THE

VERDICT OF REASON

UPON THE QUESTION OF

THE FUTURE PUNISHMENT OF THOSE WHO DIE IMPENITENT.

BY

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TO

THE MEMBERS

OF

THE BERKELEY-STREET CHURCH AND CONGREGATION,

IN

BOSTON,

WHOM IT IS MY JOY TO SERVE IN THE GOSPEL,

This Little Treatise,

ORIGINALLY PREPARED FOR THEIR PULPIT, AND NOW REVISED AND REPUBLISHED, LARGELY IN THE HOPE THAT IT MAY BENEFIT SOME OF THEM,

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In the summer of 1858, certain circumstances gave special prominence in this community to the question of the reasonableness of the doctrine of the future eternal punishment of those who die impenitent; and, in accordance with what he believed to be his duty, the author prepared, and preached to his own congregation, two sermons maintaining the affirmative of that question, which, on request, were afterwards published. Through the favor of the public, they reached a wide circulation; and the demand for them has showed itself occasionally in letters from distant places, asking for copies, up to the present time. Lately these letters have taken the form of a request that the sermons might be recast into a brief treatise, and re-issued in a form better suited for general circulation and for preservation; a request which, in view of some of the tendencies of the public mind, and the feeling that no man has any right to withhold from the conflict of opinion

any agency which God seems to claim from him for it, it has not been thought right to decline.

In the work of recasting, care has been taken to condense and clarify the argument as much as possible in some directions, while enlarging it in others; and constant reference has been had to objections brought against it by some who criticised it at the date of its first issue.

H. M. D.

HILLSIDE, ROXBURY, 8th May, 1865.

ANALYSIS.

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VERDICT OF REASON.

CHAPTER I.

REASON THE ULTIMATE JUDGE.

THE question before us for consideration is this: Is it reasonable that God should punish eternally those who persist in sin and die impenitent?

I wish to be understood, in the outset, as admitting that this is a perfectly fair question, and one which every man not merely has a right to ask, but is bound to ask. I do not sympathize at all with those who have spoken from among us, who have, sometimes at least, seemed to decry reason as a dangerous arbiter in matters of religion; and who have been understood — whether with full intention on their own part or not — to take substantially the ground, that, no matter how unreasonable a thing may be, men are still bound to believe it if the Bible seems to assert it.

I hold, on the contrary, as Lord Bacon says, that "the first principle of religion is right reason." I believe that God gave us our human intelligence — that aggregate of

mental and moral powers which distinguishes us from the brutes, the natural and healthy working of which we are accustomed to call "the exercise of our common sense" — in order that we may use it in the acquisition, criticism, and acceptance of all truth. I believe, that, as sentient and immortal beings, we are solemnly bound to receive and incorporate into our life every thing which it indorses as truth. I believe, on the other hand, that we are as solemnly bound to reject from our faith and life every thing which, after thorough and honest scrutiny, it condemns as false.

Be pleased however to notice, in this connection, the fact that a loose and narrower usage of the word "reason" has sometimes prevailed among writers on this subject, which would vitiate my proposition. Such is that of that German school of philosophy which appropriates the term to those intuitional conceptions which the mind has of the true, the beautiful, and the good. In that transcendental use of the term, reason would be very far from being the ultimate — as it would fall utterly short of being a safe — arbiter of religious questions; since it would substitute what is practically undistinguishable from the fervid or morbid dreams of the imagination, working alone, for those calm decisions of the grouped and balanced faculties which furnish the only secure data of life, whether considered in its relations to the here or the hereafter.

That reason — thus defined as common sense in its broadest and most conscientious use — is for every man the ultimate judge on *all* subjects, and so on religious subjects, will be made clear from the consideration of the fact, that, by the very constitution of the human soul, it cannot be otherwise.

It is a matter of course that his own reason must be itself the arbiter for every man, or that something else must be that arbiter.

But if something else, then what? Shall it be the dictum of another man, or of some other being less than God, or of God? If of another man, by what authority? and if of any other created being, or of God, on what evidence? What shall decide that any communication purporting to bring wisdom and judgment from any superior source, whether angelic or divine, is really what it purports to be, and not a fallacy or a fraud?

The only practicable source of answer to these questions is for the man himself to decide. He must say, "My fellow-man, or some superhuman agent, or the Divine Being, knows more than I do about this matter, and has spoken; and it is safer for me to trust him than to trust myself; and I am satisfied, on scrutiny, that this communication is really from him from whom it purports to come, and therefore I shall receive it and act upon it." He must say this, or its opposite, in regard to every such claim from any source to set up a tribunal over him; must say it, and act accordingly.

But that speech, and the decision which it enshrines, is nothing less than a judgment upon that claim to judge; and, in judging it, the man erects himself into a tribunal of last resort above it: so that, if it gets power over his own future, it is only in virtue of the fact that in judging thus he has given to it that power. So that his reason remains the ultimate arbiter, after all.

This makes it clear that God has so constituted every man monarch of himself, that he *cannot*, if he would, abdicate the function of being the judge of what is best for himself; cannot, if he would, disenthrone himself of this imperial task and responsibility.

"But," asks somebody who has been accustomed to hear it spoken of as a fearful, and fearfully common, thing for men to set reason above revelation, "is not the Bible to be received in every event? Is not whatever it teaches to be implicitly accepted, and acted upon, however much reason may object against it?"

I answer, —

1. We do not know that we need any revelation at all, except as reason so declares.

2. And when that fact has been determined, and we look around for a supply for our asserted need, it is only by reason that we can identify our Bible, and settle it, whether we ought to take the Sibylline leaves of the Romans, or the Shasters of the Hindus, or the Arabic Koran, or the Book of Mormon, or the Christian Scriptures, for

our guide. And if the Christian Scriptures had the qualities of the Koran, and the Koran the qualities of the Christian Scriptures, we should be compelled by reason to reject the Old and New Testaments, and accept the oracles of Mahomet; on the ground that the latter, rather than the former, came from a compassionating holy God to needy and sinful man.

But if Reason must thus decide whether we need any revelation at all, and, if we do, must further decide between the conflicting claims upon our acceptance of different and incompatible volumes, each affirming itself to be that revelation, it becomes clear, that, in this radically important sense, it is inevitable to that constitution of things which God has given us, that Reason should be our ultimate judge in all matters of religious truth. It is the faculty which God has created in us to be our guide to himself. He gave us eyes with which to see, and ears with which to hear, and the whole group of the senses to put us into communication with external nature, and notify us of those facts appertaining to it, in view of which our life ought to be shaped. So he gave us intellect and sensibility, and conscience and will, that, from their co-working in "good common sense," we might be put rightly into relation with the moral and spiritual world, with time and eternity. And as we should displease God if we were to neglect or misuse the senses to our own disaster, so, by an emphasis gathering force from the infinite issues involved, should we dis-

please him if we were to dethrone Reason in order to set up any other tribunal of moral and spiritual duty.

The Bible everywhere conforms to and recognizes this view. Abraham, pleading for Sodom, referred to the standard of right and wrong existing in the common sense of the race, — implanted there by God himself as the countersign by which men may surely recognize him and his works, — and reasoned on the assumption that he who had ordained such a tribunal would not desecrate or do violence to it, when he said, "That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"[1] And God, by his tone of reply, approved the view which the patriarch took. Isaiah was directed by the Lord to appeal to this same standard: "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard: what could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"[2] So the 18th and the 33d chapters of the prophecy of Ezekiel are mainly the record of an argument addressed to the Jews by the prophet, at God's command and dictation, making appeal before this very tribunal of right reason and sound common sense, which he had set up in the human breast, in proof of his own righteousness, and

1 Gen. xviii. 25. 2 Isa. v. 3, 4.

of the sin of Israel, summing up the whole by claiming a verdict from that tribunal for himself and against them: "Are not my ways equal, and are not your ways unequal, saith the Lord?" Paul cannot refer to any thing other than this arbiter, when he declares, in the 2d of Romans, that men "are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." And to this judgment-seat Christ himself appeals, when, in the 12th of Luke, he says, "Why, even of yourselves, judge ye not what is right?"

There can, then, be no sound rational or scriptural argument upon the relations of man to God, which does not rest upon this fundamental truth, that Reason — as I have explained the term — is the ultimate judge of what is true. Either this must be so, or God has made it impossible for us securely to distinguish truth from falsehood, and left us to drift helpless upon the eternal ocean.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH REASON MUST DECIDE.

A TRUE decision from Reason must be a reasonable decision; and a reasonable decision is one founded upon reasons; and a decision founded upon reasons must be one in which the facts of the given case, claiming judgment, are referred to, and compared with the great principles of right, their aspects toward those principles noted, and so the decision made up upon those aspects. If Reason is to tell us whether those who die impenitent will be eternally lost, or not, she must do it by bringing that question to the test of all the self-evident principles within her purview which bear upon it. The first step toward an answer to that question, then, becomes the identification and clear statement of those principles. To this work I now advance.

I. *The first principle is, that while Reason recognizes herself as the final judge, with reference to the reception, by the mind, of any thing that claims to be religious truth, she is yet incompetent, without help, to conduct that mind to all that religious truth which it is needful for man to know.*

This is because she sees that she cannot see all that is essential to human safety and happiness. She is conscious of immense reaches of truth spreading far, on every side, beyond the circle of the horizon that shuts her in; and though so far that she cannot know them, nor solve the problems which they present, they are not so far but she can see that those problems must have important reference to human well being. She therefore craves help. She looks around for it. Specially does she this when the question turns toward the future world. She knows, that, though all men may guess, no man of himself can *know* any thing concerning that which lies beyond the grave. She cannot believe that this life is to be all of human life; yet, unassisted, she has nothing which she can make the basis of any secure decision with regard to any life to come. Distressed thus with her own essential incompetency to decide for man some of the most important questions that cluster about his life, reason looks around for help. She decides it to be most improbable that that great and wise and good Being, whom she discerns at the helm of the universe, should leave his creatures in the dark, where light is so essential to their welfare; and this leads her to the enunciation of a second principle, in her judgment on this subject; namely: —

II. *Reason decides, that since, alone, she cannot solve the gravest questions of human destiny, it is both necessary that God should, and probable that he will, make up*

this deficiency in her data of knowledge by a revelation to her of those facts which must otherwise remain beyond her reach.

In the judgment of Reason, it is incredible that such a Being as she readily perceives God, in his works of creation and providence, to reveal himself to be, should permit that creature of his, for whose development he shaped, subordinately, all material things, and in whose well or ill being and doing the problem of the success or failure of universe must find its resolution, to remain permanently destitute of any knowledge, the possession of which is *essential* to his welfare. Feeling, therefore, that there is much knowledge in regard to this world, and every thing in regard to what comes after this world, which lies beyond the research of the unassisted human powers, yet is imperative to human prosperity and happiness, Reason decides that it is to be expected that God will make a revelation of this needful, but otherwise impossible, knowledge. To suppose that he will not reveal it, under these circumstances, is to suppose that he does not know that men need it, or does not wish men to possess it. To suppose that he is not conscious of our great want, is to suppose that he is not God; and to suppose that he does not wish men to possess all knowledge needful to make them perfect, is to suppose that he does not wish them to become perfect as He is perfect, — conclusions which Reason cannot accept,

especially in the face of the opposite teachings of a volume asserting itself to contain such a revelation from God.

This leads to the enunciation of the next principle which bears upon the matter before us; namely: —

III. *When her attention is called to the Bible, and she has examined its claims, Reason decides that God has spoken in it, and that its unfoldings are to be received as an authentic revelation to man of the particulars of that knowledge which he needs to know; could not know without it; can know with it.*

There are four great considerations which bring sound human reason to this decision in regard to the Bible. One is its thorough cognizance of the fact, that man needs a revelation of truth which he otherwise has no means of knowing. The second is its apprehension of the fact, that the Bible does actually make just that revelation of truth which man needed to receive, and looked for elsewhere in vain. The third is its discovery, that there is nothing in the Bible inconsistent with its claims to be such a revelation. The fourth is the assurance which it has, that the manner in which this revelation has been made and authenticated to the race is such that there is no reason to doubt, but every reason to believe, that it is indeed what it professes to be, and inwardly appears to be, — a divine revelation.

This process of establishing belief in the authenticity of the Bible resembles that which satisfies the absent child of

the genuineness of the letter which he gets from his father at home. He needed some money, and some advice in regard to his future course. He knows that his father knows his need. The letter contains that money and that advice. And further, the handwriting, postmark, style, incidental allusions, all things, are such as they ought to be, if the letter did come, as it professes to come, from his father to him. So of man's need of the Bible, — its adaptedness to supply that need, and the natural fitness of its incidental circumstances. Satisfied on all these points, Reason says it is from God; it has come to supply the knowledge that we lacked; it is reasonable for us to receive its declarations, and make them the basis and guide of life, — even though they should, in some particulars, be obscure, or even very different from our anticipation.

But here some one may object. You are craftily begging the very question in dispute. You now assume that Reason will accept the Bible as a revelation from God, even though it reveal the future punishment of the wicked; while the very point at issue is, whether the doctrine be not in itself so unreasonable, that men cannot and ought not to believe it, however revealed, and therefore cannot and ought not to receive, as from God, any book that should reveal it, — on your own admission that Reason is final judge.

I reply, Reason *is* final judge, and there are good grounds on which it might consistently reject the Bible as assuming

to be a revelation from God; but the fact that it reveals the future punishment of the wicked, if it be a fact, is not one of them. The whole matter hinges on this inquiry: What would justify Reason in rejecting the Bible as from God? I think there are five grounds, on either of which Reason would be justified in rejecting the claims of the Bible.

(1.) If there were no evidence of the existence of any God, then it would be absurd to receive any volume as his message to us.

(2.) If God's character was manifestly such as to make it in the highest degree improbable that he should make any revelation to man, then it would be in the highest degree improbable that any volume should be his message to us.

(3.) Or if man clearly needed no revelation; if he had knowledge enough of all kinds without one, so as to be just as well off in the absence of any Bible as in its presence; then it would be absurd to suppose that any volume contained such a needless message from God.

(4.) Or if the Bible were encompassed with outward improbabilities sufficient to much more than outweigh any inward probabilities which it contains that it is a revelation from God, then it would be absurd to receive it as such. As, for example, if it were susceptible of demonstration that the books of the Bible were written centuries after the date claimed by them, and by other persons than

their reputed authors; or if it were notorious that the individuals who first put them in circulation were bad men and public deceivers; or if different copies and versions varied so widely as to render it hopeless to get any consistent and reliable record; or if it was clear that the book had been practically injurious wherever it had gone; then Reason would be justified in denying that it came from God.

(5.) Or, once more, if the Bible were inwardly so improbable as to overbalance all outward probabilities of its divine origin, then Reason would do right to decline to receive it as from God.

There are five inward improbabilities which I can imagine, either of which, to my mind, would justify Reason in the rejection of the Bible, no matter what might be the outward evidence, *provided Reason could feel certain that she had possession of all the related facts as a basis for judgment.*

(a.) If it really made no revelation; told us nothing that we needed to know, — nothing that we did not know before, — then it must be absurd to imagine that God sent it here. For this reason, I reject the pretended revelations of Spiritualism. I have never seen any sufficient evidence of its telling us any thing of the least value that we did not know before.

(b.) If it were a weak and silly volume, I should reject the Bible, as fatally lacking the necessary dignity of inspiration.

(c.) If it were a self-contradictory volume, I should reject the Bible; for, if one-half its books neutralized the other half, if all sorts of conflicting assertions were made by it, we should say at once the book is not merely useless, but impossible to come from a God of truth.

(d.) So, if the Bible contradicted facts obvious to sense; if it said the moon shines by day, and the sun by night; that the earth is flat; that the sea is solid; that men are quadrupeds, or any thing else thoroughly irreconcilable with our consciousness of realities around us, — our reason would be obliged to reject it as a voice from God, whom we cannot help believing to know and to speak that which is true.

(e.) So, once more, if the Bible clearly contradicted the first principles of natural morality, my reason would reject it; because I cannot help believing that my convictions of right and wrong were given me by God himself, that I may use them in judging what is right in him as well as myself; what is right in any thing purporting to be his Word, as well as in the words and acts of my fellow-man. And it would be absurd for me to believe that any revelation which God should make in a book can contradict that previous revelation of right which he has implanted in my breast, on purpose that I may have some standard by which to receive or reject any document subsequently purporting to come from him. It is much as if a king

should send an ambassador to a distant court that is surrounded by hostile influences, and puts into his hands the key of an intricate cipher in which all his official despatches will be written. Now, this ambassador may receive many false messages from enemies who have intercepted the true letters of the king, and who have tried to mislead him by their own deceptive ones: but he always has the means of verification; and, so long as he rejects every thing which his key will not unlock, he acts reasonably and safely. So conscience, and our innate sense of right, are our key by which to test every thing which claims to be revelation; and all which it will not apply to we shall be safe to reject. But, as I said, we must *be sure* that we thoroughly understand the subject that we reject; that we have all the facts which ought to come into the case; and that the apparent discrepancy between it and natural morality is a real one, and is not the unavoidable consequence of want of information on our part.

Suppose, when the "London Times" announced, on the 17th of July, 1858, the departure from Queenstown of the fleet on its mission to connect the shores of the Old World and the New with an ocean telegraph, a copy of it should have struggled over distant seas to some remote land where dwelt a man of science who had never heard of the proposition to lay down such a telegraph cable, or of those wonderful modern advances in the science of electro-magnetism which make such a work possible: the question is,

what posture of mind would be reasonable in him concerning this intelligence. If the "Times" stated that those ships had started to lay down a chain cable, or a cotton cod-line, for that distance and that purpose, clearly he would be justified in saying at once, "The rumor is false; the thing is incredible! A chain cable would cost more than any sane nations would pay for such use; would be more cumbrous that any fleet could manage in the transit, and would be worth absolutely nothing for the purpose desired when down. And a cotton cod-line could carry no electricity, nor would it bear the strain of trailing for the first half-mile. Therefore the rumor must be false: my knowledge of science is sufficient to warrant me in rejecting the idea as utterly absurd.

But suppose the statement is, that they are carrying over a little rope of twisted wire covered with insulating and protecting material, as was the fact, and he should then say: It must be false; the thing is incredible; my knowledge of science assures me that it is impossible to make electricity work over so immense a space; and two sensible nations would never attempt an impossibility, — the question would be, is he acting now as reasonably as before?

Before, he was *sure* he was in possession of all the facts needful to a correct judgment; but is he sure now? Does he not, from want of information, for which he is not to be blamed, overlook the very facts which are most of all

necessary to the formation of a correct judgment in the matter, — the facts, that experiments of which he never heard, and of a character quite new and surpising, have convinced those having the thing in charge, that (by the use of a machine of which he never even dreamed) there is such assurance of success as to make the attempt in the highest degree reasonable? Is it not clear, that, under all the circumstances, the truly wise and rational course would be for him to say: This matter is very strange; I had always supposed it to be impossible to manage the electric fluid to any purpose under conditions of so great difficulty, and I am aware of no machine by which it could be made to carry messages across the Atlantic. At first thought, the idea seems incredible; and yet it never becomes the man of science to say of any thing that is difficult, it is *impossible*, because it is difficult; and since the rumor comes through a channel every way reliable, and even in the columns of a copy of the "London Times," I will suspend my judgment concerning the subject long enough, at least, to read the whole article announcing it, and not say, point blank, that it cannot be a copy of the "Times," because it contains this rumor. It may after all turn out, that, from want of knowledge, I have omitted some essential fact that would explain the whole. And yet, on the face of it, it does still seem incredible.

It will, I take it, be readily granted on all hands, that this would be sound sense in the case supposed; and I

submit that it indicates to us what is sound sense in regard to all questions touching the acceptance or rejection of the Bible as God's Word, because of some apparent conflict of its teachings with natural morality. If it gravely told us, that God will lie, or, that it would be *right* for God to lie; if it said, "Thou *shalt* steal," "Thou *shalt* commit adultery," "Thou *shalt* kill," "Thou shalt *not* honor thy father and mother," "Thou shalt *not* remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," — we should be safe in rejecting its claims as a revelation, because we know sufficiently the elements involved in such a question to warrant our decision. But suppose it tells us that God will punish eternally those who will not accept his offers of mercy in this world, is it safe for us to reject the Bible for that, as being against natural morality? Are we *sure* that we know *all* the facts? The question is broader than the Atlantic, and deeper than its depths! It reaches over into eternity! May we not overlook the very principle which, if seen, would remove all our difficulty? Does not sound Reason say here: This seems indeed very dark, yet I feel that I am but imperfectly acquainted with the facts. I am not enough master of the subject confidently to say that a book with such a revelation cannot be from God. I will rather examine its claims; and, if they satisfy me, I will decide that it is reasonable to receive it, in spite of all its mysteries, and wait for further knowledge hereafter; for, needing a revelation as much as we do, it is more reasonable to

receive a volume *with such difficulties mingled with its great and obvious blessings* than to take the ground that God has made no revelation at all to our need.

The way of the reasonable mind, in regard to such truths beleagured with difficulties, was well stated by Sir Matthew Hale: "It is true that they, [i.e., these truths] being above the reach of Reason, cannot be by force of Reason assented unto; yet there is no reason against the truth of them. Natural Reason hath a privative opposition to the knowledge of them; namely, an absence of a necessity of assenting, not a positive opposition, or a constraint by necessity of reason to disassent to them."[1] So, also, a later writer has suggested with great force and beauty, "There are truths to be believed which are not and cannot be reached by any native shrewdness of intelligence, or by the consecutive deductions of reasoning. Of this description are some of our convictions as to infinity. Of a similar character are many of the doctrines which God has revealed in his word. In regard to some of these, not only is a deductive reasoning incapable of demonstrating them, Reason in its highest degree is incapable of fully comprehending them. When it labors to do so, it is encompassed in darkness, and finds itself utterly at a loss, as it would seek to reconcile them with other truths sanctioned by Reason or experience. But still, even here, faith is not without reason; for, in regard to certain of these truths, the intuitive Reason which

1 Discourse of the knowledge of God and of ourselves, p. 105.

commands us to believe in them is above all derivative Reason; and, in regard to truths revealed to us supernaturally by God, Reason calls on us implicitly to submit to them as to an intelligence which cannot err. *Reason always demands that we should have evidence, immediate or mediate, in order to believe; but it does not insist that the truth be completely within the comprehension of the reason, or unclouded by mystery of any description.* Faith has ever the support of Reason; yet it goes far beyond Reason, and embraces much which is far beyond the conceptions of the intellect in its widest grasp and excursions. It is because man has a natural capacity of faith in the unseen and unknown, that he is able to cherish a faith in the supernatural truths of God's word. It is because he has the natural gift of faith, that he is capable of rising to the supernatural grace."[1]

This leads us to the next principle which Reason settles, and which has a most important bearing on the subject before us, namely: —

IV. *Reason, having accepted the Bible as the needed revelation from God, and studied its affirmations, decides that it is reasonable to receive it, and, interpreting it on sound principles, to make it in all particulars the guide of faith and life.* Of course, if we need it, — and, notwithstanding all its difficulties, it is what we need, — it is reasonable to receive it; and, since we do not receive it

1 McCosh's Intuitions of the Mind inductively investigated, p. 426.

unless we make its words the teacher of our faith and the guide of our life, it is reasonable for us to shape all belief and action by its voice. To have it, and neglect to live by it, would be as wickedly absurd as the throwing-away of a life-preserver when one is struggling for existence among the storm-waves.

But what are the sound principles of its interpretation? The Bible is a multifarious and many-sided volume, presenting its message in a great variety of aspects. It has some phase of truth for every mood of man. The parable instructs the child; the precept, the philosopher. The history illustrates the precept, the biography re-enforces the history; and so voices come — from Eden to Patmos — from every page to every ear, often diverse in seeming, yet always blending, at last, into the grand monotone of eternal truth. How, amid this vast diversity of outward form and sound, shall man gather securely from it its great inward and vital lessons?

Reason has her ready answer. She suggests the following, as obviously just principles on which to proceed in interpreting its words: —

A. *We must take the whole Bible as our revelation, or none of it.* It hangs together, and stands or falls in the mass. Christ vouched for the Old Testament in the same shape in which we have it to-day. And the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament are so interwoven, that we must pass judgment upon it as a whole. It is *all* reasonable and reliable, or none of it is. That moment in which Theodore Parker could reasonably say, I don't believe such and such portions of the history of Jesus, and therefore threw it out of the canon, I, by the same right, may say, I don't believe in such and such other portions; and another, by the same right, may say, I don't believe in Paul; and still another, I don't believe in Peter; and yet another, I don't believe in John; until, together, we have eviscerated the New Testament, and left ourselves with no Gospel and no Bible at all. And all reasonably, if it is reasonable for him to begin! Each of our reasons is as reasonable as his: my I don't like it; it doesn't commend itself to my good sense in this chapter and this verse, is just as good — I mean, of course, before the tribunal of my reason — as his before his reason; everybody's else as good as either. And so the Bible is left to fall asunder into useless fragments; like a cask, when, one after another, you knock off the hoops.

It may be confidently affirmed that it is impossible to receive the Bible as a revelation from God, unless we receive the whole of it as such, for these two reasons: —

(a.) All the evidence which we have to establish any of it as from God establishes the whole as from him. Christ indorsed the Old Testament — undeniably identical with that now in our possession — as a whole; while to succeed in demonstrating the claims of the eight men who wrote the New Testament to inspiration, is to succeed in

justifying the claim of the entire contribution of each to our faith. If they were inspired at all, their inspiration covers every line and letter of their books; if they were not inspired, then no line nor letter of their books is inspired: so that it is, in the nature of the case, impossible to dissect out a verse here and a verse there, and throw it out as worthless, while receiving the rest. We *must* take the whole, or none. While, —

(b.) Such a semi-revelation as is supposed by those who would accept a part of the Bible, and reject the rest, at their own judgment, would be really no revelation at all; because we should need a second revelation to make clear to us what portions of the first are trustworthy, and a third to certify us how much of the second one to believe, and so on *ad infinitum*. Besides, to assume to sit in judgmenton the details of a revelation from God — after Reason has satisfied herself that it is a revelation from him — is to treat it as no longer a revelation, but as a mere communication within the purview of our criticism. To criticise its details is to assume to have the knowledge to do so; to have that knowledge, we must be above them; and for us to be above them is to place them below us: and so we take them down from the loftiness of God's thoughts, which are not ours, and degrade them to the level of mere good advice, to be taken or rejected at our pleasure.

So that I insist upon it as the first rule of a sound interpretation of the word of God, that, rightly understood,

every part of the Bible has equal claim with every other part upon our confidence and obedience.

B. *The second rule is, that the language of the Scriptures must be interpreted by the laws of language honestly, honorably, and without twisting or forcing, to suit any preconceived theory, or any existing logical necessity.* Much of the language of the Bible presents this difficulty over that of other ancient writings, in that it labors to express the most recondite and spiritual truths in the matter-of-fact, materialistic speech of men; compelling it to seize upon common sensuous epithets, and endeavor to dignify and hallow them sufficiently to make them hint the great realities of God. In doing this, it simply follows the necessary laws of all growth of language by which words always travel up from lower to higher usage, — from a material to a metaphysical and religious sense. Thus, to express the idea of the soul, it took the word for breath (because, when the breath is gone, the soul is gone), and put upon it that higher significance, idealizing it as *spirit*. So, to convey the conception of immortality, the word signifying "to spoil," "to corrupt," was taken, and prefixed by a negative; and so the compound "not-to-corrupt" was freighted with the sense of immortal life. In like manner, when it was desired to express the idea of repentance, there was nothing better than to lay hold of the compound "to change the mind," and impress upon it the new idea; though, in this case, sometimes the kindred compound, "to change the

purpose," was used to hint the same result from a slightly different point of view. So *heaven* is "the expanse of the sky," because God was supposed to dwell there; *hell* is "hades," that is, the "under-world," or "gehenna," that is, "the Valley of Hinnom, whither all the abominations of Jerusalem were sewered, and where they were burned.

As every one of this great company of words embodying spiritual ideas — which can be comprehended by us, and described to us, only through the metaphysical suggestion of some sensible object or transaction — is thus a flower or a fruit, grown on the stalk of some prosaic literal epithet or phrase, of course it follows that all of them, which have not so long been spiritualized as to have dropped all trace of their birth into oblivion, may be said still to have two meanings, the primal and the secondary: nay, as they often retain, for some uses, still, that primal sense, they may, on one page, mean one thing literally, and, on the next, another thing spiritually. So that it becomes a great art of the honest interpreter to decide, from the connection and the good faith of the writer, in what sense his language, in any particular instance, ought to be taken.

It is a favorite artifice of those who would empty the Bible of all reference to any future punishment of sin, to seek to prove that the terms used in a secondary, metaphysical sense, to teach it, should only be taken in their first and literal sense, which would not teach it; that "hell" is only "the Valley of Hinnom," &c. But the interpreter

must be cautious how far he moves in this direction to accommodate their desire, lest in self-consistence he be compelled to overthrow the whole fabric of spiritual religion not merely, but to crowd language from its infinite diversity and luxuriance of intellectual and spiritual wealth back into the bleak poverty of its crude and rudimentary forms; making it impossible for God to reveal any thing to man, lest perchance he should reveal a hell for the persistently sinful. Such conduct, if any thing can, must come under the condemnation of "adulterating the word of God,"[1] and "cheating by it."[2]

C. *The third rule is, the Bible must be so interpreted as to be self-consistent.* If we find Christ prophesied in the Old Testament, as to be the Messiah, we must expect to find the history of the New revealing his coming, as to fill that office. If we find it revealed that the righteous are to be rewarded with life, and the wicked with death, and the same adjective is used to describe the duration of the life of the one and the death of the other, we must translate it in the one part of the verse as we do in the other; though it sadly teaches us that the death of the wicked will be co-eternal with the life of the good. If the revelation is not thus consistent with itself, it is not the work of a consistent being; is not God's word, — does not, cannot, claim our faith.

D. *The fourth rule of a reasonable interpretation is,*

[1] 2 Cor. ii. 17. [2] 2 Cor. iv. 2.

that, among possible senses of a given passage of the Word, that which is plainest, and most likely to strike the mind of an unprejudiced reader of common intelligence and culture, is likeliest to be right. This, because the Bible is intended for the great mass, — and the great mass will always be rude in culture; and, if the Bible is to do them any good, it must be so shaped, that, in their hasty glances, they may grasp its general significance; that, in their hurried and homely perusal, though wayfaring men and — in the wisdom of the world — fools, they need not err therein. If it is not such a Bible as gives its genuine (though not its completest) sense to the unskilful searchings of the rudest swain, it is either because God would not or could not make it so; and that he would not, we should affirm as reluctantly, as that he could not.

E. *The fifth rule of reasonable interpretation is, that the Bible should be dealt with as a progressive revelation.* That it is so is obvious on the face of it. The world was young when its first books were written. Men were as children. The Hebrews were rude and illiterate. The Sermon on the Mount would have been as unintelligible on the plain before Sinai as the "rule of three" is to the boy only half through with simple addition. The gradual training of the Jews to sacrifice a lamb for their sins was all the approach to the doctrine of Christ crucified — the lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world — that they were then prepared to appreciate. Fifteen hundred years

after, fifteen centuries of sacrifices had educated them up to the apprehension of the idea of the atonement through the blood of Jesus. So, measurably, with all doctrines.

We therefore do violence to the fundamental construction of the Bible, if we assume that all its books are on a level of preceptive revelation, and suspect the doctrine of the Trinity, or that of the atonement, or of immortality, or of future punishment, because we cannot find them as clearly set forth in the Old Testament as in the New, and are unable to get proof-texts of equal clearness for them from every page of the word alike.

F. *The sixth rule of a reasonable interpretation is, that the Bible is to be understood naturally, and from the position occupied by its own speakers and audiences.* This would be too obvious to demand a word, did not men so strangely misunderstand the Scriptures. Nobody thinks of reading Shakspeare or Spenser, as if written now, and affixing to his language the signification now current; but, when we study old authors, we endeavor to drink in the spirit of their time, and hear them as their cotemporaries heard them, and interpret them as their friends and neighbors did. So we ought to do with the Bible. If we wish to know what Christ really meant to teach on any given occasion, we must try to settle exactly what he would naturally have been understood to mean by those who heard him: and, in nine cases out of ten, that is his real meaning; *always*, I think it is safe to say, where he

does not avowedly speak in parable or prophecy unexplained, or with some similar limitation or modification expressed or obviously understood.

G. *The seventh rule of a reasonable interpretation of Scripture is, that we cannot expect to understand it all, or perhaps, indeed, little of it fully.* This follows from the necessary incomprehensibleness of many of its topics to our minds in their present stage of advancement. God, eternity, heaven, hell, the soul, — these are themes that run at once far out beyond any present human power of complete comprehension, just as the blue heavens stretch away beyond the utmost limit of our eyesight. We may understand them in another world. Our best interests here require that we should have hints about them. And so God reveals something concerning them. But the very attempt to bring them down at all to our present plane of thought brings down their difficulties with them, and introduces us partially to numberless questions which we cannot answer now, — ought not to expect to be able to answer here. Yet, concerning these, sound Reason says: Believe what portion you can, and trust God for the rest; it is not necessarily unreasonable or false because you cannot now understand it.

A telegraph-wire sings in the morning breeze before your door. Your little child gazes at it, and asks you to tell him about it. You say it carries messages. But how? You try, and try, and try again, but find, that at

his tender age, and with his limited data of knowledge, you cannot make him understand *how* it does it. Yet you feel that it is reasonable for him to believe it on your word, though it may seem absurd to him; and, troubled by an inconsistency that to his little mind seems fatal, he keeps on saying, Father, the wire is dead iron, how *can* it talk or write or carry? You answer: My son, you cannot expect to understand this now, — one of these days, when your mind grows large, and your studies embrace these subjects, you will.

The same is true of us — the wisest of us — in regard to some of the revelations of the Bible. As we are now, we cannot expect to make every thing which it contains consistent with every thing else in the Bible, and out of it, — not because of its non-consistence, but because our minds are not yet developed enough, our range of study is not yet broad enough, to fit us to see that consistency.

H. *The eighth rule of a reasonable interpretation of Scripture is, that, where two interpretations are possible, that one is probably truest which has most commended itself to the Christian experience of the past.* This is naturally suggested by the consciousness of our personal inadequacy to such investigations as the Bible offers. We crave help to our work. We long to know how other minds, looking on these same great questions from other quarters of the heavens, — from the varied influences of distant climes and diverse ages, — have regarded them. We

have found that we can get wisdom from the experience of our fellow-men on every other subject: so we believe we can do in the inquiry what in their life they have proved to be the most satisfying, apposite, likeliest sense of the Scripture. Besides, the promise is, that the Holy Spirit will interpret the word; and we want to know what the result of his work in the past has been. It is eighteen centuries since Christianity began to gather its system out of the whole Bible as we now have it. More than twice that number of generations have rolled away, each having its proportion, larger or smaller, of faithful, humble, devout, godly men and women; the savor of whose sweet graces in a naughty world makes the record of the inward life of the Church during all those ages, in spite of its outward troubles and shames, to be "as ointment poured forth." Every one of them has had communion with the mind of the Spirit, and, with all personal imperfections and all frailties incident to nation or station, has been divinely led into sympathy with essential godliness. Differing widely in lesser matters, they have been mainly one in their great life and love. They have been one with each other because one in Christ; one in Christ because one in the truth of Christ; one in the truth of Christ because divinely led by Christ into one truth, — the truth of God, which always makes men wise unto salvation. The Bible is a *practical* revelation. Men have *tried* its precepts, and the Church has therefore prepared herself to testify: This

is true, for it has proved true in our case; we have found this precept sound, this doctrine effective, this duty blessed.

When, then, two interpretations of any portion of the Bible are possible, that stands a very strong chance of being truest which can claim the coincident faith and love of the Church of Christ during all these ages; not necessarily of the Church in its hierarchal forms, as men are apt to look to it (for there is often least of the inward spirit where there is most of the outward form, so that what calls itself and is called "the Church," *par excellence*, may be but the world specially rampant in ecclesiastic garb). But ignoring the Church nominal, as ambition and unholy policy have made it, if we look to the Church real, the humble faithful ones who in every generation, often cast out as evil by "*the* Church," have maintained their regenerate purity, and lived and walked with God, we shall find their words reflecting light upon the sacred page. God promised expressly that his Spirit should lead his children into all truth, and it is not reasonable to suppose that he has failed in great essentials to verify that promise. Therefore that version of a controverted doctrine which truly good men have most loved and believed, bears this reasonable witness of its probable truth, — especially as against one which they have almost uniformly rejected.

I. *The ninth rule of a reasonable interpretation of Scripture is, that, where two interpretations seem to be*

possible, that is often probably truest which we naturally like least. I do not mean to intimate that the Bible is against our natural instincts, or adverse to our innocent tastes; but that many of its doctrinal teachings, being medicine for our disease of sin, are apt to seem bitter to our spiritual palate. We are naturally wanderers from God, and at antagonism with him; our will being opposed to his will. But his Word must naturally contain and be saturated with his will, and therefore will be likely to express itself in terms distasteful to our will. So that, where two spiritual senses seem possible to God's words, that sense is often likeliest to be nearest his will, and therefore truest, which is furthest from ours, and which, therefore, we like least. We may indeed expand this into a general principle, and safely pronounce that interpretation of the Word of God which favors God most and sin least to be *prima facie* the true one, because the very object of the gospel is to destroy sin. If there can be gathered out of the Scriptures two theories on any subject, each claiming the support of sundry passages, it will nearly always be safe to conclude, other things being equal, that that theory which is most comfortable to the sinner must be the false one, and that theory which is strictest in its judgment, and sternest in its condemnation of all evil, and least inviting toward transgression, must be the true one.

J. *Still another principle which reason suggests for the interpretation of the Bible is, that, where two senses*

are possible, that must be most reasonable which is on the whole safest for man. This is not sinful selfishness, but rational self-care; for sound judgment always says, In a world of danger, you are sacredly bound to make the best provision for your own safety that you can. If, of two commercial ventures which are equally profitable, one has large contingencies of loss which the other wholly avoids, no sane merchant would risk his all upon the uncertainty when the certainty was equally at his disposal. No wise traveler selects a route where it is quite probable that he may meet with disaster and death, in preference to one, even though less inviting, which promises absolute security. If, then, for our eternal journey into the cloud-curtained and mysterious future, we can classify the great biblical guide-book into the indication of two possible paths, one of which, if too late there should prove to be any mistake about our understanding, will endanger our final wreck, while the other by no possibility *can* do so, sound reason will at once and instinctively select that which gathers most of security about that after-world which has in itself the elements of so fearful a mystery, and say: 'This is the way, — walk ye in it.

Two objections have been urged against this principle: one, that, if true, it proves too much, and would make Romanists of us all; the other, that it is a mean and ignoble one. Both misconceive its real character and just application.

(1.) The Romanist insists, it is said, that Protestants *may* be wrong, while "the Church" is infallibly right; therefore, if this principle of safety is to be taken into the account, it will send us all into the embrace of the Papacy.

To this I answer: Not unless the claim of the Romanist be a valid one; and, if it be, we ought to follow it. His assumption, that there is no safety out of his Church, begs the very question at issue, and is worth nothing until it can establish itself out of the Bible before the judgment-seat of common sense. If it can do so, then safety, and every principle of honor and right as well, would prompt us to become Romanists. If it fail to do so, safety, no more than every principle of honor and right, constrains us to resist his assumption.

(2.) It is objected that to make the superior safety of a given course of conduct an element in coming to the conclusion that the Bible recommends it, is a cowardly and dishonorable procedure, — one that would have made its disciple a Tory in the Revolution, a "Copperhead," in our present struggle.

This not only begs the question equally with the other, — for events, in both cases mentioned, settle it that the path of safety and the path of duty are identical, — but it ignores the important difference between the idea of safety as one rule of interpretation of the work of God, and as an element in the decisions of human conduct. It lies on the

face of the Bible, and of all the Divine Providence over men, that human safety was a moving consideration on God's part in all. "Christ Jesus came into the world to *save* sinners;"[1] and Paul characterizes the design of the gospel as to be "for *salvation* unto the ends of the earth."[2] Surely, then, if human safety is one great design for which a revelation has been made to men, it cannot be unreasonable for them to bear that fact in mind in their interpretation of that revelation; and, where its language admits of two diverse constructions, to put upon it that which, so far as they can carefully judge, will be safest for them.

The truth is, that those very men, who, when they apprehend danger to their theology from the admission of such a principle into the interpretation of the Scriptures, reject it, and sneer at it as an "appeal to our selfishness and our fears," habitually and unquestioningly act upon it as a fundamental principle of their daily life. They never think it to be an act of selfishness and of fear to select the stanchest and most seaworthy of two competing lines of steamers when they take passage for a foreign port; or, even that route of rail, for a journey of a few miles, which is reputed freest from all risk of accident and harm. *Then* the consideration of superior safety is a rational and honorable one. How, then, on any sound principles of reasoning, does it suddenly become so mean and despicable, when it is proposed to apply it to eternal things!

[1] 1 Tim. i. 15. [2] Acts xiii. 47.

Thus, then, I sum up our argument thus far. It is reasonably settled that Reason, as I have defined it, is our ultimate judge in matters of religion.

Yet, when interrogated upon so vast and wide a question as the eternal punishment of those who die in impenitence, she replies that she cannot without help answer it; but has cause confidently to rely upon help from God to enable her to answer it.

She decides it clear that he has sent her the aid which she needs, in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; and so remits us to their pages for her final verdict.

She decides that it is the highest dictate of Reason for us humbly and faithfully to receive whatever we find in those pages, soundly interpreted.

She decides that sound principles of interpretation are these: —

1. We must take the whole of it or none.

2. We must interpret it honestly, honorably, and in the interest of no previous theory.

3. We must interpret it consistently with itself.

4. The plainest and most obvious meaning, other things being equal, is probably the true one.

5. We must interpret it as a progressive revelation.

6. We must interpret it naturally, and from the position of its own speakers and audiences.

7. Yet we cannot, with our finite minds at their present stage of development, expect to understand it all; perhaps, indeed, little of it, fully.

8. Of two equally possible meanings, that is likeliest to be true which has most commended itself to good men all along the ages.

9. Of two equally possible meanings, that is often most probably true which is least tasteful to us.

10. Of two equally possible meanings, that must be most reasonable which seems to be safest for men.

Studying the Scriptures prayerfully, in the use of those principles she decides that we may look to find clear and sufficient answer to our inquiry. To that study let us now advance. And may that great God of infinite wisdom, who knoweth with an eternally perfect knowledge, not only the right answer to this question, but the vast import to his honor and our own welfare of our gaining that answer, with all the difficulties that lie in our path toward it, be mercifully pleased to guard us from error, and to conduct us to that conclusion which shall be right in his sight, for the sake of him who, promising to men the spirit of truth, to guide them into all truth, laid down his own life that he might bear witness to the truth!

CHAPTER III.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

IN endeavoring to develop the actual position of the Bible upon this question of the future eternal punishment of the finally impenitent, it seems to me that it will be fairest, as well as every way most convenient, for us to search, in the first place, for the more direct testimony of the Old Testament; secondly, for that of our Saviour; thirdly, for that of the apostles; and, fourthly, for those more casual and indirect utterances, from whatever source, which, in the light of those previously considered, which are impossible of misconstruction, take a decided, and, from their very incidental character, peculiarly weighty significance.

Such an arrangement will at least facilitate our endeavors to comply with the fourth and fifth rules which we have laid down to aid in a reasonable interpretation; namely, that we regard the Bible as a progressive revelation, and that we interpret it from the position of its writers and speakers. We shall thus also most easily hope to avoid that danger, which threatens the argu-

ments of all who search indiscriminately for proof-texts of any doctrine, guided merely by the apparent appositeness of the language used, of unconsciously affixing to some such passages a sense greater or less or other than really belongs to them when studied in their connection, and balanced by all those counterpoising considerations which naturally associate themselves with their normal intention and relations.

Let us, then, proceed to inquire what is the testimony of the Old Testament in regard to the future state of those who die impenitent.

As we open the book, almost on its first page we read the voice of God to Adam, in reference to the fruit of the tree of knowledge: "Thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof (מוֹת תָּמוּת *mōth tā mûth*), *to die, thou shalt die.*"[1] This is a very peculiar expression. What does it fairly and honestly mean? and how much is legitimately expressed by it? I remark in exposition of it:—

1. It means more than the simple prophecy of physical death as sure to come upon Adam, should he disobey. That idea would have found natural utterance through the future form of the same verb (*yamûthû*), as in Numbers xiv. 35; or, by another verb (*gâvā*), as in Genesis vi. 17; Job xiii. 19, and other passages.

2. It means more than the threatening of what we call

[1] Genesis ii. 17.

capital punishment upon Adam for the offence of eating. That would have found expression by the last word of the two (*tā-mûth*, — *thou shalt be put to death*), without the intensifier (*mōth*, — *to die*), as where Pharaoh told Moses: "In that day thou seest my face (*tā-mûth*), thou shalt die;" [1] and where God decrees that the negligent owner of an ox which gores a man (*yumōth*, — another tense of the same verb) "shall be put to death." [2]

3. But if this language meant more to Adam than the mere prophecy, that to eat the forbidden fruit would prove suicidal to his bodily life; more even than the threat, that he should be put to death for such disobedience; what did it mean? If to have told him "Thou shalt die" would have been telling him that much, what was he to understand from being told, that "he *should die to die*," if he disobeyed?

One answer is, that it was a mere hightening of emphasis (as in Genesis xx. 7; 1 Sam. xiv. 39, 44; 2 Sam. xii. 14, &c.), making the sense of it to be, "There can be no mistake about it; thou shalt *surely* die." But to this it may be replied, that there seems to be no call for such special emphasis in the divine utterance here, if simple physical death were all that were intended. The idea of death, in any form, was as yet without illustration before

1 Exodus x. 28.

2 Exodus xxi. 29. Compare also Numbers i. 51, and many kindred passages.

Adam's mind; but he was unhackneyed in speech, words had not lost force to him by that long familiarity which breeds contempt; and, so far as death meant any thing to him then, its force would seem to have been as sufficient of itself as if hightened by such repetition.

It seems to me that to tell Adam that, if he disobeyed, he *should die, to die*, was, vaguely to be sure, — for all such ideas must have lacked important elements of clearness and force to his virgin mind in its earliest hours, — to tell him, not merely that his physical life should come to an end, but that that dying should be for the purpose of yet another death beyond, — he should die, in order to die; dying here, that he might die again, and somewhere else. And, if we examine the use of the same words in the next chapter, this view, to my mind, gains confirmation. There, in the interview between the serpent and Eve, the latter says to the former,[1] "Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said (to us) ye shall not eat of it, and ye shall not touch it, lest (*t'mû-thûn* — third person plural, future, without the intensitive) *ye shall die*." The serpent in his reply does not give her back her own term, which might apply to physical death only, but adds the very word which God had originally used in his interview with Adam, but which Eve had dropped out, and says, "By no means (*mōth t' mû-thûn*), *to die shall ye die;* for God is knowing that, in the day of your eating

1 Genesis iii. 3-5.

of it, your eyes shall be opened, and ye *shall be God-like, knowing good and evil.*" The latter member of the antithesis here intimated reflects light upon the former; and, by suggesting the idea of God-likeness and omniscience as the real result of eating the forbidden fruit, the serpent indicates his understanding of God's threat to have consisted in the opposite of God-likeness and omniscience, which is much more decidedly the eternal death of impenitence than the mere instantaneous cessation of the bodily life.

But, whether the Hebrew text necessitates this view or not, it demands more, in my judgment, than mere prophecy or threat, more even than emphasis from the double verb; and the great majority of careful students of the verse have regarded it as projecting a dark mysterious menace over into the shadowy future, — as revealing to the first man, as clearly as the circumstances of his case made possible, the fact that unrepented sin compels an unrewarded eternity.[1]

1 There seems to be great good sense in Calvin's suggestion in explanation of this text, that "the definition of this death is to be sought from its opposite, — the kind of life from which man fell. His earthly life, truly, would have been temporal; but he would have passed from it directly into heaven, without death and without injury. Hence it follows, that, under the name of 'death' is comprehended all those miseries in which Adam involved himself by his defection."— *Comment.* i. 127.

So Bush says, "We are taught by the actual result what sense to affix to the terms. So that the threatening embraced all the evils, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, which we learn elsewhere to be included in the term *death*, as a punishment for sin."— *Comment.* i. 63.

But grant that here, in this first experience of the race, was laid the corner-stone of the revelation of the doctrine of future punishment, the question at once arises: Why did not the superstructure immediately follow? I answer, there is something more than poetry in the idea, that the life of the world resembles the life of individuals. History is full of illustrations of the fact, that the nations have their infancy when their ideas are crude and their capacity for knowledge is limited. So the race had its centuries of childhood. The children of Israel were at first incapable (as we readily perceive the savage now to be) of understanding abstract and advanced truth, and needed to be led from weakness to strength, and then from strength to strength, by the simplest picture lessons. Accordingly, we find that God, for centuries, dealt with them as with children, gradually advancing from milk to strong meat, as they were able to bear it. And the Bible contains the record of this advance, with that of the means used to accomplish it.

Now, as we practically know that immature minds are more influenced by the present than by the future, and as we are, therefore, not accustomed to secure the obedience and moral advance of our young children by appeals to a distant retribution, so much as by immediate and tangible discipline; so God did not, at first, rely for the training

of the Hebrew mind upon the idea of the eternal life, and of heaven and hell, with their rewards and punishments, so much as he sought to stimulate obedience by motives appealing to their immediate and temporal welfare. Length of days, peace, wealth, and honor were promised to him who obeyed the law; while disaster, distress, and death were threatened as the punishment of the disobedient and rebellious. In this, nothing was either affirmed or denied in reference to the future world, — just as we neither affirm nor deny any thing in reference to it while we are training our little ones by nearer and more obvious considerations."

But it is objected here, that, if the doctrine of eternal punishment be true, it was true in Adam's time; true through all those early centuries which intervened before the race, in their slow progressive intelligence, began to take knowledge of it; but that if so true, and if all those generations of men were exposed to it, God ought — and from his known character might be expected — to have announced it "on the very morning of creation, in the most positive and unmistakable language, as a warning to Adam and all future generations. And if it was not so announced, no man, who reverences the character of God, ought to ask for a more overwhelming presumptive proof that it is *not* true."[1]

[1] Review of Rev. H. M. Dexter's Sermon, by Rev. T. B. Thayer. Boston, 1858, p. 10.

To this I answer: —

1. If revealed, as we claim that it was, to the extent to which the immature Hebrew mind was able to receive it, that revelation was, under the circumstances, fair and sufficient.

2. If, by any sudden, miraculous work upon that mind, it had been possible for God to highten the distinctness and force of that revelation, it is not clear that it would have added any thing to the safety of the receiver of the doctrine, while it would clearly have added to the guilt of its rejectors.

3. The Scripture makes obvious the fact, that responsibility and guilt are always directly and exactly proportioned to the degree of light in possession; to the result that only "as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law," so that God will be clear when he judges.

The essential futility of the principle on which such an objection rests may be illustrated thus: If it be a fact that poison is deadly to human life, it is a fact while children are yet too young to comprehend it. But, if all the infants in the world are hourly exposed to death by poison, a God of infinite power and kindness might be expected to announce that danger on the very morning of human existence, in the most positive and unmistakable language, as a warning to every babe in the world. And, if it has not been so announced, no man who reverences the character of God ought to ask for a more overwhelming presumptive proof that poison is not deadly to human life!

Though a long time passed, then, before future rewards and punishments were at all urged upon the Hebrews as motives of action, it is not true that they did not believe in the immortality of the soul. Their ideas were doubtless crude and dim at first; but the laws which Moses made against necromancy,[1] or the invocation of the dead, imply that the Israelites must have had some impression that dead men were not gone into non-existence.[2] So the record which was made of Enoch, "God took him," implies an invisible life with God. So where Jacob says, "I will go down into *sheol* unto my son,"[3] he suggests his belief of a place where society is possible among the departed. And the common phrase of one dying, "he went to his fathers," or "was gathered to his fathers," indorses the same belief. Job, with a brave heart, though in speech so vague as to demonstrate that his convictions were not yet clear, points towards the future world as the place where his Redeemer should vindicate his character,[4] and even inquires of his friends if they have not heard, and will not admit, that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, and will be brought forth in the day of wrath; adding — in evidence that he does not mean any day of wrath in this world — that this will happen though the wicked man here is prosperous, and is borne with honor to the tomb.[5]

Gradually, clearer intimations are given of the future

1 Deut. xviii. 11. 2 Gen. v. 24. 3 Gen. xxxvii. 35.
4 Job xix. 25. 5 Job xxi. 29-33. See Barnes on Job, i. xciii.

world, and more decided allusion is made to the separation there between the righteous and the wicked. A thousand years before Christ, the Psalmist speaks with much greater distinctness and decision. He says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell (*sheol*), and all the nations that forget God."[1] "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest."[2] So "Salvation is far from the wicked."[3] So he closes a vivid picture of the guilt and excess of bad men, and the record of his wonder that God should permit such guilt in them, by saying, that, when he went into the sanctuary of God, he understood "their end," and saw that they were to be brought into desolation, and consumed with terrors.[4] And in the ninety-second Psalm he pursues the same thought, "When all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever."[5]

A little after, we find the authors of the Book of Proverbs, and of the Ecclesiastes, speaking even more strongly. We read, "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death."[6] And again, "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness; but the expectation of the wicked shall perish."[7] And yet again, "When a wicked man dieth his expectation shall perish."[8] And again, as if to explain some of the mysteries of life

1 Psalm ix. 17. 2 Psalm xi. 6. 3 Psalm cxix. 155.
4 Psalm lxxiii. 17. 5 Verse 7. 6 Proverbs xiv. 32.
7 Proverbs x. 28. 8 Proverbs xi. 7.

by the fact that the punishment which the wicked deserve is delayed, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil;"[1] which, for its full effect demands to be regarded as an implication of a future execution of such sentence. So we are told that "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil,"[2] where not only judgment, but retribution, beyond the grave, is inevitably asserted.[3]

Passing on to the times of the prophets, we find Isaiah saying, "Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hand shall be given him;"[4] and Ezekiel declaring that God will pour out his fury upon the wicked, and accomplish his anger upon them, and judge them according to their ways, and recompense them for all their abominations;[5] and Amos predicting that they that swear

1 Ecclesiastes viii. 11. 2 Ecclesiastes xii. 14.

3 Prof. Stuart argues with great force in proof that the design of the Book of Ecclesiastes is to prove (1) that retribution, adequate and just, of good and evil, will certainly be made. (2) It is not made here. (3) Therefore it will be made in the future world. He says, "If there be any way of properly shunning or avoiding this conclusion, it is unknown to me." And some German critics, like Knobel, have considered the verse quoted above as so clear and unmistakable an assertion of a future judgment, that they have supposed it to be the forgery of some later date, because they held that the author of the book could have had no such belief. But Prof. Stuart both shows that its author could and did believe it, and that there is no shadow of proof of the imagined forgery. — *Commentary on Eccles. pp.* 33, 296.

4 Isaiah iii. 11. 5 Ezekiel vii. 8.

by the sin of Samaria, "Even they shall fall, and never rise up again;"[1] and Nahum urging, "The Lord is great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked."[2]

The last verse of the prophecy of Isaiah says of that distant future when the kingdom of God shall be finally and perpetually established, "And they (God's people) shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."[3] Here is the origin of the metaphor which we shall find Christ often using in his fearful descriptions of the future condition of the wicked.[4] So the last chapter of the prophecy of Daniel (supposed to date about 534 years before Christ) indicates a clearer conception than before, of the great idea of a future and unending difference between the righteous and the wicked. The prophet — speaking of some time of future resurrection of

1 Amos viii. 14. 2 Nahum i. 3. 3 Isaiah lxvi. 24.

4 "The Saviour (Mark ix. 44–46) applies *this language* to the future punishment of the wicked, and no one, I think, can doubt that in Isaiah it *includes* that consummation of worldly affairs. The radical and essential idea in the prophet is, as it seems to me, that such would be the entire overthrow and punishment of the enemies of God; so condign their punishment, so deep their sufferings, so loathsome and hateful would they be when he visited with divine vengeance for their sins that they would be an object of loathing and abhorrence. They would be swept off as unworthy to live with God, and they would be consigned to punishment loathsome like that of ever-gnawing worms on the carcasses of the slain, and interminable and dreadful like ever-consuming and inextinguishable fires." — *Barnes's Comment. on Isaiah*, ii. 457.

the dead — says, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."[1]

The history of the Hebrew word שְׁאוֹל (*sheol*) illustrates this progress of the ideas of futurity and future punishment in the Old-Testament times. It literally means a hollow, subterranean place, and first came into use as a name for the grave. As where Jacob says, "I will go down into *sheol* unto my son mourning.[2] But, as the grave is the visible resting-place of all of the dead that is obvious to sense, it was a very easy transition that soon after led to the application of the word to the spiritual position of the departed, — the home of all souls, a vast receptacle where the life that had ceased here is continued until the resumption of the body at the resurrection, and the day of judgment with its decisions. Gradually, as the successive utterances of inspired men and the successive books of the Bible imparted to the Jewish people clearer ideas of the future state, this word came to be modified in accordance with those ideas. *Sheol*, the great cavernous under-world, was conceived to be divided; its upper portion was imagined to contain an inferior paradise, where the righteous waited until the resurrection and the judgment should remit them to heaven; and its lower portion — the abyss, *gehenna* — was supposed to retain the souls of the wicked

1 Daniel xii. 2. 2 Genesis xxxvii. 35.

until the same epoch of finality. Sometimes the word clearly carried more distinctly the latter significance. David uses it in a sense which can not naturally apply to any place, in this world or the next, where the righteous as well as the wicked are sent.[1] So in Proverbs we find several passages so employing it as most naturally to suggest the association with it, in the mind of the writer, of the idea of the abode of the wicked and miserable dead.[2]

The Old Testament was the great teacher of the Hebrew people; given to be so, and demonstrably fulfilling its design. It follows, therefore, that the state of opinion on this subject actually existing among the Jews, at the time when the canon of the Old Testament was closed, and it had wrought its full work upon their minds, may be taken in evidence of the actual fact and force of its instructions. And what that state of opinion was we need be at no loss to discover. Josephus, born four years after the ascension of Christ, whose learning and opportunities of knowledge will not be questioned, describes with considerable care the philosophical and religious belief of the nation. He classifies the Jews into three sects, — Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes; the first dividing with the last the vast majority of the nation. Of the Essenes he says, "To the bad they allot a gloomy and tempestuous cavern full of never-ending punishment."[3] He says that the Pharisees

1 Psalm ix. 17. 2 Proverbs v. 5; ix. 18; xv. 24; xxiii. 14.
3 Jewish War, book ii. chap. 8, sect. 11.

believed that the souls of the bad "suffer eternal punishment."[1] Of the Sadducees he says, "The permanency of the soul, and the punishments and reward of Hades, they reject."[2] These last were the infidels of their day, and Josephus elsewhere adds, "This doctrine is received but by a few."[3] So that, on his testimony, the vast majority of his nation, when Christ came, were firm believers in the future punishment of the wicked.

Jahn sums up his researches into the doctrine of the Jews in this department, by saying that the Pharisees taught "that the spirits of the wicked were tormented with everlasting punishments; that the good, on the other hand, received rewards;"[4] and that the Essenes believed "that the good after death received rewards beyond the islands of the sea, and that the wicked suffered punishments under the earth."[5]

The Jewish Rabbis had various theories of explanation of the mysteries involved in this fearful subject, but they agreed in teaching an eternal difference between the righteous and the wicked.[6] We find corroboration of this as the view then taken by the Jewish nation as a whole, in the fact, that future punishment is appealed to as a motive

1 Jewish War, book ii. chap. 8, sect. 14. 2 Ibid.
3 Antiquities of the Jews, book xviii. chap. i. sect. 4.
4 Biblical Archæology, p. 403. 5 Ibid. p. 411.
6 See a learned article by Prof. Barrows in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for July 1858.

to virtue in the apocryphal books, (supposed to range in date from B. C. 300, to B. C. 30,) which — although without the authority of inspiration — have yet a certain value as witnesses of the opinions of the times which produced them. In the second book of the Maccabees, the old man Eleazer is represented as refusing to be guilty of deceit to save his life, for he says, "Though for the present time I should be delivered from the punishment of men; yet should I not escape the hand of the Almighty, neither alive nor dead."[1] So a young martyr is represented as saying, with his dying breath, to the wicked king: "Think not thou, that takest in hand to strive against God, that thou shalt escape unpunished."[2] So in the third chapter of the Wisdom of Solomon we read, "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them;" while of the wicked it is said, "If they die quickly, they have no hope, neither comfort in the day of trial; for horrible is the end of the unrighteous generation."[3]

So conclusive is the evidence on this point, that no well informed and candid person will attempt to deny it. Rev. T. S. King conceded this in his sermons against the doctrine, saying, "There is no doubt that the Pharisees of the New-Testament times believed in eternal damnation. Let the doctrine receive all the strength and respectability which such an indorsement may confer."[4]

1 2 Maccabees vi. 26. 2 Ibid. vii. 19.
3 Verses 1, 18, 19. 4 Two Sermons, p. 23.

An earnest effort has been made to prove that the Old Testament was not responsible for this opinion thus existing among the Jews, but that they received it from their heathen neighbors. That respectable writer just quoted has even gone so far as to say, —

"There is no allusion, in the Old Testament, to punishment at all in the unseen world. So long as the Jews were under the exclusive influence of the Old-Testament literature and inspiration, they held no doctrine of future punishment. Down to the time of Malachi, it had not appeared among them. That doctrine came into their mind from heathen sources, chiefly from Alexandria in Egypt, and their connection with Greek mythology and speculation. It is only in the later books of the Apocrypha, approaching the time of Christ, that the dogma is detected in their literature."[1]

But the first stone of Alexandria in Egypt was not laid until B.C. 332, and it was nearly or quite a century after that, before it began to be felt as a radiating power in philosophy; and this was two hundred years after Malachi had written the final Old-Testament page, and more than three hundred after the latest utterance (that of Daniel) which I have quoted from the Old Testament on the question at issue, and more than eight hundred after

1 "The Doctrine of Endless Punishment for the Sins of this Life Unchristian and Unreasonable," by Rev. Thomas Starr King. Boston, 1858, p. 22.

David had written, "the wicked shall be turned into *sheol*, and all the nations that forget God." While it is clear to the slightest examination, that the passages of the Apocrypha to which he refers, — which I have just quoted above, — are less clear and decided, as expressions of a belief in future retribution, than many which we have found having their place in the Psalms and the Proverbs and the Prophets, centuries before the name of the city of Alexandria was ever syllabled from mortal lips. It would, in point of fact, be a much easier task to prove that Alexandria learned its doctrine from Jerusalem, than that Jerusalem imported hers from Alexandria.

We are prepared, then, to say, in answer to the question, What is the doctrine of the Old Testament in regard to the future state of the impenitent, that, conforming to the immature and only gradually advancing condition of the Jewish mind, the Hebrew Scriptures very gradually, and at the best dimly, and yet with growing distinctness, did convey to the Hebrew nation the great ideas of immortality, and of future punishment for the wicked, and reward for the righteous. That nation had actually received those ideas from them, and had wrought them radically into its theology, before the Christian era. And such — with the exception of the inconsiderable sect of the infidel Sadducees — was the decided conviction, though perhaps not very intelligent or intelligible to themselves, of the Jewish people when Christ came.

I do not claim that the fact, that the Jews when Christ came did actually believe in the future punishment of the wicked, establishes either the truth of the doctrine, or renders it *certain* that they took it from the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. But I do claim, that the fact of such belief greatly hightens the probability that we are right in understanding those writings as really teaching what we have seen that they seem to teach, while I insist that this universal belief, which, from some cause, had worked its way into the substructure of the actual theology of the nation to whom Christ preached, is of the greatest consequence to be always and everywhere remembered in the interpretation of his words.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TESTIMONY OF CHRIST.

WE pass next to the inquiry, What was the actual teaching of our Saviour on this question of the future punishment of the wicked?

But here we are met in the outset by the objection that our New Testament gives us but the most fragmentary record of the utterances of Christ upon eternal subjects, and that since, in his humanity, he shared the oriental temperament, his language ought not to be pressed to that degree of literal interpretation which would be allowable in the construction of the dry decree of a court, or the formal act of a legislature.

Grant both of these, for argument's sake, and it will still remain imperishably true, that our Saviour did teach *some* doctrine (however fragmentary in form, and however poetic); and that his solicitude for men was such as to make him greatly desire that they should not be misled in eternal things, and his intelligence such that he could not fail to perceive the drift of their minds under the circumstances in which they were addressed by him.

Doubtless, we shall all agree that he both knew whether the doctrine of future eternal punishment is true or false, and knew that it must be of consequence to human welfare for men to know; and — since he was divinely honest — we have a right to suppose that he shaped his words (however fragmentary, and however poetic) in such a way that they would not tend to mislead the multitude, whose welfare he desired with a desire which led him to the cross.

These things are indisputably true: —

1. Christ knew that the vast majority of all whom he addressed, — the few Sadducees excepted, who, being rich and exclusive, seldom came into contact with him, — did believe that the wicked will be punished in the future world. Whether they got that doctrine from Moses and the prophets, from Alexandria, or from some other source, they had it, and held it.

2. He was himself a Universalist, or (for neutrality on such a question is impossible) a believer in the doctrine of an eternal hell for those who die in sin.

3. As one who knew all things, and loved men, even so much as to lay down his life that they might live, he not only knew that the truth on that subject was of great consequence, but he must have had a most earnest desire that all might come to the knowledge of that truth, and act in view of it.

4. Such being the facts, for him to say nothing about

the doctrine before his Jewish audiences, while discussing the great realities which shape the soul's destinies, would have been to have sealed to their minds its truth by the consent of his silence.

5. Such being the facts, further, for him to have spoken casually of the doctrine without condemnation would have been to give it, before the Jewish mind, the benefit of his manifested consideration, with the natural seeming of agreement with it.

6. Such being the facts, still further, whenever he did utter himself directly upon that question, his language must necessarily take on the force of the fullest and clearest indorsement of the doctrine, of which his words could be capable, unless he in terms opposed it; because, under the circumstances, he must have intended to indorse, unless he did oppose it.

We may illustrate his position, with the inferences which it necessitates, thus: suppose a teacher of political economy to have visited Charleston, S.C. in the first year of the Rebellion, where he would have found the people — without visible exception — earnest advocates of State rights and of secession. In lecturing upon his favorite science there and then, for him to say nothing about the State-rights' theory, or to refer to it by any words of indirection, would be practically to indorse it. Nothing short of the language of direct attack would be taken, in such a position, in evidence of dissent from the drift of the

general mind, — language which must have left instant traces on the records of the time, of bitter, perhaps bloody, answer.

So, when Christ was in Jerusalem, the Jews were no Universalists. If he had been one, he must necessarily teach like one, and his teaching would stand out into relief upon the background of their dissent.

With these obvious principles in mind, we need not go amiss in our interpretation of what Jesus actually did say upon the question before us; and we will proceed to glance, in chronological order, at every recorded word of his having obvious reference thereto.[1]

The conversation with Nicodemus is the first recorded instance of any utterance upon it.[2] Christ urges upon this rabbi of the Jews the necessity of being born again, because, without it, one can not see the kingdom of God,— a phrase, which, unquestionably, was understood by Nicodemus to include reference to future life in heaven. And this inference must necessarily have been encouraged in his mind by Christ's subsequent remarks: That the Son of man must be "lifted up," like the serpent in the wilderness, that whosoever believeth in him should *not perish*, but have everlasting life: for God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever

1 The order is that of Dr. Robinson's "Harmony," and Prof. Greenleaf's "Testimony of the Four Evangelists."

2 John iii. 1-21.

believeth in him should *not perish*, but have everlasting life; adding, that God sent his Son that the world might through him *be saved*. Here is, obviously, running through all this conversation the clear intimation of future remediless danger, from which one course only — that of belief in Christ — can save the world. Christ knew that Nicodemus was a Pharisee. Even Universalists admit that the Jews, and particularly the Pharisees, at the time of Christ, did believe in future punishment, though they think they got their faith from Alexandria, and not from the Old Testament. But for this matter, it made no difference whence Nicodemus got his faith in future punishment; he evidently must have had it, and Christ must have known that he had it, and must have known whether it was true or false, and must have known that, if it were false, it ought to be rebuked, — and yet, in the face of all this knowledge, he tells him that if he is not born again he must perish. Now, we may call Christ incoherent, or poetical, or what we please; but, unless we call him *dishonest*, I think we must, under these circumstances, admit that he did intend to encourage (certainly did not intend to *dis*courage) the faith of Nicodemus — as a Pharisee — in future punishment.

Significant also are the words of the Samaritans of Shechem, when, after Christ had preached there two days, subsequently to his interview with the woman at Jacob's well, they said, "Now we believe; for we have heard

him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, *the Saviour of the world.*"[1] Had he not taught them, then, that the world was lost without him, and so far as it should withhold faith in him?

The next record is at the pool of Bethesda, where Jesus healed the infirm man on the Sabbath day.[2] The act disturbed the Jews, who raised a tumult against him. He seized the opportunity to address them, defending himself for saying that God was his Father, and adding (remember that this was a crowd of Pharisees, who believed in future punishment, and whose error, if Christ were a Universalist, he was bound to rebuke), "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and *shall not come into condemnation*, &c. The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and *they that hear* shall *live*, &c. 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.*" Now, as I said before, we may call this poetry, or we may call it prose; but, if we call it the sincere utterance of an honest voice, we are driven to believe that our Lord himself believed and taught the future punishment of the wicked.

1 John iv. 42.

2 John v. 1–47.

Next comes the Sermon on the Mount.[1] Throughout, — especially when you interpret it in the necessary recollection of the fact that Christ was speaking to those who had been trained to believe in future punishment, and must therefore have been predisposed to interpret his language into coincidence with that belief, — this sermon is veined by thoughts that look and lean that way. The opening beatitudes, in their glorious promise of comfort and heaven for the possessors of the virtues which they catalogue, perpetually intimate a darker alternative for those who lack them. The remark that saving righteousness must exceed the strict, technical, yet hollow righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, in order to "enter into the kingdom of heaven," surely has no look like that of censure for their faith of hell for the wicked. So all those striking precepts, which affirm and re-affirm the need of a more thorough and genuine excellence of character than that which the Pharisees possessed, would naturally lighten their old impression of the uncertainty of future salvation. Then the distinct command, "Enter ye in at the *narrow* gate,[2] — for wide is the gate and broad is the way

1 Matthew v. 1 to vii. 29; Luke vi. 20–49.

2 Τῆς στενῆς πύλης. [*tēs stenēs pulēs.*] This adjective, στηνος [*stēnos*], is the epithet which Herodotus uses (B. 7. 223) to describe that narrow and difficult pass, in a rugged and mountainous country, where Leonidas fell at Thermopylæ. It includes the two ideas of narrowness and difficulty; that is, it pictures a path which is not only unfriendly to travel because of its confined dimensions, but because of its rough obstacles.

that leadeth to destruction, and *many there be that go in thereat;* because *narrow* is the gate and *narrow* the way that leadeth unto life, and *few there be that find it*" — contains — most of all to that audience — the unmistakable announcement of our Saviour's belief in the future punishment of the wicked. And that revelation is confirmed by the illustrations that follow: of the burning of fruitless trees; of the exclusion from the kingdom of heaven of those who merely say, "Lord, Lord;" and by the fearful, final image of the dreadful ruin of the house that was not founded on a rock.

Next in chronological order occurs the healing of the centurion's servant, with the Saviour's remark, — called out by the faith which the centurion, as a Gentile, exhibited beyond any yet seen in Israel, —"I say unto you that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness, — there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."[1] Doubtless, modern ingenuity can explain this text into some reference consistent with the system of Universalism. But the real questions are, What did those to whom Christ made the remark understand by it? and how did he mean them to understand it, — questions whose honest answers can not fail to give us the passage.

1 Matthew viii. 11-13.

Next on the record are those words of upbraiding, in which Christ reproached "the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done," because they repented not.[1] They are vague in their anathema, yet, as I conceive, it must have been impossible to dissever them, in the minds of the listening Jews, from distinct reference to the doom of hell.

Next is the healing of the demoniac, followed by the blasphemy of the Scribes and Pharisees, and the Saviour's consequent declaration: "Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost *hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.* And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, *it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.*"[2] Does this sound like the language which an honest Universalist would utter in the ears of those whom he knew mistakenly believed in future endless punishment, and whom he wished to convert from that error to its opposite truth?

Next comes the discourse called out by his dining with a Pharisee, and the discussion that followed in reference to their ceremonial rites.[3] What does Christ say now,

1 Matthew xi. 20-30. 2 Mark iii. 20-30. 3 Luke xi. 37-54.

when he expressly takes it upon him to rebuke and denounce their errors? "Woe unto you, Pharisees, for ye tithe mint and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God." Does he rebuke their belief in future punishment as an error? Hear him: "Fear him, which, after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell, yea, I say unto you, fear him." "He that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God." "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise *perish*."

Next we have the parable of the tares, with its interpretation, ending, "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."[1] Take away, now, as much as you please of the drapery of this, and put it to the account of the rhetorical tendencies of Jesus, can you make it the doctrine of a Universalist? Must there not remain, underneath all drapery, the honest, earnest purpose to arouse the sinner to alarm with reference to the future?

So also, on the same occasion, explaining his parable of the net with the bad fish thrown away, Christ says, "So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come

1 Matthew xiii. 24-53; Mark iv. 26-34.

forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

Next, we come to Christ's sending forth his twelve apostles to teach and to preach throughout Judæa. We have seen, that, so far as the record shows, he has never yet intimated to those apostles that the belief of the endless punishment of the wicked in the future world which, as Jews, they had previously held, was an erroneous one; but, on the contrary, has always encouraged it, and intimated that it was his own. And now that he formally sends them out as Christian teachers, enumerating the doctrines which he desires them to preach everywhere, is Universalism one of them? There is certainly no precept to them to teach it. But we find more than one distinct reference to its opposite, as being truth. He exhorts them — in allusion to the perils that might encompass them — "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell;"[1] and encourages them by the assurance that "he that endureth to the end shall be saved.[2]

We have, soon after this, the detail of a discourse of some length in the synagogue at Capernaum,[3] in which, in answer to repeated inquiries, our Saviour develops his views in regard to human salvation. Yet here he says

1 Matthew x. 28. 2 Matthew x. 22. 3 John vi. 22-71.

nothing of Universalism, but everywhere guards his words as if hell threatened all men, and deliverance from it could only be obtained through faith in him: "Labor for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." "Every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life." "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." And when many of his disciples called this "an hard saying," and murmured at it, Jesus did not relieve their dissatisfaction by preaching any less distasteful doctrine, but re-affirmed his words, and let them go. And they "walked no more with him."

Not long after this, Jesus said unto his disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"[1] From one whose previous teaching had been what we have seen Christ's to be, to those whose previous training had been what it is impossible not to believe that of the disciples had been, how unmistakably does this imply, and rest its whole weight upon, the doctrine of an eternal hell!

We next come to the account given[2] of the strife among the disciples, which should be greatest in the kingdom of

1 Matthew xvi. 24-26. 2 Matthew xviii. 1-35.

heaven, and the rebuke of Jesus, who took a little child and said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" adding, subsequently, the recommendation to avoid every obstacle in the way of salvation, and even urging to cut off the members of the body, if they cause sin, — since it is better to enter maimed into eternal life, than "to be cast into everlasting fire."

A second time[1] Christ sent forth his followers, now the seventy, to teach and to preach, and in his commission again he instructed them to exhibit the danger of refusing to repent, and declared that Capernaum, for its neglect of his word, should be "thrust down to hell."

We next find him reproving the unbelieving Jews at Jerusalem, and saying, "Ye shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye can not come,"[2] — an utterance which, to their ears, inevitably predicted eternal punishment.

Our next record[3] is of Christ's answer to one who came to him as he was journeying for the last time toward Jerusalem, and, as if to draw him out on this very point in controversy among us, said, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" His remarkable answer was: "AGONIZE,[4] *to*

1 Luke x. 1-16. 2 John viii. 12-59. 3 Luke xiii. 22-35.

4 The Greek word is Ἀγωνίζεσθε (*agōnizesthe*). It is a word taken from the gladiatorial games, applying to their contests there; and means "struggle as for life." It is the word from which our verb *agonize*, and its noun *agony*, were derived.

enter in at the NARROW[1] *gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able;*" and then he goes on to picture the scene, at the end of time, when bad men shall knock at the door of heaven for admission, only to get the answer: "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Strip this of all its poetry, if it has any; does it look like the honest attempt of an honest Universalist to preach Universalism to the Jews who believed in future punishment as an imported Alexandrian error?

Next in order[2] we have the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, in which Christ, for the purpose of illustration, seizes hold of the current Jewish idea of *sheol*, and pictures Lazarus as entering the portion assigned to the good, and the rich man sinking into its scorching depths, and thus vividly depicts the contrasted results of worldliness and piety; without, indeed, affirming any thing with reference to the accuracy of this imagery, yet most certainly, in general, sanctioning the current Jewish idea of the impossibility of the restoration of the wicked.

Next, in the account of the rich young man,[3] we find Jesus remarking to his disciples upon the extreme improbability of the salvation of the rich, and to their astonished

1 See p. 65. 2 Luke xvi. 19–31.

3 Matthew xix. 16–30; Mark x. 17–31; Luke xviii. 18–30.

query, "How, then, anybody could be saved," replying that "with God all things are possible."

So, in the parable of the wicked husbandmen,[1] we find Christ strongly urging the idea, that those who reject him must be for ever lost: "He will miserably destroy those wicked men." And he goes on immediately to press the idea in the same parable of the marriage of the king's son,[2] where the man who presented himself without a wedding garment was bound hand and foot and taken away and cast into outer darkness: where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, "*for many are called, but few are chosen.*"[3]

On the same day we find Christ denouncing the Pharisees and their opinions.[4] But he does not denounce their belief in the eternal punishment of the wicked; does not intimate that it is an error; but, on the contrary, after rebuking their formality and hypocrisy, he thunders out: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

We come next to Christ's prediction of the judgment-day,[5] to which he was led by a natural transition from his announcement of the impending destruction of Jerusalem. And here he says, in preliminary parable, that the un-

1 Matthew xxi. 33–46; Mark xii. 1–12; Luke xx. 9–19.

2 Matthew xxii. 1–14.

3 He had used this precise expression a short time before; see Matthew xx. 16.

4 Matthew xxiii. 13–39; Mark xii. 40; Luke xx. 47.

5 Matthew xxiv. 43–51; xxv. 1–46.

watchful and unprofitable servants shall be cast "into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;" and then draws the picture of the great last tribunal; all nations gathered; the angels attending; the Judge on the throne; the righteous on the right hand accepted, and the Judge saying to those on the left, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels;" summing up by the observation: "These shall go away into κόλασιν αἰώνιον (*kólasin aiōnion*, punishment everlasting); but the righteous into ζωὴν αἰώνιον (*zoēn aiōnion*, life everlasting)."

Of this adjective αἰώνιος, — here used to bound and describe both the life of the good and the punishment of the bad, — it is enough in this connection to say, that, whatever may be its possible meanings, our special concern is with its actual sense as habitually used by the writers of the New Testament.

It is employed seventy-two times in the New Testament. In four instances, it is loosely used as an adjective describing long past events, as where it is translated "Before the world began,"[1] &c.; in two instances it is used to represent a complete eternity, without beginning or end, — once of God, and once of Christ. In eight instances it refers to an eternal future, as "The things which are not seen are eternal."[2] In seven instances it is applied to the future of Christ's kingdom, as, "The everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."[1] In forty-four instances it describes the unending life of the good, and in the remaining seven instances it similarly describes the unending death of the wicked. There is absolutely no indication, in its New-Testament use, that, in the passage under consideration, or any similar one, it was intended to include any limit to its significance. And, whatever that significance may be, it is clear that Christ here attaches it as effectually to the life of the good as to the death of the bad; so that, if the latter be limited, the former must be also.

[1] 2 Timothy i. 9. [2] 2 Corinthians iv. 18.

In his conversation with his disciples, after the institution of the Lord's Supper, before they went out to Gethsemane, the Saviour — still referring to the doctrine which he had found in existence among the Jews, and which his teaching had never assailed, but often strengthened — declared to them, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."[2] And in the prayer which followed,[3] he said of them, "None of them is lost, but (Judas) the son of perdition," is lost; of whom a little while before he had affirmed, that "it had been good for that man if he had not been born," — language which it seems impossible to justify, if the feet of the apostate, after never so weary a pil-

[1] 2 Peter i. 11. [2] John xv. 6.
[3] John xvii. 1–26.

grimage through perdition, are, at last, to stand on the golden pavement of heaven.

On his way to the cross, Christ told the daughters of Jerusalem that the days are coming when the unbelieving shall try in vain to hide under the hills and behind the mountains, from the vengeance of God.[1]

And, after his resurrection, as he was about to ascend up where he was before, we find him re-affirming the entire teaching of his life on this subject, in the final command to his disciples: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and *he that believeth not shall be damned.*"[2]

And John afterward, summing up the whole matter, says of his record of the teachings of the Saviour, "These are written, that ye (all future generations) might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; *and that believing ye might have life, through his name,*"[3] which is in itself an assertion of his undoubting faith, that eternal life is possible only to those who escape eternal death by faith in the mercy of God through the crucified one; and yet John was the beloved and intimate disciple, who must be supposed thoroughly to have known, and faithfully to have reported, the views of his great Master.

Such are the words of Jesus upon the question before us. They are *all* the words of his which the Holy Spirit

1 Luke xxiii. 30. 2 Mark xvi. 15–16. 3 John xx. 31.

thought it important should be recorded bearing directly upon it. They are all *on one side* of that question. They settle the aspect of Christianity toward it. Not one of them — when we remember that they were uttered to those who believed in future eternal punishment, and whom, if wrong in that belief, it must have been our Saviour's first great desire to correct in reference to it — is susceptible even of ambiguity. They are scattered through all his active years, journeys, teachings. They increase in solemn earnestness as he drew near the end of his career. They culminate their distinctness and their strength in his final words to his disciples.

If any man can prove by them that Jesus Christ was a Universalist, by the same process he may prove, from their writings and history, that George Washington and Abraham Lincoln were traitors, and Benedict Arnold and Jefferson Davis and John Wilkes Booth, true men and patriots.

The only way to avoid the conclusion, that Christ believed and taught the eternal punishment of those who die impenitent, is to deny that the New Testament can be depended upon as giving a fair and trustworthy account of his views and teachings. This was the view taken by Theodore Parker. He said, "To me it is quite clear that Jesus taught the doctrine of eternal damnation, *if the evangelists — the first three, I mean — are to be treated*

as inspired. I can understand his language in no other way.

"But as the Protestant sects start with the notion, which to me is a monstrous one, that the words of the New Testament are all miraculously inspired of God, and so infallibly true; and as the doctrine of eternal damnation is so revolting to all the human and moral feelings of our nature, men said the Word must be interpreted in another way.

"So, as the Unitarians have misinterpreted the New Testament to prove that the *Christos* of the Fourth Gospel had no pre-existence, the Universalists have misinterpreted passages of the Gospels to show that Jesus of Nazareth never taught eternal damnation." [1]

So the same frank writer has confessed, in one of his elaborate treatises, "It is vain to deny, or attempt to conceal, the errors in his [Jesus'] doctrine, — a revengeful God, a Devil absolutely evil, an eternal Hell," &c. "He considers God so imperfect as to damn the majority of men to eternal torment." "Hell is eternal, and the wide road thereto is traveled well." [2]

Entirely equivalent to this is the admission of Rev. Thomas Starr King: "I freely say that I do not find the doctrine of the ultimate salvation of all souls clearly

1 In a letter to Rev. N. Adams, D.D., printed in *Evenings with the Doctrines*, p. 402.

2 *Discourse on Matters pertaining to Religion*, pp. 239–243.

stated in any text or in any discourse that has been reported from the lips of Christ." [1]

To these may be added the later admissions of M. Renan. He says, in describing the faith and teaching of Jesus, "The others [the wicked] will go into *Gehenna.* Gehenna was the valley west of Jerusalem. At various periods the worship of fire had been practiced in it, and the place had become a sort of *cloaca.*[2] Gehenna is, therefore, in the mind of Jesus, a dismal valley, foul and full of fire. Those excluded from the kingdom will be burned and gnawed by worms, in company with Satan and his rebel angels. There, then, shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The kingdom of God will be like a closed hell, lighted up within, in the midst of this world of darkness and of torments. This new order of things *will be eternal. Paradise and Gehenna shall have no end.* . . .

"That all this was understood literally by the disciples and the Master himself, at certain moments, stands forth *absolutely evidenced in the writings of the time.*" [3]

We are grateful for these admissions.[4] Coming from men whose bias and desire were against them, they share the eminent value of "declarations against interest" in

1 *Two Sermons*, p. 5.

2 A receptacle of all manner of filth.

3 *Life of Jesus*, p. 243.

4 Thomas Paine, J. S. Hittell, and other infidels have made similar concessions, and denied the New Testament because it does teach the doctrine of future punishment. *Age of Reason*, ed. 1796, part i. p. 18. *Evidences against Christianity*, i. pp. 121–127.

testimony; which the lawyers tell us "are entitled to claim extreme improbability of falsehood."[1]

I maintain, then, as the result of this examination of his words, that Jesus Christ believed and taught the doctrine of the eternal punishment of those who die in sin. His language goes beyond the mere avowal of *future* punishment; it requires for its honest interpretation, the theory that that punishment will never die. The word "perish" [*ἀπόλλυμι—apollumi*][2] means to be destroyed thoroughly, and without any hope of relief. The expression "eternal damnation," must have been understood by Christ's hearers to imply an irremediable and unceasing woe; and if he intended to teach that doctrine, he could use no other stronger words by which to enforce it. It is, therefore, under the circumstances, impossible to believe that our Saviour acted in good faith toward those whom he addressed, unless he intended that they should understand him as teaching that the state of the lost admits of no recovery. And, if he taught thus, that doctrine, fearful as it is, must be true, and we are bound to believe it, and govern ourselves accordingly.

1 *Greenleaf on the Law of Evidence*, i. 198.

2 ἀπόλλυμι is compounded of ὄλλυμι, which means "to destroy," "to make an end of," and απο implying "completeness," "thoroughness;" so that the compound word means "thoroughly to destroy," "utterly to make an end of."

CHAPTER V.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLES.

HAVING seen that the common belief of the Jews when Christ came, was, that the wicked would be punished in the future world for ever; and that our Saviour never contradicted, but, on the other hand, indorsed and re-affirmed that belief, let us now advance to the inquiry, What was the attitude of the apostles towards the doctrine?

We may well infer what that would be. The stream can not rise higher than its fountain. If Christ recognized and re-affirmed, again and again, the existing Jewish faith, that the persistently bad will be eternally punished hereafter, it is not very probable that we shall find the apostles reversing his teaching, and uttering Universalism. Nor, on the other hand, since the future punishment of the wicked was one of the few doctrines upon which they and the Jews were agreed, shall we be likely to find it much dwelt upon by them, except in the way of occasional urgency of argument. Let us glance over the record.

It is obvious, on the very face of the Acts and the Epistles, that the great idea of Christianity, as a scheme

of SALVATION through Christ, was the burden of apostolic preaching; which implies the faith, on their part, that, out of Christ, man can not escape perdition. Peter's sermon at Pentecost presses the point, that "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."[1] And when, a few days after, he addressed the people, after the healing of the lame man, he declared: "And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet (Jesus) shall be destroyed from among the people."[2] And when he subsequently spoke to the Sanhedrim, he said of Christ, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."[3] And so, when, visiting Cornelius by divine command, he had preached Christ to him, he says,[4] it was that he and all his house might "be saved;" and then we read that all the apostles and brethren glorified God because, contrary to their first expectation, he had now visibly granted unto the Gentiles also "repentance unto *life*."

Some five years after, we find Paul gone on a mission into Asia Minor. At Antioch, in Pisidia,[5] he preached to the people salvation through Christ, accompanied with this warning, if they rejected him: "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish, &c." So,

1 Acts ii. 21. 2 Acts iii. 23. 3 Acts iv. 12.
4 Acts xi. 14. 5 Acts xiii. 14-50.

on the next Sabbath, he preached to "almost the whole city," and, when the Jews contradicted and blasphemed, Paul said, "Seeing ye put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles;" and then follows the record, of the Gentiles there: "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

Next in order of time comes in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. Of this he devotes a portion to an earnest persuasion to them to lay hold upon the life and hope of the gospel, saying, — as an argument why they should "walk after the spirit," — of those who were guilty of the sins of the flesh, "Of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God,"[1] and adding the solemn warning, "Be not deceived: God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; for 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."[2]

So, in his first Epistle to the Thessalonians, he encourages believers by saying, "God hath not appointed *us* to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."[3] And, in the second Epistle, which soon followed, he makes it a special point to urge the danger of future punishment as an argument, declaring[4] that "the Lord Jesus shall be

1 Galatians v. 21. 2 Galatians vi. 7.
3 1 Thessalonians v. 9. 4 2 Thessalonians i. 8-9.

revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" adding, further on, the assertion of God's pleasure that "They all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."[1]

About A. D. 57, Paul first writes to the Corinthians. In the course of his letter, denouncing certain false teachers, and the fruits of their instructions, he says, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers, &c. shall inherit the kingdom of God."[2]

Some two years after, Paul writes to the Romans. It is impossible here to do justice to the absolute entireness of conviction, and energy of reasoning with which the apostle, through that whole epistle, asserts, directly and indirectly, the doctrine of future punishment. It begins by a dark picture of heathen vice, and then accuses the Jews of similar guilt, saying, "Thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth [was intended to lead] thee to repentance? But, after thy

1 2 Thessalonians iii. 12. 2 1 Corinthians vi. 9–10.

hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."[1] He then adds: "There is no respect of persons with God; for as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." So, further on,[2] he asks, "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?" and answers, "God forbid! for then how shall God judge the world?" And then he urges[3] that God especially manifests his love in the fact, that, "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," that we may be "saved from wrath through him;" adding the assurance, that Christ's atonement is as broad in its possibilities and offers of salvation as Adam's offence was in its entailment of condemnation: "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," — so that though the impenitent, as a matter of fact, will eternally die, it is yet possible for all men, if they

1 Romans ii. 3–9. 2 Romans iii. 5. 3 Romans v.

would, to exercise penitence, and gain everlasting life. A little further on he refers again to the same familiar truth, "For the end of those things (iniquities) is death. But now, being made free from sin, &c., ye have your end, everlasting life; for the *wages* of sin is death, &c.;"[1] and again he reminds them: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die;"[2] and again he speaks of wicked men as "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."[3]

Some six or eight years after this, while in custody at Rome, Paul writes his epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Hebrews, to Philemon, and the Second to Timothy, all teaching no other doctrine than that so often before affirmed; and which is, on fit occasions, reaffirmed in them. Thus, to the Ephesians, he said of certain notorious offenders,[4] that no such person "hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God," and adds: "Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." And to the Philippians, he says, of the enemies of the cross of Christ, "whose end is destruction."[5] And to the Hebrews, "If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."[6]

1 Romans vi. 21-23. 2 Romans viii. 13. 3 Romans ix. 22.
4 Ephesians v. 5. 5 Philippians iii. 19. 6 Hebrews x. 26-27.

So much for the testimony of Paul. With his intense devotion to that Saviour whom he saw "as one born out of due time," we knew that he could not be a Universalist, and we have found that he was not one, but that he lost no proper opportunity to warn men, as his Master had done, to flee from the wrath to come.

The Epistles of Peter and James and Jude, and the writings of John, remain. They all bear deep the same stamp of Christ's doctrine. Peter says,[1] "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," and "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished;" and again he declares:[2] "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." James declares that[3] "he which converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death;" Jude[4] repeats Peter's testimony in reference to the doom of the fallen angels, and testifies that the sinners of the old world are "set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire," and says of corrupt church-members, that they are "wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." And John, in the Apocalypse,

1 2 Peter ii. 4, 9. 2 2 Peter iii. 7.
3 James v. 20. 4 Jude 6-13.

says of the wicked, "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night," and testifies of "that great city the holy Jerusalem," that there shall "in nowise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life,"[1] and describes the law of the future world as being, "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."[2]

Such — if my success has equalled my intent — is a perfectly fair and honest digest of the opinions and precepts of those who taught by inspiration, after Christ ascended, upon the subject under discussion. I have inserted no word of an opposite character — such as a Universalist teacher in their place would have been likely to promulge — only because I have found none. Nor have I dwelt at length upon their precepts, or attempted to quote largely from them, because I only desired to show that they did not depart from the position of their great Master. We have seen what his was, and we now see that it was theirs also.

1 Revelation xiv. 11. 2 Revelation xxii. 11.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MORE INDIRECT TESTIMONIES OF THE BIBLE.

WE have seen that the Old Testament announces, as directly as was natural to its time and office, the doctrine of the future eternal punishment of the wicked; and we have seen that Christ not only never contradicted that doctrine, but gave to it the full weight of his constant indorsement; and that the Apostles repeated and reaffirmed it as the truth of the gospel.

In developing the evidence of this, I have made reference almost exclusively to direct assertions having for their object an utterance upon that subject. But, if the future endless punishment of the wicked is the doctrine of the Bible, there ought to be also scattered through its pages a great variety of indirect evidences of its truth, in the form of sub-assertions, allusions, inferences, and precepts, founded upon and made natural by it, all inevitable as growing from it, and weaving their roots more or less visibly into the whole texture of the Word. That is to say, if the inspired writers believed and taught the doctrine, they would inevitably often shape their appeals

in regard to other doctrines with reference to it; would make manifest, in many ways and often, that belief, by indirect allusion; while, on the contrary, if they were Universalists, *that* fact would be naturally expected to show itself in this indirect manner, at frequent intervals in their writings. No examination of the testimony of the Scriptures on the question before us can, then, be complete which does not at least glance at this (which may be called circumstantial) evidence, — a form of proof of great value in the courts, and which "often leads to a conclusion far more satisfactory than direct evidence can produce."[1]

Let us now proceed to the inquiry, what is the quality of this collateral and circumstantial testimony of the Scriptures upon the point at issue; premising only that the greatest possible condensation of such testimony is obviously indispensable to its use in this brief treatise. All that can be done is to indicate classes of passages which the reader is desired to examine at large and at leisure in this connection.

1. Those which declare that some *shall be excluded from the kingdom of God;* like, "Many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able,"[2] &c.

2. Those which indicate danger that many will never *possess "holiness*, without which no man shall see the Lord,"[3] &c.

1 Greenleaf's "*Law of Evidence*," i. 19.
2 Luke xiii. 28, &c. 3 Hebrews xii. 14, &c.

3. Those which assert that many shall never *see life;* such as, "He that believeth not the Son of God shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him,"[1] &c.

4. Those which affirm that many *die without any hope;* such as, "Sorrow not even as others, who have no hope."[2] "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death,"[3] &c.

5. Those which record the fact that there are men *for whom there is no forgiveness;* such as, "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that ye shall pray for it,"[4] &c.

6. Those which assert that there are men *for whom the atonement of Christ will not avail;* such as, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness,"[5] such as, "A sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life."[6]

7. Those which make it clear that the atonement, *instead of saving some, will only aggravate their condemnation;* such as, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"[7] &c.

8. Those which testify that the state of the dead *will*

1 John iii. 3. 2 1 Thessalonians iv. 13. 3 Proverbs, xiv. 32.
4 1 John v. 16. 5 2 Corinthians ii. 15.
6 2 Corinthians iii. 16. 7 Hebrews x. 29, &c.

be unalterably fixed, — taken in connection with the obvious fact that many have gone down to the grave in dreadful and unrepented guilt; such as, "If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be,"[1] &c.

9. Those which make it probable that God will be *permanently angry* with some of his creatures on account of their incorrigible wickedness; such as, "Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."[2] "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,"[3] &c.

10. Those which represent men as being in danger of placing themselves *where no prayers nor entreaties will avail them any thing;* such as, "I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh . . . then shall ye call upon me, but I will not hear; ye shall seek me early, but ye shall not find me."[4] &c.

11. Those which state that men *do perish;* such as, "The wicked shall perish"[5] "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish."[6] "These shall utterly perish in their own corruption, and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness,"[7] &c.

12. Those which teach that some men *shall not be saved;* such as, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"[8] "The

1 Ecclesiastes xi. 3. 2 Jude 7. 3 Hebrews x. 31.
4 Proverbs i. 26–33. 5 Psalms xxxvii. 20.
6 2 Thessalonians ii. 10. 7 2 Peter ii. 13. 8 1 Peter iv. 18.

harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved;"[1] &c., taken in connection with the multitude of passages which make salvation conditional on faith and obedience; such as, "Thy faith hath saved thee."[2] "Believe to the saving of the soul,"[3] &c.

13. Those which affirm that wicked men are in danger of going *into a remediless state;* such as, "He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy,"[4] &c.

14. Those which insist on the idea of the great danger that man will *fail of heaven;* such as, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God,"[5] &c. "Why will ye die?"[6] &c.

15. Those which imply the danger of *the misuse of this life considered as a probation;* such as, "What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"[7] &c. "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire,"[8] &c.

16. Those which declare that *the hope of the bad man, that he shall be somehow eternally safe, shall be disappointed;* such as, "The fear of the wicked it shall come upon him; . . . the expectation of the wicked shall perish,"[9] &c. "The hypocrite's hope shall perish,"[10] &c.

1 Jeremiah viii. 20. 2 Luke vii. 50. 3 Hebrews x. 39.
4 Proverbs xxix. 1. 6 Ezekiel xxxiii. 11.
5 Hebrews xii. 15. 7 1 Peter iv. 17. 8 Mark ix. 43–48.
9 Proverbs x. 24, 28. 10 Job viii. 13.

17. Those which *threaten punishment upon those who encourage the wicked to believe that there is no future retribution;* such as the denunciation against them who "with lies have made the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life,"[1] &c.

18. Those which warn men so persistently from one end of Revelation to the other, in so many varied forms of speech, and from so many different points of approach, that there is *a fatal contingency always hanging over every impenitent man*, liable to descend upon him at any moment, and sure to do so at some time, if he does not repent; such as, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."[2] "Now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation,"[3] &c. "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man,"[4] &c. "Fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it,"[5] &c.

19. Those which foretell *destruction as the end of the wicked;* such as, "Foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition,"[6] &c. "Whose

1 Ezekiel xiii. 22. 2 Isaiah lv. 6. 3 2 Corinthians vi. 2.
4 Luke xxi. 36. 5 Hebrews iv. 1. 6 1 Timothy vi. 9.

end is destruction,"[1] &c. "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction,"[2] &c. "And bring upon themselves swift destruction,"[3] &c.

20. Those which affirm that *the death of the soul is the doom of the wicked who will not repent;* such as, "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death,"[4] &c. "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death,"[5] &c. "The wages of sin is death,"[6] &c.

21. Those which foretell *a second death;* such as, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death,"[7] &c. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power,"[8] &c.

22. Those which predict *coming wrath to the impenitent;* such as, "After thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath,"[9] &c. "Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come,"[10] &c. "The great day of his wrath is come,"[11] &c. "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"[12] &c.

23. Those which teach that some men *become apostates*

1 Philippians iii. 19. 2 Thessalonians i. 9. 3 2 Peter ii. 1.
4 James i. 15. 5 James v. 20. 6 Romans vi. 23.
7 Revelation ii. 11. 8 Revelation xx. 6. 9 Romans ii. 5.
10 1 Thessalonians i. 10. 11 Revelation vi. 17.
12 Matthew iii. 7.

and are cast off for ever; such as, "If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever."[1] "Christ is become of none effect unto you; ye are fallen from grace,"[2] &c. "If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation,"[3] &c.

24. Those which affirm that wicked men *shall be cut of;* such as, "Evil-doers shall be cut off."[4] "The seed of the wicked shall be cut off."[5] "The wicked shall be cut off from the earth,"[6] &c. "Otherwise thou also shalt be cut off,"[7] &c.

25. Those which announce *a curse upon the transgressors;* such as, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."[8] "Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me;"[9] &c., taken with "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,"[10] &c.

26. Those which denounce such men *as resist and neglect the gospel;* such as, "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for

1 1 Chronicles xxviii. 9.
2 Galatians v. 4.
3 Hebrews x. 26, 27.
4 Psalm xxxvii. 9.
5 Ibid. 28.
6 Proverbs ii. 22.
7 Romans xi. 22.
8 Galatians iii. 10.
9 Malachi iii. 9.
10 Matthew xxv. 41.

you,"[1] &c. "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee,"[2] &c. "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it,"[3] &c.

27. Those which *plead with men to repent and believe that they may not eternally die;* such as, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye,"[4] &c. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil way; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"[5] &c. "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life."[6]

28. Those which teach that *the gospel was mercifully provided as the remedy against the eternal death of the race* (of course implying that where it is not known, or is not accepted, that doom still threatens); such as, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved,"[7] &c. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life,"[8] &c. "We shall be saved from wrath through him."[9] "Being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life,"[10] &c.

1 Matthew xi. 22.
2 Ibid. 24.
3 Matthew xii. 41.
4 Ezekiel xviii. 32.
5 Ezekiel xxxiii. 11.
6 John v. 40.
7 John iii. 17.
8 Romans v. 21.
9 Romans v. 9.
10 Ibid. 10.

29. Those which teach that *admittance to heaven is to be on conditions which it is obvious that all men do not fulfil;* such as, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for without are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers and murderers and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie,"[1] &c. "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it,"[2] &c. "He hath prepared for them (those having faith) a city,"[3] &c.

30. Those which declare that those who *are guilty of the works of the flesh* shall not be saved; such as, "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, revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God,"[4] &c. "Nor thieves nor covetous nor drunkards nor revilers nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God,"[5] &c. "Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience,"[6] &c.

1 Revelation xxii. 14, 15. 2 Revelation xxi. 24.
3 Hebrews xi. 16. 4 Galatians v. 19-21.
5 1 Corinthians vi. 10. 6 Ephesians v. 6.

31. Those which teach that *the unfaithfulness of Christians to sinners may be the death of the latter;* such as, "If thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity,"[1] &c.

32. Those which teach *that faithful Christian labor may be expected to save souls from death;* such as, "Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins,"[2] &c. "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death,"[3] &c. "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth,"[4] &c.

33. Those which imply that *believers make a good exchange in suffering pain and peril in this life in order thereby to secure heaven;* such as, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven,"[5] &c. "If we suffer we shall also reign with him,"[6] &c. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the

1 Ezekiel xxxiii. 8. 2 James v. 20.
3 1 John v. 16. 4 2 Timothy ii. 25.
5 Matthew v. 10-12. 6 2 Timothy ii. 12.

Lamb,"[1] &c. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed,"[2] &c.

34. Those which teach the *vital relation of perseverance to salvation* (implying that its absence would be fatal); such as, "Let us labor to enter into that rest, lest any man fall,"[3] &c. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure,"[4] &c. "If any man abide not in me, he is cast forth,"[5] &c. "To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life,"[6] &c.

35. Those which imply *that some men have been lost;* such as, "None of them is lost, but the son of perdition [is lost]"[7] &c. "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and he overthrew these cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities,"[8] &c. "And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them [Nadab and Abihu]; and they died before the Lord,"[9] &c. "And they [Korah and his company] went down alive into the pit, and they perished from among the congregation,"[10]

1 Revelation vii. 14.
2 Romans ix. 18.
3 Hebrews iv. 11.
4 2 Peter i. 10.
5 John xv. 6.
6 Romans ii. 7.
7 John xvii. 12.
8 Genesis xix. 24–25.
9 Leviticus x. 2.
10 Numbers xvi. 33.

&c.; "And Ananias hearing these words fell down,[1] and gave up the ghost,"[2] &c.

36. Those which intimate *the approval of the righteous of the eternal punishment of the wicked;* such as, "I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying Alleluia, salvation and glory and honor and power unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments, &c. — and again they said, Alleluia, and her smoke rose up for ever and ever;"[3] &c., compared with "In the greatness of thine excellency, thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee, — thou sendest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble, who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"[4] &c.

37. Those which indicate that *God is glorified by the eternal destruction of the incorrigibly sinful;* such as, "For this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name shall be declared throughout all the earth;"[5] &c., compared with "What if God, willing to show his wrath and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction,"[6] &c.

1 Acts v. 5.

2 The natural impression on the face of the narrative is, that these reprobates went to hell. To suppose that they went to heaven is to suppose God to have defeated his own end of punishment, to say nothing of the violent incongruity of such character as theirs in heaven.

3 Revelation xix. 1–3.
4 Exodus xv. 7–11.
5 Exodus ix. 16.
6 Romans ix. 22.

38. Those which speak *of the resurrection of the unjust;* such as, "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust,"[1] &c. "They that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation,"[2] &c.

39. Those which teach *that worldly prosperity imperils the immortal interests;* such as, "A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven,"[3] &c. "Ye can not serve God and Mammon,"[4] &c. "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them,"[5] &c. "Therefore, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"[6] &c.

40. Those which make clear *the danger of self-deception;* such as, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death,"[7] &c. "Many will say to me Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity,"[8] &c. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness,"[9] &c.

1 Acts xxiv. 15.
2 John v. 29.
3 Matthew xix. 23.
4 Matthew vi. 24.
5 Proverbs i. 32.
6 Luke xii. 20.
7 Proverbs xvi. 25.
8 Matthew vii. 22-23.
9 2 Thessalonians ii. 11-12.

41. Those which assert that *the love of this world is fatal to salvation;* such as, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."[1] "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world,"[2] &c. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God, whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God,"[3] &c.

42. Those which declare *that unbelief is fatal to salvation;* such as, "He that believeth not shall be damned,"[4] taken in connection with, "He that believeth not is condemned already: he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him,"[5] &c. "Being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart,"[6] &c.

43. Those which *denounce eternal judgment upon some grossest offenders;* such as, "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him,"[7] &c. "Murderers and whoremongers and sorcerers and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death,"[8] &c.

44. Those which prescribe *repentance as a condition of salvation;* such as, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto

1 1 John ii. 15.
2 1 John v. 4.
3 James iv. 4.
4 Mark xvi. 16.
5 John iii. 18-36.
6 Ephesians iv. 18.
7 John iii. 15.
8 Revelation xxi. 8.

the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him,"[1] &c. "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee,"[2] &c. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,"[3] &c.

45. Those which prescribe *faith as a condition of salvation;* such as, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,"[4] &c. "Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins,"[5] &c. Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls,"[6] &c.

46. Those which announce *love to Christ and to the truth as fundamental to salvation;* such as, "Them that perish because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved,"[7] &c. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema,"[8] &c.; that is, let him be consigned to perdition.[9] "The crown of life,

1 Isaiah lv. 7. 2 Acts viii. 22. 3 Luke xiii. 3.
4 Acts xvi. 31. 5 Acts x. 43. 6 1 Peter i. 9.
7 2 Thessalonians ii. 10. 8 1 Corinthians xvi. 22.

9 "*Anathema* — accursed; a thing devoted by a solemn malediction to God's wrath and indignation." — *Wordsworth's Comment.* Galatians i. 8.

The word *ἀνάθεμα* — *anathema* — never denotes simply an exclusion or excommunication, but always devotion to perdition." — *Alford* on Romans ix. 3.

The scholar will be interested in Trench's distinction between *αναθημα* (*anathema*), "a thing devoted to God" for its own honor as well as for God's glory," and *αναθεμα* (*anathĕma*), "that which is devoted to God, but devoted, as were the Canaanites of old, to his honor indeed, but its own utter loss." — *Synonyms of New Testament*, p. 40.

which the Lord hath promised to them that love him,"[1] &c.

47. Those which teach that the incorrigibly wicked will *go on becoming worse and worse;* such as, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived,"[2] &c. "They will increase unto more ungodliness,"[3] &c. "And blasphemed the God of heaven, and repented not of their deeds,"[4] &c.

48. Those which teach that *there is great danger that the Devil will deceive and ruin souls;* such as, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us,"[5] &c. "I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ; and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light,"[6] &c. "The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not,"[7] &c. "That old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world,"[8] &c. "The working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish."[9] &c.

49. Those which *exhort to continual vigilance, on the ground that only by resisting the Devil can salvation be*

1 James i. 12. 2 2 Timothy iii. 3.
3 2 Timothy ii. 16. 4 Revelation xvi. 11.
5 2 Corinthians ii. 11. 6 2 Corinthians xi. 3-14.
7 2 Corinthians iv. 4. 8 Revelation xii. 9.
9 2 Thessalonians ii. 9.

gained; such as, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," [1] &c. "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil, . . . and having done all to stand," [2] &c. "Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you," [3] &c. "If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will," [4] &c.

50. Those which everywhere teach that *it is the very essence of the work of the gospel to secure everlasting life to believers;* such as, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," [5] &c. "Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life," [6] &c. "He that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting," [7] &c. "Believe on him to life everlasting," [8] &c.

Now what I claim concerning these classes of passages, and the many similar ones of which space will not here permit the record, is this: —

1 1 Peter v. 8. 2 Ephesians vi. 11–13. 3 James iv. 7.
4 2 Timothy ii. 26. 5 John iii. 16. 6 Romans vi. 22.
7 Galatians vi. 8. 8 1 Timothy i. 16.

1. Not that they (or many of them) in so many words approach toward the affirmation of the doctrine of the future eternal punishment of those who die impenitent.

2. Not that they (or many of them) would compel our belief of that doctrine in the absence of direct evidence, and in the silence of the Scriptures, otherwise, on the subject.

3. But that they fall in more naturally with that doctrine than its opposite, when we find that it is established by direct evidence, as true.

4. That they are just such, in their quality, as we should expect them to be, if the doctrine were taken for granted as true by the writers.

5. That they are quite inexplicable on any other theory than the truth of the doctrine.

6. That, coming from every part of the Scriptures, and indirectly confirming every aspect of the doctrine, and uncontradicted by others of opposite character, — their existence is incompatible with any other theory than that the doctrine is the doctrine of the book, if it be a self-consistent volume.

If the sixty-six books of the Bible declare that some men are to be excluded from the kingdom of God, — never to see life, to die without any hope, to have no forgiveness, not to be saved, to perish, in danger of remediless ruin, in danger of misusing probation, and of being disappointed and losing heaven; that some never will possess holiness,

never will get the benefit of the atonement, but have their condemnation aggravated by it, and will go where prayers and entreaties will avail them nothing, but their state be unalterable, and where God will be permanently angry with them; that a fatal contingency always overhangs the sinner, coming wrath, destruction, the death of the soul, and the second death being foretold as the doom of the wicked, who shall be cut off; that some will become apostates, and be cut off for ever, while those guilty of the works of the flesh can not be saved, and that some have been lost beyond a doubt, whose punishment the righteous approve, and by which God is glorified; that a curse is denounced on those who neglect the gospel, which is the remedy against eternal death, so that men must repent and believe, or die for ever; that the conditions of entrance to heaven are such as many men clearly do decline, while there is danger from self-deception, and love of the world, and worldly prosperity, and unbelief, and the lack of perseverance, and the deceit of the Devil, so that while Christian faithfulness may save souls, unfaithfulness leaves them to perish; that believers make a good exchange in giving up the world to gain heaven, while their salvation is only secured by continual conflict with Satan, and judgment is denounced on gross offenders; that there is a resurrection of the unjust; and that, while the very object of the gospel is to give everlasting life to believers, they can attain salvation only by repentance and faith, and

love to Christ and the truth; — if, I say, the sixty-six books of the Bible make these declarations in hundreds and thousands of passages, in their free, unforced significance, — shooting rays of indirect testimony at every angle athwart the darkness of the subject, — one of two things must be true, — either those books are incoherent, incomprehensible, and valueless, or they do teach the doctrine of the future punishment of those who die in unrepented sin.

I accept the latter as the reasonable alternative; and claim, therefore, that the indirect testimony of the Bible is consonant with what we have seen to be its direct teaching, and that, with that peculiar force which is due to such evidence, it affirms that the persistently wicked will be for ever punished in the future world.

Here I rest our inquiries from the word of God. We have found that the Old Testament, with as much of distinctness as could be expected when its progressive adaptation to the advancing training of the Hebrew nation is considered, does reveal an eternal difference between the condition of the good and the bad in the future world. We have seen, from the unquestioned testimony of Josephus, that the Jewish nation, with the exception of the few infidel Sadducees, — holding this Old Testament, and studying it with reverence, — had acquired, at the time when Christ came, a firm belief in the doctrine of the future eternal punishment of the wicked. We have seen

that Christ never contradicted that belief; but, on the contrary, appealed to it perpetually as an argument why men should repent and exercise faith in himself, as the Saviour of the world. We have seen that he closed his earthly ministry by commissioning his disciples to go into all the world and preach to every creature the gospel which they had received from his lips, concentrating once more its essence into that formula which asserts, "He that believeth not shall be damned." We have seen that those disciples went and preached as he had commanded; their voice being clear as his had been in the assertion, that eternal perdition must be the portion of those who persist in rejecting the love of God in Christ to the end of their life on earth. We have seen that this is true of all these indirect allusions to truths related to, or bordering upon, this subject, as well as of their direct teachings. This gives us the voice of the whole Bible. From the threat of God to Adam, that he should die if he disobeyed, on its first page, to the prophetic word of his apostle, excluding unworthy men from heaven, on its last, that voice is clear, strong, one. It testifies that all who are inveterate in disobedience shall be for ever separated from God and from the good. It states this as a truth. It does not apologize for it, nor philosophize about it; it reveals it as a matter of fact, which it is of great consequence for men to believe.

I say it reveals it. I know this is denied. But I insist that it can not be denied, except on that false principle of interpretation which would make the Bible merely pliant to the pleasure of the interpreter. All sound principles of interpretation affirm eternal punishment for the sinner impenitent, as its revelation. To refer to those which have been laid down in this treatise, — we can not cull all pleasant passages which point toward heaven, and reject all others as "uninspired," and so evade it; for we must take the whole of the Bible, or none of it, and, as a whole, it affirms this doctrine. The self-consistence of the Scriptures asserts it, — light streaming back upon all that is obscure in the Old Testament from the blazing words of Jesus in the New. It is the obvious sense of the sacred volume; nobody ever naturally read Universalism out of the Bible. We find it revealed progressively, just as we should expect from such a progressive volume. The common-sense version of the words of the Bible — that which all their surroundings of time and place necessitate — asserts it. Its obscurity and fearfulness are only such as are reasonable, when we remember the necessary infiniteness, obscurity, and awfulness of the subject-matter to which it relates. And as between it and the doctrine of Universalism, in those few passages where any doubt seems possible, we are constrained to interpret the Bible toward its enunciation; because it favors God most and sin least to warn the sinner of a wrath to come, and not hold out to him the hope of eternal impunity as a bounty

on transgression; because the incalculable majority of those thus far who have loved God and been warmest in sympathy with him, and have walked nearest to him and been most led by his Spirit, — and have therefore been likeliest to be right, — have firmly believed it; and because it offers, beyond question, the safest alternative of faith. He who believes that the wicked will be punished eternally, and exercises faith in Christ, so as not to "come into condemnation," will be eternally safe, even should the future world reveal that his faith was vain and there is no hell; while he who interprets the Bible toward Universalism must be lost, unless his own belief shall bear the test of the Judgment. The one can not be lost in any event, while the other runs a risk whose vastness may well make any man tremble.

I claim, therefore, on all reasonable grounds, that the testimony of the Bible is distinctly this: *there will be a fearful and eternal difference between the future of the righteous and the wicked!*

CHAPTER VII.

THERE IS NO REASONABLE OBJECTION TO THIS TESTIMONY, HAVING FORCE TO MODIFY IT.

BEFORE considering, in detail, any of those objections which are urged against the doctrine under discussion, it will aid us to revert for a moment to underlying first principles, in order to see what form of objection, if any, may have validity against it.

It would be competent to object that, as a matter of fact, notwithstanding the seeming proof which we have adduced, the Bible *does not* teach that the wicked will be punished eternally in the future world; or, that while it seems to do so, it is impossible for us to accept its testimony, because it is overruled by other considerations which make it impossible for us to believe that it can teach such a doctrine. The establishment of either of these lines of refutation would amount to the logical destruction of our argument, as thus far developed; but no other form of assault would be competent to overthrow it. To adduce any of the prepossessions or notions of our minds, as proof having validity superior to the clear word of God, would amount to nothing; for the necessary ob-

security of the subject, and its unavoidable remoteness from the possibilities of our earthly experience, render our conjecture inevitably worthless in comparison with his revelation, however unsatisfying to us that may be, so long as it maintains itself as reasonably his. We may, then, confine our consideration of objections deserving to be analyzed and weighed, to those which come under these two heads; and may be sure, if these do not overthrow the doctrine, that it can not be overthrown.

I. *It is objected that, notwithstanding all the seeming evidence which we have adduced, the Bible does not really teach the doctrine of the future eternal punishment of those who die in impenitence.*

This objection divides itself into two heads: (1.) That the language quoted as announcing the future eternal punishment of the impenitent does not really imply that; (2.) That there are other texts which render another conclusion necessary.

(1.) *It is affirmed that those texts which we have quoted as declaring that those who die in impenitence shall be eternally lost, do not fairly imply, nor render necessary, that doctrine.* For example: —

(a.) It is said[1] that the word translated "perish," on which our argument relies in such passages as, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise *perish*," &c.,[2] does not imply the sense which I have put upon it; that, in such

1 *Mr. Thayer's Sermon*, p. 15. 2 Luke xiii. 3.

texts as "Lord, save us: we perish," &c.,[1] it has a lesser significance, which ought to be given to it in all cases.

To this I answer, as I have already shown,[2] the literal sense of the Greek word ἀπόλλυμι (*apollumi*) is "to destroy utterly." This primary and dominant sense is, of course, always to be interpreted by the circumstances of its application; but whoever will examine carefully the ninety-two instances of its use in the New Testament will, I think, be obliged to confess that when applied to persons, it always implies *the utmost extent of destruction of which its object, under the circumstances, is capable.* Thus, when spoken of the body, it means death; as, "Shall *perish* with the sword," &c.[3] "I am not come to *destroy* men's *lives*," &c.,[4] and that referred to above.[5] But when spoken of the soul it implies the utmost destruction of which the soul is capable, that is, the second death; as where it is put into direct contrast with those who are saved. "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish."[6] Any student in any degree familiar with the laws of language knows that it is impossible to lay down beforehand laws defining what words shall in all cases mean; the only way of determining what they do mean being to

1 Matthew viii. 25. 2 See page 80.
3 Matthew xxvi. 52. 4 Luke ix. 56.
5 Matthew viii. 25. 6 2 Corinthians ii. 15.

study them in their actual usage, and to develop the sense which their author deposited in them.

(b.) It is said that the phrases the "kingdom of God" and the "kingdom of heaven" merely imply the reign of the Messiah in this world; so that "all that is intended by saying that the wicked shall not enter into the kingdom of God, is that they will not be received as disciples of Christ so long as they continue wicked."[1] But very nearly the opposite of this is the judgment of the best commentators. Alford says, "It has been observed by recent critics that whenever the term "kingdom of heaven" (or its equivalent) is used in the New Testament, it signifies, not the Church, nor the Christian religion, but strictly *the kingdom of the Messiah which is to be revealed hereafter*." He adds, "I should doubt this being *exclusively* true."[2] So Tholuck says, "That all the senses of this phrase are only different sides of the same great idea, — *the subjection of all things to God in Christ*."[3] Here, as before, the study of the one hundred and thirty-eight instances in which the phrases are used is the best appeal: and this will make it clear that, while in a few instances fairly susceptible of the sense put upon them by this objection, they much more frequently imply the everlasting reign of Christ beyond this world and the judgment-day.[4]

1 *Mr. Thayer's Sermon*, p. 16.

2 New Test. i. 17. 3 *Bergpredict*, 74.

4 See a discussion of the use of the phrase "kingdom of God," in the *Christian Review*, iii. 380.

(c.) It is insisted, again, that the words "damn," "damnation," &c., "are used in such a way in Scripture as to show that they mean any thing but endless torment;"[1] and various instances are cited, such as, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same [condemnation] damnation," &c., in proof of this position. In reply to this, I freely acknowledge that the three words, *κρίνω*, *κρίμα*, and *κρίσις* [*krinō*, *krima*, *krisis*] *usually* mean less than eternal condemnation. Our second principle (B) of interpretation applies here.[2]

The literal sense of the verb *krinō* is to separate, to discriminate between, and hence to judge in regard to, and hence to condemn (to announce the result of an adverse judgment). Sometimes in the New Testament it intends merely a mental conclusion; as, "If ye have judged me to be faithful,"[3] &c. "Thou hast rightly judged,"[4] &c. Very often it means a decision, as of a court; as, "Judging the twelve tribes of Israel,"[5] "Sittest thou to judge me after the law,"[6] &c. The nouns which take their meaning from the verb, follow it in these respects. But sometimes, both verb and nouns are so placed as to force a sterner sense upon them. Thus, the verb in the text, "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might

1 Mr. Thayer's "Sermon," p. 18. 2 See p. 25.

3 Acts xvi. 15. 4 Luke vii. 43.

5 Matthew xix. 28. 6 Acts xxiii. 3.

be *damned* who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness,"[1] &c.; while it does not necessarily imply eternal exclusion from heaven, and would not teach it alone, still does accord with that teaching, when established from other Scripture, better than with any milder idea. So the nouns — and especially that most often rendered "damnation" in our version [*krisis*] — are sometimes so placed as to make any trivial intent impossible; as, "The resurrection of *damnation*."[2] "How can ye escape the *damnation of hell?*"[3] "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness; but is in danger of *eternal damnation*."[4] A "fearful looking for of *judgment* and fiery indignation,"[5] &c. I am not anxious that the Greek word should be translated here "damnation" instead of "judgment;" the latter is — in the connection — quite as fearful, and the mere assertion that it often (nay, almost always) means a mere judgment of the intellect, or a petty decree of some court, does no more free it from the alarming sense which its gravest use in these cases puts upon it, than the fact that the English verb "hang," in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of every thousand of its use, implies the mere harmless suspension of a coat upon a nail, or some kindred act, settles it that it never means to kill by suffocation.

1 2 Thess. ii. 12. 2 John v. 29.
3 Matt. xxiii. 33. 4 Mark iii. 29.
5 Heb. x. 27.

(d.) It is further declared that the terms "save," "salvation," &c. do not carry the sense of deliverance from eternal punishment; and that, therefore, so far as they are concerned, our argument fails."[1] But the verb σωζώ [*sōzō*] has the original significance of "delivering," "making safe." As to what it makes safe from, its usage must show. So the nouns σωτήρ and σωτηρία [*sotēr, sotēria*] derived from it, mean "Saviour" and "salvation;" from what — their application must decide. Sometimes the verb is applied to the deliverance from temporal disaster or death;[2] sometimes to deliverance from sin;[3] and sometimes it goes down to a deeper stratum of thought, and implies deliverance from eternal judgment; as, "We shall be saved from wrath through him;"[4] "A sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish;"[5] "Shall save a soul from death,"[6] &c. The same usage holds of the nouns, as well. And it is important to remember in the critical examination of such words as these, that the Jews, in whose hearing Christ spoke, confessedly must have interpreted them as having reference to that eternal death in hell, which they believed to be the portion of the sinner; and Christ knew that they would so understand them; so that the inference is unavoidable that he intended to allow them to be mis-

1 Mr. Thayer's "Sermon," p. 19. 2 Matt. viii. 25; ix. 21, &c.
3 Matt. i. 21; Acts xvi. 30, &c.
4 Rom. v. 9. 5 2 Cor. ii. 15. 6 James v. 20.

led by his words, or that — in these passages — he did refer to salvation from eternal death.

One way of putting this objection deserves a moment's consideration. The Rev. Mr. Thayer, in his criticism upon this argument when published some years ago in abbreviated form, says, that the words translated "save" and "salvation" occur one hundred and fifty-seven times in the New Testament, and that one hundred and three of these instances clearly refer to "spiritual or gospel salvation. And yet," he says, "in not one of these texts is it said that Christ came to save the world, or any part of it, from endless punishment, or even from 'hell.' But it is said repeatedly, and emphatically, that he came expressly to save us from something quite different from this; [e. g. from 'sins,' 'iniquities,' 'the present evil world,' &c.] How shall we explain this, if 'salvation through Christ' means what Mr. Dexter assumes? What shall we say of those, who, speaking by the Spirit of God in exposition of gospel salvation, never state the case as it really is, but spend all their words on matters of comparatively trifling importance?" [1]

It seems to be a sufficient reply to this, to say, that, in the judgment of the Saviour and his apostles, "sins," "iniquities," and "this present evil world," &c. were far from being "matters of comparatively trifling importance," and that salvation from them had — in their view

[1] Mr. Thayer's "Sermon," p. 21.

— the same relation to salvation from hell which deliverance from a cause has to security from its effects.

(e.) Another favorite objection by which the force of the testimony of the Word of God on this subject is sought to be evaded, is by the allegation that the words "sheol" and "gehenna" do not imply future punishment; but that the former simply means the place of departed souls, and the latter the valley of Hinnom. With regard to the former, as it has been already referred to, [1] and as its exact sense has but slight bearing upon the question of the attitude of the New Testament toward the subject under discussion, I will not take space here to discuss it. As to the latter, it will be perceived at once, by recalling the second principle (B), set down for the interpretation of the Bible, [2] that the question must be one partly of general Jewish usage, and partly of the specific usage of the New Testament. It is, of course, conceded that the original application of the word was to the valley of Hinnom, as it was simply a transfusion into the Greek language of the Hebrew words גֵּי הִנֹּם [*Ge-Hinnom*], meaning the valley of Hinnom; thus constructing the compound Greek word γέεννα [*geenna*] exactly as the word baptize was transferred to the English from the Greek. But the fact that its primary meaning was thus local and literal does not, of itself, settle it, that it never took on a deeper metaphorical significance. That is a

[1] See p. 52. [2] See p. 25.

question to be decided by the evidence. An orator may speak of New England as the land of Bunker Hill. Literally interpreted, his words merely assert a geographical fact. But that does not prove that he has not idealized the fact, and did not intend by it to designate New England as the spot where freedom conquered for herself a home. Whether he did so, or not, in any particular instance, must be a question of fact, to be decided by the evidence.

Turning, then, to the question of fact, I suggest as conclusive in proof that the word *Gehenna* was used by Christ in the advanced and metaphorical sense of "the place of future punishment," the following considerations:—

i. It is undeniable that long before the time of Christ the place *Gehenna* had been idealized by the teachers of the Jews, and its putrescent heaps of decaying garbage, eaten by the worms, and burned by the ever-fed fires designed to purify the air, had been seized upon by them to convey to the popular mind the horror of that hell which awaits the wicked in the future world; so that the use of the word, without qualification, in speech susceptible of that sense, would naturally have conveyed to any listening Jew of our Saviour's time the idea, not of Hinnom, but of hell.[1] If, then, he used it in that connection, without rebuke or hint of any other and lesser intent, if he were not deceiving the people, he certainly did design that they should receive his words as intending future punishment.[1]

1 "From the depth and narrowness of the gorge, and, perhaps its ever-burning fires, as well as from its being the receptacle of all sorts of putrifying matter, and all that defiled the holy city, it became in later times, the image of the place of everlasting punishment, 'where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched,' in which the Talmudists place the mouth of hell."

ii. He used the word eleven times; seven times in the record of Matthew,[2] three times in those of Mark,[3] and once in that of Luke.[4] In every instance there is no implication to forbid the inference, but every evidence that he intended to be understood as speaking of hell and not of Hinnom — of the future condemnation of lost souls. It is incredible, under the circumstances, that he should not have been so understood. It is more incredible that under such circumstances he should have so used the word, if he did not believe in hell, and did not mean to warn men against it.

The only remaining instance of the use of the term in the New Testament is in the epistle of James.[5] But that in no sense modifies, but every way confirms,[6] this judgment,

1 See Lange's Comment. i. 114. *Smith's Dict. of the Bible*, ii. 661.

2 Matthew v. 22, 29, 30; x. 28; xviii. 9; xxiii. 15, 33.

3 Mark ix. 43, 45, 47. 4 Luke xii. 5. 5 James iii. 6.

6 Alford's Comment on this verse is "These words are not to be explained away — as Theile — 'igne fœdissimo ac funestissimo'; such is not St. James's teaching (compare chap. iv. 7, where the devil, as a tempter to evil, is personally contrasted with God), but are to be literally taken. It is the Devil, for whom hell is prepared, that is the tempter and instigator of the habitual sins of the tongue." Vol. iv. pt. i. 306.

that the real meaning of the word Gehenna, at that date, under such circumstances of use as those in which Christ and the Apostles lived and taught, was that which our common English version faithfully conveys.[1]

Nor does the objection, that if our Saviour and the Apostles believed in future punishment, and intended to teach it by the use of the word *Gehenna*, they would have used that word, and so proclaimed the doctrine a great deal oftener,[2] avail to destroy the fact, that when they did use it, they meant future punishment by it. The word *paradise* is used only three times in the New Testament, and only once by Christ; — does that prove that it does not mean the abode of the justified, and that Christ and the Apostles did not believe that any will be justified? The word *holiness* is used only thirteen times in the New Testament, and never by Christ; — are we thence to infer that he did not have faith in, and desire, holiness for men? The word *purity* is used only twice in the New Testament, and never by Christ; — are we to understand that he and his followers did not believe in, and labor to promote that virtue on the earth? The absurdity of such reasoning might be shown by scores of similar examples. Our only safe course is to take what the Bible does say, — not what we think it ought to have said, — and deal honestly and honorably with that; then we may be made wise unto salvation.

1 Notice what is said on this subject by Thompson in *The Land and the Book*, ii. 494–8; Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, i. 404; and *Physical Geography of the Holy Land*, 100. 2 Mr. Thayer's Sermon, 29.

(f.) A further strenuous effort has been made to nullify the testimony of the Gospel in regard to future punishment, by the assertion that the words "eternal," "everlasting," "forever," &c., do not intend unlimited duration. Here, as before, the artifice is to press the point that the words sometimes mean less than an eternal duration, and thence to argue that they never mean that. Thus Mr. Thayer says,[1] "'I will give thee the land of Canaan for an *everlasting* possession,' and the covenant of circumcision is called 'An *everlasting* covenant;' and the priesthood of Aaron is called 'an everlasting priesthood,' and yet the Jews were driven out of the land of Canaan, and the covenant of circumcision was abolished, and the priesthood of Aaron set aside, by God himself, more than eighteen hundred years ago! Now, if Mr. Dexter insists that this word necessarily, or by usage, means endless, then he insists that God has broken his promise to the Jews three several times. But, as the apostle says 'it is impossible for God to lie,' the only conclusion is that *everlasting* does not mean endless."

I have already referred to this question of the sense of these words of duration.[2] I will only add here, as very pertinent and conclusive, an extract from a valuable work by Prof. Bartlett, now of the Chicago Theological Seminary. He says:[3] —

1 Mr. Thayer's Sermon, p. 22.
2 See page 74. 3 *Modern Universalism*, 82.

"Universalists make much parade of a few instances in which the Hebrew term for 'everlasting' designates something less than absolute eternity, as 'the everlasting hills.' But the phrase, when applied to future time, always denotes *the longest duration of which its subject is capable.* 'Everlasting hills' are those which will continue to the end of the world. 'He shall serve forever,' *i. e.* during the longest period of which he is capable, his whole life. Hannah devoted Samuel to the Lord 'forever;' *i. e.* he was never to return to private life. 'An ordinance forever' is one which lasts through the longest possible time, *i. e.* the whole dispensation of which it is a part. Such cases, few in number, do not contravene in spirit the scores of instances in which it signifies absolute eternity — *the original and proper sense of the term.*

"The Greek adjective translated 'everlasting' *αἰώνιος* [*aiōnios*] when applied to future duration, in all cases (excepting, for the time, its application to punishment) denotes *an endless period.* It is used sixty-six times; twice in relation to God and his glory; fifty-one times concerning the happiness of the righteous; six times of miscellaneous subjects, but with the plain signification 'endless;' and *seven times concerning future punishment.*[1] The phrase translated 'forever,' *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* [*eis ton aiōna*] with its plural form, uniformly denotes *endless duration*, and is employed sixty-one times, *six of which relate to future punishment.* The phrase 'forever and ever' *εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων* [*eis tous aiōnas tōn aiōnōn*] also invariably denotes endless duration. It occurs twenty-one times, eighteen of which relate to the continuance of the perfections, glory, government, and praise of God; one to the happiness of the righteous; *and two to future punishment.*[2] Plain men can understand such facts."

1 *Stuart's Essays*, 47. 2 *Stuart's Essays*, 36.

(2.) *But it is further affirmed that, even if these texts which have been examined, or some of them, do fairly teach the doctrine of future punishment, there are others which render the opposite conclusion necessary.*

The texts mainly relied on in this connection, are those which affirm the relation of the atonement of Christ to the salvation of men in very broad terms; such as, "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of *the whole world;*"[1] "Who gave himself a ransom for *all*," &c.[2] "Who is *the Saviour of all men*, especially of those that believe," &c.[3] But it is only needful to suggest here the recalling to mind of our third principle (C.)[4] of a sound interpretation of the Scriptures. They must be presumed to be self-consistent, and their sense gathered accordingly. And those many texts which announce, in the most distinct and unambiguous terms, the dependence of personal salvation upon personal faith, and which explain, that while Christ died for all men, in the sense that he thereby made it possible for all to be saved if they will accept of his conditions of salvation,

1 1 John ii. 2. 2 1 Timothy ii. 6.

3 1 Timothy iv. 10. "This is what St. Paul declares, when he says that God is 'the saviour of *all* men,' that is, in desire and design. This is his primary predestination. But then the Apostle adds, '*specially* of them that *believe*.' In *desire* he predestinates *all* men to salvation; and he predestinates the *faithful* in *act*." — *Wordsworth New Test.* ii. 198.

4 See page 27.

they yet remain free to reject his work, and that in point of fact, many do reject it, are sufficient to foreclose all the conclusions of Universalism from this branch of argument.

There is, then, no firm ground in this direction. All these efforts to resist the natural force of the language of Scripture are as futile in their result, as they are unwarranted in their processes. No man — not even the warmest advocate of the Universalist theory — can deny that the weight of sound disinterested scholarship is against all such endeavors to empty the language of the Scriptures of the doctrine of the future punishment of the wicked. It was meant to teach it. It does teach it. To take the ground that it does not teach it, is to take the ground that it is impossible for it to be taught through the Greek language — for there are no more absolute declarations of never-ending eternity in that language than those which it applies again and again to this subject, — a conclusion to which no competent scholar in the full consciousness of what he is doing can come. So that the only logical process possible to that denier of the doctrine of future punishment who is honest, intelligent, and a thorough student of the original tongues of the Bible, is that which was adopted by Theodore Parker, when he said, "It is quite clear that Jesus taught the doctrine of eternal damnation, if the evangelists are to be treated as inspired. I can understand his language in no other way;"[1] namely, to

[1] See page 77.

admit that the Bible does teach the doctrine, and then deny that, so teaching, it can be inspired. A persistent Universalist, therefore, must be faithless to his own logical faculty, not to be an infidel.

II. *But granting that the Bible does, by all the ordinary principles of interpretation, seem to teach the future endless punishment of the wicked, it is further objected that it is impossible for us to accept it as really so teaching, — or to accept the doctrine, if it be so taught, — because it is overruled by other considerations rendering any such belief impossible.*

Among the many suggestions of this description, I refer here to six, as including all of special moment.

(1.) *We are told that it is impossible that men can really believe the doctrine of the future endless punishment of the impenitent, and live in any peace, not to say happiness.* It is said, "If it were thoroughly credited and acted upon, all the business of the world would cease, and the human race would soon die out."[1] It is said of the ordinary believer of it, "Either his professed faith is an unreality to him, or else he is as selfish as a demon, and as hard-hearted as the nether millstone. If he really believed the doctrine, and had a human heart, he must feel it to be his duty to deny himself every indulgence, and give his whole future and earnings to the missionary fund. And when he had given all else, he ought to give

[1] Alger's Doctrine of a Future Life, 648.

himself, and go to Pagan lands, proclaiming the means of grace until his last breath. If he does not that he is inexcusable."[1] "No more children should be brought into the world: it is a duty to let the race die out and cease."[2] "God ought not to have let Adam have any children."[3] "If the doctrine in question be true, it must destroy the happiness of the saved, and fill all heaven with sympathetic woe," &c., &c.[4]

All this is plausible at the first glance, but a little cool reflection will show that it has no real logical force.

In the first place, God has mercifully shielded the sensitiveness of the soul — as he has that of the body by tough and insensible enclosing integuments — from that immediate and constant contact with outward disagreeabilities which — if their power were not thus deadened — would be perpetual torment. The Rev. Mr. Alger unquestionably has a kind heart and a sympathizing spirit, and would be easily moved by the sight or consciousness of suffering in others. And there unquestionably are at every moment of the twenty-four hours of every day of every year within the sweep of a half-mile radius from his residence on Temple Street, in Boston, cases enough of poverty, wretchedness, and abandoned guilt, accompanied by the extreme of both physical and mental anguish, to keep him perpetually filled with sympathetic agony, were he fully conscious of the facts. Will he then deny the truth of the

1 Alger's Doctrine of a Future Life, 544. 2 *Ibid.* 545.
3 *Ibid.* 545. 4 *Ibid.* 540.

"doctrine" that there is this suffering actually around him; or, while believing it in all honesty, is his professed faith in it so far an unreality to him that he is able to eat, sleep, and enjoy life, and increase the number of children exposed to all this earthly wretchedness, and so — on his own theory — prove himself to be "as selfish as a demon, and as hard-hearted as the nether millstone"? There seems to be a practical flaw somewhere in his argument. The fact that we all of us in the North have been able to live mostly in great general comfort, and even happiness, while thousands of our fathers, brothers, and sons have been starving to death in Southern prisons, under circumstances of fiendish atrocity, unheard of before in the history of the world, and impossible in this nineteenth century except as the fruits of that petrifaction of the human heart which the barbarism of slavery engenders, — does neither prove, on the one hand, that we are monsters, nor, on the other, that the asserted horrors of Andersonville, and Belle Isle, and elsewhere, are not real, and that we do not believe them. There is a flaw in the argument.

And, in the second place, there is a view of the subject of the future punishment of the wicked, which even the most tender-hearted of the good can accept as, if not a comfortable, at least an endurable one. It is the consideration that the lost are in the hands of a Being who is both infinitely just and infinitely kind; so that, however they may suffer, and in whatever way they may be dis-

posed of, it is impossible that any thing should happen to them, which they do not deserve, not merely, but which is unkind to them, which is not for their best good, and the best good of the universe, and which, however it may partake of severity, will yet be the result of severity guided by infinite kindness. Such considerations assist those who truly love God, to acquiesce in all, even the most mysterious of his ways. And to affirm that the abolition of future punishment is essential to the eternal happiness of the good, is to affirm that the good can not be eternally happy, without making it a condition of their happiness that God's will should not be done in earth as it is in heaven, which is an incredible supposition. So that, to take the ground that the clear doctrine of the Bible on this subject can not be received by us, on any such ground as this, is simply absurd.

(2.) *We are told that it is impossible for the human mind to believe that the persistently impenitent will be eternally punished in hell, because the end of all punishment is restorative, and any such punishment would, therefore, defeat its own end.* But this is pure assumption, unsustained either by the sound judgment of men, or by the Word of God. The primary intent of punishment is the general safety and welfare of society and the vindication of the insulted majesty of the violated law; the restoration of the offender by the punitive process to virtue and obedience is often present indeed, — always, when possible — but always as a subordinate element. It has no place at all in the *legal* idea of penalty. This is the common judgment of the world as expressed in its treatises on law and government.

This is no doubt the truth so far as the matter is within our purview; but as — from the nature of the case — only God can know what are *all* the designs which he has in view in punishing persistent and incorrigible sin; and what is the relative rank of these designs among themselves; it is very clearly a most unreasonable step for us to assume that he has only one intent in punishment, and that that one is incompatible with the doctrine of the Bible in regard to hell, and so that doctrine is one which — Bible or no Bible — it is impossible for a sane mind to receive!

(3.) *We are told that it is impossible that the doctrine of the future punishment of sin can be true, even though the Bible does seem to reveal it, because it is palpably unjust.* This objection takes two forms: that the sins of a short life can not deserve eternal punishment; and that, even if they do deserve it, man has not been duly notified of his danger, and so it is unjust to punish him in that dreadful manner.

(a.) Is it true that the sins of a human life — short or long — can not deserve eternal punishment? In reply, I urge: —

i. It lies on the face of the subject that it is impossi-

ble for us to *know* that they do not. We may think so; it may seem so to us; but then we are compelled to confess that we are looking only at the outside of the subject, and looking at it only in its most trivial relations. Is it safe for us, then, to say that we *know* that not to be true, which God says is true with regard to it? Suppose God, who built the earth, should tell us that there is a great diamond weighing a ton, in its exact centre, around which its whole mass is concreted and compacted; would it be safe for us to say, "I have bored down an artesian well a thousand feet, and have gone down in a mine a thousand feet more, and saw no signs of the diamond; *therefore I know that it is not there*"?

ii. It is clear that sin is the expression in act of the selfish disposition which is resident within, which is in rebellion against God; and that its demerit is to be measured not by itself abstractly, but by its relation to that disposition, so that it is surely abstractly possible even for one sin to deserve eternal punishment. Dr. Parkman was hung for one murder. Nobody felt that it was important to prove a succession of acts of homicide, in order to establish his ill-desert. *One* such indication of a selfishness within, which has grown to such a ravening power, that it stops at nothing to gain its ends, is felt so fully to interpret the character, as to justify the extremest action which the case demands. The Bible does not make the question one of how much sin, but of what kind of a character that sin

reveals; and it says, "The *wages of sin* is death." Its measure of the guilt and doom of human offenses is not mathematical but spiritual; not "so many sins — so much punishment;" but "such a character (revealed by these sins) must necessarily, for the general good, and even safety, be treated in such a manner."

Sin is the worst thing. It is the deadliest enemy of all true peace, prosperity, and happiness. Its essence is selfishness, which would gather all into, and sacrifice all to, one; while the essence of all that is good and glad and gracious, is so to manage one, as to bless all. Sin puts "I" as above all, and would sacrifice every thing — even God himself — to its single personality. There is, therefore, no such possibility as peaceably living with it in the universe. If it will not yield and be willing to share with others, and cease its offense to all, the only course left, for peace to the universe, is to shut it up where it can not absorb any longer. God can not be a good being, if he do not hate the *worst thing;* can not be a good ruler, if he do not shut it up in some safe prison-house when it is demonstrated to be incorrigible.

iii. As the question is, after all, with the sinner rather than with his sin — when he proves incorrigible, and will not repent, but persistently keeps on growing worse every day, and every day demonstrating more and more clearly that the happiness of others, and the general good, requires his seclusion from his fellows, so that he can not

gratify his desire to harm them for his own benefit, until his body is worn out, and he can not stay any longer in this world, what shall God do with him? Where shall he go? If he compelled human government to keep him constantly in prison here, because the moment he was let out of prison he went to robbing and murdering, so that it was impossible for society to live with him free; will it be safe for God to let him be free in the other world? If earth could not bear him, except as a convict, can heaven endure him? What *can* God do with him — since the omnipotence of his grace (which never forces free agency) long ago exhausted itself in vain efforts to redeem him — but send him to the prison of the universe, and, since he will eternally keep on sinning, and so keep on more and more deserving to be incarcerated, what can God do but make his stay there *eternal?* And is it for us to say that such a man, eternally sinning, does not deserve eternal punishment? More than this, is it safe for us to reject the Bible, and say that the eternal punishment of sin which it reveals, is impossible because it never can be just!

(b.) But it is urged that if the eternal punishment of sin ever could abstractly be just, it can not be just concretely in any particular case, because men have not been duly notified. But this can only mean that *some* men have not been "duly notified;" for surely all who have the Bible and the gospel are obliged to fight their way to

perdition against perpetual urgencies, if they are lost. And as to those who lived before the revelation, or who have since lived in ignorance of it, two things are surely true, *viz.* (i.) they have a sufficient "notification" in the light of nature, if they use it aright; or Paul was wrong when, speaking by inspiration, he declared that they are "without excuse;"[1] and (ii.) they are in the hands of infinite justice, administered with infinite kindness; which has laid down the rule, that "he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes,"[2]

I insist, then, that the doctrine of the future punishment of the incorrigibly wicked, is so far from being so unjust as to be impossible of belief, that it would be impossible for us to believe that God is either just or good, as the Ruler of the universe, if it were not true. No ruler on earth would be either just or good who had no prison where the dangerous should be confined; and there is every reason to judge that heaven needs its prison-house even more than earth, since it is the law of human nature that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse," — a law which disembodiment can not annul, if indeed it does not enhance its force.

(4.) *It is further urged that it is impossible that the doctrine of future punishment can be true, even if the Bible does assert it, because there will be a probation*

1 Romans i. 20. 2 Luke xii. 48.

in the next world, just as there is here, and those who die in sin, in the clearer light of eternity, will repent and so all be saved. But, —

(a.) There is no evidence, of any sort, that there will be such a probation; not a word from God, from Christ, from any prophet or apostle, — from any being competent to give evidence, — that there will be such a probation in the future world.

(b.) Such a probation would be unreasonable. It is needless, because this probation of which we are now the subjects is enough, if rightly used. And if it be said that there ought to be another, in kindness to those who have neglected this; then, by emphasis, there ought to be still another, for those who should neglect the second, and a fourth, for those who should neglect the third, and so on — *ad infinitum;* so that, to take the ground that this probation is not enough for justice, is to affirm that there never can be *any* that shall satisfy justice.

(c.) There is not only no proof, but absolutely no probability, that if there were a second probation after death, those who should have died in sin would repent, "in the clearer light of eternity." If, in such a second probation, they should be exposed to a sort of purgatorial suffering for the sins of this life, there is no evidence that such suffering would have any tendency to modify their hearts; while if they have no suffering, they will most likely — so determined is the bent of depraved nature to

sin — "because sentence against their evil work is not executed speedily, fully set their heart in them to do evil."[1] So resulting, such an extension of probation would be actually unkind; as tempting sinners to continuance in sin, till its chains are too tough to break.

(d.) Such a theory makes no provision for those who, in the exercise of their free agency, should persist in sinning obdurately through all probations, one or many. What shall God do with them? What *ought* to be done with them? And who is authorized to say, with certainty, that there would not, as a matter of fact, be many such, if additional probation were offered.

(e.) The Bible asserts the absolute contrary. Its whole drift is against any such notion. It says that *now* is the day of salvation. It everywhere assumes that this probation is adequate, and will be final. It presents Christ as to be received now, or never. It grounds the condemnation of the wicked upon their rejection of the Gospel now and here. All its solemn warnings, and its eager expostulations and tender entreaties, hinge upon the thought that all hope of mercy for the sinner dies with his death.

"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." If there is no evidence of any further probation; if it would be unreasonable that one should be provided,

[1] Ecclesiastes viii. 11.

and indeed unkind, as tempting to continuance in sin; if such a theory furnishes no probability of saving its subjects and fails to consider the case of those persistent rebels who inveterately resist all gracious influence, and if the whole tenor of God's word is diametrically opposed to it; it is surely so far against reason that it is unworthy of serious notice as overthrowing the doctrine of the future punishment of all who die in sin.

(5.) *But, we are told again, that the doctrine of the future eternal punishment of the wicked can not claim our belief, under any circumstances, and on any amount of evidence, because the wicked will be annihilated, and so can not suffer.* To this I reply:—

(a.) If this were true, it would be the worst punishment of all. To cease to be, would, to many minds, at least, be more dreadful, than to live, even in torment.

(b.) It is, indeed, susceptible of the gravest doubt whether a soul *can* cease to be, under any circumstances; whether the awful and mysterious gift of life once received, can ever be demitted, and whether that which has once become a living soul has not in that becoming entered necessarily upon a life thenceforward co-eternal with that of God himself.

(c.) All the evidence from reason in proof that we have souls, proves that they are immortal souls.

(d.) There is no evidence that death ends life, but only that it transfers it to the world of spirits.

(e.) We have an instinct of immortality, a capacity, an expectation and desire, reaching forth into the future; and as really in the case of the sinner as the saint.

(f.) Conscience argues that we are to live for ever, and as truly and earnestly in the breast of the unbeliever as of the Christian.

(g.) God's moral government is of such a nature as to render necessary — so far as we can see — to its fairness, that the wicked, as well as the righteous, shall live for ever.

(h.) There is no evidence from the Bible of any discrimination, as to the fact of eternal existence, between the righteous and the wicked.

(i.) On the other hand, all those texts which affirm future punishment, imply that it will be inflicted upon conscious sufferers. Take the text "These [the wicked] shall go away into everlasting punishment."[1] The Greek word κόλασις [*kolasis*] not merely can not mean annihilation, but refuses to be consistent with it. It is used only in one other place in the New Testament. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath [κόλασις] *torment*."[2] This can not be rendered "annihilation" without making nonsense; the term implies a state of conscious distress. And the result of the widest and most careful study of the usage of this word [κόλασις] in the Greek writers will lead inevitably to the con-

1 Matthew xxv. 64.
2 1 John iv. 18

clusion that it *never means annihilation*, or any synonyme of, or approach to, that idea.[1]

Says one of the ablest living critics,[2] "Eternal death, in the sense of banishment from God, and from all good, with the misery naturally belonging to such a condition, is an intelligible idea, and that is also eternal punishment. Eternal death as the penalty of sin, in the sense of annihilation, is also an intelligible idea, but that would not be eternal punishment. The death itself (in the sense of non-existence) would be eternal, but the punishment would be its own limitation. It must cease when there was no longer a being to receive it. We can as well conceive of a man as punished a thousand years before he begins to be, as a thousand years after he has ceased to be."

But, if every consideration from reason and from Scripture is against such a conclusion, shall we assume the dreadful idea of ceasing to exist as so far a reasonable probability as to be a safe guide in rejecting the claim of our own nature and the word of God: and meanly trust to sneak into nonentity in order to dodge a manly reckoning with our Creator for the deeds which we have done in the body?

(6.) *But, once more, if all else fails, the unbeliever in eternal punishment falls back upon some vague trust*

1 See the whole subject thoroughly discussed from a large induction of Greek passages in Thompson's *Love and Penalty*, 303-316.

2 Prof. Barrows, of Andover, in "*Bibliotheca Sacra*," for July, 1858.

in God's goodness, and denies that it can be reasonable to believe that the heavenly Father, of infinite power at the service of infinite love, can punish his own children for ever, no matter what they may do.

In any just consideration of this objection, we are called upon to remember that, though God is infinitely good and kind as a Father, he is also infinitely just and exacting as a Ruler. These two attributes the Bible perpetually urges upon our thought together, as the two poles of the infinite character, — bidding us "behold the goodness and severity of God;"[1] so that it must clearly be unsafe to draw vital conclusions from one of them without remembering — least of all in direct opposition to — the other. I reply directly, however, to this position, thus: —

Facts of constant occurrence in this life show that it is unsafe to trust to this kind of abstract inference with regard to God, unless it is supported by his own declarations of what he will do. The following process of reasoning, for example, is entirely analogous to that of the objection now under consideration, and yet is manifestly false in its conclusion.

i. A being of infinite love and kindness must always infinitely desire happiness in all his creatures; and, if he has the power to carry out that desire, must always promote such happiness, and especially may be relied upon to shield them from dreadful calamities, such as torture, starvation, and agonizing death.

1 Rom. xi. 22.

ii. God is a Being of infinite love and kindness, and he has infinite power, so that if he desires to shield his children from calamities, he can do so — by miracle, if necessary; as he kept Daniel in the lion's den, and the three Jews in the burning fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar.

iii. Therefore it follows that God may be depended upon to shield men — who are his children — from torture, starvation, and agonizing death.

Read, now, the Reports of the Committee on the Fort-Pillow Massacre, and on the condition of Union prisoners; look at the gaunt, skeleton pictures, there all too faithfully hinting to what a condition humanity can be reduced by malignant and persevering hatred and cruelty; count the graves of our dead, murdered by inches with every imaginable enhancement of torment; shudder at the gibbering idiocy — worse than death — in which some of these poor sufferers have been sent home to their friends; realize all the horrors of the Libby, and of Belle Isle and Andersonville, and then tell me why God — if your reasoning is sound — permitted this; tell me how it was possible that Infinite goodness and kindness, if it is always free to follow out its dictates without considerations of restraint from other aspects of the Divine character, could have tolerated it? Would an earthly father have looked over the stockade fence into these dens of devilish torment day after day, and allowed his own sons to rot and famish there

— he having the power to release them? And does not God love his children better than earthly parents *can* love theirs?

How is it?

There must be some fatal flaw in this logic!

And yet it is identically the same argument in essence — and so in logical force — with that on which the Universalist relies, when he says that God is surely too good to allow men to suffer in hell.

(b.) This brings us to the careful consideration of the thought, suggested before, of that balancing fact in the Divine nature, of severity, which is as truly regnant there as love itself. The Universalist — to turn for a moment to mathematical similes — conceives of God's nature as a circle described around the center of love. To him he is all Father. Some of the sternest old theologians seem to have conceived of him, on the contrary, as a circle described around the center of severity. To them he is only Ruler. Both are partly right, and partly wrong. The truer conception of the Divine existence, is as of an ellipse described around the two foci of love and severity; realizing him as both Father and Ruler — as much, and as truly, the one as the other; and so every act tinged from both streams of volition, and the harmonized result of the conflicting claims of both.

There is just as real and just as much evidence of the existence of severity in the Divine nature, as there is of

love. Nature declares it in all her earthquakes, tornadoes, torrents, avalanches; Providence affirms it in shipwrecks, famines, pestilences, wars, and slavery; History endorses it with her red pages, and the Bible declares it when it warns us of the "terror of the Lord," [1] and insists that "the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and reserveth wrath for his enemies," [2] and sums up "our God is a consuming fire." [3]

If the world has a ruler, that ruler is God; and, as Lord Bacon says, "I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind." [4] But, if God is a Ruler, he must be an infinitely just ruler; and an infinitely just ruler must secure the happiness of his loyal subjects by protecting them from the acts and aims of the disloyal; and that can only be done by severity, — severity in restraint and punishment. Therefore, if God is the just ruler of this world, he must show his severity, and restrain and punish the guilty; and this, although they be his children, and his heart yearns over them as a father's heart. So that, the reason of the case, when the entire character of God is taken into the account, is wholly against the supposition that God will somehow shield the guilty from suffering, and bring about universal happiness.

And if the Universalist claims that God, having omnipotence, will constrain all his creatures to repentance, so that he can, as a Ruler, safely pardon, and make them happy, the stubborn fact of free agency is in his way. God has placed it out of his own power to compel men to cease to do evil and learn to do well. He persuades them. He entreats them. He accumulates the most urgent motives around them, if so be he can draw their volition that it shall run after him. But he never *compels* any man to repent. So that there are always just as many possibilities of thwarted omnipotence, in this respect, as there are free agents, any one of whom can hold out for ever. Among so many possibilities, there must be some probabilities. And Reason decides that, so far as she can see, there have been and are many such gloomy probabilities, — men living and dying "without God and without hope." Toward such ones, God's paternal nature must be constrained by his official position. He can not pardon them when they will not repent, much as he loves and longs for them.

(c.) The only safe course on this subject, is, then, to turn to the Revelation which God has made of his character and intentions toward his children here, and see whether he there promises — or even remotely hints the possibility of his doing so — to bring all men to future happiness, because he loves them so much that he can not bear that they should suffer eternal death. What the Scriptures do say on this point has been made so clear in our progress thus far through this volume, that I have no need

1 2 Cor. iv. 11. 2 Nahum i. 2.
3 Hebrews xii. 29. 4 Essay, *Of Atheism.*

to develop it here. It is sufficient to remind the reader of those two great classes of passages, which, on the one hand, assert that the persistent sinner "shall surely die," and, on the other, plead with men to repent, with all the earnestness and pathos involved in the loving heart of the Infinite Father, yearning over his children, whom he sees in dangerous places and going on to destruction, notwithstanding all that he can do to save them — "For why will ye die? O house of Israel!" and then turning sorrowfully away from the hopeless end, saying, "Alas! if thou hadst known! Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea!"

There is something beautiful and touching, it must be confessed, in some of those suggestions which tender and loving hearts make in plea for mercy to all, from God's infinite love. One can not listen without emotion to Whittier, when he sings:[1] —

"I trace your lines of argument:
Your logic, linked and strong,
I weigh as one who dreads dissent,
And fears a doubt as wrong.

But still my human hands are weak
To hold your iron creeds;
Against the words ye bid me speak,
My heart within me pleads.

I see the wrong that round me lies;
I feel the guilt within;
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,
The world confess its sin:

Yet, in the maddening maze of things
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed stake my spirit clings, —
I know that God is good!

Not mine to look where cherubim
And seraphs may not see;
But nothing can be good in him
Which evil is in me.

The wrong that pains my soul below
I dare not throne above:
I know not of his hate, — I know
His goodness and his love!"

1 From a late poem in the *Independent*.

But are not these other verses of a more truly Christian tone, which are surely not less sweet in their appeal?[1]

"When my dim reason would demand
Why that or this Thou dost ordain,
By some vast deep I seem to stand,
Whose secrets I must ask in vain.

When doubts distend my troubled breast,
And all is dark as night to me,
Here, as a solid rock, I rest, —
That so it seemeth good to Thee.

1 Ray Palmer's *Hymns and Sacred Pieces*.

Be this my joy, that evermore
Thou rulest all things at Thy will:
Thy sovereign wisdom I adore,
And calmly, sweetly, trust Thee still."

The one shrinks from pain and the thought of woe, and reduces God to the measure of his own feeling and action; the other leaves all to God, — willing to be led *by him* into any darkness that can not be understood, and, yielding his own thought and wish to God, calmly, sweetly, trusts him still.

These moral arguments, then, amount to nothing. They are mere assumptions. It can not be proved that the happiness of the redeemed becomes impossible, if any are to be lost; as, if it could be, it would not prove that none will be lost. It can not be proved that the sole end of punishment is restoration, and so eternal punishment becomes impossible; and, if it could be, it would not prove that none will be punished eternally. It can not be proved that it is unjust to punish the sins of this life for ever; and, if it could be, it would not prove that the lost will not persist in sinning for ever, and so for ever merit new punishment. It can not be proved that there will be a further probation in the next world; and, if it could be, it would not prove that those who have misused probation here, will not misuse it there, for ever and for ever. It can not be proved that the wicked will be annihilated;

and, if it could be, that would be the very fearfullest punishment of all. It can not be proved that God's infinite goodness will lead him to save men from future punishment: he does not interfere to save them from the calamities which his laws necessitate here, and all the evidence of his rulership over the universe goes to prove that it is impossible, and so incredible, that he should interfere in the future world — while his language of warning and entreaty in the Scriptures makes it absolutely certain that he will not so interfere.

There is, then, absolutely no valid objection of any sort, from the Scriptures, or from Reason, to break the force of our argument, as heretofore developed, or to modify the conclusion at which we had arrived, that there will be a fearful and eternal difference between the future of the righteous and the wicked.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUMMING UP OF THE ARGUMENT.

THUS, then, I sum up our argument.

(1.) Reason is first and final arbiter on the question whether it is reasonable to believe that the wicked will be punished eternally.

(2.) She decides that, alone, she can not grasp and settle so great a question, and needs help.

(3.) She decides that she may expect that help from God.

(4.) She decides that he has offered that help in the Bible.

(5.) She decides, that, coming to her as the Bible comes, and such in itself as it is, it is reasonable for her to take its testimony, fairly made out on the question at issue, and — if it asserts that the wicked will be punished eternally — to believe that they will be.

(6.) She decides that its testimony will be fairly made out when she takes it as a whole, rejecting nothing; and interprets it honorably in its self-consistent, obvious, common-sense aspect from the standpoint of its speakers and

writers; as a progressive record; in which obscurity is to be anticipated (as to the young mathematician in the "Principia" of Newton, — but not because it is false); and so interpreted as to favor God most, to win most the assent of all good men, and to be least tasteful to bad men, and safest for all men.

(7.) She decides that the Bible, so interpreted, does reveal that those who die in sin will be punished for ever. The Old Testament affirms it, with all the clearness natural, or even possible, to its time and circumstances. Christ asserted it uniformly, and with all the tender and solemn emphasis to be expected from his lips on such a theme. The apostles re-affirmed Christ's position, and shaped all their arguments upon it. All indirect testimonies converge toward the same result. So that it is impossible to make the Bible a self-consistent volume, unless this revelation of the future punishment of those who persist in rebellion to God, and die in sin, is taken as its voice.

(8.) She decides that there is no objection brought against this view which has logical force enough to impair its validity, or, in any way, to forestall or relieve its imperative decision.

(9.) Therefore, she decides THAT THE DOCTRINE OF THE FUTURE ENDLESS PUNISHMENT OF THOSE WHO DIE IMPENITENT, IS, IN THE HIGHEST DEGREE, AND ON THE SOUNDEST BASIS OF REASON, A DOCTRINE REASONABLE TO BE BELIEVED. So she makes the voice of the Bible her verdict.

And when she is pressed, on this side and on that, by difficulties and objections, her reply is, I am not careful to answer thee in this matter, — this is a world where we see through a glass darkly, and necessarily know but in part; and because you can ask questions which puzzle me, I will not therefore let go of those great fundamental principles which bid me to expect queries unanswerable, now while I yet cling fast to the eternal word of God. It is more reasonable for me to take the Bible and obey it, even with these queries unanswered, than to make myself eternally unsafe and wretched by rejecting it because of them, — only to throw myself upon a thousand others more torturing still.

Is not this sound reason? Will you not accept, and act upon it as such? Will you not shape your faith and life by its decision?

"It is wise to *make sure* of eternal salvation in this life, and to *risk* nothing for the future. No advocate of a future probation has ever been able to make out the slightest *probability* of such a state. His moral arguments are mere assumptions. He assumes that the sin of a finite creature is not great enough in the sight of God to call for endless punishment; and, therefore he says, that God can not mean this when he threatens it. He assumes that God is too good to punish, and therefore he can not mean to execute the threatenings of his law. But all this is mere guess-work, — nay, it is sheer presumption. What

can we know of God's intentions aside from his declarations? and, if you bring the theory to the Bible, what do you find there to support it? Not one positive explicit declaration that those who die impenitent shall be finally restored and saved; not even that vagueness of statement from which the ingenuity of criticism could torture a conjecture that there *may* be another state of probation; but the whole tenor of the Scriptures, every warning, every call, every entreaty, forbids that supposition.

"And are you willing to take your chance of a second probation and final recovery on such grounds, and to throw away the certainty of salvation by abusing this probation? Will any man in his senses take that risk?"[1]

I desire to speak with utmost respect of all who hold doctrines differing from my own. And it is without the slightest feeling of unkindness, or intention of disrespect, to any, that I beseech you never, for one moment, to entertain the idea that it is possible for you to be honest Universalists and consistent believers in the Bible as a revelation from God. Many — like Theodore Parker and Thomas Paine[2] — have already perceived and announced that conclusion. The day must come when all will do the same, "renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God de-

1 Thompson's *Love and Penalty*, 195.

2 I have already quoted Mr. Parker to this effect. See also Paine's *Age of Reason* (1st ed.), part i. p. 18, &c.

ceitfully." The world will be divided by a line — which has not yet been sharply drawn — separating between those who receive and those who openly reject the Bible as God's revelation to man; when those who hold it will hold it in its obvious and honest sense, and those whose rationalistic tendencies lead them to withdraw from it their faith will launch out boldly upon the ocean of human speculation, leaving the divine chart avowedly behind. Then, to believe in the Bible will be to believe what it says, about future punishment, as well as other things, to be true.

But can there be any better thing for us all than that we should believe the Bible, and the whole Bible, and practice all its teachings, which are able to make us wise unto salvation? I urge this, not as being a discourtesy to, but rather the very highest recognition of, reason as the guide of life; for I believe, with a great father of mental philosophy,[1] that "reason is natural revelation, whereby the eternal Father of light and Fountain of all knowledge communicates to mankind that portion of truth which he has laid within the reach of their natural faculties, — revelation is natural reason enlarged by a new set of discoveries communicated by God immediately, which reason reaches the truth of, by the testimony and proofs it gives that they come from God. So that he that takes away reason to make way for revelation puts out the light of both, and

[1] Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*, Book iv. chap. 19, sect. 4.

does much-what the same as if he would persuade a man to put out his eyes, the better to receive the remote light of an invisible star by a telescope."

Oh most merciful Father! who art the Fountain of Wisdom, and givest liberally to them that ask thee; who by the glorious ministration of the Spirit hast made unto us a clear revelation of thy will in the gospel of thy Son; we beseech thee to pour into our darkened understandings the light of thy truth, and quicken our minds that we may rightly understand and duly value it, and frame our lives according to it to thine honor and glory; so that we may be delivered from pride, vainglory, and hypocrisy; from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism; from hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word and commandment; from all evil and mischief; from sin; from the crafts and assaults of the devil; from thy wrath; and from everlasting damnation; — through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

THE END.