuse the blessings proffered in the gospel. If they rest on means, they perish. Their duty should be urged of submitting immediately and unreservedly to God, relying on him alone for salvation.

The Scriptures teach that there are *evidences* of regeneration. 2 Cor. xiii. 5; Gal. vi. 4: "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?" 1 John iii. 14: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

Yet there is great liability to deception and delusion in respect to these evidences. There is need of the most faithful scrutiny on the subject.

Some suppose they are not Christians when they are. This may proceed, 1. From natural diffidence, and a tendency to doubt. Many good people have a strong constitutional besetment of this kind. 2. From declension. Either unbelief or presumption always closely follows a low spiritual state. Indeed, if one continues to decline, he ought to doubt. A state of

grace is one of progress, not of decline. 3. From making the experience of some individual a strict model. The operations of the Spirit in regeneration are various. It is, therefore, wrong for us to doubt merely because our experience does not correspond in every particular to that of some other Christian.

Others suppose they are Christians when they are not. Bias, self-love, false tests and standards mislead multitudes in this vital matter, and persuade them that their state is better than it is. Some rest on external morality, others on forms, others on certain emotions, others on past experience. All these are unsafe grounds of reliance. One or all of them may be possessed without true piety. Each one should faithfully examine himself in the light of God's word.

1. The evidence most obvious, and on which mainly we must ground our judgment of others, is afforded by *the life*. He that loves Christ will keep his commandments. Whatever one may profess, if he lives in the indulgence of sin, he is not a Christian. 1 John iii. 6: "Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not." If the fruit is corrupt, we have a right to infer that the tree is corrupt: if the streams are bitter, that the fountain is bitter also. The fruits of the Spirit are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. v. 22, 23. Where these are exhibited, we ought to conclude that they proceed from a holy heart. There is, indeed, liability to deception here. The outward manifestation may be but seeming, and superficial. While a lack of morality is decisive evidence that one is not a Christian, its *appearance* is not decisive that one is.

2. Another very important evidence to the possessor is furnished by *consciousness*. It is the privilege of believers to know their spiritual state, to have *an assurance of hope*. This assurance rests on *present*, not on past, experience. Past experience is not to be disregarded. *Bunyan* represents Christian as often refreshed by reading his Roll. But to be of any avail, we must have a present and progressive Christian experience. We may or may not be able to mark the precise hour when our sins were

forgiven; our experience may or may not accord with some others; but we do know whether we are sincere or hypocritical, whether the governing purpose of our minds is to do right under all circumstances, and whether our supreme attachment is to holy or sinful objects. If we are Christians, these evidences will not be uniformly clear and vivid; but by impartial self-examination, prayer, and the study of the Bible, we may prove ourselves, and be established in the truth. When assailed by doubts, the best way to dispel them is to apply ourselves the more faithfully to duty.

3. The last evidence to be mentioned, is the witness of the Spirit. Rom. viii. 16: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." We are not to consider this a sensible operation, which we can infallibly distinguish. Fanatics often take the suggestions of their own hearts for the leadings of the Spirit. Still we should not deny that the Holy Spirit directly operates on our spirits. The witness of the Spirit may include the following particulars:

1. It produces in us the Christian graces—the "fruits of the Spirit," which are a sure index of Christian character.

2. It leads our minds to a contemplation of these evidences.

3. It enlightens us to understand these evidences, and thus to have assurance respecting our spiritual state. Thus does the Spirit bear witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God.

Self-examination is a duty of great importance, not only to ascertain the beginning of spiritual life, but also its growth, and present state. It will tend to increase our confidence, correct our faults, and stimulate us to faithfulness. The most eminent saints have been distinguished for their delight in secret communings of heart with God.

LECTURE XXVII.

ON SANCTIFICATION.

Meaning of the Term. What Sanctification is not. Not Superhuman—nor the Perfection of Adam before the Fall—not a State of Infallibility. Sanctification distinguished from Justification and Regeneration. It is Progressive. Scriptural Proofs. Objections Answered. How Sanctification is Attained. Sanctification Practical, and a High Privilege.

The term sanctify, in the Hebrew of the Old Testament (שָׁדַף), and in the Greek of the New (ἀγιάζω), signifies to make holy. Hence holiness and sanctification are in the Scriptures synonymous terms. We have before treated of the nature of holiness, but this does not preclude us from considering it more at length in connection with a well established principle of Christian doctrine. The definition of this state given by Archbishop Usher, and which is generally adopted, is as follows: "Sanctification is nothing less than for a man to be brought to an entire resignation of his will to the will of God, and to live in the offering up of his soul continually in the flames of love, and as a whole burnt-offering to Christ."*

The will of God is the standard of right: the will is the moral faculty in man; hence, if a man's will is in entire harmony with the Divine will, his conduct is conformed to right, and, so long as he is in this state, he is holy, sanctified. Benevolence—impartial love to God and man—is the law of his being, and he is, in the Scriptural sense, a perfect man.

* Buck's Theol. Dict. Art. Sanct.

This subject needs to be carefully guarded from misapprehension. There has been much needless controversy respecting it, and many good people stumbled on account of misunderstanding the doctrine. We remark, therefore :

1. The holiness, sanctification, or perfection required of believers, is consistent with their condition as men. It is not Divine, nor angelic. It is the same in *kind*, but not in degree; else the requirement would exceed their capacity of compliance. A perfect acorn is not an oak, nor a perfect child a man, nor a perfect man an angel or God. All that is required of us, is to be perfect in our sphere—to be perfect men.

2. Nor is it the perfection of Adam before the fall. By his transgression, Adam brought himself and all his posterity into a depraved state—a state of infirmity and weakness. Their connection with him does not impose on them a *necessity* of sinning; but it is such that all do sin, as soon as they are able to, and continue to be sinners, until renewed by Divine grace. And from the effects of the fall they will not in this world fully recover. The moral image of God in men is marred by reason of sin; not of the first sin only, but of their own transgressions; and never, in the present state, will they attain that perfection which they would have reached, had no sin entered the world. In this sense, therefore, all are imperfect, and necessarily so. These fearful consequences of sin stand as a perpetual warning to the world.

3. Nor is it a state of infallibility, or of freedom from temptation. The angels were not infallible, nor was Adam; nor can we ever expect to be while in a state of probation. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are: of course the disciple is not, in this respect, above his Master. We are, then, to take the believer as he is—a frail, dependent man: the intellect beclouded, the sensibilities disordered, and the whole physical and moral powers impaired, beset with temptation on every hand, from without and from within. With the strictest sincerity, therefore, the most honest intention, he is ever liable to mistake in judgment, and this may lead to error in practice. He can, then,

never look upon himself but with deep humility and self-abasement. In his best estate he needs to use every petition in the Lord's prayer, and to depend constantly on the purifying efficacy of the blood of atonement. Through grace alone can he stand accepted of God for a moment.

This view of the subject is authorized, not only by the Scriptures, but also by the testimony of the most experienced Christians, as Wesley, Fletcher, and Upham. One quotation from the founder of Methodism will suffice: "Every one may mistake as long as he lives. A mistake in opinion may occasion a mistake in practice. Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. It follows, that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, 'Forgive us our trespasses.'"^{*} Hence Mr. Wesley never approved of the phrase "sinless perfection," as applied to men in a militant state.

It is admitted by all Christians that there is a growth in grace—that there are provisions in the gospel of which the mass of true believers even have not been made partakers, privileges which they do not fully enjoy, attainments in the spiritual life which they have not yet made. It is true that justification is complete in reference to all its subjects—i. e., all their sins are forgiven: regeneration is also entire and not partial. In this change the subject ceases to be sinful and becomes holy; from being dead *in* sin, he becomes dead to sin, and alive spiritually; with him old things have passed away, and all things become new; he is translated from the kingdom of darkness and corruption, into that of the light and liberty of the children of God. So the Scriptures plainly teach respecting the transition from sin to holiness, accomplished in the work of regeneration.

Still this great and radical change is but the commencement of spiritual life. It bears a striking analogy to the beginning of natural life, in respect to its primary feebleness, its development,

* Wesley's Chr. Per. p. 64.

and increasing vigor. The renewed man soon finds that he has a warfare before him—numerous subtle and powerful foes to contend with—both external and internal. Such is evident from the exhortations addressed to *Christians* to fight the good fight of faith, to watch and pray, to grow in grace, to press on, and the like. The prayer of the apostle for the Thessalonian believers is highly significant. 1 Thess. v. 23: “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” So, also, his exhortation to the Corinthian brethren. 2 Cor. vii. 1: “Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

These passages fully accord with Christian experience. Although the renewed soul is at the time free from condemnation, and rejoices in the liberty of the gospel; yet he soon finds that there is a part in him strongly susceptible of temptation, and prone to yield to it. Not that he is still under the dominion of sin, for to affirm this of the regenerate would be a direct contradiction. Not that he is under the necessity of committing any sin, for no being is subject to such necessity. Nor do we assert that no person, after regeneration, ever lived without committing sin; on the other hand the Scriptures show that it is the duty and privilege of every one so to live. It is important, in order to free the Divine arrangements from imputation, as well as for other purposes, to understand well that no man, and especially no renewed man, is *necessitated* to commit a single sin. Whatever may be true in regard to our fallen state, or unfavorable circumstances, yet if we sin, we do it as free, moral agents, voluntarily. As already remarked, we cannot affirm that none have lived without committing sin subsequently to their justification. But respecting the mass of true believers, the evidence, both from Scripture and experience is, that they do commit sin after regeneration. And a provision is made for those who do sin, and the privilege and duty are set forth of their entire sanctification.

This state, as already seen, is not one of absolute perfection, for no being but God is absolutely perfect; nor is it a confirmed state in opposition to a state of probation, nor one free from temptation, nor from the necessity of constant dependence on grace, and constant faith in Christ, and reliance on the blood of the atonement. But it is a state of entire consecration to God, and devotion to his will. In the Scriptures it is variously brought to view, and termed holiness, sanctification, consecration, spiritual mindedness, perfection, and the like.

In proof of the doctrine of entire sanctification, we remark:

1. The moral law requires perfect obedience. Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." Matt. xxii. 37—40: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." James ii. 10: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

2. The gospel is no less strict in its requirements. It is not necessary to employ argument to prove that the gospel abrogates none of the requirements, renews none of the sanctions of the moral law. The contrary is most expressly affirmed. Said our Saviour, Matt. v. 17: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. So the apostle, Rom. viii. 4: "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. God, therefore, requires entire conformity to him. This is generally admitted. Now would God require impossibilities? He requires us to cease from sin, and to love him with all the heart. This, then, with his grace, we are able to do.

3. God does not desire the existence of sin in any of his creatures. All sin committed is against his will, and he does all he wisely can for its prevention and removal. The passages of Scripture which teach this sentiment are too numerous and fa-

miliar to be cited. We may, then, rest assured, that if any moral being is not saved from all sin, it is in no sense nor degree the fault of God.

4. God has made provision for entire deliverance from sin, and sanctification to himself. What we, in our sinful state, could not accomplish alone, may be accomplished through Christ. Rom. viii. 3, 4 : "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh : That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." 1 John i. 7 : "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." If, then, any are not wholly sanctified, it is not for want of a gracious and ample provision for that purpose.

5. God has promised sanctification. Isa. i. 18 : "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Ezek. xxxvi. 25 : "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean ; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." 1 Thess. v. 23, 24 : "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly ; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, *who also will do it.*" 1 John i. 9 : "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." These promises are indeed conditional, but this shows that we may avail ourselves of the provisions of grace, and thus secure their fulfilment.

6. The soul must be entirely free from sin, before it can enter heaven. When will this be done ? After death ? Then we must admit a doctrine of purgatory. Death cannot take away sin, for it is but a physical change, a separation of soul and body. Sin pertains to the soul ; the dissolution of the body cannot purify the soul from sin. The sanctification of the heart is a moral work, and is wrought only on condition of our exercising faith in the blood of Christ. And why may not this faith be

exercised some time before death, as well as at the moment of death? The Scriptures nowhere teach that the work of entire sanctification is limited to the article of death. It is folly to suppose that a moral work, conditioned on the exercise of faith, can never be accomplished except amid the convulsions of the dying hour, and when, as is often the case, the individual is bereft of reason. The same grace that can sanctify a believer at the moment of death, may sanctify a day, a month, a year, or longer period before death, and preserve the subject blameless unto the coming of Christ. Hence we consider it the believer's privilege to be wholly sanctified—property, friends, influence, time, talents, body, soul and spirit, to God.

We may remark in reference to all the preceding points, that they do not refer to some indefinite period in the remote future, but all relate to the present. Our duty and privilege as there brought to view, the commands of God, the provisions and promises of the gospel, all have reference to the present. The Scriptures never encourage procrastination. *Now* is the accepted time.

7. The Scriptures teach that the state of sanctification has been actually attained. It is either expressly asserted or implied in numerous passages, such as the following: Says Paul, in addressing his brethren at Rome, Rom. vi. 20, 22: "When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness [totally depraved]. . . . But now being made free from sin," [entirely holy,] &c. Here perfect holiness is set over against total depravity. One doctrine illustrates the other. Job was "a perfect and an upright man." Job. ii. 3. Zacharias and Elizabeth "were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless." Luke i. 6. Paul enjoyed this blessing. Rom. viii. 1, 2: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Gal. ii. 20; vi. 14: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;

and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." "By whom [Christ] the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." John speaks familiarly and experimentally on the subject. 1 John iv. 17, 18: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because, as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." Many other passages of like import might be cited, but these will suffice as specimens of the Scriptural representation.

We will now notice some of the objections to the doctrine:

1. That some in the Scriptures called perfect did commit sin, as Noah, Asa, David. This only proves that they were not absolutely infallible, or free from the liability to sin, which, as we freely admit, none are in this life. Adam, in his original state, was not.

2. Those passages which affirm that none live without sin, as 2 Chron. vi. 36, Eccles. vii. 20, 1 John i. 8. These refer to man's state by nature. All without grace are sinners, and continue in sin until renewed by the Holy Spirit. No person, Christ excepted, ever lived a whole life on the earth without committing sin. Or they may refer to the general character of men—the mass. Compare Ps. xiv. 2, 3.

3. Those passages are cited in which perfection is disclaimed, as Job ix. 20: "If I say I am perfect," &c.; Phil. iii. 12: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." The first of these relates to absolute perfection. The second to the state attained after the resurrection, as is clear from the context. See verses 11, 15.

4. Romans vii. is most frequently appealed to by objectors. They regard it as an account of the experience of Paul after his conversion, and of Christian experience generally. Were this admitted, the viii. chapter would show that there is a higher state, which the apostle and many others attained. But we are unwilling that the passage should be held up as a model of Christian experience. Are true believers *carnal, sold under sin*?

v. 14. Compare viii. 2: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The candid inquirer will see, by studying the connection, that the apostle in the vii. chapter is describing the struggles of the sinner under the law—his ineffectual attempts to be delivered from sin by mere works of law. Although his reason and conscience discern and approve the right, his perverse heart will not bow to their dictates. In this animated description the first person and present tense are naturally employed. In the viii. chapter the way of deliverance through grace in Christ is brought to view, and its superiority shown over the legal method described in the vii. Thus the two chapters harmonize with each other, and with other portions of the Scriptures. Such is the exposition uniformly adopted by the Christians of the first three centuries after Christ; and is the one now given by the ablest Biblical critics of different persuasions, as Tholuck, Knapp, Bloomfield, and Stuart.

Stuart, though a Calvinist, and holding the common Calvinistic views of this doctrine, yet, as a sound philologist, makes the following remarks on the passage, i. e., Rom. vii. 13—25:

"The Jew would very naturally ask, on hearing such a declaration as is contained in verse 12: 'What, then, is that which is good the cause of sin?' This the apostle represents him as doing; and to this question he replies, that it is not the law itself which is the cause of sin, but the *abuse* of it by the sinner which renders him guilty; and that in this way the odious deformity of sin is peculiarly and strikingly exhibited. In the sequel, the apostle proceeds to exhibit in a very forcible manner, the fact that the law can in no way be involved in the charge of being the efficient cause of sin, for it stands in direct and perpetual opposition to all the sinful desires of men in an unsanctified and carnal state. That it is holy and just and good, is evinced by the fact, that the conscience and moral sense spontaneously take sides with it, or approve of its precepts. Yet, notwithstanding all this, such is the force of sinful desires and lusts, that they triumph over the precepts of the law, and lead the un-

sanctified man to continual opposition and transgression. Even against the voice of reason and conscience, i. e., of an internal moral nature, as well as against the Divine precepts, does carnal desire prevail: we yield the *moral self* to the power of the *carnal self*, and plunge deep into ruin, while the voice of God's law is thundering in our ears, and the voice of our own consciences is loudly remonstrating against our conduct, 'Wretched men that we are.' . . .

Now to what special end of the apostle would it be here subservient, if we suppose him to be describing a *state of grace* in chapter vii. How does the contest in the breast of Christians against sin, prove the inefficacy of the *law* to sanctify them? For to prove such an inefficacy, it must be admitted, is the general object of the present discourse. The fact is, that such statement would prove too much. It would show that *grace* is wanting in efficacy, as well as the *law*; for the Christian, being a subject of grace, and still keeping up such a contest, one might, of course, be tempted to say: 'It appears, then, that grace is no more competent than law, to subdue sin and sanctify the heart.' And indeed, why might he not say this, if the ground of those who construe all this of the *regenerate* man be correct? For what is the real state of the whole matter as represented by the apostle? It is, that in every contest here between the flesh and the spirit (the moral man), the former comes off victorious. And can this be a *regenerate* state? Is this the 'victory which is of God, and overcometh the world?' 'He that is born of God sinneth not;' those that love his law 'do no iniquity;' he that loveth Christ, 'keepeth his commandments;' i. e., a habitual and voluntary offender such an one is not; he gives not himself up to any course of sin; it is his habitual study and effort to subdue his passions, and obey the commandments of God. But what of all this is there, in the case which the apostle represents in vii. 14—25? Read now chapter viii. 1—17, and then ask: Is the man described in vii. 14—25, who yields in every instance to the assault of his passions, and suffers them continually to triumph over law, conscience, and every other considera-

tion, such a man or the same man as is described in viii. 1—17. In this latter passage the man is described, ‘who walks NOT after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ Can this, then, be the same man who does walk after the flesh, and always does this, even when the voice of God and conscience is thundering in his ears, and his own internal moral nature is warning him against the course he pursues? Impossible. Light and darkness are not more diverse than these two cases.” Com. on Romans, pp. 324, 325.

5. The last objection I will notice is this, that the more persons become advanced in Christian experience, the more sinful do they feel themselves to be. In reply, it may be remarked, that theories and usages have had much to do in moulding the expressions which good men have employed in speaking of their spiritual state. Besides, it is admitted, that the more Christians advance, the keener is their spiritual discernment. What would be done with an unrepenting conscience at one time, would be sin if committed under more light and grace. The ripest saint will feel that he has no merit, no goodness of his own—that regarding himself alone and his past life, he must abase himself as in the dust, and that all his sufficiency is of Christ. Payson, for example, while contemplating his own unworthiness and frailty, was ready to pronounce himself, like Paul, the chief of sinners. Yet, speaking of his great blessing in Christ, he wrote as follows :

“Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been, *for some weeks*, a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission. The Sun of Righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as he approached, and now he fills the whole hemisphere, pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in

the beams of the sun.”* At another time he writes: “Rejoice with me, for I have lost my will.” This was a state of sanctification, in which God can preserve the soul not only “some weeks,” but years.

Sanctification is a *progressive* work. Moral purification, and the consecration of the heart to God, are indeed instantaneous, being accomplished in regeneration. But triumph over besetments and temptations, subduing of the powers to God, the development and maturing of the Christian graces, are gradual. The believer may be wholly consecrated to God, his will be in entire harmony with the Divine will, and he love God with all his heart, yet his capacity be constantly expanding. The growth in grace, so far as we know, may continue forever.

Great mistakes have been made respecting the way of attaining this blessing. Some seek it in a legal spirit, by their own efforts at self-improvement, without looking to Christ. Self-denial, watchfulness, and persevering efforts to overcome sin, are essential; but these cannot be rendered without aid from Christ.

He who would attain the state of sanctification must,

1. Have a deep conviction of its importance. He must feel that he ought to be wholly given up to God, and filled with his Spirit; and that it is a great privilege to attain it.

2. He must believe it to be practically attainable. Unbelief paralyzes the energies, and prevents success. If one does not believe that the exercise of perfect love is practicable to him, he will never attain it.

3. He must rely implicitly, entirely, and constantly on Christ. In every emergency he must resort to him. Simple faith is the condition. All the spiritual blessings that believers receive from Christ, are bestowed on condition of faith in him. Mark xi. 24: “What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” 1 Thess. iv. 3: “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” 1 John v. 14: “This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.” This faith is

* Memoir, pp. 462, 463.

not an inoperative principle, but a voluntary yielding of all to Christ, to obey all his requirements. The evidences are the fruits brought forth in a holy heart and life—strict integrity, active piety, disinterested devotion to the cause of Christ.

This is eminently a *practical* doctrine. Sanctification is not an emotion of the sensibility. It is nothing less than the consecration of our all to the service of God—our entire faculties, mental and physical—our time, property, influence, all. This doctrine has been grossly misrepresented, even by some of its professed advocates. It is really the gospel, applied to the living realities of life.

Sanctification is a high *privilege*. To love God with all the heart, to be in intimate union with Christ, and communion with the Holy Spirit, to have our wills in sweet submission to the Divine will, to live in obedience to the gospel, in the exercise of faith, abounding in the Christian graces, and bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, is to be in a truly happy and blessed state. Though we are all poor and unworthy of ourselves, yet through the merits of Christ, and the blessings of his grace, it is the high privilege of the least of his disciples, and of all, to obtain and retain this great and inestimable blessing.

LECTURE XXVIII.

ON ELECTION.

“Old School” Calvinism Discussed. Argument of the “New School” Examined. Remarks of Sherlock, Fisk, and Heber. Arminian View. Proofs and Arguments. Different Applications of the Term Election.

All admit that election is taught in the Bible. But on the question, what is the Scriptural doctrine, there has been great diversity of opinion. With none, probably, has human philosophy had more to do. The controversy on this subject owes much, also, to a love of system-making. Men construct a system, and then resort to the Scriptures for confirmation of it, instead of building their faith on the Scriptures. Hence much discrimination and candor are requisite in the investigation of this subject by the Christian teacher; and a strict conformity to the simple Scriptural doctrine.

The main views of theologians on this doctrine, may be classed under three heads. These will now pass under review:

I. The “Old School” system, as held by Augustine, Knox, Calvin, Hopkins, Emmons, &c. They held, according to Dick, that God “decreed to create man after his own image, but to place him in such circumstances that his fall would necessarily follow: to send his Son to die upon the cross for the salvation of those whom he had chosen, and to give them effectual grace to

convert and sanctify them, while the rest should be given up to blindness and impenitence.”*

They argue this, first, from the fact that some are lost. But this fact does not determine the cause or occasion of their ruin.

2. From the Omnipotence of God. “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” The argument is, that as God is almighty, and some are lost, therefore we must infer that he determines absolutely who shall be saved, and who shall be lost. But God cannot act inconsistently. If God has moral beings under his government, they must be governed as moral beings. It is not within the limit of power to have a being free and necessitated at the same time. That is a contradiction. God “will have all men to be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth;” but some do not come to a knowledge of the truth, and are not saved. It is not consistent with Omnipotence to save one in his sins, or to destroy his moral agency to free him from sin. Both are absurdities, not subjects of power.

3. From the Divine Sovereignty. God, it is said, has a right to dispose of his creatures as he chooses. True, but this is always done with the strictest equity. Various passages are quoted, as Isa. xlv. 7: “I make peace, and create evil.” But especially Romans ix. chapter. Here the apostle is arguing the sovereignty of God in choosing the Jews as his peculiar people, and afterwards rejecting them for their unbelief.† A parallel passage

* Dick’s Theol., Vol. I., p. 360.

† We give Prof. Tholuck’s summary of the chapter:

“With the eighth chapter the apostle had terminated the doctrinal part of his epistle. Henceforward, to the twelfth, there follows another section, which we may call a historical corollary. Were that way, which he had hitherto been inculcating, the only way of salvation, it followed, that the Jews, who still strove after blessedness, through the medium of fulfilling the law, would be wholly excluded from mercy. Moreover, as a much greater number of Gentiles than Jews were received into the church of Christ, there actually resulted, from Paul’s doctrine, the rejection of almost all the members of the Israelitish theocracy. This might appear severe. Accordingly, Paul affirms, in the first place, that it distressed himself to think that the majority of the Israelites should be rejected. But, nevertheless, that was the truth. Moreover, it cannot be objected that, in that case, the promise made to Abraham, of Israel being the covenant people, is left unfulfilled: for the promise did not extend to *all* the bodily descendants of Abraham, as such. Isaac and Ishmael, in respect of corporeal descent, had both been Abraham’s children; and yet, in this instance, God had vouchsafed the privileges

is Jer. xviii. 1—10. Yet some in treating this subject have not hesitated to affirm that God instigates men to evil, and is the author of all sin!* God is, indeed, the author and upholder of the universe, and administers a righteous government, but that he causes men to sin, and then punishes them for it, is no part of his sovereignty. The blessings of his grace become a savor of life or of death, according as men use them.

4. Unconditional Election and Reprobation are argued from the plan, decrees, or purposes of God. That he has a plan

to Isaac only, who was born according to Divine promise. With the same free will does God now act, in not receiving all the subjects of the Old Testament theocracy into the new kingdom of God, but those only who comply with the Divine condition of faith in Christ, without relying upon their own righteousness by works. Should the Israelite object, however, that the example was inapplicable, inasmuch as Sarah was a holy woman and rightful wife of Abraham, whereas Hagar was not even a Hebrew, but proud tempered and a maid servant, we have a still more decisive example of God's not binding himself to a bodily descent in the instance of Rebecca, who bare Jacob and Esau as twins. But, notwithstanding, Jacob was destined by God for the possession of Canaan, while Esau obtained no privilege of the kind. Inasmuch, too, as God declared his decree to this effect, even at the birth of the children, it might thence be likewise gathered, that not even *works*, on their part, existed as condition of that decree, and, accordingly, that what he had vouchsafed to Jacob, whether we look to his birth or works, he vouchsafed to him from the free purpose of his grace. On the other hand, however, least of all can it be thence inferred, that God is unjust. We must only acknowledge, Paul means to affirm, that on God's side, *all* is grace, while on ours, not a word can be said of *claims* of any kind whatever. It follows, that any endeavor in our own strength to enforce certain claims (as Israel does bodily extraction and fulfilment of the law), to privileges from God, can never gain its end. Nay, we learn from the case of Pharaoh, that by the Divine forbearance, the stubborn may be, for a certain time, endured, but that punishment surely overtakes them at last, and then is all the more severe, to the increase of the Divine glory. It follows, proceeds Paul, that man must be content if God, recognizing no *rights* upon his side, accepts of him when he complies with the Divine conditions, and gives others over to their obduracy. God certainly appears compassionate enough, in enduring the latter with patience, instead of visiting them as they deserve, with instant punishment, and when, in contrast with them, he exalts to glory such as comply with his conditions. The persons who, in this way, i. e., by means of conditions, prescribed by God, and independent of righteousness by works, attained to salvation, are, now-a-days, believers on Christ, both from amongst Jews and Gentiles. . . . Accordingly, the ground of Israel's not being received into the new kingdom of God, manifestly does not lie in God; Israel has to attribute his rejection to itself, having wanted to receive pardon through efforts of its own, and upon the ground of certain rights, and refusing to comply with the condition laid down by God, according to his free purpose, viz.: acquiescence with childlike faith in the redemption of Christ." Com. on Romans, pp. 289, 290.

The chapter, instead of proving unconditional election, is a powerful argument for the doctrine of God's free, impartial grace.

* See extracts from *Dr. Hopkins*, and others, Lecture XIV.

which relates to all beings and all events, is admitted. But so far as it relates to moral beings and moral acts, it is consistent with their freedom.

Some of the proof texts may here be noticed. Matt. xx. 16 : "Many be called, but few chosen." It is obvious from the connection, that this passage does not relate to the election of individuals to salvation to the exclusion of others. Even if it did, this would not prove that the election and reprobation were irrespective of the free acts of men. The design of the parable which introduces the passage, is to show the rightfulness of the Divine proceedings, in accepting all who come to Christ, and bestowing blessings upon them according to his own wisdom and grace.

Matt. xxv. 34 : "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This passage shows that heaven was from the beginning prepared for the righteous. But this determines nothing as to who shall be righteous, or how they shall become so.

John xv. 16, 19 : "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." It is very doubtful whether this passage relates to personal salvation, rather than appointment to office ; but if it does, it does not show that the choice was unconditional, or irrespective of their character. True, we love God because he first loved us ; but he loved *the world*, and gave his Son to die for all.

Acts xiii. 48 : "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." This passage, as many Calvinistic commentators allow, does not relate to foreordination ; but simply states that such as gave candid attention (Greck, were disposed) to the apostles' preaching, believed the gospel.

Acts ii. 23 : "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." This relates to the purpose of God to give Christ to suffer to make atonement for sin. See chapter iii. 18, which is parallel. God did not necessitate the

acts of Christ's murderers, else they could not be charged as doing it with *wicked* hands. He permitted them, as free agents, to do it, and held them accountable for the wickedness.

Rom. viii. 30 : "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called." This will be understood by reference to the preceding verse : "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate." The purpose of God in reference to the salvation of individuals, is in Scripture founded on his foreknowledge. God is omniscient. He knows who will comply with the terms of the gospel, and who will reject them ; and purposes to dispose of them accordingly. This is Bible election and reprobation. Rom. ix. has been already explained as vindicating the right of God to treat individuals and nations according to their character, in opposition to the exclusive claims of the Jews.*

Eph. i. 5—11 : "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children," &c. This predestination is not arbitrary, but founded on the foreknowledge of their compliance with the terms proposed. See Rom. viii. 29, 30.

1 Pet. i. 2 ; 2 Thess. ii. 13 : "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience," &c. These passages distinctly show personal election to be conditional, founded on the foreknowledge of God, and involving the use of moral means alone. We, of course, shall object to no such doctrine of election.

Rev. xvii. 8 : "Whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." This passage does not determine the ground of the proceeding indicated. It is sufficient, however, to refer to the fact that names may be *blotted out* of the book of life, as intimated in Rev. iii. 5.

We have now passed in review the chief passages usually cited. We see what ingenuity might do in grouping detached passages, and thereby constructing a plausible theory. Almost any theory may be rendered plausible in the same way.

The tenor of Scripture is utterly opposed to this system, and teaches a sentiment altogether different, as we shall presently

* For further discussion of Rom. ix. and other passages, see Lect. XIV.

show. The theory is also opposed to reason and consciousness. Carried out to its legitimate consequences, it makes man a mere machine, divests him of real freedom, renders him incapable of either virtue or vice, reward or punishment. It makes God the efficient cause of all that is done in the universe, and conducts to Universalism, Pantheism, Atheism. Such is its practical tendency, and such has been the actual result in innumerable instances. The system is an offshoot of the old Stoical doctrine of Fate. It was brought into the church by Augustine and other speculating doctors; and although it has had the approbation of numerous great and venerated names, this is no more than can be affirmed of many other confessedly erroneous dogmas. If it will not stand the test of candid Scriptural exposition, sound reason, and consciousness, it must be pronounced false and pernicious.

II. The "New School" Calvinistic sentiment may be stated as follows, in the language of Dick :* "God, having foreseen from all eternity that man, whom he intended to create after his image, would fall from a state of innocence, elected some of the human race to everlasting life, and left the rest to perish in their sins." This theory is variously explained. There is great latitude of views among its supporters. It is to be distinguished from the Old School view, or high Calvinism, though its advocates cannot be said to be always consistent with themselves.

We will now review the principal arguments used in its support.

1. The Omniscience or Foreknowledge of God. On this point we remark, that either foreknowledge and absolute decree are the same, or foreknowledge proves decree, or foreknowledge alone does not authorize this doctrine. Foreknowledge is infinite, extends to all events: hence, if it is synonymous with decrees, or proves decrees, then absolute decrees extend to all things, and fatal necessity, or at least High Calvinism is established. The only alternative left is to admit that the Divine Omniscience affords no support to the doctrine.

2. The dependence of man on God. This, I allow, is a strong

* Theol., p. 360.

argument; and I am willing to go farther with it than even Calvinists themselves. Those of the New School, as Taylor, Stuart, Beecher, Finney, hold that man is really able of himself to make him a new heart. It is difficult to see how their view of dependence affords any support to the doctrine of personal election. But evangelical Arminians, as Wesley, Watson, Fletcher, Fisk, and Knapp, admit that of himself the sinner is unable to change his heart, but is entirely dependent on the Holy Spirit for regeneration. We see which insists most on the need of a gracious provision, and that salvation is all of grace. But the Arminian holds that although the sinner is thus dependent, grace is provided for all, and will save all but those who wilfully reject it.

3. The Scriptural account of the Divine purpose. This, it is alleged, secures absolutely the salvation of a part, while the rest of mankind are left to perish in their sins. Now, here is a question of fact to be determined solely by revelation. We all admit, that no sinner would, and we say also, no sinner *could*, be saved, but through the interposition of grace. We agree, also, that a part only will be saved. But what is the ground of this difference? Is it to be ascribed wholly to the Divine purpose?

Those who affirm this, assert (1.) That God has a sovereign right to make such discrimination. (2.) That he does make it, they adduce the various passages which speak of God's purpose, election, choice, people, &c. (3.) As a philosophical explanation of their system, they hold that the mind is governed by motives, that God knows what motives will induce any sinner to repent, and he employs such motives as he pleases, with whom he pleases. Thus they say no one's rights or freedom are at all infringed.

Now if this were the doctrine of the Bible, however difficult of comprehension it might be; I would not hesitate to embrace it. I admit that disconnected expressions and passages of Scripture appear to teach it. Still, with the light I have on the sacred volume, I cannot see that the doctrine in question is

authorized by it. I can readily admit that God is Omnipotent, a sovereign, that he governs the universe, that he has a plan of government, uniform and consistent laws relating to all beings and events, that he saves some, and suffers others to perish, that he knows, and always knew, the character and condition of every being. All this I cordially believe. I must, or deny the Scriptures, and the government of God. Now the passages relied on by Predestinarians prove thus much, and no more, and candid writers do not claim much more for them. But all this does not touch the point in controversy between them and their opponents; since the latter not only admit these principles, but hold them as essential truths in their own system. This is an important fact.

Dr. Taylor, of New Haven, a very moderate Calvinist, held that God cannot consistently save all, else he would: that he saves the most he wisely can, and so employs motives as to secure the greatest amount of good with the least evil. So far very well. But he proceeds to say that the cause why one given individual submits and another does not, is to be referred to *the appointment of God*, not to the choice of the sinner. God first determines who shall be saved, and the means which shall accomplish their salvation; and he also determines not to bestow the same effectual grace on others, but to leave them to certain ruin. This is no mere foresight of results, but a Divine purpose, itself determining the result. The grace thus bestowed is termed special, in distinction from the common grace bestowed on all. Mention is also made of the secret will of God, not only in distinction from, but in opposition to, his revealed will. How this secret will came to be in possession of these wise doctors, they do not inform us. They explain that it is secret in the sense that no sinner knows whether he is one of the elect or not. *Dr. T.* asserts that if one of the non-elect "knew what God knows, there would be good reason for his not trying to escape."* Is this the doctrine of the Bible? Does that volume thus exhibit the dealings of God with his creatures? If so, where?

* Quoted from notes of Lectures on Theology, p. 269.

We subjoin quotations from evangelical Arminians on some of the main points of Calvinism.

Extracts from William Sherlock, D. D., on PROVIDENCE, London edition, 1702 :

“ If God, then, must not permit sin, he must not suffer men to choose any thing that is wicked, for this is sin ; herein the immorality of the act consists. Consider, then, what the meaning of this is, that God must not leave men to the liberty of their own choice, but must always over-rule their minds by an irresistible Power to choose that which is good, and to refuse the evil. But will any one say, that this is to govern men like men ? Is this the natural government of free agents, to take away their liberty and freedom of choice ? Does government signify destroying the nature of those creatures which are to be governed ? Does this become God, to make a free agent, and to govern him by necessity and force ?

This, I confess, is a certain way to keep sin out of the world, but it thrusts holiness out of the world, too ; for where there is no liberty of choice, there can be neither moral good, nor evil ; and this would be a more reasonable objection against the holiness of Providence, that it banishes holiness out of the world.” Chap. vi. The Holiness of Providence, p. 207.

“ And there is no other way but this [1 Kings, xiii. 4 ; 2 Chron. xxvi. 19] for God by an immediate power to hinder the actual commission of sin, to take away men’s lives, or their natural powers of acting, which may be of great use sometimes, when God sees fit to work miracles, but ought to be as rare as miracles are ; for such a way as this of hindering sin would quickly put an end to the world, or to the commerce and conversation of it, and is properly to judge the world, not to govern it.” P. 211.

“ FOREKNOWLEDGE.

Now, in answer to this, I readily grant, that nothing can be certainly foreknown, but what will certainly be ; but then I deny, that nothing will certainly be, but what has a necessary cause : For we see ten thousand effects of free or contingent

causes, which certainly are, though they might never have been; for whatever is, certainly is; and whatever certainly is now, was certainly, though not necessarily, future, a thousand years ago. That man understands very little, who knows not the difference between the necessity, and the certainty of an event. No event is necessary, but that which has a necessary cause, as the rising and setting of the sun; but every event is certain, which will certainly be, though it be produced by a cause which acts freely; and might do otherwise, if it pleased, as all the free actions of men are; some of which, though done with the greatest freedom, may be as certain, and as certainly known, as the rising of the sun. Now, if that which is done freely, may be certain; and that which is certain, may be certainly known; then the certainty of God's Foreknowledge only proves the certainty, but not the necessity, of the event. And then God may foreknow all events, and yet lay no necessity on mankind to do any thing that is wicked.

In the nature of the thing, foreknowledge lays no greater necessity upon that which is foreknown, than knowledge does upon that which is known; for foreknowledge is nothing but knowledge, and knowledge is not the cause of the thing which is known, much less the necessary cause of it. We certainly know at what time the sun will rise and set every day in the year, but our knowledge is not the cause of the sun's rising or setting: nay, in many cases, in proportion to our knowledge of men, we may with great certainty, foretell what they will do, and how they will behave themselves in such or such circumstances; and did we perfectly know them, we should rarely, if ever, mistake; for though men act freely, they do not act arbitrarily, but there is always some bias upon their minds, which inclines and draws them; and the more confirmed habits men have of virtue or vice, the more certainly and steadily they act, and the more certainly we may know them without making them either virtuous or vicious.

Now, could we certainly know what all men would do, before they do it, yet it is evident, that this would neither make nor

prove them to be necessary agents. And, therefore, though the perfection of the Divine knowledge is such, as to know our thoughts afar off, before we think them, yet this does not make us think such thoughts, nor do such actions.

How God can foreknow things to come, even such events as depend upon the most free and contingent causes, we cannot tell; but it is not incredible that Infinite knowledge should do this, when wise men, whose knowledge is so very imperfect, can, with such great probability, almost to the degree of certainty, foresee many events, which depend also upon free and contingent causes: and if we will allow that God's prescience is owing to the perfection of his knowledge, then it is certain that it neither makes nor proves any fatal necessity of events. If we say indeed, as some men do, that God foreknows all things, because he has absolutely decreed whatsoever shall come to pass, this I grant, does infer a fatal necessity; and yet, in this case, it is not God's foreknowledge, but his decree, which creates the necessity: all things by this supposition, are necessary, not because God foreknows them, but because by his unalterable decrees he has made them necessary; he foreknows, because they are necessary, but does not make them necessary by foreknowing them; but if this were the truth of the case, God's prescience, considered only as foreknowing, would be no greater perfection of knowledge, than men have, who can certainly foreknow what they certainly intend to do, and it seems God can do no more. But thus much we learn from these men's confession: That foreknowledge, in its own nature, lays no necessity upon human actions; that if God can foreknow what he has not absolutely and peremptorily decreed, how certain soever such events may be, his foreknowledge does not make them necessary. And, therefore, we cannot prove the necessity of all events from God's foreknowledge, till we have first proved that God can foreknow nothing but what is necessary: That is, in truth, that there is no such perfection as prescience belonging to the Divine nature: for to foreknow things in a decree, or only in necessary causes, is no more that perfection of knowledge which we call prescience, than it is

prescience in us to know what we intend to do to-morrow, or that the sun will rise to-morrow. But that God's foreknowledge is not owing to the necessity of the event, and therefore cannot prove any such necessity, is evident from hence. That the Scripture, which attributes this foreknowledge to God, does also assert the liberty of human actions, charges men's sins and final ruin on themselves, sets before them life and death, blessing and cursing, as I observed before : Now, how difficult soever it may be to reconcile prescience and liberty, it is certain, that necessity and liberty can never be reconciled ; and therefore if men act freely, they do not act necessarily ; and if God does foreknow what men will do, and yet men act freely, then it is certain that God foreknows what men will freely do : That is, that foreknowledge is not owing to the necessity, but to the perfection of knowledge." pp. 218—221.

“DECREES. Acts ii : 23. What does St. Peter say was done by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ? Did they take him, and by wicked hands crucify and slay him by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ? This is not said : but he was *delivered*, that is, put into their power, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ? and then they took him and with wicked hands slew him : And then we must observe, that here are two distinct acts of God relating to this event ; the *determinate counsel*, and the *foreknowledge of God*. The will or counsel of God, which he had fore-ordained, and predetermined, the *Boule Proorismene* was, that Christ should die an Expiatory Sacrifice for the sins of the world, which was a work of such stupendous wisdom, goodness, holiness, and justice, that nothing could more become God, than such counsels and decrees. But then by his Infinite prescience and foreknowledge he saw by what means this would be done, if he thought fit to permit it ; viz., by the treachery of Judas, by the malice of the Scribes and Pharisees, and by the compliance of the Roman powers ; and this he determined to permit, and to deliver him up into their hands ; the certain effect of which would be, that they would take him, and with wicked

hands crucify him, and slay him. So that though God did decree, that Christ should die, yet he did not decree, that *Judas* should betray him, or that the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and Pontius Pilate should condemn and crucify him ; but this he foresaw, and this he decreed to permit, and to accomplish his own wise counsels for the salvation of mankind by such wicked instruments ; and there is nothing in all this unworthy of God, or unbecoming the holiness of his providence. And thus it is with all other events which are decreed by God ; he never decrees anything but what is holy and good ; and though he many times accomplishes his wise decrees by the wickedness and sins of men, yet he never decrees their sins ; but by his foresight and wonderful wisdom so disposes and orders things, as to make their sins, which they freely and resolvedly commit, and which nothing but an irresistible power could hinder them from committing, serve the wise and gracious ends of his Providence. This is wisdom too wonderful for us ; but thus we know it may be, and thus the Scripture assures us it is. P. 222.

If God wants the sins of men to accomplish his own counsels, they must either be very unholy counsels, which cannot be accomplished without the sins of men, or he must be a weak or unskilful being, which is downright blasphemy ; for a wise and powerful being can do whatever is wise and holy, without the sins of men. It is excellent wisdom indeed, when men do and will sin, for God to accomplish his own wise and gracious counsels by their sins ; but to incline, or tempt, or over-rule, or determine men to sin, on purpose to serve himself by their sins, this would be unjust impeachment both of his holiness, his wisdom, and his power ; and a God, who is neither holy, wise, nor powerful, would be no very fit object of religious worship.

To say that God decrees the sins of men for his own glory, to magnify his mercy and justice, in saving some few, and in condemning the greatest part of mankind to eternal miseries, is so senseless a representation both of the glory, of the mercy and of the justice of God, as destroys the very nature of all." P. 257.

EXTRACTS FROM DR. W. FISK.

“ The question in dispute is simply this : What relation is there between the decrees or purposes of God and the responsible acts of man ? The Arminian views on this question, as I understand them, are these : God, as a Sovereign, in deciding upon his works, had a right to determine on such a system as pleased him ; but, being infinitely wise and good, he would of course choose, in the contemplation of all possible systems to create such a one as, all things considered, would bring the most glory to himself, and the greatest good to the universe. In infinite wisdom he decided that such a system would be a *moral government*, consisting of himself, as the supreme and rightful Governor, and of intelligent subjects, having full and unrestrained power to obey or disobey the mandates of their Sovereign. He foresaw that one of the unavoidable incidents of such a government would be the possible existence of moral evil ; and in glancing through the proposed system, he foresaw that moral evil would *certainly* exist, involving innumerable multitudes in its ruinous consequences. He did not approve of the evil ; he did not decree that it should exist ; but still evil was a remote result of a decree of his ; for although he foresaw that *if* he made such free agents, and governed them in the manner proposed, they would certainly sin, yet he determined, notwithstanding this *certainly*, to make these agents and govern them as proposed. He determined, however, that they should be under no necessity of sinning, either by his decree, or by the circumstances in which they should be placed : but if they sinned, it should be their own free choice. As he foresaw they would sin, he also determined upon the plan he would pursue in reference to them as sinners, and arranged, in the counsels of his own infinite mind, the extended concatenation of causes and effects, so as to make the ‘wrath of man to praise him,’ and deduce the greatest possible good from the best possible system. Such, it is believed, is Arminianism—such is the doctrine of the sermon—and such are the dictates of the

Bible and of sound philosophy." Calvinistic Controversy, pp. 58, 59.

EXTRACTS FROM BISHOP HEBER.

"Of the supporters of the system of Calvin, God forbid that I should speak otherwise than with respect and affection, as of our brethren and fellow laborers in the Lord, and as of those who, with one single error, hold the truth in a sincerity which no man can impeach, and in a godly diligence which may make too many of our party shed tears for our comparative supineness. Of the system itself I should desire to express myself with that caution which is due to the names of Augustine, of Calvin, and of Beza, of Jansenius, and of Pascal. But let God be true, even if every man be accounted a liar! Rom. iii: 4. It is impossible that a system which, in its apparent consequences, destroys the principles of moral agency in man, and arraigns the truth and justice of Him from whom all truth and justice flow, it is impossible that a system of this kind can be from God, or can be well pleasing to him. The metaphysical difficulties, and they are many and grave, which perplex the Arminian hypothesis, may be inscrutable to our present faculties, or may be permitted to try our faith through the whole course of this mortal pilgrimage. But though we should be unable to reconcile them with the power and wisdom of God, it is evident that they leave his mercy and his truth unimpaired; and they are these last which of all God's attributes are the most important to his fallen creatures, inasmuch as they are these last alone, which give us hope of sanctification in this world, and of happiness in the world which is to succeed it!" Sermons, (Soc. of Inq.) in England. Sermon VII., pp. 152, 153.

"And since we have no reason to suppose that God's dealing with that generation of vipers [the Jews] was at variance or inconsistent with the general course [of his spiritual work on the souls of men, I conclude that every sinner has some acceptable time, in which the mercy of God is, not in name only, nor in mockery, but effectually offered to him, in which his day of

visitation, the things which belong to his peace are not hidden from his eyes ; and in which he might, unless through his own single and wilful obstinacy, discern and follow the path of salvation.

But this I maintain, and I maintain it, as on many other passages of Scripture, so particularly on the grounds of the present text, first, that some such time or times of gracious visitation is accorded by God to all his creatures, wherein he gives them the power and opportunity of forsaking the bondage of sin for the glorious liberty of his children ; and further, that this gift may be resisted and rendered vain, and has been thus frustrated and resisted by the personal fault and wilful hardness or negligence of all those who, like those Jews, are finally suffered to perish. And it follows that the Calvinists are mistaken in maintaining either the absolute election of a few, to the passing over or reprobation of the greater number of mankind, or that the saving grace of God, wherever given, is always irresistibly exerted to the conversion and final salvation of those whom it once condescends to visit." Sermon VIII., pp. 174, 175, 176.

III. After the preceding discussion, and the treatment of kindred topics in other lectures, it will not require much time to state the remaining view. We quote from Dick ; "The third system is that of the Arminians, or Remonstrants, as they are also called, who deny absolute and unconditional decrees, and maintain, that whatever God has decreed respecting man is founded on the foresight of their conduct. Having foreseen without any decree that Adam would involve himself and his posterity in sin and its consequences, he purposed to send his Son to die for them all, and to give them sufficient grace to improve the means of their salvation ; and knowing beforehand who would believe and persevere to the end, and who would not, he chose the former to eternal life and left the latter in a state of condemnation." Theol., p. 361.

Respecting this system we remark :

1. It is not inconsistent with other Scriptural doctrines—as the Omnipotence, Sovereignty, and Omniscience of God, the

depravity and dependence of man, the impossibility of creature merit, the necessity of the Spirit's influence in regeneration. So it has often been charged, but unjustly.

2. It is not pretended that this system is without its difficulties,—that it solves all mysteries in theology or experience. Take, for instance, the *origin of evil*. No system can account for it. To charge it upon God is absurd and impious. *Why* evil should exist at all, is beyond all human comprehension. Evil must, however, be incidental to a moral system. And it is more than we can assert, that God could have the best possible system without the permission of evil. If he could, he would. Not that the best possible system is the best on account of the evil incidental to it, but in spite of it. The doctrine of a moral system, then, is the most rational, as well as Scriptural, mode of accounting for the existence of evil.

Again, there are mysteries in regard to the prevalence of sin, which no system can solve. Why has wickedness so long triumphed in the earth, and the knowledge of Christ been so limited? The view of human freedom and responsibility held in the Arminian doctrine, frees the Divine character from imputation, and charges the fault upon the sinner. We know of no difficulty which admits not of as satisfactory explanation on the Arminian as on the Calvinistic scheme; but not vice versa.

3. Experience and consciousness authorize the doctrine of freedom. All men feel that they have the power of contrary choice—that although they make motives the ground of their acts, yet motives do not necessitate their acts—that the will, the moral faculty, is a self-determining power. The same power of choice exists in regard to regeneration. Although unable to regenerate themselves, they are able to submit to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, or resist, to their own destruction. They cannot save themselves; but through grace they can decide whether they will yield to be saved or not. They can do nothing to merit salvation, yet they will never be saved, without complying with the terms of the gospel. All men feel, also, that ability is a measure of responsibility—that they are accountable

just in the degree that they are free. This is an important consideration. It is a fatal objection to any theory that it contradicts experience, consciousness. It is hard to believe that God would so constitute us that we should be the subjects of constant deception, especially in reference to our most momentous concerns.

4. Every part of this doctrine is clearly authorized by the Scriptures.

(1.) The Scriptures represent all mankind as alike needy. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

(2.) That God's love of pity for the fallen race is impartial. He "so loved the world," that he gave his Son to die. "He is no respecter of persons."

(3.) He earnestly desires the salvation of all. He has "no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." "He wishes for all men to be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth." "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

(4.) The atonement is provided for all. Christ "tasted death for every man—died for all."

(5.) God enlightens all. The Holy Spirit reproves "the world." "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

(6.) The invitations of the gospel are extended to all. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

(7.) God does all he wisely can for the salvation of the world. "What more could have been done to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?"

(8.) If any are lost, it is their own fault. "How often would I have gathered you, and ye would not." "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." "O Ephraim, thou hast destroyed thyself." "So that they are without excuse."

We might cite numerous other passages on these and kindred points; also, of command, expostulation, and entreaty. But

they are too familiar to need repetition. It is difficult to see how the doctrine could be more explicitly or fully set forth. But for the efforts of men to excuse their sins, vain philosophizing, and attachment to creeds and systems, it can hardly be supposed that any other construction would ever have been put upon the sacred oracles.

It is, perhaps, needless to remark here, that Election in the Bible often denotes the appointment of persons to office, or the conferring of privileges on communities and nations. Election to salvation is expressive of a fact, viz.: that God saves those who comply with the terms he has proposed. It is founded on the foreknowledge of that obedience. Rom. viii. 29. It is conditional. 1 Pet. i. 2. The purpose to save all who should by their own free choice comply with the terms of salvation, was formed before the foundation of the world, or from the beginning. 2 Thess. ii. 13. The terms elect and saints are generally synonymous. Compare 2 Tim. ii. 10 with Col. i. 24. See also Isa. lxy. 9, 22; 1 Pet. v. 13; Col. iii. 12; 1 Thess. i. 4. For an individual to be one of the elect, is, in the Scriptural view, to be one of the children of God. On the matter of salvation, this is its full import. All other ideas of it are foreign, and the work of human device.

Such is the simple teaching of the inspired word on this subject. Such was the understanding of it universally in the Christian church for the first three hundred years after Christ. Such is the practical application that all experienced Christians make of it. False theories respecting it have done much harm. The only safe rule in reference to it is that prescribed by Christ. "If ye will do his will, ye shall know of the doctrine." "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

LECTURE XXIX.

PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS.

Various Ways of Stating the Doctrine. Impossibility of Falling from Grace Examined. Arguments for Certain Perseverance Examined. Scriptural View. Believers Still on Probation. Salvation Throughout Conditional. Exhortations and Warnings to Believers. Consequences of Final Apostasy Declared. Scriptural References. Believers in Real Danger. Instances of Apostasy. Tendency of the Doctrine.

This doctrine has been advocated under various forms.

1. That it is *impossible* for a true believer to fall away and perish. This was the form under which it was originally held by the mass of Calvinists. This was the form under which it was formerly discussed in Europe and America. But most modern Calvinists, especially of the New School, have abandoned that position, and now admit the *possibility* of falling from grace.

2. The doctrine as now defended by most Calvinists is, that it is certain no true believer ever did, or ever will, so apostatize as to be finally lost.

3. Another and rather specious manner of stating the same doctrine is, that none can be properly termed Christians, but those who endure unto the end, and obtain salvation.

4. The last is the Arminian doctrine, which denies the validity of each of the preceding views. We will now review each of the positions.

I. That it is impossible for true believers to fall away and perish. This form of the doctrine is based upon, and necessarily

results from, the theory of absolute decrees, and unconditional election. It will not be necessary, therefore, to enter into a labored discussion of the subject, since it would be only a repetition of arguments already stated. If man is a moral agent through life, he *may* at any time forsake God, persist in his rebellion, and perish. As to purposes, covenants, &c., if they are consistent with human freedom, they do not render the perseverance of any believer *necessary*. We repeat, if the believer is still a moral agent, and in a state of probation, it is *possible* for him to fall away and perish. And this is now so generally conceded, as hardly to admit of argumentation.

II. Those who hold the second form, viz.: the *certainty* that all true saints will persevere, admit the following things:

1. That true saints *may* fall away and perish.

2. That they do sometimes fall into gross sins, and would perish, if they did not repent.

3. Many of them also admit that there is *real danger* of their being lost, and that this is the ground of the warnings and exhortations addressed to them. To show this I make one quotation from *Prof. Stuart*:

“Whatever may be true in the Divine purposes, as to the final salvation of all those who are once truly regenerated, (and this doctrine I feel constrained to admit), yet nothing can be plainer, than that the sacred writers have every where addressed saints in the same manner as they would address those whom they considered as constantly exposed to fall away and perish forever. It cannot be denied that all the warnings and awful comminations directed against cases of defection, are addressed to Christians, in the New Testament, which could be addressed to them supposing them to be liable every hour to sin beyond the hope of being renewed by repentance. Whatever *theory* may be adopted in explanation of this subject, as a matter of *fact* there can be no doubt, that Christians are to be solemnly and earnestly warned against the danger of apostasy and consequent final perdition.”*

* Com. on Hebrews, p. 577.

Of course, if they are to be thus warned, they are in real danger.

Let us now examine some of the principal arguments urged in support of the certain perseverance of all who once truly believe.

1. *The immutability of God.* It is argued that if God should suffer any true believer to fall away and perish, he would not be immutable. But he suffers his children to sin: does this prove him to be mutable? He suffered Adam to fall from his primitive rectitude, and the angels to fall to final perdition: do these instances prove that God is mutable? No! The change is in the creature, not in God; and if he did not treat them according to their changed character, then he would be mutable.

2. *The faithfulness of God.* He is faithful to all his promises. True, but he has declared, "If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever." It is replied, his faithfulness is a pledge to keep his people from forsaking him. Is it? The faithfulness of God is universal and constant. But does it keep Christians from falling into sin? Did it keep Adam from sinning, or the angels that fell? If it is not inconsistent with the Divine faithfulness to suffer angels to apostatize, the progenitors of mankind to fall, his chosen people to be disinherited, and individual Christians to backslide, and commit heinous sins, it is not inconsistent with that faithfulness to suffer some to apostatize totally and finally.

God is faithful to all his promises. But his promises to his saints while in a state of probation, are conditional. He promises to save those only who are faithful to the end. If any forfeit the blessing by failing to comply with the condition on their part, they cannot impeach his faithfulness.

3. Perseverance is *desirable*, and *Christians pray for it*. So are universal obedience and salvation desirable, and Christians pray for them. But all are not saved. Christians pray to be preserved from all sin; but they are not so preserved. In each case the fault is wholly chargeable upon ourselves. And if any draw back unto perdition, the fault will be their own.

4. *Christ prayed for his people.* So he did, also, for his murderers. He died for all, and wishes for all men to be saved : but does this prove universal salvation ?

5. Those passages are cited which speak of a part as given to Christ. "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing." John vi. 39. Isa. liii. 10, 11. But who are those given to Christ ? Evidently those whom the Father foresaw would comply with the terms of the gospel. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

John vi. 40 : "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life." To understand this, compare the 47th verse. "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life," i. e., spiritual life, is a true Christian. The terms everlasting and spiritual are, in such connections, synonymous.

6. Promises relating to the Divine protection and preservation. Luke x. 42 ; John xv. 2, x. 27—29 ; 1 Cor. x. 13 ; Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24 ; Isa. xliii. 25 ; John v. 24 ; Phil. i. 6 ; Rom. viii. 35—39. These promises are all based on the *condition* of the believer's constancy. They assure him salvation, if he endures to the end. God will protect his faithful followers against every aggressor. He will never prove false or treacherous to them. But this does not determine that they will all maintain their constancy. And if any break their covenant, what will these promises avail them ? Nothing *but their own sins* can separate any from Christ's love ; but these may, as it is written, Isa. lix. 2 : "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you." He promised to preserve his chosen people, the Jews, forever ; but for their unbelief and rebellion, he cut them off. Hear the word of the Lord to one of his priests, Eli ; 1 Sam. ii. 30 : "I said, indeed, that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me forever ; but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me, for them

that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." So to Solomon, "If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever." What promises can impenitent backsliders and apostates plead?

7. It is alleged to be *inconsistent* for God to begin a work of grace in the heart, and afterwards abandon it. Phil. i. 6: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This is on the condition that men "do not frustrate the grace of God." Gal. ii. 21. It will be admitted that God bestows grace on all. He begins a work of grace in the heart of every one, viz.: conviction. Yet some are not saved. Does this argue inconsistency or fickleness in him? The passage, Phil. i. 6, expresses no more than the apostle's confidence that those whom he addresses would be steadfast, and so obtain salvation.

8. *The assurance of hope.* This is founded not only on the promise and faithfulness of God, but also on the hope of constancy on the part of the believer. But this assurance may be lost. David lost it, as every backslider does. It rests only on present evidence.

9. Those passages are adduced which speak of the *recovery of the fallen*. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24: "Though he (the good man) fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." This passage does not relate to a fall into *sin*, but into temporal calamities. See the context, and Micah vii. 8.

10. Those which show that many who forsake their profession, never were truly regenerate. Matt. xiii. 3—8, the stony ground hearers. 1 John ii. 19. We do not question this fact. But it no more proves that all who forsake their profession are such, than the fact that some who adhere to their profession are hypocrites, proves that all who adhere to their profession are hypocrites. It is unquestionable that some truly renewed have departed from the faith, and committed gross sins. While in such a state, there is no promise that they can plead. God is

under no obligation to reclaim a backslider, and he has never pledged himself to do it. On the contrary, the denunciations of wrath are out against them. True, he desires the return of the backslider, as he does the repentance of all sinners. The backslider, while his day of probation lasts, may return ; but this does not prove that he will.

11. Those passages claimed as asserting that all saints *will persevere*. Job xvii. 9 : "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." With this compare Prov. iv. 18 : "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." These and like passages relate to the faithful, and show that in them there is a growth in grace. They no more prove that all saints will persevere to the end, than that all will constantly grow in grace without any relapse.

It is essential for the advocates of this doctrine to prove that all saints will continue faithful to the end. Failing to do this, their whole argument falls. Here they do fail. They have not been able to quote a single passage that fairly teaches it. On this subject many irrelevant and inconclusive passages have been cited, and much special pleading employed ; but it is all insufficient while there is no "Thus saith the Lord" to authorize it. To attempt to sustain it by basing it on Divine purposes, foreknowledge, and election, is vain ; for these prove no more in this direction, than that those will be saved who comply with the conditions of salvation.

III. That none are Christians but those who do persevere. This is substantially the same position as that now discussed. They both stand or fall together. One implies the other. The same arguments are employed in behalf of both. It will not be necessary, therefore, to discuss this separately.

IV. The last position is, that *salvation is throughout conditional*—that voluntary obedience to the end is the condition of salvation to every one,—and that the Scriptures afford no sufficient warrant for teaching that all who are once regenerated do hold out to the end, and obtain salvation.

1. This doctrine is argued from the fact that the believer is still in a state of probation. If he were not liable to fall, he would not be in a probationary, but in a confirmed, state.

2. The promises of final salvation to Christians are all conditional, either expressly or implied. Perseverance in faith and obedience is the indispensable condition of their salvation.

3. The exhortations and warnings addressed to believers, presuppose their liability to fall away and perish. It is replied, that these are means employed to secure their perseverance. Granted, but means are often abused. God uses means to bring all sinners to repentance, but all do not repent. He uses means to preserve his people from all sin ; yet some of them do sin.

4. God has declared the consequences of final apostasy in such passages as the following: 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. "If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever." 2 Chron. xv. 2: "The Lord is with you while ye be with him . . . but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you."

5. The same is taught in Ezekiel xviii. and xxxiii. chapters. Ezek. xviii. 26: "When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them ; for his iniquity that he hath done, shall he die." This is not self-righteousness, but true righteousness, since turning from it exposes to death. Can it be admitted that such a statement would be made in the inspired Scriptures, and repeated several times in the most earnest manner, merely to *suppose* a case which God knows never did, and never will, occur ?

6. It is taught in Heb. vi. 4—6, x. 26: "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened," &c. This passage is not conditional—there is no condition expressed in the original. Many formerly contended for this, but they have generally given it up. Most now say it relates to false professors. This position is also untenable, as some of the ablest and most candid among them allow. Says Stuart on the passage :

"But does the whole paragraph pertain to real Christians, or to those who are such only by profession? To the former, beyond all reasonable doubt. For how could the apostle so sol-

emly warn those who were *mere professors* of Christianity, against defection and apostasy? Defection from what? From a graceless condition and from a state of hypocrisy. Such must be the answer, if mere professors (and not possessors) of Christianity be addressed. But mere professors, instead of being cautioned against defection from the state in which they are, are every where denounced in language of the severest reprobation. See Rev. iii. 15, 16, and the denunciation of the Saviour against the Pharisees. Moreover the language employed to describe the condition of the persons in question, shows that the writer is addressing those whom he takes to be real Christians. e. g., μετοχῶς. πνεύματος ἁγίου καλὸν γευσάμενους θεοῦ ἔργμα. Above all, πάλιν ἀνακινίξουσιν εἰς μετένοιαν; for how could he speak of being *AGAIN renewed by repentance*, if he did not address them as once having been renewed by it.*

The passage shows that true believers are in *real danger* of final apostasy and ruin. There is no other way of salvation, but through faith in Christ; and if any renounce this, they are without hope. We are not to infer that every instance of backsliding involves this. Backsliders, while in a state of probation, may repent and be restored; but they may persist in their revolt, grieve away the Holy Spirit, and seal their own destruction.

7. This doctrine is taught in such passages as the following: 1 Tim. iv. 1: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. Heb. xii. 5: "Looking diligently lest any man fail of [Marg. *fall from*] the grace of God." John xv. 2: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away." Backsliders are always denounced as sinners, required to repent; but no assurance is given that they will repent. See Rev. ii. and iii. chapters.

8. The danger of final apostasy is taught in 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

* Com. on Hebrews, p. 576.

they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness; than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." Objectors refer this, also, to false professors, and appeal to the context. Such may be its application in part; but the language of our quotation will not allow its reference to those who never were renewed. The preceding context, so far as it relates to them, describes their condition after their backsliding. The Scriptures always represent the sins of apostates as possessing great enormity.

9. Passages denoting instances of apostasy. Some have laid too much stress on this part of the argument. The Scriptures do little to gratify a vain curiosity in respect to the future world. Of the great number of those mentioned in the sacred volume, there is certainty afforded respecting the final condition of but few. Especially is this true of the lost. Mercifully to us at present, a dark and impenetrable veil is drawn over the world of despair. We are distinctly taught that all who die in impenitence will be forever miserable. This is enough. Who could wish to have the condition of each individual known in this world? If we are so happy as to gain heaven, we shall doubtless meet some to whom we had allotted a different destiny; and the places of others, whom we confidently expected to see there, will be vacant.

Some of the angels, while in a state of probation, sinned, and were cast down to endless perdition. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Adam fell from the holy state in which he was placed, and was driven from Eden. The Jews were cast off from being the chosen, covenant people of God, on account of their unbelief. From such cases we learn the principles of the Divine government. The same also apply to men. See Ezek. xviii. and xxxiii. chapters. Heb. vi.; 2 Pet. ii.; Rev. ii. and iii. chapters, and others that might be cited. These passages denote more than mere suppositions, or possibilities, which never did and never will have a practical exemplification. Would that such were not true or that a different

interpretation of the passages were warranted: but fidelity to truth forbids it. Such passages as the following, too, are of fearful import. 1 Tim. i. 19, 20: "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander."

Such is the Scriptural view of this subject. Christians are still moral agents, on probation, exposed to temptation. While faithful, the Divine arm is pledged for their safety. God seeks to keep them from every sin; but when they forsake him, (as some do,) they provoke his displeasure, and though he bears long with them, and desires their return, as he does the repentance of all sinners, if they will not obey, he will cast them off forever. When the righteous turn from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they fall from a gracious to an impenitent state; and if any continue in that state perpetually, neither the justice, wisdom nor goodness of God is thereby impeached. Sin is a great evil everywhere; surely not the less when committed by one who has been renewed. God abhors it wherever it exists. He is careful for the honor of his law, however transgressed. It is a dictate of reason, as well as of revelation, that in regard to the transgressor, the greater the opportunity, light, and blessing he enjoys, the greater is the enormity of his offence. And the incorrigible offender, wherever found, may properly be made an example of warning to the universe.

The *tendency* of the views held, on this, as well as on other subjects, will depend much on the mode of their exhibition. Truth may be so erroneously presented as to have a bad tendency. An erroneous conclusion may be so set forth, or rather the truth connected with it, as to produce a good effect. Again, a truth may be advocated by a bad man, or an error by a good man.

We do not deny that the Arminian view of perseverance is liable to abuse. If persons hold the idea that all who ever professed religion possessed it, or that "falling from grace" is a light thing, they have very erroneous conceptions of the subject. But such is not the proper tendency of the doctrine. On

the contrary, when rightly exhibited, after the manner of the sacred writers, it excites to watchfulness, self-examination, self-denial, diligence, and constancy, giving assurance of final salvation to those only who endure unto the end.

Neither do we deny that the Calvinistic view has been held by some without any fatal consequences. But when it is made the occasion of lulling the heart and conscience into a feeling of security, inducing persons to rely on old hopes instead of present experience—to rest upon the maxim, “once in grace, always in grace”—thereby to excuse delinquences, and cherish a vain confidence, the tendency is highly pernicious. It is to be feared that in numerous instances such is its practical operation.

The only safe course for the religious teacher, is to follow the example of inspiration. While he assures the faithful that they have nothing to fear, he should show that there is no pledge of future blessedness, but upon condition of present and abiding faithfulness. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

LECTURE XXX.

DEATH AND THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

Nature of Death. Was Man Created Physically Immortal? Sin the Cause of Death. Natural Evil. Consciousness of the Soul after Death. Proofs. Intermediate Place. Meaning of the Original Terms *Sheol* and *Hades*. Discussion of Proof Texts. There is no Intermediate Place. Condition of the Soul in the Intermediate State.

“It is appointed unto men once to die.” Heb. ix. 27. All the millions of mankind hitherto, with two recorded exceptions, have gone down to the grave: so will all those who succeed us, until Christ shall make his second appearance on the earth; when the dead shall be raised, and the living changed. It is not necessary to go into a critical discussion of the nature of death. It is, in the language of a dying statesman, “the end of earth.” It is a separation of the soul from the body, described in the expressive language of a sacred writer: “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” Eccl. xii. 7.

Was man created physically immortal? On the affirmative, it is urged that the sentence of death, as the penalty of disobedience, implies, that if he had continued in obedience, he would never have died. This is objected to on the ground of physiology and reason. On this point, it is evident that no being but God has a natural or necessary immortality. It appears from the narrative that man was not created subject to death; but, if we may be allowed the expression, with a *conditional* immortality

He had a capacity for it, and means were provided to sustain it. The tree of life furnished the means. As ordinary food sustains life for a season, so the fruit of that tree preserved it from decay. Had man continued to partake of that tree, even after the fall, he would not have died a natural death—as appears from Gen. iii. 22—24: “Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever, . . . he drove out the man [from Eden], and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, Cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

When Adam sinned, he forfeited a right to the tree of life, and became subject to death. His posterity are born in a fallen state, all sin, and all die. Rom. v. 12: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

Such are the effects of sin in this world. All natural evils—earthquakes, tempests, barren deserts, venomous beasts, pestilence, pain and death—are in consequence of sin. This is the common lot. In this respect, all things come alike to all—there is one event to the righteous and the wicked. The most holy men encounter these evils: they sicken, and languish, and die. The tender infant, incapable of committing sin, has to struggle with disease, and suffer the pangs of death. This is not to be regarded, however, as a *punishment*, since the infant is not guilty. We are not *punished* for Adam’s sin, nor for our connection with him; though we *suffer* in consequence of it. Still, no injustice is done us. We are accountable for our own conduct only; and the blessings brought by Christ are ample to provide for the evils induced by Adam. Though the believer’s body, and the infant’s, moulder to dust, in the resurrection an incorruptible body is secured to all through Christ.

There are deep mysteries connected with the ravages of death. Multitudes die in infancy or early childhood. Many are cut down in the bloom and vigor of life; while the old and decrepit often drag on a miserable existence. It has become a proverb, that “death loves a shining mark.” Still, we have no right to murmur, but should say in all the dispensations of Providence:

“ Even so, Father, for so it seems good in thy sight.” They are all ordered in infinite wisdom and goodness.

We are not to infer, however, that natural evil is never induced by ourselves. God has established physical laws, whose benefits we shall enjoy, if we conform to them; and which cannot be violated with impunity. Doubtless much of the physical suffering, disease, and premature death experienced, comes in consequence of the conduct of the individual sufferers—the natural consequence of their mistakes or sins—violations of physical laws. This is an important fact, and should be duly considered. Still, nothing that we can do will preserve us from the evils incident to our condition, or avert the stroke of death.

Respecting what immediately succeeds death, we know very little. Curiosity would fain explore, but an impenetrable veil wisely conceals the future. We witness the convulsions of the dying hour, the ebbing of life’s flood, until the frame, once so active, becomes a clod, and is soon food for worms. But how is it with the rational, immortal part?

The first question here respects the soul’s continued consciousness. Some hold that the soul is unconscious from death to the resurrection. They argue this,

1. From the intimate connection of the soul and the body. It is true that in this world the body is the organ of the mind, and a mutual sympathy exists between them. But even nature does not prove this connection to be such that the mind is wholly dependent on the corporeal functions for its activity. There are strong intimations in nature that the mind may exist and be conscious without the body. At least, nature furnishes no decisive proof that it cannot. On this point, however, our chief reliance is on revelation.

2. Those passages are adduced which represent retribution as taking place after the general judgment. These denote that the soul does not enter upon its *full* retribution before the judgment. This is not inconsistent with the belief of its conscious existence before.

The general Scriptural representation is, that the soul retains

its consciousness after death. Moses appeared to the Saviour on the mount of transfiguration. Christ assured the penitent thief, that on that day he should be with him in Paradise. Paul desired to depart, and be with Christ. Those passages which appear to teach a different sentiment, either express the doubts of the skeptical respecting a future existence, or they relate to the mortal part only. It is the belief of Christians generally, that the soul maintains a conscious existence between death and the resurrection.

We make the following extract from an article in the "Free-will Baptist Quarterly,"* on the subject under consideration :

"At death the soul does not slumber with the body in the earth, and in a state of unconsciousness, but is introduced into a state of conscious mental and moral activity. The truth of this proposition we argue from the following considerations :

(1.) That the opposite doctrine, the unconscious sleep of the dead, is, in no form, taught or implied in any of the proof texts adduced by its advocates to sustain it. They are such passages as the following:—'For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in any thing that is done under the sun.' 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.' To us it is a matter of wonder, that such passages could ever be supposed to have any bearing upon the doctrine of the real state of the soul, after it leaves the body. The sacred writer is speaking expressly of the relations of the dead, not to the realities of the invisible world, but exclusively to what men are doing in this. Relatively to this world, and to what men are here employed about, the departed spirit has nothing whatever to do. 'They have no more a portion forever in any thing that is done under the sun.' This is the exclusive theme of the writer, and to this he should

* Vol. IV., p. 43, et. seq., Jan. 1856.

be understood as exclusively referring when he says that the dead know not anything: Then in this life he would have us understand probation ends. The work for eternity is completed. Relatively to it, there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither we are hastening. What force is given by this view to the exhortation, 'Whatsoever thy hands find to do, do with thy might?' But what reason is there for such an exhortation, in the fact that from death to the resurrection all activity of the mind ceases? It is the height of absurdity to make such a fact the basis of such an exhortation.

(2.) The dissolution of the physical organization presents not the shadow of evidence that the soul then ceases all forms or activity, and remains in total inaction till the judgment. The return of that which is dust to dust presents not the least presumptive evidence that that which is not dust, but is endowed with the power of thought, feeling, and voluntary determination ceases wholly to think, feel and act. The change referred to, on the other hand, is equally consistent with the supposition that the spirit is thereby introduced to the exercise of far higher forms of thinking, feeling, and action, than those which pertained to it in its previous state. The most that can be said for this new theory is, that it has not the shadow of evidence in its favor, from Scripture or reason either. Hence we remark—

(3.) That the passages which we have cited to prove the doctrine of the fundamental distinction between the soul and the body, and the consequent immateriality of the former, present also, in the form in which this great truth is presented in the same, the highest positive evidence of the truth of the proposition now before us, the moral and intellectual activity, instead of the unconscious sleep of the departed spirit, between the period of death and the judgment. In these passages, we are positively taught that the spirit is not 'dust,' and with the body, does not, at death, return to the earth, 'but to God who gave it.' Here, too, we are also taught, by our Saviour himself, that 'killing the body' does not affect at all the vitality of the soul, a fact which

could not be true, if the soul does, and from its nature must, as this new system teaches, dissolve when the body dies, into a state of absolute unconsciousness. Further, we are positively taught, that the highest conceivable visions of heaven itself may be enjoyed by the spirit when out of the body, a fact which could not be true, if the doctrine of the necessary sleep of the dead is true. There also, we are positively informed that the soul of the believer, when 'at home in the body, is absent from the Lord.' This implies absolutely that when absent from the body, such spirit is not in the sleep of death, but is present with Christ. The declaration of the apostle is without meaning if this is not the case. Hence the apostle affirms that he desired to be 'absent from the body,' that he might thereby be 'present with Christ.' How could this be true, if the soul has, and can have, no conscious existence out of the body in the present, or future even, and consequently that it can, by no possibility, be present with Christ, only when it is in the body? Finally, the apostle absolutely affirms that, as the only means of 'being with Christ,' he desired to 'depart from the body.' Suppose that he held the doctrine of the unconscious state of the dead from death to the resurrection, or final judgment. We know perfectly, that unless he was beside himself, he would not represent himself as desiring death, and that for this exclusive reason that he might 'be with Christ,' a state 'far better' than a residence in the body. There is no possibility of reconciling these passages with any other supposition than this, that the soul of the believer, from the period of death to the resurrection, is 'with Christ,' in the full fruition of his love and favor, and not with the body in a state of unconsciousness.

(4.) The same truth is *implied* with equal distinctness and positiveness in other passages of Scripture, passages, the meaning of which nothing but a false theory can prevent our understanding aright. Let us, for example, compare Eccl. xii. 7: 'The spirit shall return to God who gave it,' and the idea of departing from the body and 'being with Christ,' expressed in other passages, with the following statement pertaining to the spirits of

departed saints, when Christ shall return to the earth at the final judgment: 'For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.' The saints, at death, are represented as 'departing and being with Christ,' and the soul of every man as then 'returning to God.' At his second coming, Christ is represented as 'bringing these same spirits (those of the saints) with him.' How could this be true, if these souls had not been with Christ at all, but in a state of death and total unconsciousness? The passage can be reconciled with no such dogma. Christ is represented as coming to raise the *bodies* of the saints. The spirits, however, which are to reanimate those bodies he is not to raise up with the latter, but 'to bring with him,' implying most distinctly and absolutely that they have been, not with their bodies in the earth, but 'with Christ' in heaven. The phraseology of the passage, when taken in connection with other representations of the Bible, admits of no other construction."

Consult also Heb. xii. 22, 23: "But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

See also Luke xvi. 19—31; Rev. v. 8, 9; vi. 9—11; xxii. 9—11, and Luke xxiii. 43, already cited: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." On this plain and decisive text, we find even *Whately*, in his "Future State," favoring the puerile criticism of joining the words "to-day" with "I say unto thee." So far may the mind be misled by a false theory!

For further discussion of the general topic, See Lecture XXXIII.

Another question, of less importance, but more debateable, relates to the intermediate *place*. Though the soul is immaterial, and pure spirits can hardly be said to occupy space, yet the whole Scriptural representation of the invisible world is predi-

cated on the idea of its locality, and we cannot conceive of it otherwise. Does, then, the soul, at death, pass directly to heaven or hell, or is there a common receptacle for all before the resurrection? The notion prevalent in all heathen mythology is, that, at death, all souls descend to the lower world: those destined for happiness to an apartment called Paradise or Elysium; those destined for misery, to Tartarus. Many of the Jews entertained a similar belief. It was expressly taught by Josephus. It was also held by many of the early Christians, and has had advocates ever since.

All questions of this kind must be settled by reference to the Scriptures. Much, of course, depends upon the meaning of the original terms *ἄδης* and *ᾗδης*. These must be rightly interpreted. They are used in Scripture in different senses. In many passages they denote the *grave*, and are so translated in our version. Gen. xxxvii. 25; xlii. 38; 1 Sam. ii. 6; 1 Kings ii. 6; Job xiv. 13; xvii. 13, 16; 1 Cor. xv. 55.

As the grave is the common receptacle of the dead, and is associated with ideas of darkness and gloom, it is common for people to say of those who die, they are gone to the other world, to eternity. Many passages of Scripture correspond to this popular mode of speaking, and use *Sheol* and *Hades*, to denote simply the future state.

In other passages they denote hell, or the place of torment. In numerous instances they are put in contrast with heaven, or the abode of blessedness. Job xi. 8: "It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know?" See also Ps. cxxxix. 8; Amos ix. 3; Matt. xi. 23; xvi. 18. Such passages as the following are decisive: Ps. ix. 17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Luke xii. 5: "Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell." Luke xvi. 23: "In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." So much for the different senses in which those words are employed in the Scriptures.

We will now examine the principal passages adduced to authorize the belief in an intermediate *place*.

Ps. xvi. 10: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption." This may be regarded as an instance of Hebrew parallelism, both parts of the passage expressing the same sentiment. The passage means no more than that Christ, at his death, was not left to long continue with the dead, but was speedily raised up. Says Peter, Acts ii. 31: "He [David] spoke of the *resurrection* of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption."*

Phil. ii. 10: "Things in heaven, and things in earth, and things *under the earth*." Also Rev. v. 13. These denote simply that *universal* homage shall finally, or at the judgment, be paid to Christ. See Rom. xiv. 10, 11. All must bow to his authority. Ps. ii. 9, 10.

1 Pet. iii. 19: "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." This passage is relied on to prove that Christ, between his death and resurrection, descended to *hell*, and preached to the lost spirits there. But it cannot authorize such a sentiment. The Scriptures teach that there is no probation beyond the grave. The passage and context may be fairly interpreted to mean, that in the time of Noah, the Spirit strove with those antediluvians who are now in the prison of hell.

Rev. xx. 14: "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." According to those who hold to an intermediate place,

* On this point Barnes has the following note:

"In the place before us, therefore, the meaning is simply, *thou wilt not leave me AMONG THE DEAD*. This conveys *all* the idea. It does not mean literally the *grave* or the *sepulchre*; that relates only to the *body*. This expression refers to the *deceased Messiah*. Thou wilt not leave *him* among the dead; thou wilt raise him up. It is from this passage, perhaps, aided by two others (Rom. x. 7, and 1 Pet. iii. 19), that the doctrine originated, that Christ 'descended,' as it is expressed in the creed, '*into hell*;' and many have invented strange opinions about his going among lost spirits. The doctrine of the Roman Catholic church has been, that he went to *purgatory*, to deliver the spirits confined there. But if the interpretation now given be correct, then it will follow, (1.) That nothing is affirmed here about the destination of the human *soul* of Christ after his death. That *he* went to the region of the dead is implied, but nothing farther. (2.) It may be remarked that the Scriptures affirm nothing about the state of his *soul* in that time which intervened between his death and the resurrection. The only intimation which occurs on the subject is such as to leave us to suppose that he was in a state of happiness." Note on Acts ii. 27.

Hades, here rendered hell, includes both Paradise and Tartarus. But are the abodes of the blessed to be cast into the lake of fire? *Hades* may here be taken by a figure for the god of the lower regions, viz., *Satan*. Its sentiment will then correspond with various other passages in the Apocalypse.

Luke xvi. 19—31: The account of the rich man and Lazarus. From the conversation held, it is argued that they were in one place. This does not follow. The passage expressly affirms that they were "afar off" from each other, and an impassable gulf between them. One was comforted, the other tormented.

Having seen that the theory of an intermediate *place* is unauthorized, it remains to remark, that at death all souls go either to heaven, or to hell. The special abode of God, Christ, and holy angels, is heaven. And there are the souls of all the pious dead. Said our Saviour to the penitent thief, Luke xxiii. 43: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." That this Paradise is heaven, is evident from the fact, that the tree of life in its midst is in the heavenly city, near the throne of God. Compare Rev. ii. 7, with xxii. 1, 2. Elijah was carried up by a whirlwind into heaven. 2 Kings ii. 11. Stephen, at the point of death, "saw the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God," and prayed to be received there. Acts vii. 56, 59.

Several passages are very explicit. Heb. xii. 22, 25: "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels: To the general assembly and the church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Rev. vii. 9: "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." This vision preceded that of the resurrection.

Such is the Scriptural doctrine. The theory of an intermediate

place has been connected with the notion of a probation after death, *purgatory*, and other unscriptural dogmas, and has been of pernicious tendency. A great part of the Popish superstitions are based upon it.

Though, as already seen, it is evident that, at death, the soul enters upon its fixed and eternal state, we are not to suppose that its happiness or misery will be as complete as it will be after the general judgment. The state of each will be *known* before, but not so fully experienced.

As to the mode and circumstances of our existence in the period now under consideration, very little is revealed. General truths are made known, and this is sufficient for all practical purposes.

That departed spirits know what is transpiring on earth, is intimated in several passages. Moses and Elijah knew of the Saviour's approaching sufferings, and came down to confer with him at the time of his transfiguration. There is joy in heaven over repenting sinners. Both Abraham and Dives knew the state of the five brethren still living.

It seems clear, also, that departed spirits know each other. Moses and Elijah doubtless did. Dives knew Lazarus and Abraham. They have all their essential faculties, and are always represented as existing in society. Of course, they have not that sensual state, which was their lot on earth. In reply to the gross cavils of the Sadducees, the Saviour expressly declared, Matt. xxii. 30: "They neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."

At death, then, the body is committed to the earth, and the spirit continues in a conscious state of happiness or misery; thus to remain until the resurrection, when they shall be reunited, be judged in the great day, and go to receive their full and final retribution. So much is revealed. Speculation, beyond what is authorized, is of little avail.

LECTURE XXXI.

THE RESURRECTION.

Definition. Scriptural Proof. Objections considered. Christ the Author of the Resurrection. All will be Raised. It will take place at the Last Day. False Theories Refuted. The Doctrine Vindicated.

The doctrine of the Resurrection is, that the bodies of all men will be raised, and reunited to their souls. It should not be confounded with the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul. Some admit the latter doctrine, but deny the former. They suppose either that the soul will exist without a body, or transigrate to other bodies. If the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead is established, both these theories fall.

For *proof* of this doctrine, we rely upon gospel revelation. The evidence here furnished is explicit and abundant.

1. Christ asserted the doctrine. John v. 28, 29: "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." This refers not to a moral, but to a physical, renovation, as is clear from the context. It relates to the future state, and as the spirit does not enter the grave (Eccl. xii. 7), reference must here be had to the body.

2. The apostles taught it. Acts xxiv. 15: "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." 1

Cor. xv. 22 : " As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." See also Phil. iii. 21 ; 1 Thess. iv. 13—18 ; Rev. xx. 6, 13 ; Acts xvii. 18 ; xxvi. 8.

3. Jesus exemplified the resurrection in his own person. He died and was buried, arose from the tomb, showed the same body to his disciples, John xx. 27, ascended in their sight, and it was then proclaimed to them that the *same* Jesus should descend in like manner. Acts i. 11. The sacred writers teach that he is the pledge of our resurrection—the *first fruits*. See 1 Cor. xv. 12—20. Through him the resurrection is secured. " In Adam all die ;" and had there been no gracious provision, the sentence, " Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," would have been final. But through Christ not only is provision made for the salvation of the soul, but the life of the body also is secured. In Christ shall all be made alive.

This doctrine, thus clearly stated and defended in the sacred oracles, is embraced by all evangelical denominations. Still there have not been wanting individuals who have labored in various ways to subvert it. Their objections and theories will now be noticed.

1. Some contend that such passages as those cited above, prove no more than a future existence. We admit that in some passages of Scripture, the fact of our future existence is not distinguished from that of the resurrection of the body. Such as Matt. xxii. 23—32. On this account some have denied the consciousness of the soul before the resurrection ; and others have admitted that the soul preserves its consciousness after death, but denied the resurrection of the body. Neither of these positions is warranted by Scripture. While a few passages treat the subject of our future being in general terms, others clearly discriminate and assert, in the most distinct manner, the resurrection of the body. See Acts xxiv. 15 ; 1 Cor. xv. ; 1 Thess. iv. 13—18. To those, therefore, who consider Divine revelation as authoritative, this question must be regarded as settled.

2. The resurrection of the body is objected to on natural

principles. It is asserted that the analogy of nature forbids the idea that the dead and mouldering body will ever be reënimated. In reply, we observe, that we do not derive this doctrine from observation of nature, but from the express teaching of Divine revelation ; that the resurrection of the body is to be accomplished by the direct interposition of God. Surely he who created the human body, can reënimate it, and this he has promised to do. Further, we deny that nature proves the resurrection to be either impossible, or improbable. On the other hand, it exhibits phenomena strikingly analagous to it. Instance vegetation. Also, the transformations in various insect species. In truth, the entire physical world is undergoing remarkable and mysterious transformations. Growth and decay—dissolution and reorganization are perpetually occurring in every department of nature. In view of these great natural laws, well might the apostle ask of certain skeptics in his day, “ Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead ?” Acts xxvi. 8.

3. Another objection is, that but a small part of mankind have believed the doctrine. We admit that multitudes have denied any existence beyond the present world, many have believed that the soul would exist forever separate from the body ; others, that it would pass into other bodies. But are the doctrines of revelation to be tested by the suffrage of this world? Even in the Bible it is unfolded gradually. Still, there is a sentiment favorable to this doctrine, deep in the human constitution, and which, amidst the grossest ignorance and perversion, has often been found struggling for expression. Why, in all ages, has there been so much care of burial—for the mortal remains—if they are never to be revived? Read the history of sepulchres, monuments, embalming, the instinctive horrors of violating the grave, and give an explanation. Tell us how these sentiments are to be accounted for.

Nor have mankind been so skeptical on this subject as some would have us suppose. Homer, the prince of heathen poets, puts such language as the following into the mouth of Achilles :

“What a wonder! All the Trojans slain by me shall again arise from the kingdom of the dead.” Iliad 21: 54. Similar expressions occur in Æschylus, Cicero, Livy, &c.

4. It is asserted that the doctrine was unknown to the ancient Jews, and was rejected by many of them in the Saviour’s time. It is impossible to say how full and definite were the conceptions of the early Jews on various subjects pertaining to the future state. Evidently there was a gradual development of truth to them from age to age. Much was left for the gospel *fully* to reveal. If, then, we allow that such passages as Job xix. 25—27: Ps. xlix. 15, do not refer to the resurrection of the body, and that Moses and the early prophets did not instruct the people on this subject; still the doctrine is not thereby affected. Let it be remembered that no sacred writer denies the resurrection. There are some passages which speak doubtfully of any future existence; but these either express the feelings of the skeptical or desponding, or relate to a return of the dead to this world. No correct interpretation can make them disprove a future state. In the later Hebrew writers the resurrection of the body is pretty strongly intimated. See Isa. xxvi. 19; Dan. xii. 2: “Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,” &c. It is clearly stated in several passages of the Apocrypha.

In the time of Christ and the apostles the Jews were divided on the question. The Pharisees held to the resurrection: the Sadducees denied it.

Acts xxiii. 6—8: “But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.”

xxiv. 15: “And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”

John xi. 24 : "Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

The skepticism of the Sadducees is to be ascribed to two causes. 1. The fact that the Pentateuch, the part of the Scriptures to which they attached the highest importance, is not explicit respecting it. 2. Their Gnostic views of the inherent evil of matter. In the controversy on the subject between them and the Pharisees, CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES JOINED WITH THE PHARISEES IN MAINTAINING THE DOCTRINE.

Having established the general truth of the resurrection, several remarks will now be made upon the Scriptural representation.

1. The resurrection is accomplished through Christ. He declared to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life." Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. and other passages, ascribes it directly to his merits.

2. All will be raised. Some passages speak of the resurrection of the righteous only ; but we are not thence to infer that there will be no resurrection of the wicked, since the contrary is expressly affirmed in various other passages, as John v. 29 ; Acts xxiv. 15.

3. The resurrection will take place "at the last day," or close of Christ's mediatorial reign. From Rev. xx. 4—6, some have argued that a long space will intervene between the resurrection of the righteous and of the wicked. But we understand that highly figurative passage as relating, not to a physical resurrection, but to the moral renovation which is to precede the Millennium. Other passages clearly show that the entire resurrection is to take place immediately before the coming of Christ to judge the world.

Matt. xxv. 31—46 : "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory," &c.

John xii. 48 : "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him ; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

The above and similar passages relate to the general judgment "at the last day," or consummation of earthly things. We will now refer to some passages which fix the time of the resurrection in connection with that great event.

Paul, in 1 Cor. xv., after showing that Christ was literally raised from the dead, and became the pledge of our resurrection, proceeds,

1 Cor. xv. 21—24: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power." Also verses 51, 52.

1 Thess iv. 16, 17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." See also Rev. xx. 11—13. Phil. iii. 20, 21.

The above, and like passages, furnish an ample refutation of the theories of *Prof. Bush* and other Swedenborgians and others *that the resurrection takes place immediately after death*. Some of them hold that a germ in the body survives death, and the rising of this is the resurrection.

Others hold, that within the mortal body there is a "spiritual" body, which is the real and only resurrection body, rising with the soul at death, and constituting the resurrection.

But all such theories are not only foreign from the Scriptural representation, but subversive of the Scriptural doctrine. They deny that there is to be any literal resurrection of our mortal bodies. Whereas the Scriptures explicitly teach that the body of Christ was literally raised. 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. Of this he assured his disciples after his resurrection. Luke xxiv. 39: "Be-

hold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Also John xx. 24—27.

As before remarked, Christ's resurrection is a pledge and proof of ours. 1 Cor. xv. 12—22. This is no mere expansion of a live germ in the dead body, or of a spiritual body within the natural body, occurring immediately subsequent to death; but a resurrection at the last day of our mortal bodies, which by the power of God shall be changed, and made like unto Christ's glorious body. Phil. iii. 20, 21. 1 Cor. xv. 42—44.

The errors noted above, though brought by some into new prominence of late, are as old as the time of Paul, who thus speaks of them, 2 Tim. ii. 16—18: "But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus: who, concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."

Various theories have been proposed to explain this doctrine, or to show its *mode*, but they have not shed much light upon it. Where the Scriptures are silent, we may as well be.

The *fact* of the Resurrection is fully asserted by the sacred writers, and maintained against all the assaults of skeptics. We are assured that there is to be a real resurrection. It is not a mere figure, a semblance, or a new creation, but a resurrection of the body. Says Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 42: "*It* (the body,) is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." But the question, as old as Paul's time, has often been asked, *How can* the same body be raised? Various difficulties are presented. We are told that the substance of our bodies is constantly changing, so that several entire physical transformations occur in the course of a human life. The same particles may have entered into the composition of several human or other bodies. How, then, can the same body be raised? The apostle met such objections by asserting the revealed *fact*, and showing that it has analogies even in nature. We are not bound to explain the process. No

man can explain the mode of the simplest processes in nature. It is manifest, however, that in order to have the same body raised, it is not necessary that all the particles that ever entered into its composition, or that composed it at any one time, should be raised. Amid all the changes which our bodies undergo in life, each one preserves his physical identity. Cannot Omnipotence, then, so guard our dust, as to secure our physical identity in the resurrection? It is enough that Divine revelation has assured us of the fact.

The process of germination may properly be referred to as furnishing an analogy to the resurrection; but should not be considered as strictly parallel with it. The seed does not die absolutely, as the human body does; if it did, it would not germinate. No live germ remains in the dead body, as in the seed. Resurrection, then, is not a kind of germination. The latter is a natural process; the former, supernatural and miraculous.

In the resurrection, the body will be changed from mortal to immortal; from corruptible to incorruptible. This is true of all. The bodies of Enoch and Elijah were thus changed, so was Christ's, and so will the bodies of those be who are alive at the final advent of Christ. The nature of this change is not fully explained. It is clear, however, from the Scriptures, that the *glorious* body will have none of the *infirmities* of the flesh, or the sensual appetites. Matt. xxii. 30; 1 Cor. vi. 13, but be perfectly adapted to the spirit, and fitted to the elevated sphere to which it is raised. The physical powers are now often a clog to the soul; but when no longer perverted, but rendered immortal and glorious, they will, in the case of the saints, doubtless greatly minister to their felicity. The bodies of the wicked will also be raised immortal, but it will be a resurrection to damnation. They will be destroyed, both soul and body, with an everlasting destruction, in hell.

LECTURE XXXII.

END OF THE WORLD AND FINAL JUDGMENT.

Denial of the End of the World. Arguments and Theories Discussed. Scriptural View. Four Last Things. Matter not to be Annihilated. Doctrine of a General Judgment Gradually Developed. Day of Judgment. Object of the Judgment. Difficulties Considered. Christ the Judge. All will be Judged. It will Occur Suddenly and Unexpectedly to Many.

Some have denied that this world is to have an end. Persons who reject revelation, and believe in an eternal series of existence, deny, of course, that the world will be destroyed. Attempts have also been made to sustain the same theory from Scripture. For this purpose they quote Eccl. i. 4: "The earth abideth forever." That passage, however, speaks obviously by way of *comparison*. The changeableness and frailty of man are contrasted with the permanency of the earth. The words rendered forever and everlasting, correspond to the nature of the subject to which they relate. When applied to God and eternal things, their signification is absolute. But when predicated of temporal things, as when a perpetual priesthood is mentioned, the throne is promised to David and his seed forever, everlasting mountains are spoken of, a period is denoted either of great and indefinite length, or simply commensurate with the known continuance of the subject. Thus we speak of an endless narrative, an everlasting talker.

Another and more plausible mode of defending the position, is to treat the Scriptural representation of the subject as *figurative*. Passages assumed to exhibit a parallel usage are cited. In Isa. xxxiv. 4, the destruction of Idumea is described as a "dissolving of all the host of heaven," and "rolling them together as a scroll." In Ezek. xxxii. 7, the following language is applied to the overthrow of Egypt: "When I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light." See also Joel ii. 10, 30, 31; Amos viii. 9; Haggai ii. 6; Matt. xxiv. 29—31. Hence they infer that all description of this kind, must be confined to convulsions in kingdoms and nations.

But this is far from being a satisfactory disposition of the matter, for various reasons.

1. In the above and similar passages, the language used, however strong, is expressly limited, in the context, to some particular nation; so that it could not be applied to the end of the world. The connection shows it to be figurative.

2. For support of the doctrine under consideration, we do not rely on mere epithets applied, or on any figurative representation. We allow that such phrases as "the heavens passing away," the "end of the world," (so translated in the common version,) and "the coming of the Son of man," often refer to events in this world, particularly the overthrow of the Jewish state. Nothing is gained by controverting these points.

3. We rely on general and plain Scriptural representations. One of them is God's declaration soon after the deluge, Gen. viii. 21, 22: "While the earth remaineth," &c. This implies that the earth will pass away. Not to dwell on such direct passages as Ps. cii. 25, 26; Isa. li. 6, and numerous incidental allusions, which assume the doctrine, we refer at once to the apostle Peter. 2 Pet. iii. 3—13: "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of

the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water : Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished : But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," &c.

Here it will be noted,

1. That the apostle is refuting an error, the very error which is the opposite of our doctrine.
2. He is treating directly of the end of the world.
3. His language is plain and definite.
4. The destruction of the world by fire is compared with its being overwhelmed by the deluge.
5. Practical exhortation is founded on a view of this awful event.

The final consummation, according to the sacred writers, includes the following particulars, often spoken of by writers as the four last things.

1. The second coming of Christ.
2. The Resurrection of the dead.
3. The end of the world.
4. The final judgment.

These are described as having a close proximity in time. See Matt. xxv. 31—46 ; 1 Cor. xv. ; 1 Thess. iv. 15—17 ; 2 Thess. i. 7—10 ; 2 Pet. iii. 3—13.

The entire Scriptural representation is, that the world is not to be eternal. This is not our abiding place. The present order of things is to be changed. The scheme of grace, as adapted to a probationary state, is to cease. The earth itself, so long marred by sin, and the consequent abode of wretchedness, is to be burned up.

We are not, however, under the necessity of supposing, that the matter of which the earth is composed, will then be *annihilated*. The earth, as first prepared for the abode of man, may have been but a new arrangement of preëxistent matter. The

world "*perished*" in the deluge, but was not annihilated. So the time is coming when the earth and the works therein shall be burned up, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Yet this is not to be considered annihilation: for in the same connection the sacred writer informs us of "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Still, to all the inhabitants of this world it will be the end, as much as though the earth were then annihilated. Indeed, death is to all the end of earth—the end of their probation.

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

The doctrine of a general judgment is one of gradual development. At first man was informed that rewards were attached to obedience, and punishments to disobedience. Little was then said about the time or mode of administering them. It was enough for man to know that both duty and interest required his obedience. After the introduction of sin and its fearful consequences, more light was shed on this subject. Reason and conscience anticipated a retribution, and revelation confirmed it. As the doctrine of a future life was unfolded, a final retribution was referred to that state. Men saw that the present is a state of trial rather than of reward—that in this world there is not a full administration of justice. Hence this must be referred to the coming life. Thus gradually is the doctrine of a complete and impartial retribution unfolded in the Old Testament.

Ps. ix. 7, 8: "But the Lord shall endure forever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment. And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness."

Isa. iii. 9, 10: "Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! It shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him."

Eccl. xii. 14: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

But even then a *day* of judgment was not revealed. The fact of a future general retribution was disclosed, but a minute detail of particulars was left to be supplied by the gospel.

In the New Testament the *day* of judgment is distinctly brought to view. Matt. xii. 36 : "Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Acts xvii. 31 : "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." Also Rom. ii. 16 ; xiv. 10 ; 2 Tim. iv. 1. These passages are decisive respecting the fact of a final judgment. They are in plain language, and are connected with other doctrines and practical exhortations : so that to reject this doctrine would be to reject the Bible.

In other passages, the *transactions* of the great day are detailed. Matt. xxv. 31—46 : "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory : And before him shall be gathered all nations : and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 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. . . . Then shall he also say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment ; but the righteous into life eternal."

Rev. xx. 11—13 : "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them ; and they were judged every man according to their works."

A proper explanation of these passages is the best comment on that solemn scene.

Several difficulties have been proposed. Some do not understand the *object* of a final judgment, especially if each one knows his final condition and destiny immediately after death. But reason itself readily disposes of this difficulty. God has administered a moral government over the world for thousands of years. Connected with this administration have been many mysteries, especially sin and its awful consequences. There must be a time when these mysteries shall be unfolded, the justice of the Divine procedure fully vindicated, and God honored in the eyes of the universe. Under these circumstances, a general judgment is seen to be necessary.

Others have perplexed themselves with regard to the *mode* of the judgment. But all difficulties suggested by the imperfections of earthly tribunals, must be esteemed of little consequence with the Omniscient and Almighty Being. Will any doubt whether God *can* judge the secrets of men?

Again, it has been asked, how can sins which have been pardoned come up in review? Reply, such sins will not be brought up in the way of accusation. To exhibit a perfect view of the Divine administration, the whole conduct of all may be considered, and thereby the grace of God be the more magnified.

What is to be understood by all being rewarded according to their works? Reply, that all shall be treated according to the character they have at the close of their probation. The righteous rewarded, the wicked punished. Rom. ii. 6—11. Rev. xxii. 11.

Several other points will now be briefly noticed.

1. The time of the judgment is termed a *day*. This word is used with much latitude in the Scriptures, sometimes denoting a literal day, sometimes a year, [as often in prophecy,] sometimes a man's life, sometimes any indefinite period. We cannot assert positively how long the judgment will continue. There is no good reason for supposing it will be very protracted.

2. The judgment will immediately succeed the resurrection, and end of the world. We derive this conclusion from the order in which the events connected with the final consummation are mentioned in Scripture. Especially, Rev. xx. 11, 12. Still, they may be, in a great measure, contemporaneous.

3. Christ will be the Judge. As God and man united in the person of the Mediator, he is eminently fitted for this office. The proofs are Matt. xxv. 31—46; John v. 27; Acts x. 42; xvii. 31; Rom. ii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 10. True, it is said that God shall judge the world. When this relates to the Father, it has reference to his authority and superintendence, rather than to his personal agency. Besides, the Son is one God with the Father. The apostles and saints will have a part in the great transaction; Matt. xix. 28; 1 Cor. vi. 2, doubtless in the way of notice and approval.

4. All men will be judged. This is plainly declared in the proof texts already cited. The fallen angels will also be judged at that time. 1 Cor. vi. 3; 2 Pet. ii. 4.

5. All the moral conduct of men will then be laid open. Eccl. xii. 14; Matt. xii. 36; Rom. ii. 16. At present we know but little of the power of memory and conscience. Even in this life, impressions long effaced return with great vividness and particularity.* Thought is indestructible. It is a solemn consideration that every moral act of our lives is to come up in review before an assembled universe.

* *Prof. Upham* gives several examples illustrative of the power of memory under various circumstances. One, from *Coleridge*, of a young woman in Germany, about twenty-five years of age, unable to read or write, who was seized with a nervous fever, during which she was incessantly talking Greek, Latin and Hebrew, with much pomp and distinctness of enunciation. The case attracted great attention, and, after protracted investigation, it was explained by the facts, that in her childhood she lived as a domestic in the family of a learned minister, who had been in the habit, for many years, of walking up and down a passage of his house, into which the kitchen door opened, and reading to himself with a loud voice out of his favorite books. These passages made an impression on her memory, "and although probably for a long time beyond the reach of her recollection when in health, they were at last vividly restored, and were uttered in the way above mentioned, in consequence of the feverish state of the physical system, particularly of the brain." *Mental Phil.* pp. 185—6.

In another place he remarks: "It appears, for instance, from the statements of persons who have been on the point of drowning, but have been rescued from

6. The judgment will occur suddenly, when many will not be looking for it. As a thief in the night, as the Deluge, or the overthrow of Sodom; thus unexpected to multitudes will be the coming of the Son of Man. No one knows the time but God. It becomes us all to be in constant readiness to meet it.

that situation, that the operations of their minds were peculiarly quickened. In this wonderful activity of the mental principle, the whole past life, with its thousand minute incidents, has almost simultaneously passed before them, and been viewed as in a mirror. Scenes and situations long gone by, and associates not seen for years, and perhaps buried and dissolved in the grave, came rushing in upon the field of intellectual vision in all the activity and distinctness of real existence." p. 183.

On an objection to the doctrine of a final judgment, he observes :

"In reference to the objection to the Scriptural doctrine of a final judgment, the remark naturally presents itself, that it seems to derive its plausibility chiefly from an imperfect view of the constitution of the human mind. It is thought that we cannot be conscious of our whole past life, because it is utterly forgotten, and is, therefore, wholly irrecoverable. But the truth seems to be, that nothing is *wholly* forgotten; the probability that we shall be able to recall our past thoughts may be greatly diminished, but it does not become wholly extinct. The power of reminiscence slumbers, but does not die. At the judgment day, we are entirely at liberty to suppose, from what we know of the mind, that it will awake, that it will summon up thought and feeling from its hidden recesses, and will clearly present before us the perfect form and representation of the past." pp. 189, 190.

LECTURE XXXIII.

FINAL STATE OF REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

Probation Universal. Final State of the Righteous—a Confirmed State—a Perfect State—a State of Holiness—a State of Unmingled Felicity—Eternal. Mode of our Future Being. Final State of the Wicked—Fixed and Unalterable—a State of entire Sinfulness—a State of Misery—Endless. Doctrine of Endless Punishment Discussed. Annihilation Theory Considered. History of Modern Universalism. An Error of the Heart more than of the Head.

Probation is a condition of all existence with which we are acquainted. The morning is probationary to the day. Spring to the year, youth to manhood—indeed, every portion of existence to subsequent portions. This is necessary in the nature of things. So of the connection with the present life and the life to come. It is from no arbitrary appointment, but an obvious principle of fitness, that our present existence is an introduction to that which is fixed and eternal.

Reason, then, shows the necessity of probation. But it does not reveal all the conditions of this probation. These belong to the province of Scriptural revelation.

The Bible teaches that the only probation in respect to our immortal state is the present life. Eccl. ix. 10: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." Gal. vi. 8: "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the

Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." The final condition of all is thus announced, Rev. xxii. 11 : " He that is unjust, let him be unjust still ; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still ; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still ; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

FINAL STATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

1. It will be a *confirmed* state. Their probation having closed, their condition will then be fixed and unalterable.

2. It will be a perfect state. Phil. iii. 11, 12 ; Heb. xii. 23. This does not preclude progress, but is opposed to the frailty and imperfection of the present life.

3. It will be a state of holiness. Those saved will be entirely free from the annoyance of sin. Rev. xxi. 27 : " There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie."

4. It will be a state of unmingled felicity. There will be no physical or moral infirmity ; nothing to disturb the peace of the soul ; but the presence of God, the society of saints and angels, with all the various provisions made by infinite benevolence, will conduce to the happiness of every glorified being. If all do not have an equal capacity and measure of enjoyment, yet each will have a full cup, and be satisfied.

5. This state will be eternal. The same terms are used in describing its duration, that are applied to God. If, then, he is to exist forever, so, also, will all his redeemed and glorified people.

Respecting the *mode* of our future being, little is revealed. We infer, however, from the Scriptural representation, that we shall have material, though glorious, bodies, and hence shall occupy space. Our state there will be one of eminent activity. There full scope will be afforded for exercising every faculty, while the mysteries of the present are unfolded, and we are exploring new fields, ever enjoying and glorifying God. As our powers will remain essentially unchanged, there must be similar sources of pleasure there which are provided for holy beings here. It cannot be doubted but we shall know each other in

heaven. Association with the holy and happy is one of the highest means of enjoyment. The Scriptures give decisive intimations of this fact. Memory will not be destroyed, nor our social natures.*

FINAL STATE OF THE WICKED.

1. This, also, will be fixed and unalterable. The Scriptures reveal no probation beyond the grave, but distinctly teach, that as we enter the unseen world, so will be our condition forever. Death works no moral change. It is but a separation of soul and body, and these will be reunited at the resurrection. Suffering and punishment can produce no moral renovation. The notion of Purgatory is wholly anti-Scriptural. No hope of change for the better is extended to the finally impenitent.

2. It will be a state of entire sinfulness. Some hold that all the wicked will become holy at or after death. But the passages of Scripture cited by them, do not authorize such belief. 1 Cor. xv. 22, chiefly relied on, relates to the resurrection of the body only, as is manifest from the context. The universality of the gospel provisions are also alleged; but these do not *secure* the salvation of a single moral agent. They are *conditional*. The gospel "is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth," Rom. i. 16, and to no others; for "he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16.

Also such passages as Col. i. 20: "By him to reconcile all things unto himself," are quoted to prove that all will finally believe. But these show only the nature of the gospel provisions. God has made provision for all, invites all, and *wishes* that all men should be saved, and come to a knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. ii. 4; but many will not comply with the conditions he requires—they *will not* come unto him that they may have life, John v. 40; they resist and grieve the Holy Spirit, Acts vii. 51, and persist in their rebellion.

Rom. v. 19: "For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." This passage is explained by the connection, in

* For other remarks on the future state, see Lecture XXX.

which Adam and Christ are compared. One introduced sin, the other grace. By means of Adam all are brought into a fallen state; by Christ all are brought into a salvable state. But after all that Adam did, none are actual sinners except by their own voluntary transgression; so under Christ, none become personally holy, but on condition of their own voluntary obedience. See v. 18, where this *tendency* is brought to view.

It is essential, in order to obtain the Scriptural sentiment on this or any other point, that passages should be studied in view of their connection and the bearing of parallel passages. Great injustice has often been done to the sacred oracles, by exhibiting detached and garbled expressions from them to sustain some theory. The candid inquirer will compare Scripture with Scripture, and thereby elicit their harmonious instruction.

Acts iii. 21: "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." The word here rendered *restitution* is often used in the sense of completion, filling up, *fulfilment*. So in the Greek classics, and in the Syriac and Arabic of this passage. This is its meaning here. The import of the passage is, that the Messiah, having ascended to the Father, will there remain until the fulfilment of the ancient prophecies concerning his spiritual reign on earth, when he will return to judge the world. It may also indicate the victory which the gospel shall gain over sin—that *the world* shall be converted to God. It, however, gives no intimation that those who reject the Saviour and die in sin, shall ever inherit his kingdom. The contrary is expressly affirmed, v. 23: "And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people."

1 Tim. ii. 4: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." The word rendered will (θέλει) does not here denote *an absolute decree*, but that he *desires, wishes*, as in numerous instances. See Luke viii. 20; xxiii. 8; John xvi. 19; Gal. iv. 20; 1 Cor. vii. 7, and many others. God *desires* the salvation of all, and has made provision

whereby all may be saved. But he has made salvation *conditional*. Jesus did not come to save men in their sins, but from their sins. Matt. i. 21.

God desires that all should come unto the knowledge of the truth (latter clause of the passage). Here the *condition* of salvation is brought to view. But as all are moral agents, and, in the exercise of their choice, may reject the truth and all the provisions of grace, they thereby exclude themselves from the salvation provided. So Christ declared to the unbelieving around him. John v. 40: "Ye *will not* come unto me, that ye might have life."

The fact that salvation is conditional, and that many reject the conditions, is conclusive evidence against the theory of universal salvation. If God had decreed the salvation of all, it would not have been conditional. But since it is conditional, and a part refuse to comply with the conditions of grace, the conclusion is inevitable, that they thereby secure their own final perdition.

Other passages are cited, which assert that every tongue shall confess to Christ, and all things in heaven and earth shall praise him. Phil. ii. 10, 11; Rev. v. 13. But these prove no more than that Christ shall have universal dominion, and all shall confess his rightful authority. There is no evidence that those who die in impenitence will ever cease to sin. They will have no disposition to cease from sin, and if they had, they could make no atonement for their past transgressions, nor recover themselves from their fallen state. Having rejected the mediation of Christ, whereby alone they could obtain pardon, their state will be utterly hopeless. Heb. x. 26: "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."

3. It will be a state of *misery*. Wretchedness is a necessary consequence of sin. Isa. lvii. 21: "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." iii. 11: "Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him." The passages which teach that there will be punishment in the future life, are too numerous and familiar to need citation.

This doctrine has been denied on various grounds. It is said that the wicked are fully punished in this life. But this position cannot be sustained, either from Scripture, observation, or history. True, the lot of the wicked, even here, is an unenviable one, and some are signally punished in this world; but there is evidently not a full retribution here. Some of the most wicked flourish until death, and go from the midst of their abominations and cruelties into the invisible world. If there is no punishment there, then they have no retribution. The premonitions of conscience should also be considered. Besides, we have already seen, that sin will continue in the future state, and hence misery, as its necessary consequent.

The benevolence of God is also supposed to be inconsistent with the existence of misery hereafter. But God is benevolent now, yet much wretchedness exists. It may, then, in the future state. This reply will suit all similar arguments drawn from the Divine attributes.

4. The punishment of the wicked will be *endless*. This truth is taught in almost every variety of manner in the Scriptures. To cite the passages would be to quote a large portion of the inspired volume.

1. It is contrasted with the final state of the righteous. Matt. xxv. 46: "These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment; but the righteous into life *eternal*." It is to be inferred that one state is as durable as the other.

2. The same terms are applied to describe the duration of future punishment, as those applied to the Divine existence. We have no more right to limit them in one case than in the other.

3. The doctrine is implied in the *conditionality* of salvation, since, unless the conditions are performed, salvation is forfeited; and, by contrast, in those passages which relate to the final state of the righteous.

4. Also in those which imply the existence of hell, and exposure to final perdition. Matt. x. 28: "Able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Mark iii. 29: "In danger of eternal damnation." Jude 7: "Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

5. It is implied in the closing up of the mediatorial dispensation. 1 Cor. xv. 24—28. When Christ shall cease to intercede, and the Holy Spirit to strive, the door of hope will be forever closed.

6. It is taught in the passages which describe the perdition of the ungodly as being “without remedy.” Prov. xxix. 1.

Numerous efforts have been made to set aside this doctrine; some on Scriptural grounds, as noticed already, though this is the chief reliance of but few. One main effort of Universalists on the Scriptural argument has been to unsettle the meaning of the terms, everlasting, eternal, endless, &c., applied to the punishment of the wicked; but thorough discussion has shown them to be the strongest terms that could have been employed, being applied to the duration of heaven and God. This fact most candid persons have to confess. So conclusively has this been shown, that most of those who deny the doctrine of endless punishment, now do it on other than Scriptural grounds. So far as Christians are concerned, this may be regarded as settling the question; still it may be well to notice the main objections from speculation.

1. It is said that endless punishment is unjust—that it would be wrong to punish men forever for the sins committed in a few years. We reply, the enormity of an offence does not depend upon the length of time occupied in its perpetration. Who can determine that sin ought not to be punished endlessly; that it would be proper or safe ever to remit the penalty in the case of those who knowingly and wilfully reject the offers of grace? It is right for human government to imprison during life: why not also, for the Divine government?

2. It is asserted that endless punishment is inconsistent with infinite benevolence. From abstract reasoning we might conclude that there would be no sin or suffering in the universe. But how much does this weigh against the fact? And if sin and suffering are consistent with infinite benevolence now, they always may be. Benevolence itself demands that sin should be adequately punished. It would be the greatest wrong to the in-

nocent to suffer crimes to go unpunished. What would any government be worth, which had no sanction to its laws, and no protection for the virtuous ?

3. It is contended that the whole object of punishment is *disciplinary*, and therefore it cannot be eternal. This is not true. Law regards the good of all—the innocent, as well as the guilty.

In view of reason, the propriety of endless punishment may be shown in the following manner : It would be the highest good of the universe for every moral being to conform strictly to the Divine law. The greatest evil is sin. That government, therefore, is best, which most effectually prevents sin, and promotes virtue. The stronger the motive to obey God and avoid sin, the more effectually will sin be prevented, and the strongest possible motive will most effectually prevent sin. Now, eternal punishment is the strongest motive to deter from transgression. This penalty is, then, the most appropriate sanction of the Divine law. So the Scriptures teach, that eternal death was the penalty denounced for a single transgression ; and had there been no gracious provision, every sinner must have perished forever.

But a day and means of grace are bestowed on all ; so that if any perish, they do so wilfully, and must blame themselves for it. Sin and suffering are indeed real and great evils ; but, so far as we can judge, they are necessarily incidental to the best moral system. We have reason to believe, that in our own world, on the whole, virtue and happiness will greatly preponderate over vice and misery. And in the whole universe, taking into account the millennium, the proportion of the lost to the saved *may* finally be no greater than the convicts in our penitentiaries bear to the community at large.

The theories in opposition to the doctrine of a final retribution are numerous, and ever assuming new phases. Some hold that man has not an immortal soul—that both soul and body perish at death, and that the resurrection is a new creation. Such is the theory of most modern Universalists. Others hold that immortality is imparted in regeneration, so that all dying in impenitence are annihilated.

The theory of *the annihilation of the wicked* has of late obtained a prominence which it never had before. Traces of it are found in different ages, but it never had much influence among the intelligent. Within a few years, however, it has had more advocates. Some twenty years since, *Rev. George Storrs*, previously a Methodist preacher, embraced the sentiment, and published a work on the subject, entitled: "An Inquiry—Are the Wicked Immortal?" which has had an extensive circulation.

Soon after, *Rev. H. H. Dobney*, and others in England and Scotland, commenced advocating the theory, and it has since been adopted by numbers there. It is confined mostly to the *Advent societies*, and the *Christian sect*, though some in various evangelical denominations favor it.

The advocates of this theory, so far as the Scriptural argument is concerned, rely on such terms as *death, destruction, perish, perdition*, applied to the wicked. See Gen. ii. 17; Ezek. xviii. 4; Deut. xxx. 15; Rom. vi. 23; Job. xxi. 30; Mal. iv. 1; Rom. ii. 12; 2 Pet. iii. 7.* These texts are by them explained in the most literal and materialistic sense.

But this is a manifest perversion, as will appear from a candid examination of the subject. It cannot be shown from Scripture that either of these terms, as used there, denotes annihilation. The idea of death in Scripture is not extinction, but separation. It is a *relative* term, being opposed to life. Now when used with reference to the future world, life does not denote a mere continuance of being or consciousness, but union with God, peace, blessedness: so its opposite, death, does not denote extinction of consciousness and being, but separation from God, misery, wretchedness. Compare Rom. ii. 6—9; vi. 23; 2 Thess. i. 6—9, &c.

The same remarks will apply to the other terms mentioned above. The wicked shall indeed be destroyed, perish, descend to perdition: not that they will cease from a conscious existence; but be banished from God, separated from good, involved in tribulation and anguish forever. On this point the Bible is explicit and conclusive, as already shown in this lecture.

* See Dobney's arguments discussed in *F. Baptist Quarterly*, April, 1856.

There is no evidence, from Scripture, reason, or experience, that a single particle of matter even, in all its changes, has ever been annihilated. The SOUL of man, made in the image of God, living and immortal, shall, as respects its future existence, run parallel with that of the Creator; if obedient, in happiness; if disobedient, in misery forever. God has thus given us an eternal destiny, the shaping of which is committed to our own voluntary choice.

We subjoin a few abridged extracts on the tendency of the annihilation doctrine from *Pres. Mahan*:

“ 1. This doctrine, as far as the nature of the soul is concerned, is opposed to the intuitive convictions of the race upon the subject. It has its exclusive basis, as we have seen, in the dogma of the proper materiality of the soul.

2. This doctrine is equally opposed to the most absolute deductions of science.

3. If the mind is material, as this dogma affirms, God is material.

4. If the soul of man is material, then all its activities of every kind must be subjected to the immutable laws and principles of matter. In other words, such activities, intellectual and moral, must be subject to one unchangeable law, that of absolute necessity. The intellect, sensibility, and will, are only parts of our complicated machine, every movement of which can, by no possibility, be otherwise than it is. Mind, then, can no more be subject to moral obligation, or susceptible of moral right or wrong, or of the desert of moral retribution, than a steamboat.

These are the necessary consequences of the fundamental principles of this system, and there is no escape from them. If mind is material, all its activities are the exclusive result of chemical and other kindred affinities, and we might as properly adopt codes of moral legislation for the direction of the action of the acids and alkalis, or of the forces of electricity and galvanism, as for that of the human will. There is no such thing as moral government, right and wrong, obligation, moral desert of good or ill, if this dogma is true. Morality and religion both

are chimeras, born of ignorance and error, and the judgment would be nothing but a senseless farce. No one can show that these are not the necessary bearings of this system upon the eternal principles of morality and religion. It annihilates totally every sphere for the action of the moral and religious principles and sentiments. Those who hold this dogma, and yet believe in either morality or religion, do so in violation of the fundamental principles of their own system.

5. This system of belief is held in opposition to the most direct and express teachings of Scripture conceivable. The doctrine of the materiality of the soul, for example, is held in opposition to the express and formal affirmation of Holy Writ, that the spirit, as distinguished from the body, is not dust, that is, material. It is held, too, in opposition to the plainest teachings elsewhere. Everywhere, as we have seen, the Scriptures place the soul in contrast with the body, affirming, that while man can destroy the one, God only can destroy the other. The doctrine of the universal sleep of the dead is maintained, in opposition to the express teachings of our Saviour, that the souls of the dead are not now *dead* but *living* beings; and equally so to the express teachings of the Spirit of God, in the epistles of Paul, that the present inhabitants of heaven are made up in part of 'the spirits of the just made perfect,' that is, perfected in glory; and finally to the equally express teachings of inspiration in the Revelation, that the spirits of departed saints are, with the four and twenty elders, now in active worship before the eternal throne. The doctrine that the death threatened to the wicked is annihilation, is contradicted by the most undeniable and formal definitions of the meaning of the term, when thus employed, to wit, that that death is 'evil,' 'misery,' 'indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish.' There is no subject on which inspiration can be shown to be more specific than it actually is on all these. Never was a system of doctrine developed with less regard to the plain and fundamental teachings of the word of God, upon the specific topics embraced in that system." Freewill Baptist Quarterly, Vol. IV. pp. 322—326.

Enough for the theory not inappropriately termed the "sleepy doctrine," or "dirt philosophy." Its pernicious influence in some directions at the present day must be our apology for allowing so much space for its exposure.

Some teach that all will be made holy and happy at death. Others (the Restorationists) hold that there will be punishment after death, but that all will finally be saved. As before remarked, the advocates of these sentiments rely very little on Scripture for their support; and only pervert and misapply it to prop up their system. Reason and conscience, also, afford them no support.

Some, in all ages, have speculated about a final restitution of all things. But such has never been the prevailing sentiment of mankind. Most, not only of Jews and Christians, but also of Mohammedans and heathen, have believed in endless punishment.

HISTORY OF MODERN UNIVERSALISM.

About the year 1770, Rely and Murray commenced preaching the doctrine of the final salvation of all men, in England; in which year Murray came to America. The doctrine was embraced by Mr. Winchester in 1781, by Dr. Chauncey in 1784, and by Dr. Huntington in 1795. They, however, advocated it on very different grounds from those assumed by Universalists now. They contended merely for the final salvation of all, admitting the other orthodox points generally.

Modern Universalism is of very recent date. It originated mainly with Hosea Ballou, of Boston. Its principal distinguishing tenets are the following:*

1. Final salvation of all.
2. It never was, or could be, forfeited by sin, consequently there is in reality no salvation.
3. Men are born as pure as Adam was created.
4. Sin originates in the body, not in the mind.
5. Man never becomes wholly depraved.
6. There is no punishment after death.

* "Universalism as it is," pp. 28, 9.

7. There is no sin after death.
8. Man is naturally mortal—has no immortal soul.
9. All will suffer as much as they deserve.
10. Sin is its own, and only, punishment.
11. This doctrine denies the divinity and atonement of Christ, a probation, faith as essential to salvation, regeneration as a supernatural change, the general judgment, the existence of angels, devils, or hell, and the Sabbath, prayer, and church ordinances, as being of Divine authority. Such is the system of modern Universalism. Enough to show that it is not the gospel of Christ."

Universalism is an error of the heart, rather than of the head. It is most generally assumed to excuse sin, or ease a troubled conscience. It is of little use to combat it with speculative arguments. The truth on the subject, as revealed in the Scriptures, should be plainly set forth and faithfully impressed upon the heart and conscience. In treating it, we should avoid harshness and denunciation. In declaring the awful truth, we may be pronouncing sentence upon ourselves, or our nearest friends.

Respecting the *nature* of future punishment, little can be affirmed. It is evidently real and positive. Though the language used in describing it is figurative, as all sensible descriptions of the invisible state must be, it has not less force on this account. The figures, and indeed all the language applied to the condition of the finally impenitent, are of the strongest and most vivid kind. Its significance may be inferred from its immediate contrast with corresponding terms descriptive of the state of the blessed in heaven.

PART IV.

THE CHURCH AND ITS INSTITUTIONS.

Under this division, we treat of some subjects not strictly pertaining to it; though we could not better dispose of them with our classification. We confine ourselves chiefly, however, to the institutions and ordinances of the Christian church. The other Lectures are essential to the completion of the general course.

LECTURE XXXIV.

CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH.

Our Social Wants. Origin and History of the Church. Different Applications of the Term. General Church. Particular Churches. Conditions of Church Membership.

The CHURCH is an institution adapted to our social condition. Every man has individual responsibilities. He has a moral agency and responsibility, which cannot be merged in that of the mass. The law of God addresses each man, and each, in his individual capacity, obeys or disobeys. So with the provisions of grace for fallen man. Christ tasted death for every man, and ordained the preaching of the gospel to every creature. Each one, therefore, in respect to his salvation, has to act for himself.

Still, man is not an isolated being. His nature is eminently social. He is ever in society, bound to it by numberless ties, and impressed by it at every turn, from the cradle to the grave. The Christian religion does not overlook these great truths. While it is well suited to man's character as an individual, in every diversity of circumstance, it also fully provides for his social wants, and, in this respect, shows its superiority over every other moral and religious system. It prescribes adequately for our social condition.

But precepts for the conduct of life are not enough. Society, to exist at all, must be organized with a constitution and disci-

pline. It is not the place here to discuss fundamental questions respecting civil society. We merely allude to the acknowledged fact, that civil society cannot exist without an adequate organization. This being admitted, it may be remarked, that the church relation is demanded by our religious wants, as much as organized civil society is required by our social nature. Had sin never entered the world, one form of society might have been sufficient; but in the existing state of the world, the church institution is essential to the highest welfare of mankind. Civil society alone is not sufficient for the moral necessities of men.

These principles are early recognized in the Scriptures. Even in the days of Adam we have this record: "Then began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord." Gen. iv. 26. Marg. As sin had already made fearful ravages in the human family, there was need of *separation*—a coming out on the Lord's side. The words subsequently employed to designate the church, retain this idea. In the Hebrew קָהָל, קָרָה denote *assembling, calling together*. In the Septuagint and New Testament, the specific word for church is Ἐκκλησία, which signifies a *select* body, from ἐκ, καλέω to *call out*. Our word church, from the Scotch Kirk, is derived from the Greek Κυριακός, *House of the Lord*. A study of the derivation and import of this term might have saved much confusion and logomachy on this subject.

It is easy to see, from what has been said, that the church of God must have existed substantially in all ages. We have already seen that it existed in the days of Adam. Its existence in the patriarchal dispensation is recognized in various ways. Enoch prophesied, Noah was a preacher, each patriarch presided over the spiritual concerns of his own household and dependents. The Jews, as a nation, were specially selected, and for many ages constituted the peculiar people of the Lord. In a more formal way than any that preceded them, they entered into covenant with God, observed his ordinances, and maintained his worship. It is true that, in all these forms, the civil and religious, church and 'state, were blended in one, a state of things

adapted to the infancy of society, when men acted more in the mass, and whole communities and nations avowed either the worship of the true God, or idolatry. In a more advanced state of the world, a different order of things became necessary. We are not to suppose, however, that from Moses onward, the church was confined to the Jews. Pious individuals, and perhaps communities of such, existed in other nations without being required to become incorporated with that people.

That the church exists by Divine authority under the gospel, cannot be doubted by any believer in the New Testament. Christ and the apostles modified it, gave it new ordinances, and adapted it to the nature of this fuller dispensation, and established it to be coeval with the gospel itself.

From the preceding view, we learn the necessity and Divine authority of the church relation. Some, indeed, in every age have opposed it, and there are not wanting those in our own day, who are bitter in their denunciations of it. The hands of such have been strengthened by the abuses that have existed in the church. It is not to be denied, that these have prevailed to a fearful extent. But to condemn an institution of Divine appointment, on this account, shows a narrow view, and a bad spirit. What good thing has not been abused? Not a natural agent can be named that has not been perverted to evil purposes. Is it to be inferred that they are all inherently and necessarily evil?

Besides a perverse and corrupt body, whatever *name* it may assume, is not a true church of Christ. If a church become lukewarm and iniquitous, unless it repents, God will reject it. Were, then, nine-tenths of the church nominal, for any length of time, to become corrupt in doctrine and practice, this would not extinguish the true church. God will raise up a church of the faithful, while he will abandon a corrupt and incorrigible institution to its apostasy. Such has ever been his procedure. If, in the whole world, but seven thousand remained who had not bowed to Baal, or but twelve, or even one, *such one* would keep the church alive. The indiscriminate denunciation with

which some assault the church, is as unreasonable as it is impious. We should discern between the precious and the vile. We should consider, that in every age the true church has been the great medium of communicating spiritual blessings to the world.

The Church of England correctly defines a church to be—"A congregation of faithful men, in which the true word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinances." Various distinctive terms have been applied to this institution. Luther distinguished between the visible and invisible church, by which he denoted the professed, and the real, church. Some have supposed that the pious, who make no public profession, compose the invisible church. But this is not scriptural. The Bible does not recognize *secret* religion. It requires a confession of Christ before men, self-denial, and cross bearing, as evidences of discipleship. Matt. x. 32, 33, 38.

Another term applied, is that of *general* or universal church. This is Scriptural. Not that this word is distinctly applied; but the idea is implied, wherever, in general terms, a distinction is made between the righteous and the wicked. Indeed, glorified spirits in heaven, as well as the saints on earth, may be included in the general church. We are not to suppose that the general church exists as such in an organized capacity. The term general is applied chiefly for convenience. The general church is the aggregate of all the various individual churches.

Again, associations of individual churches, combined for religious purposes, harmonizing in sentiment and effort, may properly be called a church. Thus the Lutheran, Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist church. No such association, however, has an exclusive right to be denominated *the Church*.

To the New Testament mainly must we look for instruction on the subject before us. If the church was not first organized by Christ and the apostles, it underwent, in their hands, such modifications as to make it substantially a new institution. On this principle, Coleman observes: "The Jews had no distinct

organization, which could, with propriety, be denominated a church. Much less is any association, under other forms of religion, entitled to this appellation.* The church, under the gospel, was adapted to this full, spiritual dispensation.

In the New Testament the term *church* is used in two senses :

1. To denote all true believers—the *church general*. Of this church Christ is the Head: all those spiritually united to him are its members. Various figures are employed in Scripture to designate the relation which Christ holds to his people—as husband and wife, the head and the body, the vine and its branches. See also the tender and expressive prayer of the Saviour, John xvii. 20—23: “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” Some suppose this prayer has not yet been answered, and are looking for its accomplishment in the future. This may be true in a degree. Yet all true believers are united to Christ, and to each other. The apostle makes “love to the brethren” one of the strongest evidences of spiritual life.

The dissensions which exist in the church prove two things :

1. That some, in the nominal church, are not real members of the body of Christ. 2. Many true members are yet imperfect. Just in the degree that they are united to Christ, are they united in love to each other.

Erroneous interpretation of Scripture, on the subject of the general church, has led some to deny the necessity of any organized local churches. But the Scriptures afford no countenance to their position. They contain nothing against, but much in favor of, local church organizations. Religion would not subsist in the world, any more than civil society, without organizations. Experience proves this. To be adapted to the moral wants of the world, the church must diffuse its influence in society. To maintain the ordinances, impart instruction, and preserve discipline, there must be individual, local organizations.

* Antiquities, p. 34.

2. Hence, another sense in which the term church is used in the New Testament is in reference to distinct, religious societies. Indeed, this is its ordinary import there. The apostles organized numerous churches, which are spoken of in various connections. Acts ix. 31; xv. 41; Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. vii. 17; xiv. 34; Gal. i. 2, 22; Col. iv. 15; Rev. i. 4. These, and many other passages, are explicit on the point of individual churches. Sometimes an association of churches is called a church. Compare 1 Cor. i. 2, with xiv. 34; but the ordinary and specific use of the term in the New Testament has reference to distinct local bodies.

The gospel church was organized by Christ. He is its chief corner stone, its head, and lawgiver. The constitution of the gospel church rests wholly upon the precepts and practice of Christ and his inspired apostles. They not only organized and governed churches, but also transmitted a record of their doings to us, to be followed in the perpetuation of the church. Essentials in church building are not left as matters of indifference to be regulated by uninspired men. The acts of popes, councils, or any other mere human authority, have no right to change the Divinely established constitution of the Christian church.

Who are eligible to membership in individual churches? All true believers, and no others. The precepts and practice of Christ and the apostles settle this question beyond a reasonable doubt.

How are churches to be constituted? By ministers. When these find a company of faithful men, able and willing to sustain the ordinances of the gospel, they have a right to constitute them a church, subject to the gospel rules and discipline.

How and on what conditions are persons to be received to the church? We answer, this matter rests with the church itself, subject to the laws of Christ. The church, not the minister, or a select number of its members, has the right of admitting persons to membership.*

* See the subject of church government and discipline, discussed in the next Lecture.

The gospel condition of membership is a credible evidence and profession of faith in Christ. None but those who are regenerate, who deny self, bear the cross, and confess Christ before men, can properly be recognized as his disciples, and all such should be. One must acknowledge the Divine authority of the church and its ordinances, and his obligation and purpose to conform to them, before he can be received to membership. The ordinary and Scriptural mode of making the requisite confession and covenant is by baptism. In connection with this, there is, of-course, a vote of the church, and generally the hand of fellowship formally extended. There must be an established mode of the reception and recognition of members. Baptism is the professional ordinance, the outward sign of regeneration. We would not contend that Baptism alone makes one a member ; but according to the Scriptures, this is always to be required.

LECTURE XXXV.

GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH.

Different Forms of Church Government Discussed. Episcopacy. Presbyterianism. Independency. Scriptural View. Practice of the Apostolic and Primitive Churches. Associations—their Use and Authority. Church Covenant. Importance of Church Discipline. The Scriptural Mode. General Principles.

The forms of church government may be divided into three general classes—Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, and Independency. These we will notice in order.

1. EPISCOPACY. The distinguishing feature of this form is, that it vests the government of the church in the clergy. In all its varieties, from Romish Papacy to low church Episcopalianism, the laity have no essential part in church government. Laws are passed, members received, disciplined, and excommunicated, by the priest, bishop, or pope. Episcopacy is defended from two sources.

(1.) *From Scripture.* It is claimed that the apostles exercised such authority. But were this admitted, it alone would not clothe ministers now with the same prerogatives. The apostles were inspired, and were Divinely authorized to prescribe laws for the government of the church—which no minister can now assert of himself.

Again, the passages cited do not prove that even the apostles

held the government of the churches. The texts mainly relied on to prove that they did are 1 Cor. v.; 1 Tim. v. 20; Titus iii. 10. The last two are no more than general directions and exhortations. The first relates to a specific case, but proves the reverse of what Episcopalians claim for it. If Paul held exclusively the government of the church at Corinth, would he not have excommunicated that gross offender at once? But, so far from doing this, he sends a letter to the church, exhorting them to do it, thus showing that the government of that church was in the hands of its members. Matt. xviii. 15—17, also shows that church government belongs to the body of members.

(2.) Many Episcopalians do not claim any Scriptural requirement of their usage, but contend for it on the ground of *expediency*. They hold that the Scriptures have prescribed no particular order of church government, but have left the whole matter to be regulated as circumstances shall require. They assert that, as a general thing, the members at large are not competent to exercise discipline, and that distraction and anarchy would result from committing it to their hands. This rests on the assumption that the mass of men are not capable of self-government, and the consequent need of an aristocracy. But so far at least as our own country is concerned, this assumption has been proved to be utterly groundless. Our civil constitution recognizes the people as the source of authority; and the experiment has amply proved that they are competent for self-government. So the Bible, our great moral charter and bill of rights, confers the government of the church on its members, and experience has shown its practicability and wisdom. The members of the church are as able to govern themselves as the citizens of the state are to govern themselves. On the other hand, the evil of denying the rightful equality of men, and investing a few with exclusive prerogatives, has been abundantly shown. If this is an abuse, it is one to which most are prone. It is true that society in the mass may practice injustice and oppression. But they are not so likely to do it. Where the equality of all is ad-

mitted, there will be checks and balances interposed by conscience, and by opposing interests; and injuries can be more easily redressed.

2. PRESBYTERIANISM. This holds the government of the church to be in the hands of the members. It is, therefore, widely different from Episcopacy. It differs from the Independent form in vesting the government of each individual church in a board of elders, elected, however, by the church; and, in allowing of appellate jurisdiction, or the right of appeal from the decisions of an individual church.

In support of governing the church by ruling elders, 1 Tim. v. 17, is cited—"the elders that rule well." But this does not necessarily prove that ruling elders were a distinct class, or that the sole government of the church was in their hands. Ruling and teaching were usually included in the duties of the same person. See 1 Thess. v. 12. What is fatal to the Presbyterian argument on this point, is the fact that elders in the apostolic churches were ministers. Elders, presbyters, and bishops in the New Testament, all denote the same thing. This all admit.

It is, also, sometimes asserted that Matt. xviii. 17; Acts viii. 1, &c., denote not the whole church, but only a select portion appointed to manage its concerns. But this position cannot be sustained. The opposite sentiment is evident on the face of these passages, and many others. 1 Cor. xii. 28, is also referred to. But this refers to different gifts rather than classes of men in the church. Several of these were possessed by the same person.

As a matter of expediency, it is doubtless true that in special cases the church may find it best to create a board; for instance, in case of a difficult and protracted labor. But this is quite another thing from having a standing board to govern in all cases. Neither Scripture nor experience warrants the creation of any such aristocracy in the church.

Appellate jurisdiction, in the Presbyterian church, takes the ultimate decision of questions from the individual churches. In any cases of church discipline, an appeal may be carried from the decision of the church to the Presbytery, Synod, or General

Assembly; and in any case the decision of a church, or of any of the inferior associations, may be reversed. This arrangement has, doubtless, some advantages. It tends to consolidation, and often promotes efficiency. It is, also, attended with disadvantages. It opens a door for protracted controversy, and tends to accumulate power unduly in the hands of a few. To the extent in which it is claimed and exercised by Presbyterians, appeal is not warranted by the New Testament.

3. INDEPENDENCY. This is the form of government which prevails in the various Congregational and Baptist denominations. According to this form, each local church is independent in the management of all its internal concerns, being responsible to Christ alone. Some, as the *Brownists*, have carried the doctrine to an extreme, disallowing all church associations or councils.

That the individual churches are the sources of ecclesiastical authority, and that each church in the management of its internal affairs is independent, the Scriptures clearly teach. Such were the churches planted by the apostles. See the Acts, and Epistles, *passim*. The churches continued to be independent for some time after the apostles, and a different order was introduced only when they began to degenerate. There is no evidence that in the times of the apostles, or of their immediate successors, the act of a church relating to its own business, or within its appropriate jurisdiction, was ever reversed.

It is urged by some that, as no particular form of church government is expressly prescribed in the Scriptures, each body of Christians is left to choose whatever form it pleases. This we cannot allow. The Scriptures are our rule and guide in this as well as in other matters of faith and practice. They afford us all needful instruction on the subject. Christ and the apostles, who planted the first churches, set us an example. So far, at least, as the main principles are concerned, their teaching, and the precedents they furnished, should be followed by us in church building and government. Else, why were the records of the apostolic churches incorporated into the Scriptures, if not for

our instruction and guidance? To leave these, and adopt the inventions of uninspired men, must expose us to great abuses. True, we should take into account essential changes in circumstances, especially with reference to points of minor importance; but this does not warrant us in neglecting general and fundamental principles of Scriptural doctrine.

Now, it is generally conceded, even by Episcopalians, that in the apostolic and primitive times, each church was an independent body. Unless, then, it can be shown that our circumstances are so different from theirs as to demand a radical change in this particular, it is safe and proper for us to follow the apostolic example in church building and discipline.

The independence of the churches does not preclude them from forming associations for mutual benefit, and for the extension of religion. Under the apostles, they associated on different occasions, and for various purposes. Rom. xv. 26; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, &c. See an important controversy in the churches of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, referred to the church at Jerusalem. Acts xv.

From all that has now been said, we derive the following principles:

1. Each church is independent in the management of its internal affairs.

2. Churches have a right to form associations, and subject themselves to such regulations, not inconsistent with their own independence in internal discipline, nor opposed to the gospel, as will best subserve the purposes of benevolence.

3. The churches are the sources of authority, hence all associations should originate with the churches, and be composed of delegates appointed by the churches.

4. For convenience and efficiency, there may be various associations formed, as Quarterly Meetings, Yearly Meetings, and a General Conference.

5. The authority of these associations is not simply *advisory*. While they have no control of the internal affairs of the churches, yet within their proper province they have all the power that

any ecclesiastical body can have. Such is the polity of the Freewill Baptists and others. The Yearly Meetings are amenable to the General Conference, the Quarterly Meetings to the Yearly Meetings, the churches to the Quarterly Meetings, and individuals to the churches. Such arrangement is adapted to secure efficient discipline, purity, and order. A corrupt or disorderly member of either of these bodies may be disciplined and excommunicated. But no appeal can be prosecuted from one body to another, so as to reverse the action of the other. Each body has its own sphere of duty. Thus the rights of the churches are strictly guarded; and, at the same time, the advantages of union, coöperation, and fellowship, are secured.

The churches, as already remarked, have the sole management of their own internal affairs. To them belongs the appointment of pastors, and provision for their support in the way they judge best. Also, the appointment of deacons and all other church officers. The house of worship should be under their control, and be owned by them. They, subject in all things to Christ, have the exclusive right of disciplining their members. The pastor ought to belong to the church to which he administers, have all the rights of a church member, and, as such, no more than any other one.

Each church should have a covenant. The Bible is indeed the rule of faith and practice to all; but as all Christians receive this, yet interpret it variously, each church should have an expression of their views of Scriptural doctrine and discipline. The covenant should not merely embrace such articles as are absolutely essential to salvation, but such as the members deem essential to completeness of Christian character, and of high practical importance.

The union, harmony, and strength of the churches are best promoted by associating those in a church who agree on all great practical points. While different opinions and practices prevail, there had better be denominational distinctions. Proselyting, and every species of sectarianism, should be discountenanced. Each denomination of Christians should regard the others as

members of the family of Christ, as co-workers in the same great cause with themselves. This is Christian union, and best preserves the cause of truth. In the present state of mankind, every attempt to merge all denominations into one, only creates a new sect. No church is obliged to receive a person to membership, though a Christian, unless he so agrees with them that they can walk together in harmony. He had better join those with whom he does agree.

Strict church discipline is of great importance. The usefulness of the church relation depends very much upon it. Without it, the church cannot be the salt of the earth, and light of the world. Its proper exercise tends, also, to the highest good of the offender. The Scriptures authorize church discipline, and give explicit directions for conducting it.

Matt. xviii. 15—17: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

1 Cor. v. 11: "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner: with such an one no not to eat."

2 Thess. iii. 6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

When duly administered, it has the sanction of God. Matt. xviii. 18. As it is of so much consequence, it should be administered with great deliberation, love, and energy. Those who, in the judgment of the church, forfeit their Christian character, should be excommunicated; and, ordinarily, no others. The

great object in church labor should be to maintain the honor of the cause, and to reclaim offenders.

The rules of discipline are laid down in Matt. xviii. 15—17. The spirit of these should be carried out in all cases of church discipline. There will, of course, be some diversity in the details, suited to the different cases. Some general directions may here be given :

1. Each church should have an efficient standing committee, whose duty it is to attend to cases of delinquency, visit offenders, report cases, and prosecute labor before the church. It should be understood, however, that their existence does not release individuals from their duty in any degree.

2. There should be a stated church meeting, as often as once a quarter, to act on cases of discipline.

3. The pastor should be standing moderator of the church.

4. In special cases, church labor may be prosecuted before a committee ; but the final decision, in every case, should be made by the church at large.

5. In church labor, the accuser and accused, if possible, should be brought face to face.

6. Care should be taken that kindness and love mark all the proceedings. Party feeling and bitterness should be carefully avoided.

7. An excluded member is to be treated kindly, yet as one who has forfeited his Christian character, and reproached religion. We should not countenance his course, though we may seek to reclaim him.

8. One church ought not to receive a person excluded from another true church.

9. The majority should govern, and the minority cheerfully acquiesce, except when it may be necessary to have a council from the Quarterly Conference, or other association to which the church belongs. In church business, a unanimous vote is desirable, but not indispensable.

10. The female members have a right to take part in the pro-

ceedings, and vote, especially with reference to the admission or rejection of members.

Each church, ordinarily, should have a house of worship, stated public services, Sabbath school, church, prayer and conference meetings, and the ordinances regularly administered. Churches should be organized by ordained ministers, usually appointed therefor by the Quarterly Conference, or association, to which, when organized, it should be immediately united. No individual Christian has a right to stand voluntarily without church connection; nor should a church stand alone, without becoming associated with others. Candidates should be examined by the whole church, and, after baptism, admitted to membership by receiving the hand of fellowship. Members, on removing their residence, should take letters of dismissal, and, as soon as practicable, unite with some other church, when, upon notification of the former church, their connection with that ceases.

LECTURE XXXVI.

THE MINISTRY : ITS CONSTITUTION.

Historical View. Call to the Ministry. Must be from God. How to be Ascertained. This Call is Special. Parity of Ministers. Deacons. Arguments for Episcopacy Discussed. Apostolical Church. "Apostolical Succession." Ecclesiastical History. Arguments for Ministerial Parity.

The interests of religion require a class of men specially devoted to its services. In the earliest times, the head of the family was priest of his household. Under the Jewish dispensation, one entire tribe was set apart to the duties of the sanctuary. They were not to be embarrassed with secular cares, and therefore had no portion in the distribution of the promised land; they were exempt from military duty and other worldly business, and were wholly devoted to the purposes of instruction, sacrifice, and worship. They derived their support from an equitable assessment upon the other tribes.

One of the first public acts of Christ's ministry, was the appointment of the twelve apostles, whom he instructed, and sent forth to preach the gospel. Afterwards, he commissioned seventy others. The ministry, thus constituted, he designed to be perpetual, as is clear from the commission he gave to his disciples, near the time of his ascension. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe

all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

It is the prerogative of God alone to call men to the sacred office. All men are not suitable for ministers of the gospel, nor are all Christians. Nor would it be proper for all to engage in it, if they were. Temporal, as well as spiritual, interests, must be attended to in their place. A selection must therefore be made, and God has wisely reserved this to himself. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. Heb. v. 4.

How does God call men to the gospel ministry? Some say by miraculous, or, at least, extraordinary, manifestations. But there is no evidence that such is his method at the present day. The best ministers have no such experience. Others make the call consist in certain *impressions* on the mind. Impressions should surely be regarded in deciding upon duty; but they alone are not a safe ground of reliance, for they may be deceptive. *The will of God* is to be sought on the subject; and it is to be learned in a *rational* way. The man who is inquiring for duty on this point, should seek impartially, earnestly, prayerfully to know the will of God concerning it. Some principles may here be laid down:

1. The candidate for the sacred office must be *pious*. No unregenerate man should presume to enter the Christian ministry. "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" Ps. l. 16. Such should practice God's requirements for themselves, before they undertake to teach them to others.

2. He who is to fill the sacred office must have a *capacity* for the work. Not, indeed, a sufficiency of himself, for this no man has. Nor, as yet, all the requisite qualifications. God doubtless shows persons their duty to become ministers, in many cases, long before they are prepared to devote themselves wholly to the work. But the candidate must have a suitable capacity.

We question not the ability of God to make ministers of idiots, brutes, or stones; but he does not do it. He works by rational means, and in a rational manner. If he chooses the poor of this world, it is because they are rich in faith. He chooses the weak and foolish things of this world—not really such, but only so in the estimation of that wisdom of man which is foolishness with God. An inspired apostle declares that a bishop must be “*apt to teach.*” 1 Tim. iii. 2.

3. He must be *disposed* to give himself earnestly to the work—that of preparation—and to every duty that shall devolve upon him. No man who does not faithfully apply his energies, can ever become a successful minister. To be eminently useful, one needs to be well educated, well versed in the Scriptures, in many of the sciences, and in a knowledge of mankind—to have a mind disciplined and furnished, a good judgment, lively imagination, tender sensibilities, decision and energy, a facility of communicating, patience, courage, an ardent love for souls, and for all the interests of religion. Now, unless one is willing to labor heartily and perseveringly to make these attainments, he ought never to think of entering the ministry. Better for himself, the church, and the world, that he abide in some other calling. The gospel ministry has been greatly reproached by admitting unsuitable men into it. Many of them might have been useful in other stations, but they should not have become ministers.

4. The judgment of experienced ministers, and other Christians, must be consulted. Rarely, if ever, should one go forward in this work without their concurrence.

5. By a diligent, prayerful study of the subject, the individual should obtain a settled conviction, that it is his *special duty* to consecrate his life to the ministry, and that *he can take no other course with a clear conscience.* In view of the whole matter, he must feel like Paul, that a dispensation of the gospel is committed to him—that necessity is laid upon him, and woe is unto him if he preach not the gospel. 1 Cor. ix. 16, 17. When one comes to this place, he should not, on any account, be disobedient. He should engage in it cheerfully as a desirable work.

On this important subject, we present extracts from an article on the Special Call to the Ministry, by *Prof. J. Fullonton* :

“ By the speciality of the ministerial call, we mean an indication of the Divine will, wrought in the mind, not like that which determines the choice between two secular professions, nor yet like that which determines to the general Christian his sphere even of religious activity. Howard was moved to exemplify his religion by ministering to the temporal and spiritual wants of imprisoned criminals. Wilberforce his, by untiring and self-sacrificing efforts to break up the infamous slave trade, and to remove its concomitant evils. The Sabbath school teacher his, by imparting religious instruction to the youth, and others theirs, in a thousand different ways. Now, all these enterprises are Christian in their character and results, and hence, have the Divine approval, yet to them there is not a call like that to the ministry. This latter is specific, and characteristically differs from each and every one of them.

If the above statements be true, then many constructions put upon the ministerial call must be defective, if not, indeed, false, and as the negative view of the subject is under consideration, it may be well to consider some of these constructions, with a view to point out and expose their fallacy.

I. A desire to do good and to glorify God cannot be a call to the ministry. The view here presented amounts to this: A young man, in taking a survey of the church in its destitution and wants, and of the world in its moral desolation and wretchedness, feels prompted by a desire to help the church, and to aid in the redemption of the world, to assume the functions and prerogatives of a minister of Christ. But such a desire is common to all Christians, so that it does not constitute even a distinctive sign of a call, though it may be of piety.

II. An impression of the greatest amount of usefulness does not constitute a call. Many can give no other reason for entering the ministry than a conviction that they can be more useful in it than in any other profession or employment. It is not difficult to conceive that ‘to desire to be a bishop is to desire

a good work,' and that a true minister is, of all men, the most useful; but how a modest man, and especially a humble Christian, can conclude that *he* himself can effect the most good in such a calling, without special grounds of assurance, is a matter not so clear. A conviction that such is the will of God, in some way emphatically expressed, could, it would seem, alone lead to this conclusion. To conclude, then, that a man is called to the work, because he has an impression of being eminently useful in it, is to invert the natural order of things, inasmuch as he can be useful in it only, at least mainly, because he is called. If it be asked whether fitness may not serve as a call, we answer, without the call there can be no fitness. There are other and varied qualifications, but all subordinate to this, never to be taken in its stead, though they may be regarded as its tests. With all the solemnity and earnestness the importance of the subject warrants, we deprecate the idea of a young man's balancing his talents and tastes with a view to adaptedness to the various professions, and coolly concluding that he is best fitted for the ministry, and can be most useful in it. We would not be understood as discarding reason in the matter, but would insist that it shall be held subservient to higher authority, which is the voice of God in man, a point which we shall presently reach.

III. The authority imparted by the church or its accredited ministry is not a sufficient call to the work. That the office of the ministry is of Divine appointment, none, perhaps, will deny; but that the assumption of it by whosoever will, or an appointment to it without special Divine direction, receives thereby the Divine sanction, can by no means be affirmed. If this were so, then the civil ruler is the minister of God in the same sense, and to the same extent, as the preacher of the cross. But this is far from the representation of the matter in the New Testament.

We conclude, then, that an essential call to the ministry consists in a state of mind, or disposition towards it, which may be denominated 'desire,' induced by the Holy Spirit, and confirmed by Divine Providence. Not a general, or ordinary desire, but

a want and tendency of mind which nothing but this work can meet. Not a desire for its accidents and concomitants, but for the work itself. Not for the social position it confers, nor yet for 'the occasions which it offers for the exercise of talents with which we may think ourselves endowed,' but for the order of being it involves, God's ambassador, his messenger of grace, his medium of communication with man. We are painfully conscious of the feebleness and poverty of language in attempting to express the conception of this inward summoning of the soul to the work in question, though to our own consciousness it seems clear and well defined. And this is not strange, nor is it to be urged as an argument against the fact, since it is the operation of the Spirit which, as in conversion, 'bloweth where it listeth.' With such convictions, however real, though not easily explained, the soul cries out, 'Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.' There may be a consciousness of want of ability and qualifications, yet the spirit yearns for this work with a yearning it cannot help. From every human view there may arise obstacles to success and usefulness, still there rings through all the chambers of the soul the imperative voice of God, 'Son of man, I have made thee a watchman.'"

The position is sustained by reference to such passages as the following :

Acts xiii. 2: "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them."

Acts xx. 28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers."

Also, by these considerations, treated at length, viz. :

1. The work itself is special.
2. What is here contended for is true in other like cases, [the prophetic office, and the priesthood.]
3. This method is best adapted to secure a true and efficient ministry."*

* Freewill Baptist Quarterly, Vol. VI., Art. II.

PARITY OF MINISTERS.

A great question has long divided Christendom respecting the *parity* of ministers. Are there different grades of authority in the Christian ministry, or do all possess equal rights? On this point, it should be observed, that the Scriptures must be made the ultimate source of appeal. Human authorities of every sort, are fallible, and hence not decisive. The testimony of the fathers is so conflicting, so uncertain as to its source—many of their writings having been corrupted—that it can aid us very little in the decision of this question. As was remarked by Milton: “Whatever time, or the heedless hand of blind chance, hath drawn down from of old to this present, in her huge drag net, whether fish, or sea-weed, shells or shrubs, unpicked, unchosen, those are the fathers.” Ch. Spect., March, 1834, p. 3.

Nor is this a matter of mere prudential regulation, which we may dispose of, or change at pleasure. The Christian ministry is of Divine appointment. The rules of its constitution are laid down in the gospel, and from them we are not at liberty to depart. Whatever God has prescribed on this subject is binding, and nought else is. A departure from this principle has been productive of the most pernicious effects. To the law and the testimony.

Episcopalians contend for three orders of church officers, viz., bishops, elders, or presbyters (termed by them *priests*), and deacons. Respecting the last, i. e., deacons, there has not been so much controversy. That this office was held in the apostolical churches, is evident from such passages as 1 Tim. iii. 8—10. An account of its origin is generally supposed to be given, Acts vi. 1—6; from which it appears that the duty of deacons pertained chiefly to the temporal affairs of the churches. In some instances deacons became ministers; so Philip; but there is no evidence that deacons, as such, were an order of ministers. To assist ministers, in providing for the poor, in the general pecuniary matters of the church, in social meetings, &c., they are clearly needed. It appears from Acts vi., that they were ordained.

We will now examine the principal arguments against the parity of ministers.

1. The apostles were a distinct and higher order of ministers. We admit, the apostles were a distinct class of ministers. But to authorize prelacy by this argument, it must not only be shown that they were a distinct order; but also that they had the sole power of ordaining ministers and disciplining the churches, and that these prerogatives were to be perpetuated in their successors. Now, there is no sufficient evidence that such was the design of the apostolic office. In the Scriptural account of the appointment of the apostles, and of the minute instructions given them, not a word is said of their having the exclusive power of ordination and discipline. Nor is there any such intimation in the sacred writings. On the other hand, we are taught that their distinguishing characteristic consisted in their being *witnesses* of Christ. "And ye are witnesses of these things." Luke xxiv. 48. When an apostle was to be elected in place of Judas, the object is very definitely stated: "Wherefore, of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Acts i. 21, 22. See also Acts ii. 32; v. 32; x. 39—41. Paul claimed the same as an evidence of his apostleship. "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2. We see from these passages that the distinguishing characteristic of the apostles was that they were *personal witnesses* of Christ. Of course, this office is not perpetuated.

Nor did the apostles exercise the exclusive prerogatives claimed for them. *Ordination* was performed not by apostles, but by elders or presbyters. 1 Tim. iv. 14; Acts xiii. 1—3. Church government and discipline were in the hands of the churches. Matt. xviii. 15—18. That the apostles had the gift of inspiration and of working miracles avails nothing to prelacy; for surely those powers do not pertain to their "successors."

2. But it is argued that we find an apostolical succession actually recognized in the Scriptures. It is asserted that mention is made of several other apostles besides the twelve and Paul. As Andronicus and Junia, Rom. xvi. 7, Sylvanus, Timothy and Titus. It will be sufficient to examine the part of the argument relating to Timothy and Titus. The rest does not need a serious refutation. Respecting Timothy, we observe, he is nowhere called an apostle in Scripture. 1 Thess. ii. 6, either denotes Paul himself, as the plural is often used for the singular, or he is speaking in the name of the apostles. In other passages, Timothy is spoken of in a manner which indicates that he was not an apostle. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother. 2 Cor. i. 1; Col. i. 1. Besides, if he was an apostle, he received ordination from the elders or presbytery, 1 Tim. iv. 14, though Paul was one who laid hands on him. 2 Tim. i. 6. Episcopalians, then, must admit, either the validity of ordination by elders, or that Timothy was not an apostle.

So as regards Titus: he is nowhere called an apostle. Paul left him in the island of Crete for a season to labor in setting the churches in order, ordain elders, &c., but there is no evidence that he had any exclusive right of ordaining, or discipline in Crete or elsewhere; or that the office assigned him was any thing more than a temporary one created by an exigency. The angels of the churches, Rev. ii. 1; iii. 1, &c., have been claimed as prelates. But there is no evidence that they were more than elders, or at most, moderators of associations of elders. There is, then, no proof of apostolical succession in the New Testament.

3. The final appeal is to ecclesiastical history. But the New Testament is the only ecclesiastical history that has Divine authority. The practice of uninspired men cannot invalidate its claims. We admit that Episcopacy rose early in the church. But the same history that records its origin, shows it to have been a departure from the simplicity and purity of the gospel—an innovation of gradual growth, cherished by the pride and ambition of the worldly, and productive of most pernicious effects. Such history of it can give it little claim to the regard of evangelical Protestants.

Arguments in favor of the parity of ministers and against prelacy.

1. Christ conferred equal rights and prerogatives on all his ministers. He ever discouraged assumptions of superiority in his disciples, and taught them that they were all brethren and servants. Matt. xxiii. 8. In his final commission, to be in force to the end of the world, no distinction is recognized. Christ set up no spiritual hierarchy.

2. The ministers mentioned in the New Testament were equal. Bishops, presbyters and elders were all the same, and the terms denoting them are used synonymously in the Christian Scriptures. These facts, Episcopalians themselves admit. There is no evidence in the New Testament that one class of ministers was higher in authority than another class, as ministers. Paul and Barnabas were ordained, not by apostles or prelati- cal bishops, but by the ordinary ministers of the churches at Antioch. Acts xiii. 1—3. Timothy was ordained by presbyters or elders, 1 Tim. iv. 14. Decisions in matters of faith and practice were made by the apostles and elders with the whole church. Acts xv. 22. Also Matt. xviii. 15—18.

3. Prelacy and Episcopacy are corruptions gradually introduced, after the church had become greatly degenerate. No regular succession from the apostles has ever been fairly made out: if it could be, the succession must be traced through a thousand years of gross darkness and abomination under the Papal hierarchy, and end at last in the simplicity of the apostolical churches, wherein all the ministers were equal. We conceive, therefore, the evidence to be conclusive in favor of the equality of gospel ministers—such was the order established by Christ and the apostles, and which has never, by any proper authority, been changed.

LECTURE XXXVII.

MINISTERIAL QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES.

Essential Qualifications. Piety. Natural Ability. Education. Other Qualifications. Duties of Ministers. Self-Culture and Discipline. Preaching. Attendance upon Church Ordinances. Pastoral Duties. Responsibility of his Work.

In discussing the subject of ministerial qualifications, we will consider,

I. Some that are indispensable.

1. We mention first in this connection, *deep piety*. The business of the gospel minister is to deal in spiritual things. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14. Also, Ps. l. 16. How absurd it would be to set an illiterate man to teach the sciences, a blind man to describe colors, a deaf man to instruct in music. How much greater the absurdity of committing the interests of immortal souls to one who is not in the way of life himself—who has no practical acquaintance with Divine things, nor love for the law of God. This would be truly putting the blind to lead the blind. Religion has already suffered immeasurably from such folly. The piety requisite must be real, pervading, consistent, fervent. A single moral obliquity, or besetment, may mar the whole character. We do not mean that

the minister must be absolutely perfect, or infallible ; but a decided Christian.

2. He must have *natural ability* suited to the duties of a minister. It is not the duty of all Christians to become ministers. There are natural obstacles in the way of some, which grace itself would never enable them to surmount. It is so difficult for some to learn, or to communicate, that they should never think of entering the ministry. This natural incapacity is one of the strongest possible proofs that God does not call them. He uses appropriate means in dealing with moral beings. There are several classes of men whom, it would be easy to show, God never calls to the ministry. Paul says, a bishop must be "apt to teach." One must have a natural capacity for any business he engages in, to be successful. Ministers are not an exception to this rule. As a general rule, in order for one justly to contemplate the ministry as his field of labor, he should have a good faculty to learn from nature, from books, from men ; and to apply the knowledge he acquires to practical purposes. Hence it is obvious, that one may be a skilful farmer, mechanic, merchant, or musician, who could never be a successful minister. Piety is not sufficient, nor sincerity. These, with other necessary qualities, may render a man highly useful in a private sphere, who, as a minister, would only be an incumbrance.

3. He must have *an education requisite for the work*. All men are educated in a degree. Observation, experience, social intercourse, to say nothing of books and schools, do much to develop the natural powers. Most men in the common pursuits of life do become prepared for the sphere in which they move. They deem a careful and thorough preparation indispensable. A farmer, who should suffer his sons to grow up in idleness, could never expect them to make good farmers. The mechanic and the merchant have to pass through a long apprenticeship. The school teacher, the physician, the lawyer, the statesman, unless he depend on imposition and quackery, regards a thorough discipline and training preparatory to his particular profession, as a

matter of course. And is the Christian ministry an exception to all this ?

It may be said, that the Holy Spirit qualifies men for the sacred office. True, but he does it by blessing them in the use of appropriate means. He does not do it at the present day by miracle, or special inspiration. We allow he must bless us, he must sanctify the heart and the attainments ; else all our efforts will be of little avail. He gives no encouragement to wilful ignorance, imbecility, slothfulness. Men in all ages have become useful by employing consistent means. The patriarchs, prophets, apostles, reformers, all possessed extensive knowledge, sanctified by deep piety ; and they would not have accomplished what they did without it. It is justly considered an outrage for an ignoramus to set up for a school teacher or physician. And is quackery in the gospel any less dangerous or pernicious ? Let all history decide. Because special Divine influences are essential for the qualification of a minister, this does not in the least supercede the necessity of natural endowments and acquirements. A minister is a man, he has to deal with men, and if he would do them good, he must deal with them on rational principles. It is as much presumption to depend on God without using appropriate means on our part, as to depend on means without seeking the Divine favor. Attempts have been made a thousand times to divorce gifts and grace : but always with fatal results. Just in the degree that either is neglected, there must be loss.

It is impossible to fix a standard of attainments for all : since men so greatly differ, and their circumstances differ. Each one should be qualified for the sphere in which he is to move. A man may be prepared to minister to fifty people, or three hundred, or a thousand. The same individual, according to his abilities and attainments, may meet the wants of either number. In deciding, therefore, upon the degree of attainments to be sought, one must have regard to his natural capacity, health, pecuniary circumstances, age, and especially his prospective sphere

of labor. He should have enlarged, liberal aims, and make every proper exertion to fit himself for the widest sphere of usefulness : and he may be pretty well assured that he will fill as important a station as he is qualified to fill.

II. There are other qualifications not directly included in those above noticed, though more or less implied in them. Eminence in these is desirable, though not always essential. Among these we may enumerate :

1. *Genius*—an inventive, original faculty—a power of adaptation to circumstances, of making the most of every help.

2. *Patience*—in research, and self-culture, and efforts to do good, as well as in sustaining the trials incident to a minister's life.

3. *Perseverance*. Many fail from lack of it. The minister should never be weary in well doing—never discouraged.

4. *A vivid conception*—this is a great help to style and manner.

5. *Deep feeling*. A cold, phlegmatic temperament is a great obstacle to usefulness. One must be interested himself, if he would interest others.

6. *Diligence*. The minister has much to do. He must be active and energetic ; he must love his work.

7. *Fondness for order*. Much may be gained by being systematic and regular.

8. Kindness, both of heart and manner.

9. Hospitality.

10. Sobriety.

11. Cheerfulness.

12. Good manners.

13. Common sense.

The list might be extended and enlarged under each head, but a bare mention here must suffice.

We pass to notice some duties of ministers :

1. *Self-culture and discipline*. The mind never remains long stationary. It is either growing better or worse. A minister should be improving in every respect. He must grow in grace daily, be ever overcoming, pressing on in spiritual attain-

ments. It is not enough that he labors for the good of others. He must attend to the state of his own heart. He must himself be a consistent Christian. So with intellectual and other attainments. He must not depend on his general duties to furnish him sufficient culture. He should daily make direct efforts for his own personal improvement. He must study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. Many, by relying on their past attainments, or upon the common routine of labor for the development of their powers, and furnishing their minds, make a great mistake. To be a growing man, and successful minister, one needs to spend a large portion of his time in private study and devotion. In this way only can he be expected to bring "beaten oil" into the sanctuary.

Neglect of self-culture is one of the greatest faults of ministers. The manner in which some spend their time, and conduct themselves in private, is absolutely shameful. In numerous instances, however, much is to be ascribed to want of light and instruction. Many do not know how to study. The duty cannot be too strongly urged upon every one to acquire right habits of study and improvement; to be a diligent student of books, of men, of nature, as long as he lives. He should have his systematic courses of private study, upon which to *task* his energies. He should make thorough preparation for every public duty. It is a shame to be perpetually making apologies. To engage in doing what we are consciously unprepared for, is rarely our duty. What is worth doing at all, is worth doing well. Let one pursue the right course, and he will, in all ordinary circumstances, find himself prepared for the discharge of duty. Ministerial conferences, and other associations for mutual improvement, are great helps, and ought never to be neglected.

It follows from what has been said, that it is not the duty of ministers to embarrass themselves with worldly callings. Under the legal dispensation the priests were exempt from military duty, they held no civil office, they had no occupation, trade, or profession, but their sacred calling. The same principles were

established under the gospel. Christ required his apostles to forsake all, and follow him: he did not allow them to engage in any secular business to furnish means for their own support. He *ordained* that those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, not by worldly avocations. If the apostles sometimes labored with their hands for a livelihood, it was a special emergency, similar to one which made Paul advise certain disciples not to marry. For ministers to leave the worship of God and serve tables, is no more *meet* in the sight of God, than is celibacy. Extraordinary circumstances may justify either. The minister's responsibilities in the sacred office are such as to demand his whole time and energies, nor can he fail to devote himself to his great work, without the existence, somewhere, of great fault.

2. Another ministerial duty is that of *preaching the gospel*. This is his great and most specific work as a minister. The Scriptures give great prominence to this duty. The passages which relate to it are too numerous to be mentioned. In periods of great degeneracy in the church, preaching has been almost wholly abandoned. So it was for centuries during the dark ages. The priests were incompetent, and did not attempt to preach. They were occupied with frivolities and mummeries. But as learning and religion revived, preaching was again demanded.

Experience proves that efficient preaching is essential to the maintenance of gospel institutions. The minister should feel that his great duty is to "preach the word, to be instant in season, out of season; to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." 2 Tim. iv. 2. It is not the place here to discuss at length the subject of preaching, which belongs to the department of homiletics; but it must be insisted on as of special importance. The minister, it is true, has other responsibilities, which are not to be lightly esteemed; but they are not such as need interfere with a faithful performance of this duty. To this he is to bend his energies; here, mainly, he is to lay out his strength. Here he can labor to the best advantage, ac-

comply the most in the shortest time. In this country, particularly, the pulpit has great power, and he who would meet the reasonable expectations of the people, must neglect no opportunity of preparation for, and improvement in, pulpit duties.

3. *Attendance upon the ordinances of the church.* No church can prosper where these are not regularly and efficiently administered. They should not be a mere form, but have life and power. And much, in this respect, depends upon the manner in which they are conducted. The minister has much to do, also, in promoting the interest of the social meetings, maintaining strict discipline, enlisting the church in Sabbath schools, missionary, temperance, and other benevolent and reformatory measures. Each church should be heartily engaged in all the great moral causes; and much here depends upon the minister.

4. The minister is to be a *faithful pastor*. He should be personally and even intimately acquainted with all the people of his charge. Acts xx. 28. He should make a personal application of gospel truth to every individual in private. This will, of course, require much labor; but if heartily performed, it will afford much pleasure, and will greatly contribute to the pastor's usefulness as a preacher. It is not the place now to dwell minutely on this topic.

In review of the whole subject, we may well exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Without Divine aid, these responsibilities would be too much for man. Still, we are not to shrink from the undertaking. We are to do our duty faithfully, relying upon the grace of God. Christ has promised to be with his devoted servants to the end of the world, and great will be their reward. Those who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars, forever and ever.

LECTURE XXXVIII.

ON PRAYER.

Definition. Prayer is Appropriate. Examples of Prayer. It is Enjoined in Scripture. Objections Considered. Moral Influence of Prayer. The Divine Promises. Kinds of Prayer. Ejaculatory. Secret. At Meals. In the Family. In Public Worship. Requisites of Prayer. Answers to Prayer.

Some have defined prayer to be the "desire of the heart." This is doubtless essential to its nature, but not a full definition. Simple desire is not prayer. One may desire a thing without praying for it. Prayer is an expressing or offering up of desire. As a Christian duty, it may be thus defined: A sincere offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ.

The duty of prayer may be urged from three considerations:

1. It is *appropriate*. We are needy and dependent. This we should feel and acknowledge. It is *natural* for a child to ask for what it wants; men make requests of each other in every variety of circumstance. How reasonable, then, that we make request to God for blessings which he only can bestow.

2. From the example of the holy. As early as the third generation from Adam, we have this record: "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." Gen. iv. 26. The patriarchs were eminently men of prayer. They prayed much, and with great fervency. The same is true of the prophets and apostles,

Christ often prayed, and on special occasions, as before the ordination of the twelve apostles, and before his crucifixion, he spent whole nights in prayer. If Christ needed to pray, surely we do. The most devoted and useful Christians and ministers since Christ, have ever been praying men. So were Whitefield, Payson, and many others.

3. This duty is expressly enjoined in Scripture. 1 Thess. v. 17: "Pray without ceasing." Phil. iv. 6. "In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God." 1 Tim. ii. 8: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere." Numerous other similar passages might be cited.

Several objections will now be noticed :

1. It is said, the unregenerate ought not to pray, and Prov. xv. 8; xxviii. 9, are quoted; but these passages condemn hypocritical, not sincere, prayer. God requires "all men," "every where," to pray. Any man that feels his needs can pray, and ought to pray. The prayer of the ruler, "I believe, Lord, help my unbelief," and that of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner," were not condemned, but approved of God.

2.- Another objection relates to the Divine purposes. But those are conditional, and are never presented in Scripture as an obstacle to prayer. On the contrary, we are taught to pray, to fill our mouths with "arguments," to bring forth our "strong reasons," to importune, and persevere. With the encouragements God has given us, the sneers of skeptics should have little regard.

3. It has been objected that, as God is infinitely wise and good, he will bestow all needed blessings, whether we pray or not. This objection overlooks the fact that God has made prayer the condition of receiving, and has promised to answer prayer. "Ask and ye shall receive." God may bestow blessings in answer to prayer, which, without it, he could not consistently grant.

4. The immutability of God. This, and indeed all the other objections, might as well be urged against the use of any means

by man. Why should the farmer plough and plant? Why does the student study? Because these are means to ends. So is prayer. God, as a Moral Governor, adapts his administration to the circumstances of moral agents. God is immutable, but man is not. The more enlightened and spiritual any one is, the less is he influenced by these and similar objections.

The *moral influence* of prayer upon ourselves, is very great. It induces in us feelings of dependence and humility, leads to self-examination, watchfulness, sobriety, stability, and energy. While these benefits are to be recognized as having great value, still they do not constitute the chief motives to the performance of this duty.

The motive of highest encouragement, is the promise of God that he will hear and answer prayer. But for this assurance prayer would lose its efficacy. To make requests to others merely to affect ourselves, would be absurd. But God has promised to bestow blessings in answer to prayer—blessings which will not be bestowed without prayer.

We are required to pray without ceasing, i. e., ever maintain a devotional spirit, be ready to pray at any time. According to the various circumstances under which prayer is offered, it is distinguished by appropriate terms.

1. Ejaculatory prayer—the putting forth of holy emotions in prayer on numerous occasions through the day. It is a spontaneous exercise of the devout heart.

2. Secret prayer. We need seasons of stated recurrence, when, retiring from the busy scenes of life, we may have communion with our own hearts and with God in our closet. Christ expressly enjoined it. Matt. vi. 6.

3. Prayer at meals. The apostle enjoins that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all in the name of Christ, with thanksgiving. As every gift is from God, it is appropriate that we ask his blessing on our daily food.

4. Family prayer. The vengeance of God is denounced on the “families that call not on his name.” Jer. x. 25. Joshua declared, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

Josh. xxiv. 15. The Lord's prayer is strikingly adapted to families. The family relation is such as clearly to indicate this duty. Its salutary influence has long been known.

5. Public prayer. Here the minister prays in behalf of the people and should put up petitions in which all can appropriately join. Prayer is an essential part of public worship.

Several requisites of prayer may here be mentioned :

1. A deep conviction of our needs. Without it our prayers will be heartless and formal. To obtain this conviction, we must study ourselves and the Scriptures.

2. We must feel our dependence on God. To acknowledge this in words is not enough. Especially must we feel our dependence on him for spiritual blessings.

3. *Faith* is an indispensable requisite. Heb. xi. 6 : James i. 6 : "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." God has made many great and precious promises, suited to the wants of all. These promises we are to plead before him in faith. Mark xi. 24 : "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

4. Another requisite is a pure motive. Says the Psalmist, Ps. lxvi. 18 : "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Says an apostle, James iv. 3 : "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." No oblation can be acceptable which is the offspring of hypocrisy and corruption. Unless one renounces sin, his prayer will not be heard.

5. Simplicity. The object of prayer is not to compliment God or man, nor to exalt self ; but to pour out our sincere desires for the blessings we need. All pompous display and ceremony should, therefore, be avoided : and a spirit of childlike humility and earnestness cherished.

6. Prayer should be direct and specific. Indefiniteness is to be avoided here. Many burden their prayers with much irrelevant matter. In prayer we should always have some distinct object in view, and not allow ourselves to fall into a formal round,

or into vain repetition. It is wrong to come before God with no particular request. Almost every prayer recorded in Scripture is specific.

7. Prayer should be appropriate to the occasion. Much of the interest of the exercise depends on this. Ejaculatory prayer should be suited to the various exigencies which arise. Secret prayer should respect our wants as individuals. Family prayer should be adapted to the condition of the family—to the circumstances of all the members. Public prayer should be an expression of the wants of the people at large. Not only should the different kinds of prayer be appropriate as such, but there should be appropriateness in each prayer to the particular occasion. Our circumstances are perpetually changing, and our petitions should vary accordingly. We should ask for the blessings most needed at the time. Then there will be variety and interest.

8. There should be perseverance in prayer. Earnest, persevering labor is made the condition of receiving almost every good thing. The Scriptural examples of importunity in prayer are numerous. Jacob wrestled all night in prayer, before he prevailed. Elijah prayed seven times on Mount Carmel, before an answer was given in the descent of rain. The Saviour agonized in prayer until he sweat as it were great drops of blood; and also by express precept taught the need of importunity. Luke xviii. 1, *et. seq.* We are not to seek for great excitement, or to work ourselves into any particular frame; but we should be in earnest, and be resolved in the strength of God, not to remit our exertions until the blessing is obtained. Confession and thanksgiving are suitable accompaniments of prayer. The exercise will of course vary in length. It should never be prolonged to tediousness; for it is a well established maxim, that where weariness begins, devotion ends.

In respect to *answers* of prayer, we have this rule. 1 John v. 14: "If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." It would be wrong for us to ask anything which we know to be opposed to the will of God. He always hears right prayer; not that the answer is in all cases in direct ac-

cordance with the supplication ; but, in infinite wisdom and goodness, according to our needs. Such should ever be the spirit of our petitions : “ Not my will, but thine be done.”

With regard to *spiritual* blessings, however, we may have greater confidence of receiving the very things for which we pray ; and, in all instances, the answer will be the best for us.

We should also supplicate blessings for others, and expect to be answered ; not so as to interfere with their moral agency, but as will be in accordance with it. James v. 16 : “ The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” We cannot doubt but great blessings have thus been bestowed in answer to prayer. Nor is there any special difficulty in understanding this subject by those who have just views of God’s moral government. Those who adopt theories in respect to decrees and predestination which make the universe a grand puppet show, must frame some mechanical scheme to explain the consistency of answers to prayer. But in view of the character and moral government of God, there is no such difficulty. We are required to pray for rulers and for all in authority. We are bound, also, to act in consistency with our prayers, else they will be of no avail.

LECTURE XXXIX.

THE SABBATH.

Sabbath Instituted in Eden. Proof. Made for all Men. Objections Considered. Law of the Sabbath. Change of the Sabbath. Perversions of the Institution. How it is to be Observed. Practical Directions. Benefits of the Sabbath.

The first question respecting the Sabbath relates to the time of its institution. The first mention of it in the Bible is in connection with the account of the creation. Gen. ii. 2, 3. "On the seventh day, God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." This would seem to settle the question that the Sabbath was instituted at the beginning.

Some, however, contend that this account is given by anticipation, and that the Sabbath was not, in fact, instituted until the delivery of the Jews from Egyptian bondage. The main argument for this position is, that we find no express mention made of keeping Sabbath in the interval between the creation and the departure from Egypt. But it would be very unsafe to conclude that the Sabbath, or any other institution, was not observed during a given interval, merely because it is not expressly mentioned. No particular instance of circumcision is recorded in Scripture from the settlement of the Jews in Canaan to the

circumcision of Christ, a period of about fifteen hundred years ; yet no one doubts that the rite was practiced throughout. When an institution is established by Divine authority, the presumption is, that it is observed by the godly, until it is repealed.

Besides, there are incidental allusions to the Sabbath in the period under consideration ; as, "at the end of days," Gen. iv. 3 ; "and he stayed yet other seven days," viii. 10, 12 ; "fulfil her work." xxix. 27. The first express mention of the Sabbath in the wilderness is that of a well known institution. Ex. xvi. The reason given in the fourth commandment for the observance of the Sabbath, relates to its institution at the creation. Ex. xx. 11. We learn, also, from the testimony of Philo, Homer, Hesiod, Josephus, Porphyry, and other ancient writers, that the division of time into weeks, and the observance of the seventh day were common to the nations of antiquity. They would not have adopted such a custom from the Jews. Whence, then, could it have been derived, but through tradition, from its original institution in the Garden of Eden ?

The conclusion is irresistible, that the Sabbath was Divinely instituted at the foundation of the world. This belief is confirmed by other evidence. A precept for the observance of the Sabbath is one of the ten commandments. Now, it is well known that the precepts of the Decalogue are not positive, but moral—their obligation rests on no enactment, but they were, from the beginning, naturally binding on all men. The moral law pertained not only to the Jews, but to all men in every age. The commandment for observance of the Sabbath being a part of this law, its universal and perpetual obligation follows, according to the declaration of Christ, Mark ii. 27 : "The Sabbath was made for man." As might be expected in a moral institution, the Sabbath is found to be suited to the wants of man, physically, intellectually, and morally. And even the brutes need it.

It is objected, that since all time is the Lord's, one portion is no more sacred than another. Is it not, when Jehovah has ordained the special consecration of a particular portion ? The objection also disregards the need that man has of a Sabbath.

We do not deny that some have perverted the institution; but this fact releases none from obligation to observe it according to the design of the Institutor.

Some have argued that Paul classes the Sabbath with the Jewish ritual, which was abolished by Christ. See Col. ii. 16; Rom. xiv. 5, 6. But there is no evidence that the apostle, in these passages, refers to the institution of the Sabbath, or, at least, that his language warrants their conclusion. The Jews had numerous laws and exactions respecting the Sabbath, which were a part of their own polity. These were abrogated by the gospel; but this did not affect the institution itself, which was obligatory long before the existence of the Jewish polity. To assert that the gospel repealed the fourth commandment, or any other part of the moral law, is contradictory of the clearest declarations both of Christ and the apostles. Matt. v. 17, 18; Rom. iii. 31.

The law of the Sabbath requires one day in seven, in regular recurrence, to be separated from common to sacred purposes. The spirit of the precept is that, after six days of labor, there should be one of sacred rest in regular succession, uniformly observed by mankind. Not that all men, in all latitudes and longitudes, by sea and land, in every circumstance, are required to keep the same exact portion of time; for this would be impossible. The law of the Sabbath is one that can be obeyed in practice. It must be observed according to the original design. No man, community, or nation, has the right to change the proportion of time, as the French sought to do by substituting the Decade for the Sabbath; nor can they keep any day they please. Such procedure would at once destroy the institution.

The *day of the week* kept as Sabbath is not, indeed, essential to the institution. The day may be changed, *by proper authority*, without affecting the institution, as may be inferred from its nature, and from the language of the fourth commandment. No one, however, but God, can change the day. The Lord

of the Sabbath can unquestionably change the day of its observance.

It is generally believed that the seventh day of the week was, by Divine appointment, observed as the Sabbath, from the creation of the world to the crucifixion of Christ. It is also very generally believed, that under the gospel, the time is changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. The principal grounds of this belief are the following :

1. Under the former dispensation, the Sabbath was commemorative of the work of creation. Ex. xx. 8—11 : “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work : But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work. . . . For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” Under the gospel it is more appropriately commemorative of the resurrection of Christ, the crowning act in the work of redemption. Ps. cxviii. 22—24 : “The stone which the builders refused is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord’s doing ; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made : we will rejoice and be glad in it.” Also Isa. lxxv. 17, 18. The resurrection of Christ was on the first day of the week. Mark xvi. 1, 2 : “And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.” Also Luke xxiv. 1, &c.

2. Christ not only rose the first day of the week, but a week afterwards met his disciples again, while assembled for worship, and also at Pentecost, seven weeks from his resurrection. John xx. 26 ; Acts ii. 1.

3. The apostles met for worship on the first day of the week, administered the sacrament, and made charitable collections. Acts xx. 7 : “And upon the first day of the week when the

disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them." 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2: "Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week," &c. It was termed by them the Lord's day. Rev. i. 10: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."

4. The primitive Christians universally observed the first day of the week as the Sabbath, as appears from the testimony of Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and others.

5. God has sanctioned the change by the blessings he has in every age bestowed upon the observance of the Christian Sabbath.

The Sabbath, then, is still in full force, and has never been essentially changed. Christians still observe the Sabbath,—the Sabbath of the Bible—the Sabbath of the fourth commandment—the Sabbath instituted at the beginning, made of universal and perpetual obligation, and appointed as an expressive type of the Rest that remains to the people of God.

Another question of some practical importance is, when does the Sabbath commence? Some say, at sunset on Saturday, according to the ancient mode of reckoning. "The evening and the morning were the first day," "second day," &c. But, under the Christian dispensation, it seems better to conform to the modern mode of reckoning, beginning at midnight. The Saviour evidently did not rise before midnight, since it was the third day from his crucifixion on Friday; though very early, before daylight. John xx. 1.

While, then, Sunday evening is to be regarded as a part of the Sabbath, Saturday evening may well be considered as the *preparation for* the Sabbath. The business of the week should be so arranged, as to leave us, in a good measure, disencumbered from worldly cares Saturday evening, thus allowing some reflection upon the closing week, and anticipation of the approaching Sabbath. When such precaution is not taken, a great part of the benefit of the institution is apt to be lost.

The Sabbath has been often perverted :

1. The Pharisees burdened it with their traditions. The like has frequently been done since.

2. Some by interpreting the *rest* of the Sabbath improperly, have made it synonymous with indolence and sloth.

3. In many countries it is regarded too much as a festival or holiday.

The Scriptural requirement clearly is, that the entire day be separated from secular to sacred purposes. We should as faithfully appropriate the Sabbath to the object of spiritual improvement, as we do the other six days to the ordinary affairs of life. The fact that we are to devote all our time, and do all things to the glory of God, does not supercede the necessity of this institution. In Isa. lviii. 13, it is enjoined upon us that we "turn away our foot from the Sabbath, from doing our pleasure on that holy day; and call the Sabbath a Delight, the Holy of the Lord, Honorable; and honor him, not doing our own ways, nor finding our own pleasure, nor speaking our own words." From this and other passages we may learn:

1. The impropriety of attending to worldly business on the Sabbath, except as necessity requires. Not only so, but our thoughts, also, should be withdrawn from worldly business.

2. Worldly sports and amusements are inconsistent with the Sabbath. This rule extends to conversation, reading, and the thoughts, as well as to outward acts.

3. While it is right to perform works of necessity and mercy on the Sabbath, we should govern ourselves in deciding what are such works by conscientious principles, the study of the Bible, the example of devoted Christians, the consciences of others, and regard to our own spiritual advancement. We should not violate the dictates of an enlightened conscience either in ourselves or others. Consider the rule of the apostle: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat none." It is a bad omen when one feels the Sabbath to be a restraint, and is disposed to lower its sanctions to the standard of the worldly. The Sabbath is no bondage to the living Christian, nor are its duties tasks, nor its prohibitions restraints, except to a part in us prone to evil, and which needs to be crucified.

4. Devotional duties, both public and private, belong to the Sabbath. Nothing can release us from the latter; nor from the former, but such circumstances as would release us from the claims of our daily business.

5. It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day. The preaching of the gospel, and other ordinances of the church, Sabbath schools, meetings for the promotion of Temperance, Anti-slavery, Peace, and similar moral objects, are appropriate to it. But visiting, travelling, &c., unless from *necessity*, are forbidden.

6. The Sabbath is equally binding on all. Mariners on the ocean, and physicians, may keep the Sabbath, according to the spirit of the requirement, as well as others, and should govern themselves by the same principles. So, also, with ministers and theological students. They should make the same distinction between the Sabbath and other days, that the farmer or mechanic does. They need it equally. Their studies during the week, being, in a great degree, scientific and abstract, affect the mind and heart differently from those duties which pertain to the Sabbath. Hence, when the Sabbath comes, those pursuits should be laid aside, and they should apply themselves exclusively to the devotional and other practical duties of their calling. Preaching is a duty belonging to the Sabbath, but preparation for it belongs to the week. The pen, the dictionary, and the scientific treatise are to be laid aside on the Lord's day, equally with the hoe, the axe, and the plane. They should have devotional reading for the Sabbath. Conversation should be to godly edifying. Much time should be spent in secret prayer and meditation. Thus only can the spirituality of ministers and students be maintained.

The *benefits* of the Sabbath are numerous and great. They are strikingly seen in the comparison of those nations that have a Sabbath with those that have none; and between Sabbath keeping and Sabbath breaking communities.

1. The Sabbath is a great preventive of crime and vice. Sabbath breaking leads to almost every other sin. Our penitentiaries are full of Sabbath breakers.

2. It is an important source of physical improvement. Man and beast naturally need it in this point of view.

3. Its tendency is to improve the manners. By observance of the Sabbath, the most rude and debased are greatly cultivated.

4. It is a valuable source of intellectual improvement. A great amount of knowledge is acquired by attendance upon the sanctuary and other duties of the day.

5. Its highest advantage is as a source of moral and spiritual improvement. It is suited, in this respect, also, to the wants of all. Without it, religion would not subsist in the world.

It is not strange that such an institution should find bitter enemies in the wicked. It has been an object of special virulence to infidels and the immoral of all ages. It is intimately connected with the best interests of man. Those, therefore, who desire the spread of the gospel, the stability of our religious institutions, and the general welfare of society, should use every proper means to promote the right observance of the Sabbath, and increase the interest and profit of the services appropriate to it. Thus shall we prepare for the eternal Sabbath of heaven.

LECTURE XL.

SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

Baptism a Positive Institution. Literally Binding. Scriptural Proof. Baptismal Regeneration. Subjects of Baptism are Gospel Believers. Arguments for Infant Baptism Discussed. Origin of Infant Baptism. Not of Scriptural Authority.

Baptism is a *positive* institution. It is not naturally binding, like the moral duties, but derives all its authority from positive enactment. We are to learn from the Scriptures, therefore, the law of baptism, and whatever is essential to the ordinance.

The literal observance of this ordinance has been rejected by several classes of men. The Friends or Quakers regard it as figurative and spiritual merely. In support of their position, they quote Heb. ix. 10, which speaks of "carnal ordinances." But this passage relates only to Jewish ceremonials, not to Christian baptism, as appears from the context. Also Matt. iii. 11; the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This does not, and never did, supercede water baptism, as is evident from the fact that the apostles administered water baptism, after the baptism of the Holy Ghost was enjoyed. Most of those who reject the Divinity and atonement of Christ, deny the Divine authority of baptism.

The law of baptism is given in the commission of Christ to his disciples, Matt. xxviii. 19: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the

Son, and of the Holy Ghost." They evidently understood this as requiring literal water baptism. When the convicted multitudes at Pentecost inquired, "What shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ." "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Acts ii. 37, 38, 41. "When they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women." Acts viii. 12.

At an early period, the doctrine became prevalent that baptism *regenerates*. The dogma of baptismal regeneration has prevailed extensively in the Catholic, Lutheran, and Episcopal church establishments. It is also held by the Campbellites. The chief passages used in its support are Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 5; Tit. iii. 5. But these passages prove no more than the *necessity* of the ordinance as a *symbol* of regeneration, and mode of professing it, not that baptism is regeneration. In the light of such passages, we readily allow that the ordinance is of universal obligation. If an individual should knowingly reject this, or any other Divine requirement, he could not be saved. In this sense it is essential to salvation. No more is indicated by the above passages.

The whole current of Scripture is opposed to the theory of baptismal regeneration. Therein, we are distinctly taught that regeneration is the *prerequisite* of baptism. John required candidates for baptism to exhibit fruits meet for repentance. So did Christ and the apostles on all occasions. Their language was, "Repent and be baptized;" "Believe and be baptized." We have no evidence from Scripture, that any were baptized, until they exhibited credible evidence of piety.

Baptism, then, is not regeneration, but its sign. It is a public profession of faith in Christ, and of being his spiritual children, on the part of those baptized. The renewed man has become dead to sin, buried with Christ, and raised to a new spiritual life. This profession the candidate makes in going forward in

this ordinance. Rom. vi. 2—4 ; Col. ii. 12, 13 ; John iii. 3—5, &c. Other ideas may be included, but the one here indicated is the most definite and prominent.

The Scriptural *subjects* of this ordinance are believers or Christians. Matt. xxviii. 19 : “ Go ye, therefore, and teach [Greek, MAKE DISCIPLES OR CHRISTIANS of] all nations.” Mark xvi. 16 : “ He that BELIEVETH and is baptized shall be saved.” Acts ii. 38 : “ REPENT and be baptized.” It is the duty, therefore, of all believers to be baptized. None but those who gave credible evidence of Christian character were, in the apostles’ times, admitted to the ordinance ; and there is no evidence in the New Testament that any true believers neglected it. The ordinance being *professional*, believers are the proper subjects.*

Many, while admitting that believers are proper subjects, hold that the infant children of believers, should also be baptized. They argue that baptism takes the place of circumcision, and should, therefore, like circumcision, be extended to infants. But the Scriptures nowhere teach that baptism is a substitute for circumcision. For some time, in the age of Christ and the apostles, baptism and circumcision were both practiced. The Saviour received both. In all the controversies on the perpetuity of circumcision in the apostolic churches, no one intimated that baptism was substituted in its place ; which, were it true, would have been conclusive to the point, and must have been urged. We admit that there is some analogy between baptism and circumcision, and this is all. Circumcision had much the same relation to the Jewish polity that baptism has to the Christian church. But the analogy itself is fatal to the argument. Circumcision was a prerequisite to the enjoyment of the privileges

* We are surprised to find Mr. Lee advocating the theory, that others, even among adults, besides the regenerate, are proper subjects. He says : “ All who embrace Christianity as a system of revealed religion, and entertain an honest purpose to live in it, are proper subjects of baptism, without reference to the question whether or not the Spirit has regenerated them, or whether or not they have obtained an evidence of their acceptance with God.” Lee’s Theology, p. 549.

In support of the position, he holds that the *faith* required in Mark xvi. 16, is not “justifying faith,” but “only a general belief in the sense of credence.” Ib. p. 550. To such extremes, and positions subversive of all spiritual religion, are men driven to furnish a consistent plea for infant baptism.

of the Jewish nation—including both the temporal and spiritual privileges; and, as the males were chiefly concerned with these prerogatives, a rite was chosen applicable to them only. Baptism is a requisite to the enjoyment of the privileges of the Christian church, and is hence a rite applicable to all proper subjects of church membership—both males and females. The privileges of the Jewish nation descended by inheritance; circumcision was therefore applied to infants. The duties and privileges of the Christian church pertain to none but those who have faith in Christ; hence baptism is applicable to believers only.

Another argument for infant baptism is derived from the example and language of Christ. Matt. xix. 13—15: “Then were brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.” But there is no evidence that Christ baptized these children. Nor does the passage assert that they were subjects of the kingdom of heaven. Its import is that such as are like them (*viz.*, in humility and docility) are subjects. Compare Matt. xviii. 1—3. How can those who hold the doctrine of native depravity allow that infants are subjects of the kingdom of heaven? Will any claim that infants are to be baptized because they *need* regeneration? On this ground, all sinners should be admitted to the ordinance. The passage in question relates to a custom of bringing children to distinguished personages to receive their blessing.

Another argument is derived from the mention of several households that were baptized; as that of Lydia, Acts xvi. 15, of the jailor, v. 33, of Stephanas, 1 Cor. i. 16. But it is a fatal objection to this argument, that we have express evidence that two of these three households were all believers. See Acts xvi. 34; 1 Cor. xvi. 15. And in the other case, *viz.*: of Lydia, a seller of purple, or milliner, on a business tour with those in her employment, the circumstances were such as to preclude

the belief that she had infants in her household. The household of Crispus were all believers, Acts xviii. 8 ; and so have many been since. Now it is a remarkable circumstance for an entire family to be pious ; yet the above *pious households* are the only ones mentioned in the New Testament as being baptized. The argument is against, rather than in favor of, the baptism of infants.

Acts ii. 39 : “The promise is unto you and your children.” The passage has no reference to baptism, nor to infants. It is a quotation of Joel ii. 28, of the blessings promised to the righteous and their posterity.

1 Cor. vii. 14 : “The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband ; else were your children unclean ; but now are they holy.” If this proves that infants may be baptized on the faith of their parents, it equally proves that an unbelieving husband may be baptized on the faith of his wife. The apostle is urging the sanctity of the marriage relation as subsisting after one of the parties has become a believer. The sanctification and holiness of which he here speaks is not moral, but legal, ceremonial. The passage says nothing of infant baptism, but in the view of eminent Pedobaptists contains an implication that the apostle knew nothing of the rite, else he would have urged the purity of infants on the ground of it.

Many able Pedobaptist writers admit that infant baptism is not enjoined or authorized by the Scriptures. Says *Dr. Knapp* : “There is no decisive example of this practice in the New Testament ; for it may be objected against those passages where the baptism of whole families is mentioned—viz., Acts x. 42, 48 ; xvi. 15, 33 ; 1 Cor. i. 16, that it is doubtful whether there were any children in those families, and if there were, whether they were then baptized. From the passage Matt. xxviii. 19, it does not necessarily follow that Christ commanded infant baptism ; nor does this follow any more from John, iii. 5, and Mark x. 14, 16. There is, therefore, no express command for infant baptism found in the New Testament ; as Morus (p. 215, s. 12) justly

concedes. Infant baptism has been often defended on very unsatisfactory *a priori* grounds—e. g. ; the necessity for it has been contended for, in order that children may obtain, by it, the faith which is necessary to salvation,” &c.*

Says *Caudrey* : “ We have not in Scripture either precept or example of children being baptized.” Says *Luther* : “ It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures, that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the apostles.” Says *Bp. Burnett* : “ There is no express precept or rule given in the New Testament for baptism of infants.”

The next appeal is to ecclesiastical history. Infant baptism prevailed very early—as early as the fourth century after Christ. How could it be introduced thus early, and without great controversy? We answer, just as the doctrines of baptismal regeneration, prayers for the dead, celibacy of the priests, veneration of relics, and other gross errors were introduced as early, and with no more controversy. It was a degenerate age, perversions and innovations abounded, numerous errors grew up gradually, and, as it were, imperceptibly. Infant baptism cannot be traced farther back than to within one hundred and fifty or two hundred years after Christ; and contemporaneous with its earliest mention, is the existence of infant communion at the Lord’s Supper, and the sentiment that baptism has a magical efficiency, and is essential to the salvation even of infants !†

* Knapp’s Ch. Theol., p. 494.

† It was common in Africa, in Cyprian’s time—i. e., in the third century—to give the sacramental elements even to children; and this custom was gradually introduced into other churches.” Knapp’s Theol. p. 503.

“ When, now, the position, *extra ecclesiam visibilem non dari salutem*, [without the visible church there can be no salvation,] with all its consequences, became more and more prevalent, especially after the time of Augustine, and in the Western church, they began to maintain the doctrine of the absolute necessity of baptism in order to salvation; and they gave out, that whoever is not baptized, and is not a member of the visible church, could not become partaker of eternal happiness. So Augustine had before judged, not only respecting the heathen, and the children of heathen parents, but also the children of Christian parents who die before baptism. He was followed by the schoolmen. After this time they began very much to hasten the baptism of children; and now for the first time, the so called *baptism of necessity* (administered when a child was thought in danger of dying) became common. It happened, also, not unfrequently, that the children of unchristian parents (e. g., of Jews) were forcibly baptized against their own and their parents’ will, on the ground that they were thus put into the

The existence of the practice is easily accounted for. First came the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and that baptism is essential to salvation; then infant baptism follows, of course. And this is the history of the rite, as given not only by impartial historians, but by many of the Pedobaptists themselves. *Tertullian*, A. D. 192, is the first writer who makes express mention of infant baptism. He opposes it, and for much the same reasons that Baptists do now; in such a way, also, as to show that it was then gradually coming into use. *Neander*, an able ecclesiastical historian, and himself a Pedobaptist, admits that infant baptism is not of apostolic origin, and was not practiced in the first ages after the apostles.* The testimony of history, therefore, is opposed to the Divine authority of infant baptism.

Some hold that the church has the power to modify existing rites, or introduce new ones; hence it could authorize infant baptism. This we cannot admit. Christ is the Head and sole Lawgiver of the church, and the Scriptures are our only authoritative rule of faith and practice.

Finally, we are told that infant baptism has long existed, has been sanctioned by many worthy men, and is a useful institution. Such arguments have very little weight. The utility of the rite may be fairly questioned. It is an important, if not an essential, element in all national church establishments. If, while of human origin, it has been made to *supercede* an ordinance of Divine appointment, its influence on the interests of spiritual religion can hardly be questioned. We believe it is the duty of Christian parents to consecrate their children to the Lord; but,

way of salvation; of this we find many examples in earlier times." *Ib.*, p. 492.

"In the old ecclesiastical writers we find many extravagant and unscriptural assertions respecting the effect of baptism, especially in the instructions which they gave to catechumens and new converts—e. g., in Gregory of Nazianzen, Cyril of Jerusalem, and even earlier, in Irenæus and Tertullian. . . . Christians began very early to attribute to baptism a magical efficacy, by which it produces its effect through its own inherent virtue, and independently of the use of the Word of God, and by which it acts, not only upon the soul, but upon the body also." Knapp's *Theol.* pp. 488, 9.

* *Neander's Church History.* Bib. Rep., April, 1834, pp. 273, 4. *Mosheim's Eccl. History.*

as respects having them baptized, it may well be asked, "Who hath required this at your hand?" We reject this rite as an innovation upon the order of the gospel. All believers are required to be baptized, and thereby *answer their own consciences*. 1 Pet. iii. 21. No rite of human origin can be substituted in place of a gospel ordinance.

A marked change of sentiment on this subject is taking place. Infant baptism is becoming more confined to national churches, and formalists. Evangelical Christians, of all denominations, are becoming more and more convinced of the evil tendency of the innovation, and of the importance of returning to the primitive rule of administering the ordinance only to gospel believers.

LECTURE XLI.

MODE OF BAPTISM.

The Real Question at Issue. Evasions. Christian Baptism a Positive Institution. Meaning of Baptizo, the Original Term for Baptism. Ancient Classical Usage. Its Use in the Septuagint and Apocrypha. Various Uses in the New Testament. Its Import in the Ordinance of Baptism. Practice of the Primitive Churches. Testimony of Pedobaptist Authorities. Immersion the only Scriptural Mode of Baptism.

Some regard the *mode* of baptism as too trivial a subject to deserve a thorough investigation. They say it is a mere circumstance, in an ordinance not in itself essential to salvation. Now, to assert that the mode of baptism is only an incidental circumstance, is assuming the whole question in controversy. We demand proof. And, to settle the question, there must be a careful and candid investigation. It cannot be disposed of by a sneer, or a rhetorical flourish. The question is one that has exercised the best minds in different ages; and the church is divided both in sentiment and practice respecting it. To declare, as some have, that the whole question is *moonshine*, betrays either great ignorance or prejudice on the subject. Faithful, dispassionate investigation, is the only way in which we can hope to obtain right views of it.

Again, to discourage discussion on the ground that baptism itself is but an external ordinance, and not saving, is equally un-

worthy of a candid mind. We admit that many have made too much of external forms and ceremonies—have rested in the mere form, and thereby made it to themselves a dead letter, useless. What then? Are rites and ceremonies and external forms to be discarded? Are Baptism, the Lord's Supper, the Sabbath, Marriage, &c., to be laid aside, because they are but forms and external observances? True, they are not saving. Nor is any duty we perform. We are saved through Christ. His works alone are meritorious. But obedience on our part is essential to salvation. God requires an unreserved submission on our part to all his requirements; and, if we knowingly withhold it in any particular, we bring ourselves into condemnation.

It does not, then, become us to ask whether a person was ever saved without baptism, under any circumstances; or, how little we may do and yet attain heaven. It is the spirit of the true believer to say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Whatever is *duty*, whether relating to a great or small matter, whether enjoined by a moral or positive law of God, should be implicitly and cheerfully obeyed. We are individually responsible according to the light and opportunity we enjoy.

Christian baptism is a positive institution of the gospel. The law of the ordinance is contained in the New Testament. The ordinance originated with Christ and the apostles, and to them we are to look for instruction respecting it. Whatever rites existed previously or subsequently, they cannot be adduced as relevant to this subject, any farther than they throw light upon the law of gospel baptism. The question is not what was required of the patriarchs or the Jews, or what has been the practice of any class of uninspired men; but what does the gospel enjoin in the ordinance of baptism? As the law of baptism is prescribed in the New Testament, all we have to do is to interpret that law correctly, and obey it. We are not to determine from speculation what that law *ought to be*; but from just principles of interpretation, *what it is*.

The authority for Christian baptism, as a perpetual ordinance in the church, is derived from Christ's commission to his disci-

ples, Matt. xxviii. 19: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. Mark xvi. 15, 16. The question before us relates to the *import* of this law. And here the whole controversy hinges on the meaning of the original word BAPTIZO, there employed to denote baptism. As there employed, it can have but one meaning.

Whatever may be true in regard to the double sense of words, all must admit that this word in this place can have but one sense. On this point *Dr. E. Beecher* justly remarks: "However numerous the possible meanings of a word may be in its various usages, it has in each particular case but one meaning, and in all similar cases its meaning is the same. Hence the word baptizo, as applied to a given rite, has not two or many meanings, but one, and to that one we should in all cases adhere." *Bib. Rep.*, Vol. III., p. 42, second series. "The question arises," then, to use the language of the same writer, "what meaning did the word baptizo convey to those who, in the age of the New Testament writers, read the command, 'Go baptize all nations.'" *Ib.* p. 44. This is the precise point, which should not be lost sight of.

What, then, is the import of baptizo, as applied to this ordinance? We may, first, refer to its meaning in the classics. It was a word in common use at the time Christian baptism was instituted. *Stuart* says that in the classical usage baptizo means to dip, plunge, or immerse into any thing liquid; and remarks, that all lexicographers and critics of any note are agreed in this. *Bib. Rep.*, Vol. 3, p. 298. He also observes that baptizo means to overwhelm, literally and figuratively, in a variety of ways. *Ib.*, 303. These, according to him, are the only significations which classical usage has assigned to the word. The proper classical import of baptizo, then, is to immerse. See all the classical lexicons.

In the Septuagint and Apocrypha the word occurs but four times, viz.: Isa. xxi. 4, fig.; 2 Kings v. 14, Naaman dipping in Jordan; Judith xii. 7; Sirach xxxi. 25, instances of bathing. All these evidently correspond to the classical usage.

We next seek the meaning of baptizo in the New Testament, when not applied to the ordinance. Mark vii. 4 ; Luke xi. 38 : " Except they wash," &c., relate clearly to *bathing*. Grotius has the following note on the former passage : " They were more solicitous to cleanse themselves from defilement they had contracted in the market ; and therefore they not only washed their hands, but immersed their whole body."*

In Mark vii. 4, 8 ; Heb. ix. 10, the noun *Baptismous* denotes ceremonial washings. Numerous purifications among the Jews were effected by sprinkling : but many others by bathing or immersion. See Lev. xi. 32 ; Num. xix. 7, 8. The latter may fairly be considered the reference in the above passages ; for it would not be much information to a reader to state that the Jews had divers ceremonies of sprinkling. But that they bathed thus frequently their persons, also cups, pots, brazen vessels, and beds, might naturally be mentioned as an evidence of their superstition : and a statement which their history fully warrants.

In Luke xii. 50 ; Mark x. 38, 39 ; Matt. xx. 22, 23 ; 1 Cor. xv. 29 ; Matt. iii. 11 ; Mark i. 8 ; Luke iii. 16 ; John i. 33 ; Acts i. 5, ii. 3, xi. 17, it is employed figuratively in the sense of overwhelm. Says *Stuart* on these passages : " The basis of this usage is very plainly to be found in the designation by baptizo of the idea of *overwhelming*, i. e., of surrounding on all sides with a fluid." Bib. Rep., Vol. 3, p. 311. Also *Robinson's Lexicon*.

In 1 Cor. x. 2, " they were all baptized unto Moses," it is used figuratively to denote the subjection of the Jews to Moses. The Jews in the wilderness stood in much the same relation to Moses, that believers under the gospel sustain to Christ. This analogy is *illustrated* by the above passage. Compare Gal. iii. 27 ; Rom. vi. 3, 4. It does not mean that the Israelites were literally baptized.

The above passages are all those in the Bible where baptizo occurs when not applied to the ordinance of baptism, and they show that the sacred writers used the word in its classical or ordinary sense. In both the classics and sacred writings it is often

* Gale's Ref., p. 164.

used figuratively, and with various shades of meaning; and the same is true of all words. But that the ordinary, primary, and fundamental idea of *baptizo* was to immerse, no candid philologist can deny.

We come now to the import of *baptizo* as applied to the ordinance in question. We are, of course, to consider the term as employed in its ordinary import, unless there is valid evidence of a change in its meaning, when applied to this ordinance. Is there evidence of such change? This is an important subject of inquiry.

-- Jewish proselyte baptism is often referred to in discussions upon this subject. But there is not reliable evidence that it was practiced before the Christian era; there being no mention made of it in the Bible or elsewhere, until several centuries after Christ. Hence, though that rite was invariably administered by immersion, we would not depend on any argument drawn from that source.

Some insist that the three thousand baptized at Pentecost could not have been immersed. But when we consider the facilities everywhere existing at that time, in the oriental countries, for bathing and baptizing; the fact that one hundred and twenty disciples were present, Acts i. 15, most of whom might be administrators; and that immersion does not require more time than the ordinary method of sprinkling, the difficulty vanishes.

On the contrary, the places chosen for administering the ordinance, such as the river Jordan, Enon, "because there was much water there," afford important indications. No satisfactory reason has been given for this selection, except that it was for the convenience of immersing. Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12, "buried with him in baptism," contain clear allusions to the mode, as is admitted by most Pedobaptist commentators, as Clarke, Barnes, Chalmers, Stuart.

The practice of the primitive Christians has an important bearing on this point. It can hardly be supposed that they would mistake the Saviour's meaning in reference to the practice, and

the apostles' usage, or that they would fail to conform to it. Now, it has been conclusively shown by Stuart, "that from the earliest ages of which we have any account, subsequent to the apostolic age, and downward for several centuries, the churches did generally practice baptism by immersion." *Bib. Rep.*, Vol. 3, p. 361. The Greek church has practiced immersion exclusively from the beginning to the present time. The fact is well established in history, that sprinkling and affusion were first allowed in the third or fourth centuries, in extreme cases of sickness, and thus, in a degenerate age, were gradually introduced.*

We appeal, finally, to the testimony of the most able and candid Pedobaptist writers. Says *Augusti*, "The word baptism, according to etymology and usage, signifies, to immerse, submerge, &c., and *the choice of the expression* betrays an age in which the later custom of sprinkling had not been introduced." *Chr. Review*, Vol. III., p. 96.

Says *Bretshneider*: "An entire immersion belongs to the nature of baptism." *ib.*

Neander remarks: "Baptism was originally by immersion; to this form various comparisons of the apostle Paul allude." *ib.* p. 101.

Says *Limborch*: "Baptism, then, consists in ablution, or rather in immersion of the whole body into water. For, formerly, those who were to be baptized were accustomed to be immers-

* "*Immersion* is peculiarly agreeable to the institution of Christ, and to the practice of the apostolic church, and so even John baptized, and immersion remained common for a long time after; except that in the third century, or perhaps earlier, the baptism of the sick (*baptisma clinicorum*) was performed by sprinkling or affusion. Still, some would not acknowledge this to be true baptism, and controversy arose concerning it, so unheard of was it at that time to baptize by simple affusion. Cyprian first defended baptism by sprinkling, when necessity called for it, but cautiously and with much limitation. By degrees, however, this mode of baptism became more customary, probably because it was found more convenient; especially was this the case after the seventh century, and in the Western church, but it did not become universal until the commencement of the fourteenth century. Yet Thomas Aquinas had approved and promoted this innovation more than a hundred years before. In the Greek and Eastern church they still hold to immersion. It would have been better to have adhered generally to the ancient practice, as even Luther and Calvin allowed. Vide *Storr*, *Doct. Chris. Parstheoretic*, p. 291." *Knapp's Theol.*, p. 486.

ed, with the whole body, in water." Christ. Theol., Book V., ch. 67.

Campbell, Translation of the Gospels, on Matt. iii. 11, remarks: "The word BAPTIZEIN, both in sacred authors, and in the classical, signifies, 'to dip,' 'to plunge,' 'to immerse.'"

J. A. Turretin (Prof. of Theology at Geneva), on Rom. vi. 3, 4, remarks: "And, indeed, baptism was performed in that age, and in those countries, by immersion of the whole body into water." So also *Tholuck*, *Olshausen*, *Hahn*, *Scholz*, *Bloomfield*, &c., &c.

Dr. Conant, in the appendix to his Revised Version of Matthew's gospel, after a full citation of passages where *baptizo* occurs throughout the entire range of Greek literature, concludes with the following summary of results:

"1. That the rendering given to this word, in this revision, [*viz.*, IMMERSION] is its true and only meaning, as proved by the unanimous testimony of Greek writers, both Pagan and Christian.

2. That it accords with the religious instructions of the earliest Christian writers, and with the requirements and practice of the whole Christian church, till within a comparatively recent time.

3. That it is the rendering of the word in any version sanctioned by early use of the church, and still retained in the vernacular versions of northern Europe.

4. That it is the only rendering of the word in any version sanctioned by early use in the church, and is the only one used by scholars in their versions and expositions for the learned.

5. That recent and living scholars, without distinction of ecclesiastical relations, unite in asserting this to be the true meaning of the Greek word." Appendix to Matthew's Gospel Revised, p. 103.

In review of this whole subject, we are not authorized to believe that when *baptizo* was applied to a Christian ordinance, its import was changed, but the contrary. There were other

words which might have been employed. There was *Louo*, to wash, *Katharizo*, to purify, *Cheuo*, to pour, *Rhantizo*, to sprinkle, and others, some general, others specific, in signification. But *baptizo* was selected, a word which specifically denoted immersion. We have seen, from contemporaneous usage, the circumstances of administering the ordinance, and the practice of the primitive churches, that *baptizo*, as employed in this ordinance, was used in its original and ordinary sense. There is no proper evidence to the contrary.

As candid interpreters, therefore, we are bound to teach that in this ordinance *baptizo* defines the mode, and restricts it to immersion. Wherever, then, this term, and its derivatives, occur, as applied to this ordinance, just TRANSLATE THEM INTO ENGLISH, AND THE WHOLE CONTROVERSY IS ENDED.

But, one inquires, must immersion be insisted on in all cases?

If some, from feelings of delicacy, shrink from such a cross, may they not adopt some other mode? Or, since infant baptism has been long practiced, may it not be admitted as a substitute? In the light of the preceding investigations, such questions appear like trifling with a Divine requirement. God has prescribed the ordinance for our observance; he has given us the law that regulates it. He has given us no authority to change it, or admit a substitute in its place. We are to be guided in duty, not by our feelings, but by the law of Christ; not by tradition, but the Bible. We have no right to tamper with the requirements of the gospel, or modify them to suit our prejudices. We have already had abundant and sad fruits of such a temporizing policy.

The church has lost much by her departure from the simplicity and purity of primitive times. Just in the degree that she has departed from the spirit of the apostolic churches, and become conformed to a worldly standard, has she been shorn of her strength. *Knapp* says (Theol. p. 486), "It would have been better to have adhered generally to the ancient practice, as even Luther and Calvin allowed." The Papists brought in the cor-

ruption ; let evangelical Protestants purge it out. Just so far as the ordinance itself is to be regarded, it should be observed according to the requirement of its institutor.

As in the Lord's supper, eating of the bread and drinking of the cup duly consecrated, and received by authorized communicants, is essential to that ordinance ; so is the immersion of the believer in the name of the Holy Trinity, by a proper administrator, essential to the right observance of Christian baptism.

We have confined ourselves, in this discussion, chiefly to the import of the word *baptizo*, since the argument is thus more direct and simple than it would otherwise be, and absolutely conclusive.

LECTURE XLII.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Proof Texts. Design of the Lord's Supper. Nature of the Ordinance. Transubstantiation. Consubstantiation. The Ordinance Simply Commemorative. Who are Communicants. Arguments for Close Communion Discussed. Historical Notice of the Communion Question. Free Communion. Invitation to the Lord's Supper.

The institution of this ordinance is recorded in Matt. xxvi. 26—30; Mark xiv. 22—26; Luke xxii. 17—20; 1 Cor. xi. 23—26. From these, and other passages, it is evident that the ordinance is of perpetual obligation in the church militant. The propriety and importance of such an institution are readily seen.

DESIGN OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The main design of the LORD'S SUPPER is clearly indicated in the above passages, viz.: *a memorial of Christ*. "Do this in remembrance of me." "Ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

Commemorative observances have existed in all ages and nations, and have been of great service in cherishing the remembrance of important events. Such was the Passover to the Jews: such is the Fourth of July to us. Christ is the hope of the world. Without his atonement, every sinner must have perished. By his sacrifice, Christ made possible the salvation

of all mankind; multitudes have already been saved, and an innumerable throng will finally surround his throne, redeemed by his blood. It is fit that the great work of redemption should be commemorated by the redeemed. Christians should ever feel it to be not only a sacred duty, but a most delightful privilege, to surround the table of their Divine Lord.

A secondary object of the ordinance, is to maintain the *fellowship* of the saints. Hence it is called *THE COMMUNION*. In it believers have communion with Christ and with each other. It is not necessary that each communicant should approve of every thing in all the other communicants, for this would be requiring absolute perfection of all as a prerequisite, and would destroy the ordinance.

One ought not to absent himself from the communion because he has trials with another member. A person under the discipline of the church, is not at liberty to commune, but all the other members should be punctual at each sacramental occasion. Carelessness and recklessness in respect to it, highly reprehensible, are sometimes manifested by church members.

This ordinance, baptism, and the Sabbath, are standing witnesses to the truth of the Christian religion. Had they been forgeries, sought to be imposed in a later age, they would have been detected. They must have been instituted at the time, and under the circumstances, related by the sacred writers. And this admission goes far to establish the claims of the Christian religion.

NATURE OF THIS ORDINANCE.

There has been much controversy upon the *nature* of this ordinance. The Papists interpret the Saviour's language, "This is my body, this is my blood," literally, and insist that, at the word of the priest, the bread and wine are changed into the real body and blood of Christ. This is called *transubstantiation*. Hence have arisen their practices of regarding the elements as a sacrifice, worshipping them [*elevatio hostiæ*], administering to the people in one kind only, viz., the bread; and the like. Their doctrine is not authorized even by the most literal construction

of the words of Christ, for he called it the bread and the cup, after its consecration. If Christ did not transmute the elements, who can suppose that any priest does now? The Scriptures, equally with our own senses and reason, condemn the Popish doctrine as an absurdity.

Luther, and many of his followers, adopted what is called the doctrine of *consubstantiation*. They held, "that though the bread and wine remain unchanged, yet that, together with them, the body and blood of Christ are *literally* received by the communicants."* This, however, should be understood of Christ's *glorified* body, and the mode of its presence in the Eucharist mysterious.

The view adopted by Melancthon and many other Lutherans, and by Calvin, is, that the bread and wine remain, in all respects, unchanged, but that the glorified human nature of Christ is influentially present, that is, by a supernatural influence, exerted on all communicants, at the time when they receive the elements.† This view is still retained by many Lutherans, and High Churchmen, or Puseyites.

The Socinians, and some others, make the ordinance a mere form, and even deny its Divine authority in its literal observance.

The view generally held by experienced Christians, is, that while there is nothing supernatural or mystical in the Eucharist, but that it is commemorative, and the elements used are but symbols, yet an appropriate spiritual blessing is enjoyed in the ordinance by all who rightly partake. See 1 Cor. xi, 27—29. Such is the experience of the most devout Christians.

Preparation should be made before coming to the table of the Lord. A preparatory covenant meeting or lecture is very appropriate. The services on the occasion of celebrating the ordinance, should be heartily engaged in by all the communicants. It is a suitable occasion for deep self-examination, repentance of sin, and renewed consecration; also of gratitude to our Divine

* Watson's Theol. Inst., 649-50.

† Schmucker's Theol., 250-1.

Benefactor. It should be attended with a sincere heart, and in faith. Those who do thus, partake worthily. They may feel their own unworthiness of this or any other blessing of grace; but none can be accused of partaking unworthily, unless, like some in the primitive churches, they pervert and profane the ordinance, when they procure to themselves condemnation.

The circumstantials of this ordinance are not prescribed in Scripture, but are left to be regulated by the churches. These circumstantials are the frequency of its administration, the time and place, the attitude of the communicants, and the like. Good judgment must regulate these according to the condition of each church. No more is essential than that an authorized administrator give the elements to suitable communicants, and they eat and drink of the same in faith. Formerly it was considered a *mystery*, and therefore administered in private. But there is no good reason for such sentiment or practice. None well-disposed should be excluded from being spectators. Experience has also shown that, in ordinary cases, it had better not be administered less frequently than once in three months, nor oftener than once a month.

WHO ARE COMMUNICANTS ?

Who should be invited to partake at the Lord's table? It might seem that this question would admit of an easy answer, viz. : THE LORD'S CHILDREN. But we need not say that this simple Scriptural direction has been strangely overlooked, and unauthorized tests set up. Some denominations receive those to this ordinance who are not professedly regenerate, though belonging to their church connection; while they reject those not within their pale, though acknowledged to be eminent Christians. This is palpably opposed to the terms and spirit of the institution and the uniform practice of the apostolic churches.

Among evangelical denominations in this country, the chief controversy on this subject is with the Close Communion Baptists. They will not admit members of the Pedobaptist churches to the ordinance, on the ground that baptism is prerequisite to the communion, and that the Pedobaptists have not been bap-

tized. They also reject the Freewill Baptists, although baptized, because they commune with Pedobaptists. It will be seen, therefore, that, in their view, Christian character, church membership, and baptism, will not entitle one to the communion. He must also be of their faith and order. This is a position which they rarely undertake to defend by argument, yet it accords with their general practice.

But is baptism an indispensable prerequisite to the communion? Ought Pedobaptist Christians to be barred admission to this ordinance? We will notice some of the arguments used in the affirmative:

ARGUMENTS FOR CLOSE COMMUNION EXAMINED.

1. The order of words in the apostolical commission. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20: "Baptizing them in the name," &c. "Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you." But this contains no prohibition of the kind contended for. It is barely a commission to baptize and inculcate the performance of all other duties. It establishes no priority of one over another.

2. The order of the apostolical practice. Acts ii. 41, 42: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Why not, on the strength of this passage, make baptism prerequisite to prayer, since it precedes it in the order of the record? All the passage proves is, that, in a given case, a multitude were baptized immediately after conversion, and continued in the performance of the various Christian duties. Nothing is here intimated of the apostles' making baptism an indispensable requisite to the communion.

But even if they did, this does not necessarily authorize close communion now. In the time of the apostles, there was no controversy on the subject of baptism. All Christians were baptized. If any were not baptized, it was because they rejected the ordi-

nance. How stands the case now? Are there no unbaptized Christians now, in the estimation of our Calvinistic Baptist brethren? Were not Doddridge, and Brainerd, and Whitefield, Christians? But they were never baptized according to the Baptist faith. The apostles admitted all Christians to the Lord's supper. We must do the same, if we would follow their example. To be consistent, we must either do this, or deny that any Pedobaptists are Christians.

3. It is asserted that communing with Pedobaptists is countenancing their error. By no means. We commune with them as Christians, not as free from error. Have Baptists no errors? The question should be, is it an error incompatible with Christian character? Robert Hall said, "If a man is good enough for the Lord, he is good enough for me."

4. It is said by some that baptism is the door into the church. But this is not true. Christ is the door. John x. 9.

5. "Baptism is prerequisite to church membership,—church membership is prerequisite to the communion; therefore baptism is prerequisite to the communion." Both these premises need proof. We admit that if one should reject the ordinance of baptism, he could not be a church member, or a communicant at the Lord's table. But is this the position of our Pedobaptist brethren? Are they to be unchurched? Even if they are, on account of their error in regard to baptism, still we can commune with them as Christians, if not as church members.

6. Finally, it is said, if we commune with Pedobaptists, we ought to admit them to membership in our churches. This does not follow. If we regard them as Christians, we can agree with them in commemorating the sacrifice of our common Lord. But Christians honestly differ on various important points in church building and discipline. The Episcopalian is tenacious of his views, the Independent of his. While these incompatible views are entertained, they cannot unite in the same local church. So with Baptists and Pedobaptists. While these differences of sentiment exist, there had better be distinct church and denominational organizations; still, they should cherish each other as

brethren in the same general church of Christ, and coöperate with each other for the salvation of the world.

The arguments, then, for close communion are not sufficient. The practice is authorized neither by Scripture nor reason, but is opposed to both. Its tendency is to cherish a spirit of exclusiveness and sectarianism, and is unworthy the Christian name.

HISTORICAL NOTICE OF THE COMMUNION QUESTION.

In the apostolical and primitive churches, free communion was universally practiced. There is no account of any restriction in this period, barring a portion of the Lord's children from their Father's table; but members of churches, however widely separated, were freely admitted to the ordinance.

The first departure from the primitive order on this subject occurred when the growing Papal power assumed to be infallible, and taught that without its pale salvation was impossible. During the long reign of the Papacy in the dark ages, they rigidly adhered to this exclusiveness, and denied to those denominated by them *heretics*, all Christian privileges. The bitter controversies between the Eastern and Western church establishments fostered the same spirit and practice.

Like begets like. Persecution and intolerance often produce the same in their own victims, who, in turn, practice it towards others, when they possess the power. From such causes, it is not strange that restricted communion has had a wide and long prevalence; most of the great hierarchies and national church establishments having in this, as in most other respects, departed from the purity and simplicity of the gospel.

With the dawn of the Reformation, the establishment of Protestantism, and especially of evangelical and spiritual Christianity, the primitive practice of free communion began to be revived, and has obtained general prevalence among evangelical denominations. In most of them there are still those who contend for restriction and exclusiveness, like that existing in the formal and corrupt organizations. But the body of true believers will not tolerate it.

There is but one marked exception, viz., as found among the Baptists. A large portion of them have for a long period advocated and practiced close communion, refusing to celebrate the ordinance with any but those of their own "faith and order." No matter how excellent or eminent as Christians they may allow others to be, they refuse them admission with them to the Lord's table.

But here, as elsewhere among spiritual Christians, a better spirit is gaining ground. ROBERT HALL did much in his day to expose the evils of close communion, and to restore among Baptists the Scriptural faith on this subject. The great body of the Baptist churches in England now hold and practice free communion. And although there has not been as yet an equal advance among this people in America, it is well known that many of their best ministers and members sympathize strongly with the same sentiments, and it cannot be doubted that at no very distant day this remnant of intolerance and exclusiveness among gospel believers will be removed; and all true Christians, on earth as in heaven, will unite at the table of their common Lord, as they coöperate elsewhere in labor for the universal prevalence of his kingdom.

FREE COMMUNION.

The doctrine of free communion may now be stated in few words. It is, that communion at the Lord's table is the communion of saints. Every true believer is of right a communicant. This is the principle, and is authorized on two grounds.

1. *Of Reason.* All Christians have a common interest in the Redeemer's blood, they are alike accepted of Christ, united to him and to each other in the same spiritual relation, heirs together of the same heavenly inheritance. They now coöperate in various ways in which they acknowledge each other as Christians. They may, therefore, unite in commemorating the Saviour's sufferings and death. Experience has shown the influence of close communion to be bad, and that of free communion to be good.

2. *Of Scripture.* The precept for the ordinance is such as to exclude no true believer from the Lord's table, but makes it the duty of all to come. "This do in remembrance of me." "Drink ye all of it." We have no evidence from the practice of the apostles, that they excluded any from the ordinance whom they recognized as Christians. Their doctrine implies the contrary. Rom. xiv. 1: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye." See also a lengthy argument for the exercise of mutual charity and fellowship, 1 Cor. xii. 12—27. If we regard our Pedobaptist brethren as Christians, we should not exclude them from the communion. The table is the Lord's, not ours. We have no right to exclude any whom he has not excluded.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER.

How shall it be determined who are Christians? Shall each one be the sole judge of his own case, and the ordinance be open to all who are disposed to partake? This would be virtually opening the door to all: and Unitarians, Universalists, Mormons, and even the immoral, might partake to the profanation of the ordinance, and the grief of Christians. The ordinances of the gospel should not be thus exposed. The church is Christ's body. All its members have spiritual communion with the Head of the church, and with each other, and may freely associate in the visible ordinance.

The proper course, as we conceive, is to invite all Christians, or gospel believers in regular standing in any evangelical church. Each church should clearly define what she understands by evangelical, as thus applied, so that none need mistake the invitation. Those only can be recognized as evangelical who hold both theoretically and practically the doctrines essential to salvation. It should be distinctly understood that persons in regular standing are not invited, unless they are true believers. As a general rule, we say, all such and no others should be invited to the ordinance. None can rightfully complain of this rule as too strict. If, after all, one partakes unworthily, he does it to his own condemnation alone.

Exceptions to the general rule may be allowed in special cases. Where the evidence of Christian character is clear and undoubted, one who is not a member of any church, might be permitted to partake. Of such cases each church will judge for itself. The practice of some in allowing professed converts before uniting with the church, rejected members of other churches, and indeed, almost any, to come to the Lord's table, is to be condemned.

We should require satisfactory evidence that persons are Christians, before admitting them to this ordinance, equally as in the case of receiving candidates for baptism. Gospel order, purity, and harmony require that in no ordinary case should one be invited to the Lord's table, who is not in regular standing in an evangelical church. It should be understood, also, as before remarked, that none such are invited unless they are real Christians.

None have a right to the privileges of this ordinance but gospel believers—those walking in the path of obedience to God. All such have the right, and should on no account be prohibited. The gospel rule on the subject, as we understand it, is, that COMMUNION AT THE LORD'S TABLE IS THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

LECTURE XLIII.

THE MILLENNIUM.

General Expectation of the World. Future Golden Age. History of Various Theories. The Millennium Chiefly Spiritual. Meaning of Revelation xx. 1—10. Extent of the Millennium. Scriptural References. Conversion of the World. State of Things in the Millennium. Length of the Millennium. Time of its Commencement. How it is to be Introduced.

The MILLENNIUM, or *thousand years*, is an expression derived from Rev. xx. 1—6: “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years shall be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be

priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

A doctrine affording the basis for later views was indeed prevalent long before John's apocalyptic vision. The Jews from a very early period of their history, and especially after their decline and captivity, confidently expected a signal triumph of truth and righteousness, and a long season of unprecedented prosperity. They supposed this time was to come in connection with the advent and reign of the promised Messiah. The heathen, also, anticipated a similar season, a golden age. Some of the descriptions of it by Virgil and other classical authors, are exceedingly vivid, and resemble the most impassioned passages in Isaiah on the Messiah's reign.

So general and uniform an expectation must have had some foundation. Reason, as well as revelation, authorizes the anticipation. It cannot be supposed that physical, mental, and moral depravity, and sin, are always to prevail over the world, as they have hitherto; and that there is never to be a general triumph of truth and virtue. It would be the greatest mystery connected with the affairs of this world. We do not say it would be an impeachment of the Divine wisdom or goodness: for our knowledge of the universe is very limited. But it is certain that a general prevalence of righteousness on the earth would greatly tend to the praise of God.

Many erroneous and even gross ideas have been entertained on this subject. The Jews, after their degeneracy, regarded it as wholly temporal—a restoration of their nation to earthly power, and the subjugation of all other nations to themselves. The apostles and primitive Christians partook largely of the common sentiment; and, when convinced of their error on those points, they still put the Millennium in connection with the overthrow of the Jewish state, and the second advent of Christ, all of which they supposed would take place at the destruction of Jerusalem. See Matt. xxiv. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, however, these errors in their minds were corrected. In their epistles the true doctrine is brought to view.

In the second and third centuries former opinions were revived and propagated by Papias, Irenæus, and others. Their views, however, were never made an article of faith in the church. About the year one thousand, much excitement prevailed on the subject. Great numbers, in expectation of the immediate approach of the Millennium, suspended all their secular business. Other periods were subsequently fixed on, and attended with excitement and extravagance. Luther had much trouble with certain fanatics, who were for bringing in a temporal Millennium at once, and by force. The last edition of the error under *Mr. Miller*, has scarcely yet been exhausted. So much for a historical outline. It should teach us the necessity of careful study and discrimination, especially in matters of prophecy.

These errors should not cause us to reject the true Millennial doctrine. Great errors are often the perversion of great truths. There would be no counterfeits were there no true coin. We should seek for the Scriptural sentiments, and embrace them.

I. It is evident from Scripture that the Millennium and the blessings connected with it will be chiefly *spiritual*. Some have taught that Jerusalem is to be rebuilt, and to be made the metropolis of the world—that the Jews are to be restored to Palestine, to have civil rule over the whole earth—that all the wicked will be destroyed, and Christ reign personally on earth. Others hold that this world and its appurtenances are to be destroyed, and a new one to be formed, the pious dead raised, and reign with Christ without any physical or moral evil, a thousand years.

These theories proceed from interpreting figurative passages literally. But they all admit of a fair interpretation on the ground that the Millennium is to be spiritual. This is true of the passage most relied on, viz.: Rev. xx. 1—6, which denotes the revival and powerful reign of truth on the earth in the latter days, but should not be construed in a gross and material sense. A casual reading of this passage may lead to the supposition that the Millennium is to be material—that Christ is to reign personally on earth, with the saints raised from the dead, according more or less to the ancient theories, and those of *Priest, Miller*,

and others in modern times. But a more careful study of the subject, and comparison of other Scriptures, will show that this is not the true interpretation. When Christ shall again appear literally on the earth, it will be on the last day, at the general resurrection and final judgment. See Matt. xxv. 31—46; 2 Thess. i. 7—10; John v. 28, 29, and parallel texts. His reign with his saints on earth, then, mentioned in Rev. xx. 1—6, must be spiritual, denoting the wonderful prevalence of the gospel, the *revival* of ancient piety, such as existed in the old martyrs, so that in a sense they may be said to live again on earth, i. e., in the life and conduct of Christians; as John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah, and so fulfilled the prophecy in Malachi iv. 5, 6: “Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet,” &c. Compare Matt. xvii. 10—13. The literal coming of Christ will not occur until after the apostasy that shall succeed the Millennium, mentioned Rev. xx. 7, 8. Subsequent to this the revelator saw the grand events attending the final consummation. See verses 11—15.

On the other hand, the theories above noticed are directly opposed to the current Scriptural representation. According to our view, the present order of things is to be essentially continued, man is still to exist in probation, moral government to prevail, truth to be propagated, and indeed to gain a great triumph by moral means alone—when Christ shall make his second advent, it is to be at the general resurrection, final judgment, and consummation of all earthly things. Strong figures are indeed employed to denote the triumph of truth and the blessings of the gospel yet to be enjoyed in this world, still we should avoid a gross interpretation of them—one not authorized by the plain doctrine of Scripture.

The careful student of the Bible will, on examination of the whole subject, conclude that the Millennium is to be spiritual—that the temporal blessings connected with it will be mainly incidental, and consequent upon the spiritual blessings.

2. EXTENT OF THESE BLESSINGS. The representation of Scripture is that the WORLD will be converted. “The earth

shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord." "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of Christ." Numerous expressions of the kind are cited.

Ps. lxxii. 11 : "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him : all nations shall serve him."

Isa. ii. 2, 4 : "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills ; and all nations shall flow unto it. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people : and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks : nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Isa. xi. 9 : "And they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain : for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Also, xlix. 22, 23 ; lx. ; Dan. ii. 35, 44 ; vii. 27.

Some have interpreted such prophecies too strictly, and literally ; others suppose they are to have an accomplishment only in heaven. These are the extremes.

In their connection they clearly relate to this world, and prove the general triumph of truth, the conversion of the mass of mankind. In every period of the world there will doubtless be some wicked. So Christ taught. Matt. xiii. 30, 38—42 ; 47—50. Both the tares and the wheat shall grow together until the harvest. Yet in the Millennium, holiness will as greatly prevail over sin, as sin has hitherto prevailed more than holiness. Nothing less do the Scriptures teach.

The Jews, as a people, will then be converted.

Isa. xlv. 17 : "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." Also, chapters liv., lxii., lxv., lxvi.

Hos. iii. 4, 5 : "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king ; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days."

Many believe that they will also be restored to their ancient land, though most regard these as symbolical of spiritual blessings. See Isa. xxvii. 12, 13; Ezek. xi. 17—20; xxxvi. 21—38; xxxvii. 21—28; Hos. i. 10, 11; Amos ix. 14, 15; Zech. xii. 6; xiv. 10, 11; Luke xxi. 24.

Perhaps the most satisfactory passage to prove the conversion of the world is Rom. xi. Here the apostle fully discusses the subject, and teaches that the mass, at least both of the Jews and Gentiles, will be converted. Viewed in this bearing, the passage is full of interest to the inquirer.

Rom. xi. 12, 15: "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" Here the apostle, by referring to the "fulness" of the Jews, in contrast with their previous "fall" and "diminishing;" also, "to the receiving of them," clearly indicates the restoration of God's ancient people to the faith of the gospel.

But the 25th verse especially, in its connection, shows not only the apostle's belief of the future conversion of the Jews, but also of the Gentile nations. "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, UNTIL THE FULNESS OF THE GENTILES BE COME IN." Thus does he interpret and apply the former prophecies, and with the light and spirit of the gospel dispensation, bring out the glorious doctrine of THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD.

Various opinions have been entertained respecting the state of things in the Millennium. One extreme is to suppose that there will then be no natural or moral evil in the world. The opposite extreme is that which makes the Millennium merely nominal.

The Scriptures authorize the belief that the mass of mankind will then be Christians, living agreeably to the requirements of the gospel—that governments will be regulated on Scriptural

principles—the rulers being just men ruling in the fear of God—that truth will greatly prevail over error, and virtue over vice—that war, slavery, intemperance, licentiousness, and kindred enormities, will be effectually subdued—knowledge be universally diffused—improvement in every useful pursuit greatly advanced, and impartial benevolence be the governing purpose of mankind.

It may be expected that then conversions will generally take place very early, and Christian character be fully developed. As men will still be moral beings, on probation, and by nature depraved, we are not to suppose that there will be no sin, or no impenitent persons or communities on earth. But when primitive Christianity shall be revived, and prevail, as it will, in the Millennium, we may believe that the reverse of what has been witnessed in the world hitherto, will be experienced—viz., that holiness will then be the rule, sin the exception. No fair interpretation of the prophecies will allow us to expect less. The history of mankind, and especially recent developments—the multiplication of facilities, and increase of benevolent exertion—hardly leave this as a matter of mere faith.

3. THE LENGTH OF THE MILLENNIUM. Most have regarded it as a literal thousand years, from Rev. xx. But the language of that passage should not be pressed. A thousand in Scripture is often a round number, and used in an indefinite sense. It may be regarded as an indeterminate, though long, period. *Stuart* and others consider it a prophetic period, to be reckoned a day for a year, thus making the duration of the Millennium three hundred and sixty-five thousand years.

Against such an interpretation, it has been urged that the apostles represented the day of final judgment as near, and spoke of their own times as *the last days*. In reply, it is said that, as near eighteen centuries have elapsed since they wrote, a much longer period may yet intervene. Compared with eternity, all worldly computations are as nothing. Besides, virtually, the end of life brings us to our final retribution. It should also be observed, that in the Scriptures, such phrases as *last days*,

last times, signify the gospel dispensation. All, therefore, who live under this dispensation, whatever its length may be, are in the last days.

Hitherto wickedness has prevailed, the multitude have trod the broad way, while but here and there one has pursued the path of life. Are we not to expect that the reign of righteousness in the earth will continue as long, and even much longer, than the reign of sin has continued, so that, at last, a vast majority of mankind will be saved? And do not the glowing descriptions, in the prophets, of the Messiah's reign, and the final triumph of the just, warrant such belief? While nothing positive can be asserted on a subject not fully revealed, we may indulge the hope that the Millennial reign of truth and righteousness will be of great length.

4. COMMENCEMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM. This has been made the subject of various calculation and conjecture. Numerous periods have been fixed upon, with much confidence, especially the years 1000 and 1843. Some, by comparing the prophecies in Daniel, and the Apocalypse, have named the year 1866. The more common belief is, that it will commence about A. D. 2000, or about one hundred and forty years hence. This would make a great week—six thousand years of labor in the prevalence of sin, and the seventh thousand a rest in holiness.

On this point nothing should be asserted positively, since it is not revealed. But present indications show that it *may* be no farther distant. The advance in enterprise, discovery, progress in the arts and sciences, inventions, civilization, missionary and reformatory effort, within the last two or three centuries, has been very great, and grows more rapid every year, especially since the beginning of the present century.

There have been more propitious signs of the general diffusion of truth within the last fifty years, than for sixteen hundred years before. Almost every report from abroad shows that the Papal, Mohammedan, and Pagan powers are fast crumbling, and will soon be prostrate. In the present state of affairs, in the progress of light and improvement, one thing may be consid-

ered certain—a few years hence will find this world either swayed by pure religion, or under the dominion of blank infidelity! The great moral conflict is approaching a crisis.

Can we doubt the issue? Were we in doubt, we have only to consult Divine revelation to settle the question. Dan. ii. 35, 45: “The stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” vii. 37: “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High. See also other passages referred to in No. 2 above.

5. MEANS OF INTRODUCING THE MILLENNIUM. Many have supposed these would be physical and miraculous. But the most approved and Scriptural view is, that they will be moral and ordinary; as preaching, publishing, and various missionary and reformatory efforts.

The great requisite is, conformity to the standard of the gospel on the part of all Christians—lives of faith and obedience. When pure religion was propagated in the primitive church, it spread with astonishing rapidity; not more from the miracles wrought, than from the earnest and consistent lives of its votaries. Since that time, the church has been paralyzed in her influence, through worldliness. Let primitive purity and zeal be revived, and with the wonderful facilities possessed and multiplying, the triumph of truth will soon be complete. Let the conflict be waged in the open field; let the friends of the gospel be true to their trust, and the victory is as sure to crown their banner, as that there is a God, that man has an immortal soul, that truth and virtue are better than error and vice.

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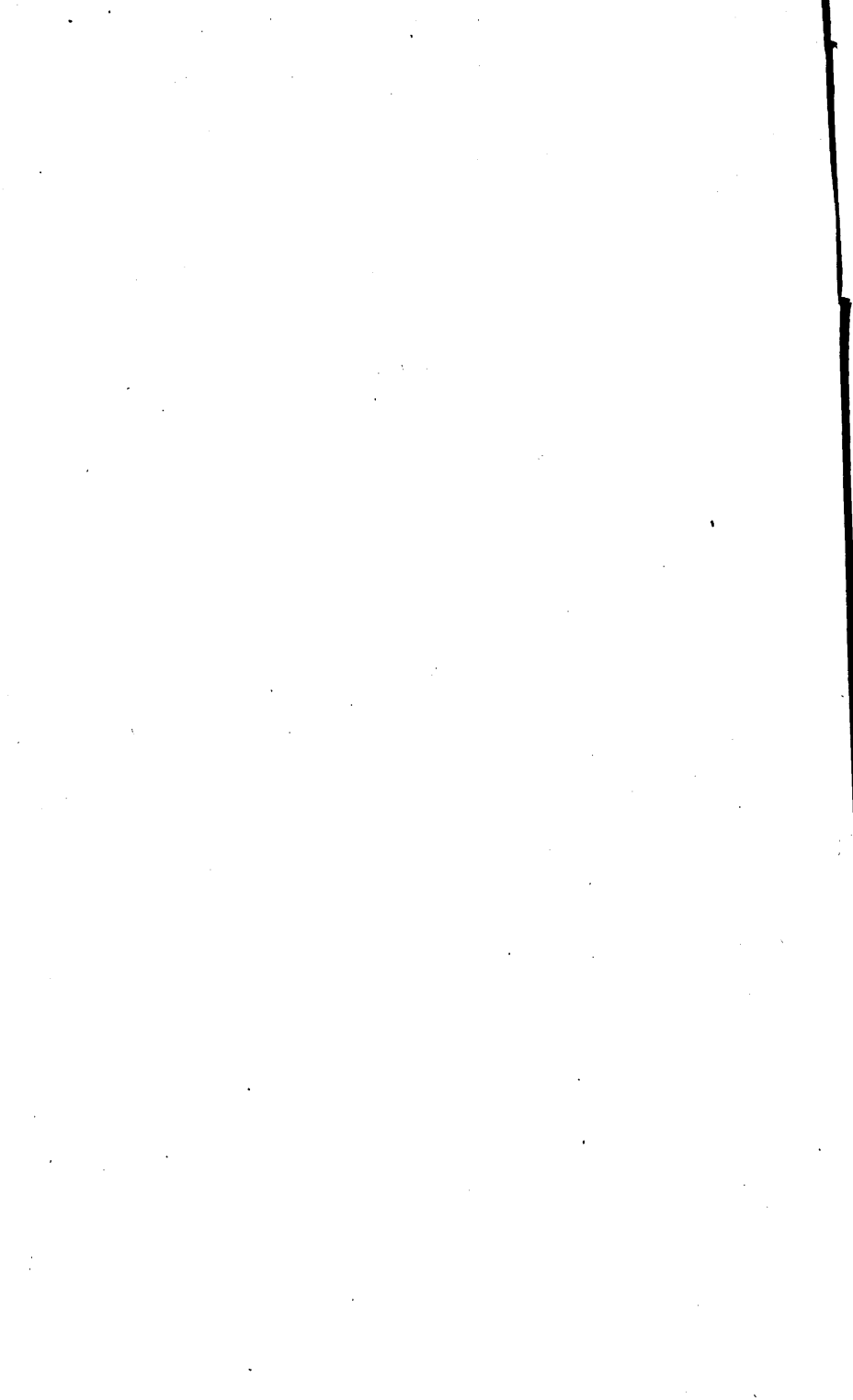
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