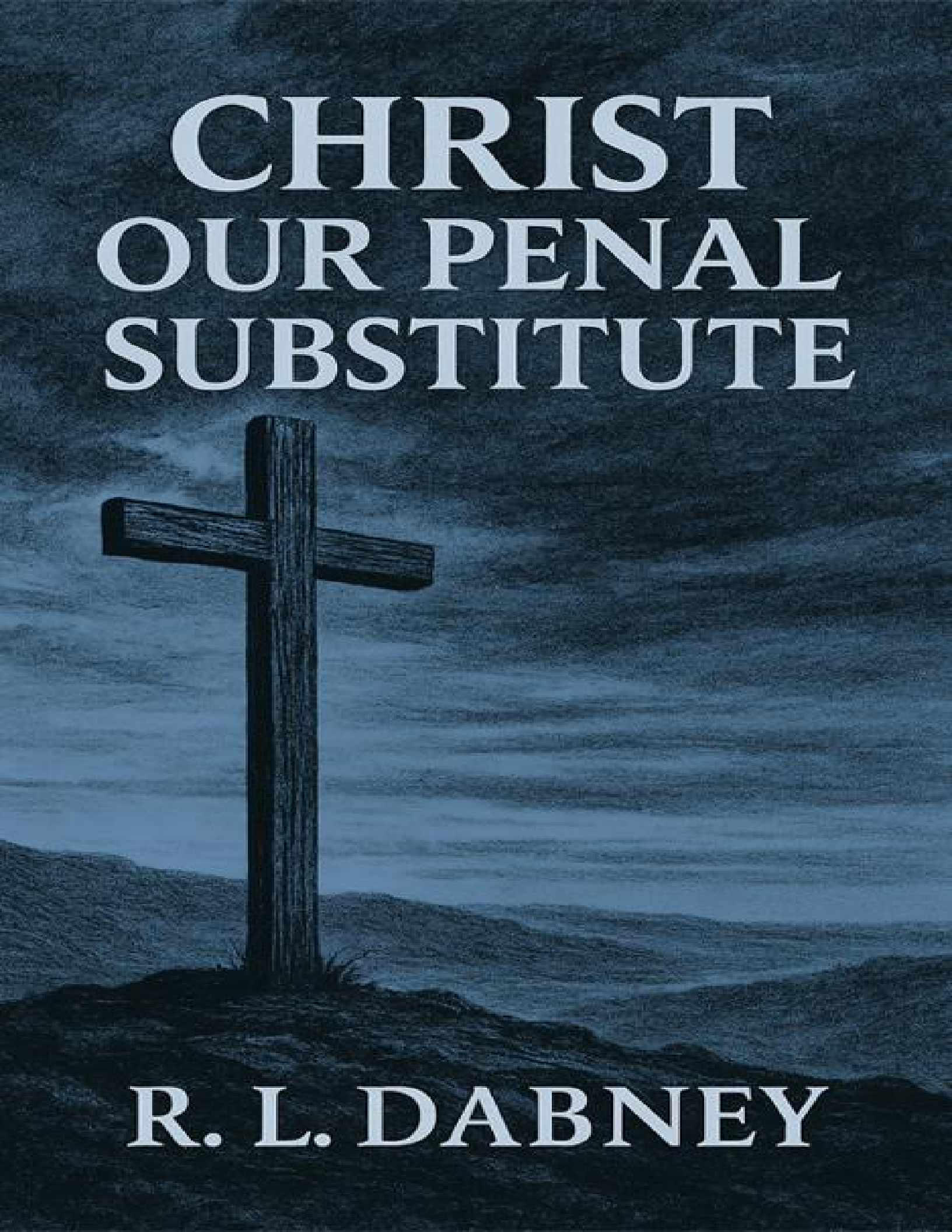
CHRIST OUR PENAL SUBSTITUTE



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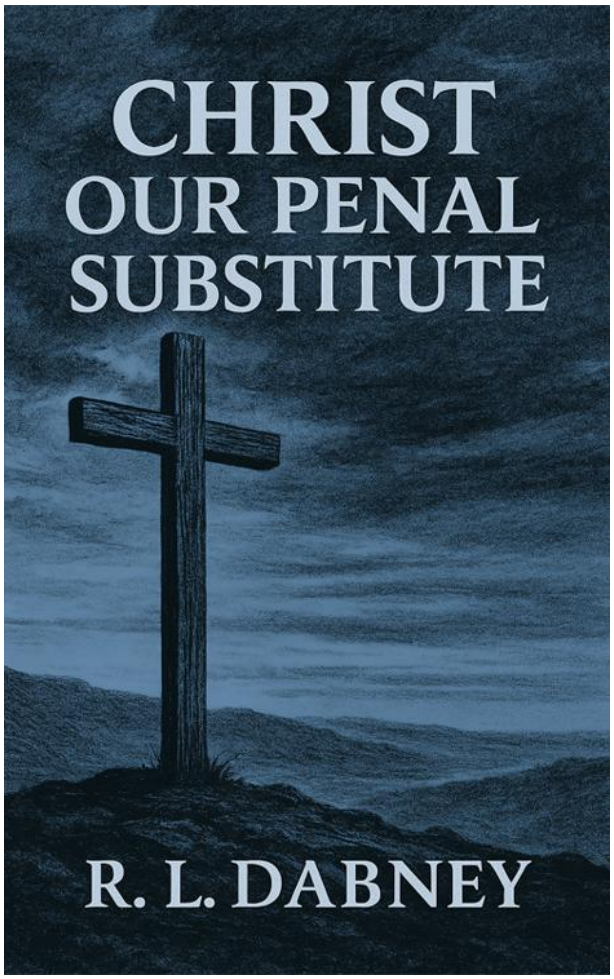
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Christ Our Penal Substitute

by Robert L. Dabney

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Chapter 1

The Rationalistic Objections to Penal Substitute

The student of religious discussion finds these objections as varied and pertinacious as though the blessed conception of righteous pardon, grounded in full satisfaction to law, were irritating

and insulting to the objectors, instead of being attractive, as it should be, to all of us sinners. This cardinal conception is rejected by the multitudes of rationalizing nominal Christians through every party, from Socinians upward. They say that they must reject it as essentially unjust, as thus obnoxious to necessary moral intuitions, and so impossible to be ascribed to a righteous God. They say they must infer this from the Bible facts, that God strictly prohibits such substitution to civil magistrates judging in his name (see Deut. xxiv. 16), and that he disclaims the usage for himself, as in the famous text, Ezek. xviii. 20.

They claim that, while ancient or pagan peoples, taught by barbarism and debasing forms of religious belief, made constant use of the cruel principle of substitution in their antipspchoi and hostages, civilization, Christianity, and correct ethics, have banished these usages from modern Christendom. And this, they say, is but the testimony of a more enlightened, a better age, against the cruelty and injustice of substituting the innocent in place of the guilty under punishment.

They argue that, since "God is love," we must not represent his penalties as meaning vengeance on transgressors, or simple retribution for supposed outrage upon his authority and personal honor; to indict misery upon the transgressor for this purpose would not be holy justice, but malicious revenge; and that this notion has descended from the pagan conceptions of their vindictive gods, who were apprehended rather as fearful demons than as a heavenly Father. Hence their only conception of divine justice is the remedial one. Penalties are but modified expressions of divine benevolence, just like the chastisements and bitter medicines administered by loving parents to erring or diseased children, solely for their good, and as deterrents from future transgressions for them and their

brothers and sisters. Hence the objectors infer, with loud triumph, that there can be no imputed guilt and vicarious punishment, because the sick child must swallow his own physic in order to get any cure. The taking of it by a healthy comrade can do him no good. They charge that the orthodox doctrine of the necessity of a vicarious satisfaction in order to pardon is directly contradicted by the duty of Christian forgiveness, so strongly enjoined upon us in Scripture. To forgive those who trespass upon us, without waiting for compensation for the injuries done us, is the loveliest Christian virtue. The Lord's prayer makes such forgiveness the absolute condition of our receiving forgiveness from him. The apostle commands Christians to forgive their enemies "even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven them." But surely our Christian virtue should consist in our being like God. His perfections, therefore, do not prompt him to exact penal satisfaction in order to pardon. But the orthodox doctrine misrepresents God in an odious light, as a vindictive being who refuses to relinquish his own pique, no matter how penitent the transgressor against him, until his vengeance is satiated; yea, so blindly vindictive, that he can be satisfied only by hurting somebody, though that person be the innocent one.

The more thoughtful objectors also argue analytically, that there can be no penal substitution in God's government, because penalty loses its whole propriety and moral significance when transferred away from the person of the transgressor. They ask, What is it that deserves penalty? Everybody's common sense answers, It is the sin. But sin is not a substantial thing when abstracted from the sinner. In strictness of speech, sin is the sinner acting. The sinfulness and bad desert are nothing more than the attributes of the sinning person. Hence they infer that the penalty must be as inalienable as the personal ill-desert.

Therefore, imputation can be but a legal fiction, and that an immoral one. Passing from abstractions to concrete cases, they cry passionately, "How could any right mind view the punishment of an innocent person in place of the guilty except with righteous and burning indignation? " If you, Mr. Calvinist, were the victim of such a legal fiction, we surmise that all the dogmatism of the orthodox would fail to satisfy you under your unjust sufferings! Therefore, the ground upon which God permitted a holy Christ to suffer and die must be otherwise explained. The places in the Scripture which seem to teach his penal substitution must be so expounded as to expunge that doctrine out of them.

So far as I know myself, I have above given the points and the arguments of the objectors with complete fairness and sufficient fullness. I have set them in the strongest light which their assertor's could throw around them. I do not believe that the impartial reader can find any treatise advocating Socinianism, or the new theology, which makes as plausible a showing as I have now made for them. Does the array appear formidable? Yet if the reader will follow me faithfully, he will convince himself that these seeming bulwarks are built not of stone, but of fog. They owe their seeming strength to half truths, false analogies, and defective analyses of elements.

Now, reader, audi alteram partem, "A man seemeth right in his own cause until his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."

Chapter 2

Definitions and Statement of the Issue

The standard which distinguishes between righteousness and sin is the preceptive will of a holy God. This legislative prerogative belongs to him by right of his moral perfections, omniscience and righteous ownership of us as our Maker, Preserver, and Redeemer. Our righteousness is our intelligent and hearty compliance with that will. Our sin is our conscious and spontaneous discrepancy there from. (1 John iii. 4: The badness or evilness expressed in any sin (and usually increased by it) is the attribute or subjective quality of the sinning agent. "Potential guilt" is the ill-desert, or merit of punishment, attaching to the transgressor by reason of his sin. This concept is not identical with that judgment and sentiment of disapprobation which sin awakens in the conscience, though it springs immediately out of it. Where we judge that an agent has sinned, we also judge that he has made himself worthy of penalty; that his sin deserves suffering, and this is a necessary and universal part of the moral intuition whose rise he occasions in us. Such is potential guilt. Actual guilt (reatus) is obligatio ad poenam ex peccafo, the debt of penalty to law arising out of transgression. It is the penal enactment of the lawgiver which ascertains and fixes this guilt. Hence, under a lawgiver who was less than omniscient and all perfect, there might be sin, evil attribute and potential guilt, while yet the actual guilt was absent, because the penal statute defining it did not exist. It thus appears that while evilness or sinfulness is an attribute, actual guilt (reatus) is not an attribute but a relation. It is a personal relation between a sinning agent and the sovereign will which legislates the penal statute. Now, when the Scriptures and theology speak of penal imputation or substitution, it is this relation only which is transferred or counted over from the sinning person to his substitute. We do not dream of a similar transfer of personal acts, or of the personal attributes expressed in such acts.

Now let none exclaim that these are the mere subtleties of abstraction. They are the most practical distinctions. They are recognized, and must be recognized, in the civil and criminal laws of men as much as in the government of God. Readers must observe that in sacred Scripture the word "sin" is often used by metonymy where the concept intended is that of actual guilt. Thus a prophet exclaims (Jer. 1. 20): "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none." The exact meaning of the word "iniquity" here must be actual guilt, else we should make the prophet contradict himself utterly by first charging on Israel very great sins, and then declaring that no sins of theirs existed, which is, moreover, a statement impossible to be true of any of Adam's race. In a multitude of places, God's mercy is said to "remit sins." But actual guilt is what is meant. For God's act of forgiveness only removes our actual guilt from us; not sinfulness, as is proved by our own subsequent, most hearty confessions of unworthiness and sinfulness whenever God really forgives us. Or let us add another instance, since this distinction is so vital and so much overlooked. A thief steals a horse of a neighboring benefactor, sells him beyond recovery, and loses the money at the gaming table. These acts of the thief give expression to much meanness or vileness of character. The market price of the horse was one hundred dollars. These acts have infected upon the good neighbor a pecuniary loss (damnum) of that amount. They have also laid the thief under the penal obligation of five years or more in the penitentiary, as fixed by statute law. The good man, learning that the thief and his family are still suffering destitution, exclaims: "Oh! I freely forgive the fellow." What he means is that he, at the prompting of charity, remits to the thief his damnum, his lost hundred dollars, and suppresses the anger at first naturally and properly felt. The good man dreams of no such folly as that he can remove from the thief his attribute of vileness or release him from his legal debt of penal servitude; he knows he has

neither the power nor the right. The distinction between potential and actual guilt is found, perfectly real and solid, in numerous secular cases; as where the cunning manipulators of business corporations so juggle with the property of creditors and fellow-stockholders as to inflict on them what is mere theft in the sight of God. But the sapient American legislatures, while recklessly creating such corporations, have forgotten to enact any statutes fixing the legal penalties for these juggleries. Hence these men go unwhipped of justice, although the judges of the courts may be thoroughly alert and righteous. Abundant potential guilt is there, but for want of statute law the debt of actual guilt does not exist.

The distinction between sinfulness as an attribute and as a penal obligation often receives more practical concrete application. Here is a treasurer who has given an official bond upon which a friend goes security. The treasurer commits the felony of embezzlement, and by flight escapes the clutches of the law. Thereupon the Commonwealth forces the security to pay the official bond; that is to say, it exacts from him the legal obligation which is made his by imputation. And this exaction is, to the good man, a heavy penalty, a mulct, inflicting, perhaps, much suffering on him and his family. Does anybody dream that a shadow of the embezzler's meanness or sinfulness is transferred to, or infused into this generous friend, who suffers for another's crime? Not at all. All honor the unfortunate man for the generous friendly help which prompted him to go security, and for the honesty with which he makes good society's loss. Yet the Commonwealth acts with perfect justice in exacting the money from him. Here is the clearest distinction between actual guilt and sinfulness; nobody is so stupid as to pretend not to see it. Let the vital proposition be repeated, that, in the penal substitution of Christ, it is the actual guilt of sinners as above defined, and nothing else, which is transferred from them to him. And the whole question

between us and the objectors is this: May the sovereign Judge righteously provide for such a substitution, when the free consent of the substitute is given, and all the other conditions are provided by God for good results? This issue is cardinal. As the church of all ages has understood the Scriptures, the whole plan of gospel redemption rests upon this substitution of Christ as its corner-stone. He who overthrows the corner-stone overthrows the building. The system which he rears without this foundation may be named Christianity by him, but it will be another building, his own handiwork, not that of God--- another gospel. This is proved by the history of doctrinal discussions. There is scarcely a leading head of divinity which is not changed or perverted as a logical consequence of this denial of penal substitution consistently carried out. It must change the description of God's attributes, excluding his distributive justice from the catalogue of his essential perfections, and putting in place of it the morals of expediency. It must vitiate our view of God's immutability. It must change and lower our conception of sin as an infinite evil, because it assails the impartial justice, holiness and unchangeableness of an infinite God. He who pronounces the imputation of guilt to Christ morally impossible for God, has, of course, rejected the doctrine of original sin; for that contains, as Paul teaches in Romans v., a parallel imputation. Next, the church doctrine of justification must be corrupted, for that is founded upon the counterpart imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers personally unworthy, which is just as bad as the other, if the objectors are right. The true office of faith must next be perverted; for the imputed ground of justification having been denied, there is nothing else to thrust into its place except the believer's faith. The doctrine of adoption must be changed; there is nothing left to purchase it except the believer's personal obedience after the merit of Christ's preceptive righteousness is discarded. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints becomes an excrescence and an absurdity

in this creed; for the title and status of the Christian as a child of grace cannot be more stable than its foundation, and the only foundation left is the believer's own obedience, which is incomplete and mutable. The whole doctrine of Satan and, his angels, with their fall and eternal condemnation, must be rejected, since the theory asserts that the only penalties which the God of love can inflict must be remedial, whereas everlasting torments are not a remedy, but a destruction. Of course, this creed should reject eternal punishments of reprobate men, and teach universalism for the same reason. A proper belief in God's providence becomes impossible, because, if there was a special providence in Christ's sufferings and death, we should have God punishing Christ for other men's sins. How much now remains of the church theology? Did the limits of this treatise permit, the teachings of one or another of the objectors could be quoted, asserting each of these heretical inferences, and that logically from their denial of penal substitution. All of these errors are not charged upon all our opponents, for many of them are preserved from a part by a fortunate logical inconsistency. These objections against imputation are mostly of Socinian origin; and consistently followed they will lead back to Socinianism.

The doctrine of substitution is taught by the Scriptures so expressly in both Testaments, by types and didactic propositions, and with such iteration, that it cannot be eliminated from the Bible system without a license of exegesis destructive of all faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures. Infidelity lies as the next remove from these disingenuous misconstructions. Let these three propositions be set side by side: Jesus was perfectly innocent; guilt cannot be imputed from a sinner to his substitute on any condition whatsoever; Jesus suffered the bitterest sorrows and death. Then there is but one way to reconcile them with each other; it must be asserted that God's providence does not direct what befalls even the best men, and that

the evils of this life and the death of the body are not penal evils, but mere natural consequences, like the fading of the flower and the fall of the leaf. Such is theological result. Obviously, it assails God's word with the most express and insolent contradiction possible. It gives us practical atheism, that, namely, of the Greek Epicureans, for the god who exercises no providence over us in our most urgent circumstances is practically no god to us. And after an utter rejection of Scripture, it blots out every premise by which natural theology proves that there is a moral government over mankind. Is there any deeper abyss of infidelity? Yet not only is the Socinian literature, but the pretended "Advanced Christian thought" of our day, loaded with denials of the moral possibility of penal substitution, confidently uttered by men who do not foresee whither they are traveling. A generation ago Jenkyn, Beaman, and Barnes excluded this vital truth from their treatises on the atonement. So the New Haven theology had done, and its parent, Dr. Samuel Taylor, of Yale; so does Dr. Joseph Parker, the great light of the English Independents; so does Dr. Burney, lately the theological teacher of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, in a recent world, which, as we hear, his General assembly fail to disclaim; so teach multitudes of pulpit leaders in nearly all the Protestant denominations. The customary tone of secular literature is marked by a fiery and disdainful rejection of the whole concept. And these writers think that nobody can believe it except stupid old fogies besotted in their bigotry. If Presbyterian pastors will probe the opinions of their own people they will find numbers of communicants who regard themselves as more cultivated and intellectual, discarding penal imputation as an insult to their moral intuitions. These facts show that an exhaustive and triumphant refutation of objections and a anal establishment of this vital doctrine are among the urgent needs of the day. If the innovators would but study the masterly demonstrations of the church theologians, of an Anselm, a Calvin, a Turretin, a Witsius, a

Hill, a Hodge, a Shedd, they would not need further discussion. But the flippant and superficial spirit of our age disdains a thorough study of these masters; they are filliped aside by the words "antiquated," "Calvinistic."

Chapter 3

Objections Examined

It is objected that the unrighteousness of penal substitution is strongly shown by the fact that God expressly prohibited it to human magistrates (Deut. xxiv. 16), and that in Ezekiel xviii. 4, he disclaims it as a principle of his own moral government, declaring that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." The first assertion is correct; the second misconceives the text. But the sophism of the first is contained in the false assumption that because a given moral prerogative is improper for men, it must, therefore, be improper for God. I shall not take the harsh position that because God is sovereign and omnipotent, therefore his will is not regulated by, or responsible to, those fundamental principles of morality which he has enjoined on his creatures. I shall never argue that God's "might makes his right," as our opponents charge strict Calvinists with arguing. But it is a very different thing, and a perfectly plain and reasonable thing, to say that the infinite sovereignty, wisdom, and holiness of God may condition, and may limit his moral rights in a manner very different from what is proper for us men. The principles of righteousness for the two rulers, God and a human magistrate, are the same; the details of prerogative for the two may differ greatly, while directed by the same holy principles. How simple is this! How ready and facile the instances! Thus, a father entrusts his boy to a distant teacher, and tells him to consider himself as in loco parentis to the child.

Does this authorize the pedagogue to inflict any kind of punishment for the boy's faults which would be righteous for the father, as, for instance, disinheritance? By no means. This plain view makes the inference of our opponents worthless, that because God has told his servants they must not do a certain thing, therefore it is immoral for him to do it.

And the reasons limiting the two cases differently are plain and strong. The first is: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." The prerogative of retribution is God's alone; magistrates only possess a small fraction of it by delegation from him. Hence, they are properly bound by such restrictions as he chooses to impose upon their judicial functions. Next, men lack the wisdom and infinite serenity of moral judgment which are requisite for these exalted and far-reaching acts of retribution. Third, they cannot possibly find subjects suitable for holy penal substitution. One of the conditions necessary for righteous substitution is the free consent of the substitute, that is, where he himself is innocent. No human being is thus innocent before God, but each is guilty for himself. Now, a guilty life forfeited to the law cannot possibly buy off another guilty life also forfeited to law. One bankrupt cannot release the obligations of another bankrupt by becoming surety for him. The surety must personally be innocent, righteous, and owing nothing for himself to penal law. This principle governed in the establishment of the representative relation between both Adam and Christ and their two federal bodies. Adam was personally innocent when thus chosen, and must have continued so in order to benefit his federal body; and Christ was and continued absolutely innocent, and was thus able to justify his federal body by his imputed merit. Here, then, is one insuperable obstacle to any human ruler's punishing through a substitute. Not to dwell upon this difficulty, that a good man would rarely be found willing to die under human law for a wicked

neighbor, we meet another still more fatal. No subject of human government has that ownership or autocracy of his own faculties and being which are strictly necessary for a penal substitution; these belong to his maker; they are but a loan to the creature. Now, no citizen, however generous, can pay his neighbor's debt with propriety, nor his own, by robbing another in order to get the wherewithal. Besides this, every man in society owes moral obligations to other fellow-creatures who have a rightful interest in his being and faculties. Let us suppose that a good Damon were found generous enough to propose dying for a bad Pythias; Damon's wife would very certainly protest, saying, may it please the court, I "have a legal right to object utterly to that arrangement; for our matrimonial contract has invested me with a previous right in Damon's life and faculties, for the protection and subsistence of me and my children. If the judge knew anything of law, he would be obliged to reply, that the wife was right; that Damon, however generous, had no right to dispose of his life in this substitution, and that the court could not accept his proposal, being clothed with only a limited and delegated power, and strictly forbidden by the sovereign to accept such an arrangement. Another obstacle would arise; the civil magistrate has no power to convert Pythias from the evil of his way. And as he is equally unable to raise Damon from death, the practical results of the substitution would only be to deprive society of a good citizen in order to preserve for it one who had been wicked and mischievous, and who would, probably, continue so. When we add to this that the human judge might wickedly pervert the power of substitution to wreak his malice upon some innocent person, or to gratify a general rage for slaughter, we have the true reason which prompted God to prohibit the power summarily to the magistrate. But how worthless is the inference that he will never exercise it himself under conditions which he knows to be wise, just, and beneficial?

Now, we find every condition which was lacking to the human substitute beautifully fulfilled in the case of Christ. He was innocent, owing for himself no debt of guilt. He gave his own free consent, a consent which his Godhead and autocracy of his own being entitled him to give or to withhold. (See John x. 17, 18.) He could not be holden by death; but, after paying the penal debt of the world, he resumed a life more glorious, happy, and beneficent than before. He has power to work, and does work, true repentance and sanctity in every transgressor whom he justifies. The founding of this objection upon the inhibition of Deuteronomy xxiv. 16 well illustrates the superficial haste and silliness of our opponents. Had they read a few chapters further, they would have found (in Joshua vii. 6 -- 26) what absolutely refutes their inference. They say that, because the civil magistrate may not make any penal substitution, therefore God himself cannot. But in the latter place, in the case of the thief Achan and his children, God did this very thing. The sinning children were punished along with the guilty father. This sentence was not found by Joshua, the human chief magistrate of Israel, but was dictated to him by Jehovah. This case utterly ruins the objectors. The Almighty took it out of Joshua's hands, as it was one of critical importance, and judged it himself in his own sovereignty. But what shall we say of the audacity of our opponents' assertion, when we find the same God asserting his purpose to visit the guilt of sinful parents on sinful children in the very Decalogue (Exod. xx. 5), a law of perpetual obligation for all ages and dispensations, and in his own most solemn declaration of his own principles to Moses (Exod. xxxiv. 7)? And what shall we say when we all have before our eyes indisputable instances in God's providence of the penal results incurred by parents descending to children, while those children may be exempt from their particular vices? And, last, what shall we say when we hear the meek and lowly Jesus declaring with such emphasis (Luke xi. 51, 52) that this law of imputation was still in full force under the

Christian dispensation, and was to be terribly executed upon that generation of Jews? But does Ezekiel (xviii. 4) contradict both Moses and Christ as to this principle? If he does, the squarely honest mind has no resort except to give up the inspiration of Ezekiel. He who has a fair understanding of God's theocratic covenant with Israel and of its history has no difficulty at all. Ezekiel heard the captive Jewish nobles in Chaldea insolently perverting truth by wresting the old adage; it was "the fathers who ate the sour grapes, but it is the children's teeth which are set on edge." This is the clear line of the debate between the pastor and his backslidden charge: Ezekiel -- Your present, urgent duty is repentance. Jews --- Why so, Ezekiel? Ezekiel --- Because you are great sinners. Jews --- What evidence have you, Ezekiel, that we are great sinners? Ezekiel --- The proof is the great secular calamities that you are now suffering: captivity, exile, and pagan despotism. Jews --- This proof is not conclusive, because it may be that we are only suffering the inherited guilt of our fathers' great sins. Now, it is to meet this evasion that Ezekiel introduces, with powerful emphasis, the correct statement of the theocratic covenant between God and Israel. It was precisely this: that God was to hold to his chosen people the relation of a political king. This was to be to Israel a great mark of favor, grace, and blessing, chiefly in that the strict principle of God's government over pagan peoples, by which God visits the guilt of parents also in part upon their guilty children, was by this covenant suspended as to Israel, in special mercy; just as, in the covenant of grace with believing sinners of all races and ages, these are to be delivered from all guilt, imputed or personal, when they receive Christ, and by his gracious merits and intercession.

The political compact between God and Israel was this: that he would chastise political transgressions with secular calamities, but that the favored people should be exempt from the fathers' imputed

guilt, and from that awful substitution under which God is still governing all pagan and wicked races. Whence it would follow, that just as soon as a generation of Hebrews, suffering for their sins, should turn from them by repentance, God would promptly lift off their secular miseries. This was the special bargain between God and the Hebrews. Moses explained it thus to them in detail at the end of his ministry. (See Deuteronomy, last chapters.) This compact Gods illustration throughout the Book of Judges (chapter iii. 9, 15, et passim), and the prophets. Here is just the explanation of a very remarkable fact in history, that for two thousand five hundred years this little commonwealth of Hebrews escaped that doom which befell all pagan commonwealths. The political and religious transgressions of Israel doubtless often became, if not as gross, at least as aggravated as those of any pagan race of Mizraim or Amalek. But these people were all destroyed as nations by God's providence in punishment of their race transgressions. Where is Mizraim? Where is Amalek? Where are the Amorite commonwealths, and the Hittite, and Edom? Where is Assyria, Chaldea, Tyre, Elam, Carthage? These have ceased forever to have any distinct racial or political existence. The political life of Israel persisted through all his crimes and calamities because he was under the special covenant. Among Israelites, therefore, the old adage could not be true as to political guilt. Therefore, Ezekiel's argument against his backslidden charge was logically and historically perfect. The heavy woes of that generation did prove them backslidden sinners, and, therefore, repentance and reformation were their prime duty. True, Ezekiel then proceeds to do what all the prophets delight in doing, he proceeds to deduce from the terms of God's theocratic secular covenant with Israel as a type, the blessed spiritual reality of which it was the standing emblem, the merciful rule of Messiah's gospel kingdom over believing men of all races, that all penitent and obedient souls are by that gospel mercy released eternally from all

guilt, whether original and imputed, or personal. He says under Messiah's spiritual kingdom no soul incurs eternal death save by his own personal impenitence. Each soul which perishes is the architect of its own ruin. There is, therefore, no suggestion in this famous passage of any disclaimer or repeal of God's providential law of vicarious secular punishments upon Gentile families and tribes.

Now, let us see just what the extent of that law is. God never said that the guilt of wicked parents could be justly visited upon an innocent descendant, nor that the rights of perfect immunity secured by such perfect innocence could ever be invaded, even by the Almighty Sovereign, without the voluntary consent of the substitute. If Adam ever had another son as truly pure as Jesus, the son of Mary, I know, as surely as I know that God is God, that holy son never tasted any punishment, either in this world or the next, for the guilt of the wicked ancestor; and the only reason why the son of Mary was an exception was this, that his superior nature was uncreated, independent, and divine; that this eternal Word clothed himself with humanity for the very purpose of bearing this peculiar substitution, and that in the God-man, Christ, both natures and both wills, the human and divine, consented with perfect freedom to this wondrous arrangement for the glory of God's moral perfections and for the infinite good of an innumerable company of redeemed men. As to the guilty posterity of guilty parents, these are the principles taught by enlightened conscience and God's word: That the sovereign Judge may righteously punish any guilty person with adequate sufferings, both secular and eternal, after the death of the body; that the wicked children of wicked parents do primarily incur this personal responsibility by their own sins; that having thus made themselves guilty of death, they are justly liable to be punished in any times and modes, not excessive, which seem wisest and best to the Omniscient; and that God does see fit, for wise and righteous administrative

reasons, to put upon these wicked children a part of the earthly sufferings entailed upon them as natural results of parental sins; and this is the extent of that providential law published by God in both Testaments, and administered before our eyes in every generation.

I now beg the reader to pause and ask himself this question, whether any other moral dispensation would be possible towards responsible moral agents, connected with each other by racial, parental, and social ties, as we men are; towards creatures whose existence is begun through parentage, qualified by heredity, and closely bound up in social relations which, whatever responsibilities they may bring, are absolutely essential to man's rational development and welfare? I can see how the young of the human species could be exempted from this principle of imputation, provided God conditioned their existence and growth like those of young monkeys or pigs, namely, without any inheritance of property rights; without any moral or intellectual influences, forming their spiritual natures for better or for worse; without any permanent parental or filial affection; without any spiritual heredity; without any such attributes or social relation as unite rational men; not otherwise. But since man must be the opposite of all these in order to be better than a monkey or a pig, I see not how the principle of social imputation could be eliminated. Let us see some human infidel perfectionists construct a rational and moral social state without it.

To save time and space we have completed the argument by analogy from this providential imputation of the guilt of sinful parents to sinful children, to the imputation of the guilt of sinners unto their divine Substitute and Redeemer. We do not claim that the parallel is complete in all its details. It is enough that in both instances we have the principle of imputation, although its applications are conditioned differently in some particulars. And this

is all that is required to rebut the objection that the very principle is itself so irrational and contra-ethical, that a wise and holy God cannot have adopted it all. For he does adopt it to a certain extent in a multitude of cases which are continually occurring before our eyes. We must stultify ourselves in order to avoid admitting the facts that sinful children do share the penal consequences of their father's sins. Bishop Butler well remarks that the argument from these cases to the propriety of the redemptive imputation to Christ is a fortiori, whether or not we may apprehend all of God's thoughts and purposes in the two cases. For if this imputation of the parents' punishment to their sinning children is justifiable, though made without asking the children's consent, the imputation of our sins to Christ must be more justifiable, seeing it is only made after Christ's free consent. From this reasoning there is absolutely no evasion except by denying God's providence totally in any of the natural calamities which follow men's sins, or by denying that such calamities are penal or have any moral significance of God's displeasure with men's sins. As I have pointed out, the former denial is practical atheism; and the latter utterly obliterates all evidence from natural theology whether God (if there is any God) possesses any moral attributes or exercises any moral regimen over his rational creatures. Such is the deadly abyss to which this rationalistic line of thought will lead, if it be consistently followed.

The second class of objections is thus stated: That this usage of penal substitution is of pagan origin, and is prompted by a barbaric vengeance and hatred, not by sentiments of justice; that the proof is, as Christianity and civilization have educated the nations of Christendom, they have abolished the barbaric usage in all its forms; and that we no longer hear of hostages being put to death, in retribution for the breach of treaties, as antipsychoi. Of course we do not deny that barbaric races and ruthless tyrants have mingled

feelings of revenge and cruelty with their execution of their ancient laws. We have already explained in full the sufficient reasons which make penal substitution improper in the retributive actions of civil rulers. But, unfortunately for the objectors, their assertions concerning the usages of modern Christian civilized nations are expressly erroneous. There is not one of them that does not retain and employ the principle of penal imputation in certain cases. A common and familiar instance is the law which compels sureties to pay the debts of insolvent debtors and of delinquent officials. We have already used the instances to illustrate the distinction between the guilt, reatus, or obligation to penalty, and the personal attribute of badness or evilness qualifying the evil agent, and expressed in his sin. We grant that the surety's motive in joining the bond, now forfeited, may have been generous and honorable. We do not impute to him any shade of the meanness of character exhibited by the delinquent debtor. Yet we judge that this surety is righteously held to make good that debtor's obligation, inasmuch as he voluntarily assumed it. There is not a sane man upon earth who thinks such eases of imputation unjust. But it is replied that the obligation thus enforced by imputation is not ethical, but merely pecuniary; that the principal was bound only to the payment of so much money, and that the thing exacted from his surety by imputation is only money and not punishment. This evasion is false in both statements. The debtor's broken contract to pay money for value received was both moral and pecuniary. Its breach was an immorality, except where necessitated by some dispensation of Providence. The common law of England was founded upon this judgment, that the breach of contract was a moral delinquency, a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment at the will of the injured creditor, until atoned for by full reparation. This form of penalty was harsh, but the judgment which grounded it is just. And our laws still hold that there is criminality in all debts arising out of official embezzlement and the

obtaining of money under false pretenses; yea, criminality amounting to felony. It is equally untrue that the enforcement of the debt against the surety involves no punishment. It is to him an indication of suffering, as practically a fine or mulct as any imposed by a criminal court in punishment of a misdemeanor. It is often a ruinous fine, inflicting upon the surety the miseries of lifelong destitution.

Still another instance of penal imputation is found in the law of reprisal; and this is still asserted by all Christian nations. One commonwealth commits sin by breaking its treaty-obligations to another. Thereupon the injured commonwealth seeks retribution by issuing letters of marque and reprisal against the property of any citizen of the sinning commonwealth found upon the high seas. Let the aggressive commonwealth have a representative government; let the citizen whose goods are seized upon the sea for reprisal plead that he voted against the aggressive actions of his own commonwealth, and, therefore, is not morally and personally responsible therefor; there is not an admiralty court in Christendom which would yield to this plea. This merchant must bear his part of the retribution due to his sinning commonwealth, because he is a member of it. The military laws of every civilized nation provide for cases of penal imputation, and of none is this more true, both in theory and practice, than of those of the United States. Let an officer who has surrendered in battle or by capitulation be slain by the enemy while an unresisting prisoner of war, then a captive officer of equal rank among the enemies will be condemned and shot, although, personally, he had never broken any rule of civilized warfare, or, perhaps, had never yet drawn his weapon against any adversary.

In view of these legalized usages, it is a mere contention of ignorance or reckless assertion for an opponent to say that these penal substitutions are antiquated and barbaric. These laws are in full force today; and they no more offend the moral sentiments of civilized men than they did those of the ancients. What mere insolence is it, then, in these rationalists to claim that man's primary and necessary moral intentions condemn all penal substitution, when we see that nearly all men of all races, religions and civilizations justify it in some cases. The valid tests of such an intuition are these: "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus, creditur." These different legalized instances of imputation may be conditioned by circumstances differing from each other and different from those which condition the imputation of our guilt to Christ. But there is the principle. And my point is, that it is a principle recognized and employed as just by all nations in all ages. This may not be enough to prove it right; for in some cases nearly the whole world has gone wrong. But it is a complete answer to the historical assumption, and to the false inference drawn from it.

A sophistical appeal is made by our opponents to men's moral intuitions in another form. They ask: would not all spectators feel outraged if they now saw a court punish an innocent man, upon some fiction of imputation, in place of the guilty one? And they exclaim, was the innocent victim one of these Calvinists, they presume none of his theologies would reconcile him to the burning wrong by their antiquated logic. Our reply is: that their intuitions would condemn the injustice, provided the imputations were made without their free consent. In the case of Christ this was given. That is the all-important point. Common sense affirms that when reasonable spectators were informed of the substitute's free assent, this would be the verdict of their intuition: he cannot complain, for he gets what he freely chose to bargain for.

The other and more philosophic objections will be dealt with under the appropriate heads of our argument.

Chapter 4

The Utilitarian Theory of Punishments

Our opponents virtually adopt the utilitarian ethics, for on it they found a famous objection to the gospel doctrine of substitution. They proceed thus: God is love. But a ruler whose single consummate moral attribute is benevolence can punish one of his creatures only from a benevolent motive. They find this motive in God's desire to administer a healing medicine to the spirit of the creature whom he loves, which he perceives is suffering from the disease of sin; and also the benevolent desire to deter the other thoughtless creatures from sinning. They suppose that God in his punitive providence regards sin only as a natural mischief, injurious to the welfare of creatures, and not a moral evil incurring his righteous displeasure, and carrying an inherent ill-desert. They suppose that the sentiment of the loving God in view of sin is only compassion, and not moral resentment, just like the feeling of the good, kind mother towards the sickness of her amiable child. This mother, prompted by love alone and prudential expediency, imposes restraints upon the sick child quite irksome to it, and administers remedies which afflict the sufferer with additional nausea, gripings, and burning pains. But in all the treatment, there is nothing vindicatory; her sole object is to deliver the child from the greater miseries resulting from unremedied disease. Exactly such, say they, is God's punitive policy toward sinners; it is only to be explained as remedial. And on this theory of punishment they found a famous objection against penal substitution. The sick child must swallow his own physic himself. It

will be no remedy for him to have it swallowed by a healthy comrade. So, the punishment of a substitute is utterly futile for any medicinal result, and, therefore, foolish and cruel. The shallowness of this boasted argument is revealed by a simple question: Do not our opponents claim for Christ's sufferings great medicinal or remedial effects?

And according to them, were not the sufferings borne by one person, Jesus, and the benefits received by others, converted sinners? Here, then, we have the same case which they pronounce absurd: the healthy person drinking the medicine, and the sick persons healed by it without tasting it. But this explanation of God's punishments is notoriously that of the utilitarian ethics. The famous book of Dr. Wm. Paley, his Moral and Political Philosophy, with those of Hobbes, Locke, Helvetius, Hume and other advocates of the "Selfish System," once gave currency to the ethics of expediency in New England. To all sound philosophers, that sorry system is dead, slain by the unanswerable logic of Bishop Butler, Dr. Richard Price, Cousin, Jouffroy, Kant, and indeed, a great host in America, Britain, France and Germany. This theory of punishments is an integral part of that utilitarian system of ethics; since the parent stock is dead, this branch must be but rubbish, fit only to be burned. The recital of the general refutation would lead too far away from our special object in this discussion. Such refutation ought to be needless for well-informed men. For the demolition of this remedial theory of punishments, these remarks are sufficient.

We were about to say that it finds no support in the Holy Scriptures; but we remember that this old book may carry little authority with our opponents. While the Scripture often describes God as administering medicinal chastisement to his reconciled children for their good, it nowhere ascribes to him such a motive for

his retributions upon the condemned and reprobate. His objects here are always different, the satisfaction of his own moral indignation, the meetings of the claims of justice, the vindication of his law.

In order to hold this remedial theory we must adopt very degrading views of God's omniscience, not to say of his sagacity; and we must conclude that as a moral governor he is very much a failure (absit blasphemia)! For even our creature experience has shown us that the temporal miseries visited upon sin by divine providence mostly fail to reform sinners. The prodigal usually goes on, in spite of the evils of poverty, to repeat his sins of waste and idleness. The drunkard experiences the miseries of disease, but returns again to his strong drink. The miseries of pagan life are more severe than those experienced in Christian lands, and they are mostly traceable to their idolatries; but we do not see that they convert any pagans. In truth, whenever we see instances of sanctified affliction, that is to say, of the temporal penalties of sin reforming the sinners, the good result is accounted for, not by the operation of the mere pain, but of the word and Spirit of God, employing it as a timely occasion for the sanctifying impressions. If God is infinitely knowing and wise, does not he also see this? If he is infinitely benevolent, why does he continue to employ this pretended remedial policy when he sees it futile, and therefore cruel? It may be added that if this theory of remedial penalties is relied on to justify the criminal laws of states, then it shows their punitive policies to be wretched and contemptible failures. What felon repents in a Penitentiarium? We demand, then, of our rationalistic and humanitarian opponents, why they permit their boasted commonwealths to continue civil punishments if they believe that penalty can only be justified as a benevolent remedy for transgressions?

But a more fatal objection is found in every case of those moral creatures of God who are punished, but not for their restoration. If there is any authority in the Bible, it makes known to us two very numerous classes of such culprits, reprobate men and the fallen and condemned angels. Their punishment cannot be designed to be remedial; because for them there is to be no remedy, but perdition. Of course, therefore, God does not design the penal sufferings of these creatures as benevolent; they simply are retributive, or they are inexplicable.

This theory is utterly inapplicable to an infinite heavenly Father. Human parents seek to cure the diseases of their children by using distressing remedies. They know that their remedies are as real natural evils as the disease itself, although smaller and briefer evils. They know that their curative policy is, after all, "a choice of evils." Why do they not employ some relief for their beloved children which is no evil at all? Because they cannot help themselves; their knowledge and power are quite limited. Were they omnipotent their love would surely cause them to prefer another remedy. They would complete the curative work upon those they love by their simple word of power: "Be healed!" But the heavenly Father is sovereign, and infinite in wisdom and power. If benevolence were his sole motive in punishing, why did he not choose some other painless remedy? When we add that, being omniscient, he must have foreseen the complete failure of the distressing remedy in multitudes of sufferers, and that, being almighty, he must have felt himself able to use any other remedy he chose, equally painless and potent, our question becomes crushing. The theory of the remedial policy, as applied to God's government, stands exposed as equally shallow, thoughtless, and worthless.

It breaks down equally when tested in another way. If the ruler's motive in punishing were only remedial and deterrent, without any eye to retributive justice, then every consideration should decide him to punish where the punishment would be most effective for these ends. Upon this plan many cases would arise in which it would be more politic, and therefore more just, to punish some innocent person, without his consent, closely connected with the real culprit whose reform is designed. For instance, here is a fallen reprobate woman, guilty of frequent disorders, and several times chastised for them by law. But she has became so callous and desperate that the legal penalties fail to influence her. In this arid heart there is yet one green spot; she still has one daughter, the child of her better days, who is innocent and charming. The mother still loves this child with all the passion which centers upon a sole remaining object. The magistrate punishes this child with stripes. As the hardened mother witnesses her torments and her screams, she relents; she resolves to reform, and her mother love keeps her to her resolution. Do we therefore say that it was more wise and just to scourge the innocent child than the guilty mother? This is abhorrent to every right mind. But according to the theory we combat, it should be entirely acceptable to our consciences.

Chapter 5

Retribution not Revenge

But our opponents may now exclaim, that, by proving that God's motive in his punishments is not merely remedial but retributive, we only succeed in making him out a vindictive person, and therefore abhorrent, instead of an object of reverence to right minds. They say that vindicatory punishments are mere revenge, and revenge is sinful

and odious. They assert that the concept of retributive sufferings, indicted merely to satisfy moral resentment, is barbaric. Savage and barbarous rulers thought this right, and under the name of justice remorselessly indulged their spite and malice against their enemies. And our opponents claim that, as the light of Christian civilization spreads, this cruel notion is corrected. We must therefore ascertain and settle the truth as to this sentiment of vindicatory justice, as it is ascribed to good men, and especially to the Divine Ruler. Is the desire simple retribution upon guilt malicious revenge, or is it grounded in a reasonable and necessary moral judgment? Is this intrinsic desert of suffering in the sinful agent the counterpart to that intrinsic title to welfare as due to virtuous agents, upon which our opponents insist most strenuously? And is this the simple and primary aim of the wise and righteous Ruler in punishing to requite the ill-desert of the guilty man? We assert the latter set of propositions. We do not disclaim for the Divine Ruler all remedial policy, nor all benevolent motive in the sufferings which he visits upon sin. Doubtless, among the manifold purposes of his wisdom, he does aim to recall transgressors from their sins, and, even in his sterner acts of retributive justice, he has an eye to deterring other men from sin by the spectacle of its woeful consequences. But behind and underneath all these legitimate and benevolent policies is God's fundamental judgment, that sin is to be punished because it deserves to be, because impartial justice requires due penalty, just as it demands reward for virtue.

The position is proved by conclusive facts in the consciousness of all men. Their moral intuition recognizes ill desert as an essential element in evil action. Desert of what? Moral ill-desert is but desert of natural ill. It is an immediate judgment of the reason that voluntary sin deserves penal suffering. Ask any unsophisticated mind why a given penalty is proper, and it will reply, simply because the

sinner deserves it. Every person, whether sympathetic and benevolent or harsh and revengeful, when shocked by a crime, feels an instinctive desire that it may receive due retribution. These all think that this is not revenge, but a sentiment of justice. If the criminal escapes judgment, they say that the "gallows has been cheated." So opposite are the two sentiments of retributive justice and revenge, the most compassionate, pure, sympathetic women and ingenuous youths feel this sentiment of justice most keenly, while they would shrink with the greatest reluctance from being obliged to witness the pangs of the wicked. The most righteous and amiable magistrate is at once the most certain to pronounce the righteous judgment against crime, and the most tender and sad in doing it. Such judges are not seldom seen to assert the inexorable claims of the law with tears coming down their faces.

The same position is proved by those principles which direct our penal administration. Not only do legislators and lawyers, but all the people, see these principles to be self-evident. For instance, let us suppose that counsel for a murderer, after a just verdict of death rendered, and after admitting that there were no adequate mitigating circumstances, should move the judge to set aside the verdict simply because the fear and anguish of the condemned man were pitiable. Any righteous judge, learned in the law, would reply that such a motion was entirely improper; that it was tantamount to requiring him to perpetrate injustice and to become a traitor to the state and to his own official oath; and if the counsel grew pertinacious in his claim, he would risk being punished for contempt. Or if the repentance of the condemned man were urged as the ground for setting aside a just verdict, the judge would explain that while this was, of course, the proper feeling for the criminal, it constituted no satisfaction whatever for the penal debt, no just recompense for guilt. The due punishment alone must pay that debt of justice. Or let this

plea be urged that this murderer had slain but one man, and had always been a harmless person before, and would certainly become so in future. The judge would say this was nothing to the purpose; that because this peaceful life only satisfied the just demands of the law, it could not be offered as payment for guilt of the murder; for this the only compensation was the due and just punishment. We here see that human law does not believe the medicinal or remedial effect of penalty to be its main end; because it proceeds to exact the punishment just the same whether there is or is not any evidence that the criminal is cured of his moral disease by his own penitence and reformation.

We introduce a still more conclusive argument. Sin is the antithesis of virtue. That moral principle in the reason which makes us desire the reward of righteousness is one and the same with that which makes us crave the due punishment of wickedness; moral approval of virtue and moral indignation against evil are not effluences of two principles in the reason, but of one only. They are differentiated solely by the opposition of the two contrasted objects. The sincere approbation of the good necessitates moral indignation against the evil, because the objects of the two sentiments are opposites. Everybody thinks thus. Nobody would believe that man to be capable of sincere moral admiration for good actions who should declare himself incapable of moral resentment towards vile conduct. Now, then, if we would have a God without moral indignation against sin, we must have one without any moral pleasure in righteousness. If we must have a God capable of disregarding and violating the essential tie between sin and its penalty, we must have him equally capable of disregarding the righteous tie between meritorious obedience and reward. How would our opponents like that result? They are the very men who hold that the good man's title to heaven is grounded on this inviolable bond which, in the judgment of the good

God, unites righteousness and reward. If we were to say that God is capable of capriciously rending that bond, they would fill the very heavens with their outcry against the injustice and even blasphemy of such a doctrine. Yet these are the men who insist that God may capriciously rend the exactly parallel bond between guilt and deserved penalty. The magnetic needle presents an illustration exactly. When the little bar of steel is charged with this electric energy its upper end invariably seeks the north pole, and as invariably is repelled from the south pole of the earth. They are not two opposite energies in the north pole of this needle, but one only; it is the same magnetism which causes the north pole to attract and the south pole to repel its upper end, because the magnetic conditions of the earth's two poles are opposite. What should we think of the mariner who should tell us that he had so marvelous a needle that its upper end was always and certainly attracted to the north pole, yet not repelled from the south pole? We would know that he was either ignorant or a liar.

Now, we must believe that God's righteousness is the same in its essential principles with that which he requires of us, and this by two reasons, as even the pagan poet knew, "We are God's offspring." He formed our spirits in his own image and likeness. Again, God is the moral governor of mankind. If the righteousness which he requires of us were not the same in principle with his own, ruler and ruled could not understand each other. But Scripture expressly confirms our position here. As Proverbs 17:15, "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord." Romans 2:9 --11, "God will render indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul that doeth evil.... But glory, honor and peace to every man that seeketh good.... For there is no respect of persons with God." 2 Thessalonians 1:6, 7, "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that

trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us." In each of these scriptures, and in many others of similar import, the retribution of guilt is declared to be the exhibition of the same righteousness (not revenge), with the reward of merit.

Again, the Scriptures ascribe retributive justice to God as his essential attribute, not an optional exercise of his physical power. He is declared to be perfectly righteous, and righteousness in a ruler is defined as the principle which gives to every one his due with unvarying impartiality. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne." "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil." "He hateth all workers of iniquity." In Ezekiel 18, he triumphantly asks the sinful Jews: "Are not my ways equal, saith the Lord? (impartial); are not your ways unequal?" He then proceeds to explain this impartiality with the utmost precision, as the expression of that impartiality both in punishing the backsliders and pardoning the penitent. If distributive righteousness is an essential attribute in God, then his immutability necessitates its impartial and universal application to both classes of sinners. The declarative holiness of God necessitates the same regularity. The proper expression of that holiness is the divine action, rather than the divine words. If God rewarded guilt with immunity and welfare, in as many cases as he thus rewards merit, rational creatures could see no evidence at all of his holiness. Were he to vacillate only to the extent of rewarding guilt with welfare in the minority of cases, to that extent he would impair this manifestation of his holiness. The attribute of truth is surely perfect and essential in God. But this also insures the invariable exercise of his punitive justice, for he has not only said, but sworn, that "the wicked shall not go unpunished."

But the Scriptures come still nearer to the issue in debate. They declare expressly in many places that in God's administration sin is

unpardonable until satisfaction is made for its guilt. In Numbers 32:23, God says by Moses, "Be sure your sin will find you out." In Romans 1:18, he declares by Paul that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." In two most solemn and emphatic places (Exodus 34:7; Nahum 1:3), Jehovah declares that he will by no means clear the guilty. The crowning evidence is in the words of the Redeemer himself, in that very sermon on the Mount, which our opponents are so fond of claiming, Matthew 5:17, 18, "Think not I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, until heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle of the law shall not fail until all be fulfilled."

The rite of bloody sacrifice, unquestionably ordained for man, the sinner, by God, proves the same truth. Until the Lamb of God came and took away the guilt of the world, God's requirement of bloody sacrifice was invariable. From Abel down to Zachariah, the father of John, in order that believers might pray, the smoke of the burning victim must ascend from the central altar. The Apostle Paul has summed up the invariable history in the words (Heb. 9:22), "And without shedding of blood is no remission." But this awful rite, the death and burning of an innocent and living creature, could typify but one truth, substitution. Compared with the milder ritual of the new dispensation, bloody sacrifice was more expensive and inconvenient, yet God regularly required it. It is manifest that his object was to keep this great truth, penal substitution, prominent before the minds of sinful men, because, like our opponents, they are so prone to forget it.

But our opponents here advance two cavils which they think are very decisive. They cry: the best civil magistrates sometimes pardon crime without satisfaction, and their moral credit is thereby

enhanced with their subjects instead of being lowered. Why may it not be all the more so with the God of love? The reply is very simple. Because those cases of pardon, in which alone human rulers can properly set aside a verdict without penal satisfaction for guilt, are cases which can never possibly occur under God's jurisdiction. They must fall under one of these heads: where either the evidence of guilt has been afterwards found inconclusive, or it is uncertain whether the condemned man acted with criminal intention, or where unforseen circumstances are about to change the operation of the sentence of the law into something more severe or destructive than was justly intended. But these cases arise because all human rulers are fallible; in the administration of an omniscient, infallible God, they never can occur. But every wise man knows that these are the only cases in which it is safe and right for human magistrates to exercise the pardoning power. Again, it is objected that this God enjoins on us the forgiveness of injuries without retribution as at once the loveliest, the most Godlike Christian grace. Therefore this dogma must be false, which represents God as always unforgiving until his vengeance is satisfied. They brandish before us the Lord's prayer. They proclaim the words of Paul, requiring us to forgive our enemies "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us."

Out of their own mouths we easily refute them. For Paul teaches, in this their textus palmaries, that God does not forgive his enemies after the fashion they claim, but for Christ's sake. Which is to say that God's forgiveness of his enemies is grounded in Christ's satisfaction for their guilt, and it implies that those enemies of God who reject Christ's satisfaction are not forgiven by God. The forgiveness required of us is to be after the pattern of God's forgiveness (as he, etc.). Now, how does God forgive his enemies? Upon condition of repentance and faith; not otherwise. And Christ, in teaching Peter, shows that our forgiveness is not required to go beyond God's. If thy

brother "trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." (Luke 17:4.) But what if the offender says, "I do not repent." Christ answers (in another place), don't seek revenge, but let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. But the weakness and folly of this cavil is best revealed by this question: In what relation do we stand to our trespassers in this forgiveness of injuries? In the relation of fellows, equals, sinners toward God like them, and fallible creatures. In what relation does God stand to his trespassers? In that of sovereign owner, and also in that of infallible chief-justice and magistrate. That makes all the difference. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord." The visiting of due retribution upon guilt is the exclusive prerogative of God; because his sovereignty, his power, his purity, his infallible wisdom and justice qualify him for that task. And therefore we who are disqualified are not to meddle with it. Is it not fatuous to infer that because God says we are unfit, and therefore must not meddle with his prerogative, therefore he must not exercise it himself? Even the poorest human magistrate sees this difference perfectly. Let us suppose that a thief duly convicted should reason with him to set aside a just verdict in this way: "Squire, you are a charitable Christian; last year when I and my family were in distress your charity gave me relief. This verdict puts us in distress again; the same charity should again release us." We presume the plainest squire would know how to say: "Thou fool, then I was acting toward thee as a private person and neighbor. I took what was mine own to succor thy distress; now I sit in the judgment seat; I represent the delegated rights of the law, of eternal justice and of God; these are not my own to give away in charity. I am sacredly sworn to uphold them. Would it be charity in me to commit theft and perjury to extend succor to you in this present distress, where you deserve none?"

Our opponents are fond of charging that this our doctrine of God's distributive justice is harsh, barbaric, bloody; that ours is "the theology of the shambles." Our just retort is, theirs is the theology of dishonesty. None could declare more loudly than they that for a ruler to rob an obedient subject of the reward pledged to his merit would be false, dishonest, unprincipled. We have proved along with the Scripture that the bond which connects just retribution with guilt is morally the same. Do they insist upon inventing a dishonest divine ruler? The Psalmist says, that they who invent an imaginary god "are like unto him." So are they which "worship him." Were we as severe, we might justly say to our readers, You had better not entrust your social rights, even to people who worship a god not governed by principle.

We now reach a point where we place our opponents in a fatal dilemma. They say there cannot be any substitutionary punishment of guilt, that it would be an immoral legal action. Very well; then they and all their adherents are self-condemned to an inevitable and everlasting hell! For they certainly are sinners; and God's doctrine is that in his final judgment all sin is unpardonable Sinners may be pardoned but the guilt never. For this, satisfaction must be made, if not through a substitute, then by the sinner himself. If, then, substitution is absurd and unrighteous, then we testify solemnly to these gentlemen that the sole result of their boasted philosophy will be, as surely as God is God, to seal them all, self-condemned, to perdition.

Chapter 6

The Witness of Human Consciousness and Experience

These all confirm the proposition that, under a right moral government, punishment, either personal or vicarious, must follow guilt invariably. This is what is meant by that fear of death which is present, both instinctive and rational, in every human consciousness. Some men die calmly under the delusions of agnosticism, universalism, or utter weariness of life. Some, like the skeptic, David Hume, effect before company a cheerful indifference which they are far from feeling. But the average, the natural, and the reasonable state of the human spirit which is not sustained by a conscious justification through Christ's vicarious righteousness is to dread death, because it expects penal evil in another life. Why this dread and expectation? "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law!" And this is the final judgment of the guilty conscience against itself in that most honest hour, when the approach of "death, that most potent, wise, and eloquent teacher," has dissipated the deceitful illusions of life and compelled the soul to face the truth.

Reference has been made to the sacrifices required in the Old Testament. Reason and Scripture both declare that these were types, and that this is the principle which they teach by emblem: expiation must be made for guilt in order that pardon may take place. But as the meaning of pardon is that it releases the culprit himself from punishment, this needed expiation is to be made by a substitute. The lamb, the kid, the bullock are themselves "clean beasts," innocent of guilt, but they die in place of the guilty worshipper, in order that he may pray and be pardoned; thus teaching the substitution of one innocent for the guilty, more clearly than any words. It is noticeable, moreover, that all pagan religions employ bloody sacrifice, either animal or human, and in the same sense. When idolaters pray, they feel that their gods must be propitiated. Why this? Because deep down in their consciousness they have the judgment, it may be surd and distorted, that, for the guilty, satisfaction must be made to their

gods in order that they may be propitiated. The essential fact is, that this obstinate conviction inheres in the minds of all pagans and polytheists of all races and ages. Whence does it come? Will our opponents answer that this is nothing but the persistence of a traditional superstition derived from the ignorant and senseless usage of the first parents of the race? This provokes two questions in reply. Whence did these first parents get the usage; and was it in fact the dictate of a senseless superstition, or of a command from God? Reason and Scripture say the latter. The second question is harder: How comes it that such a tradition should persist through hundreds of ages, where similar traditions asserting the truths of God's unity, spirituality, and infinite perfections have been lost, although so much more obvious to right reason than the religious value of animal sacrifice? The tradition would have been lost long ago from pagan minds were it not sustained by the echo of their own moral intuitions.

We do not advance considerations drawn from the policy of God's rectoral relations to man as our foremost or most weighty arguments; but they have their inferior place. When a superior being assumes the office of judge and ruler over men, he enters into moral relations with them; and, if he is perfect in wisdom and justice, he will infallibly administer his judicial functions on that plan which is most promotive of the proper ends of his government. Now, our opponents say that those ends are remedial and deterrent. But experience proves that the execution of penalties should be regular and invariable in order to secure these results. The least uncertainty in the sequence of punishment upon transgression will raise in the mind of the man under temptation a doubt and a hope whether he, in this instance, may not sin and. yet escape. This doubt weighs with the tempted mind much more than it is worth. The sinner's hope magnifies his chances of escape. Thus the ends of justice, and even of

benevolent policy, require of this Divine Ruler invariable regularity in punishing. This, in the end, must prove the most humane as well as the most impartial. If he allows some guilty persons to escape when others are punished, he loses that moral respect from his subjects which is so necessary to good government. Tolerated transgressions are as mischievous as they are illegal; they are contagious; they strongly threaten the welfare of the law-abiding. The ruler who is uncertain in attaching just penalties to the guilty raises this question, so damaging to his authority, in the minds of his subjects: What right has he thus to jeopardize our welfare, duly earned by obedience and guaranteed to us by the covenant of his own law, in order to favor the very law-breakers who deserve no favor? Is this either just, wise, or benevolent?

So powerful is this inferior argument, drawn from the interests of the subjects of his moral government; but we can never grant that these are its highest end God's own glory presents an end unspeakably more worthy; and it needs no exposition to show that for that highest end absolute regularity, equity, and impartiality are necessary. If penalty follows the transgressions of some, it must follow the transgressions of all. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Charter 7

Our Opponents' Self Contradiction

They insist that God's remission of sin must be unconditional, the result of simple goodness, and yet none of them, not even the Socinians, dare to promise sinners forgiveness except upon condition of their repentance and reformation. Now, we also hold that these

are necessary and meet for the state of the pardoned sinner, but not conditions precedent, not procuring causes of their pardon; they are, in fact, after-consequences and fruits of that blessing. Christ's vicarious sacrifice has already provided its meritorious cause. While our opponents deny this, they yet strictly require repentance and reform, making them forerunners and procurers of pardon. They are thus compelled to teach that the forgiveness of sin is not and cannot be unconditional; and after so stoutly denying that satisfaction to justice is prerequisite to God's mercy upon the guilty, they have to fabricate a species of satisfaction out of these two actions of the guilty man himself. It is true their substitutes are unsuitable; but by this invention they seem to admit that satisfaction for guilt is necessary for the divine honor. This self-contradiction is indeed fated; the common sense and conscience of all men who think predestinated it.

There are no professed Christians on earth who assert so loudly the blessed doctrine that God pardons sin. But what is pardon? Its most common and express name in Scripture is remission; that is, aphesis. Now, what is remitted or removed? Not strictly the pardoned man's sin or sinfulness in the sense of his own personal attribute of evilness or opposition to God's holy law; but his guilt, that is to say, his obligation to punishment therefor. Plainly, when Scripture speaks briefly of the aphesis of sins, it uses a metonymy, meaning by sins, literally, their guilt; for the consciousness of every pardoned man in the world tells him that his personal attribute of sinfulness has not yet been removed; he tells God this in every confession, Thanksgiving, and petition for further grace which his thankful and believing heart offers to his God. Is he lying to him? Let the reader then pardon us for repeating this fundamental distinction, so simple and plain, yet so obstinately overlooked, between sinfulness, the attribute, and guilt, the penal obligation. And let us

reaffirm what both Scripture and conscience assert of every pardoned man on earth, that while his guilt is wholly removed, sinfulness remains in him for a time. Now, then, whoever says that God pardons sin has therein said that God actually makes this separation between the attribute and the obligation, which our opponents say cannot be made at all, because the two are inseparable. They conflict with all the Scripture in asserting that neither Christ nor any other person can be substituted under another's guilt; and their main argument is, as we shall see, that guilt is inseparable from the personal sinfulness which incurred it. But if this were true, all pardon of sinners remaining more or less sinful would be absolutely impossible; and as our opponents and we are all sinners, the only thing left for us is to make up our minds to go together to inevitable perdition, like the lost angels, who have no substitute. Our adversaries seem to think that it is more reasonable our obligations should be transferred nowhere else than to somewhere else.

If the Redeemer did not suffer for our sins, that is, for the guilt of them, he must have suffered for something, and that a very grand object. Our opponents, of all men, are bound to teach this; for they say God's whole essence is love, by which they mean benevolence; therefore causeless sufferings in his children must be more obnoxious to his feelings than any other thing in the world. Moreover, since Jesus is perfect in the Father's eyes, his causeless sufferings must have been most obnoxious to him of all; they were, moreover, terrible and extraordinary in severity, worse than were ever endured by any innocent child of God. Therefore they must have had an object, and that of the grandest importance. What was it? Our adversaries are not agreed between themselves in their answer. One set say that God's object was to give conclusive weight to Jesus' testimony for this truth, namely, that God certainly pardons sin on

the ground of the sinner's repentance and reform; for when a man dies a martyr for his teaching, men are obliged to believe that it was true. Another set say that the object of Jesus' innocent sufferings and death was designed to add moral weight to his example as our pattern, especially in practicing the virtues of truth, moral courage, patience, and fortitude under calamity. Still another set hold that the object was to soften and melt our hearts by sympathy with his sufferings; and yet another, that God's object in the sacrifice of Christ was to make a dramatic display of his opposition to sin, even while pardoning the sinner, and so to prevent men's presuming too much upon his kindness. When we are taught that these are ends designed and secured through Christ's death, we respond, yes, they are secondary ends; but in order that they may be such, they must be grounded in the great truth that he suffered legally and righteously for the guilt of sin imputed to him. Take away that foundation, and these purposes of Christ's sufferings become inexplicable and worse than futile. We can reasonably assert all these as secondary results of the divine sacrifice; in the scheme of our opponents they are contradictions and folly. First, the martyr's willing death does not prove the truth of his creed, but only his sincerity in it, perhaps even his stubborn pride in it, unless we know that he possesses infallible and divine wisdom; second, Did God's providence permit and order the calamities and death of Jesus? If the Father took no providential note of or concern in the destiny of such a Son, at once the most admirable and the most important figure in human history, there is not a shadow left of proof that there is any providence over persons as insignificant as we are. This conclusion is to us practical atheism. If Providence did ordain the sufferings of Jesus, while he bore no guilt, then the case which we have is this: That God punished, or intentionally permitted the punishment of the one man of purest and sublimest virtue who ever appeared on earth with miseries more dire than he ever visited upon a Cain or a Judas. What lesson of patience

or fortitude under suffering does this contain for us? It would be only a lesson of hatred against the government we live under, and of horror and despair. And last: the gratuitous sufferings of Jesus would remain a dramatic exhibition of God's hatred of innocence and virtue rather than of vice. But if the great truth be posited that a just ground was laid by Christ's voluntary substitution under the guilt of a world for these penal sufferings, and that by them God's purity, adorable justice, and infinite love for the unworthy are gloriously manifested together, then all these moral and didactic effects of Christ's sacrifice most truly result.

From these deadly paradoxes there are but two evasions. One is to say that God's providence had nothing to do with the calamities and the murder of Jesus; the other, that earthly miseries and death are not penalties for sin. The latter is the evasion of the old Pelagians when pressed by Augustine with the inexorable fact that infants, whom they pronounced sinless, meet with the same bodily evils and death with adult sinners. Let us see at what cost either of these evasions must be adopted. It has already been pointed out that, if Providence intervenes anywhere in human affairs, it certainly did so in the life and destiny of Jesus, because his is the most illustrious and important figure that has ever appeared among mankind, and because his career has already had more influence on human history than anything else ever done on earth. And this is a just argument ad hominem, because all these rationalists adopt this theory of providence: that God concerns himself therein with cardinal and influential events, but not with the ordinary current of effects arising out of common second causes. Therefore, he who denies a providence over the destiny of Jesus must logically deny providence everywhere; and that, we repeat, is practical atheism; moreover, it is virtual infidelity. He who takes that position should flout the authority of all Scripture, because God's concern in the sufferings

and death of Jesus is taught as expressly and as widely as any proposition in the Bible. There is no way to get rid of it except by trampling the authority of Scripture under foot. In Psalm 22, it is, beyond all doubt, the Messiah who speaks through the mouth of David. (verses 1, 15): "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (the very words of Jesus on the cross), and "thou hast brought me into the dust of death." Isaiah 53:6: "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Luke 24:46: It is Jesus himself who said to his apostles, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead." John 19:11: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." Acts 2:23: Christ was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Romans 8:32: God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all."

It is equally contrary to Scripture to say that any human sufferings and death are other than penal. Genesis 2:17: "For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Genesis 3: 17, 19: "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife,..... cursed is the ground for thy sake..... For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Romans 5:12: "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"; and 6:23: "The wages of sin is death." The very benevolence of God, on which our opponents boast so much, proves that all human miseries and death must be just penalties for sin, and cannot be otherwise explained; for it is proved that they are permitted and disposed by God according to his purpose. Did he not do this at the prompting of his own justice, his infinite benevolence would forbid his doing it at all. Surely there cannot be a sharper self-contradiction than that of the men who say, in one breath, that God's perfect justice makes it impossible that he should inflict vicarious sufferings for guilt upon the voluntary substitute who is innocent;

and in the next breath, that God is capable of indicting similar penal evils upon multitudes of others, without reference to their guilt.

This, then, is the word which common sense and honesty would speak to all our opponents: You say that you know intuitively and necessarily that there cannot be penal substitution of the innocent for the guilty under God's just government. Then cease to call yourselves Christians of any phase, degree, or sect; repudiate the Bible at once and wholly. Let the world know where you stand as simple infidels, like Chubb, Toland, Tom Paine, Voltaire, and Ingersoll. Consistency leaves you no other position, no middle ground; for the Bible is too deeply committed to the doctrine which you disdain, to be any rule of faith at all, if you are right.

Chapter 8

The Ethical Objections Considered

The grand and cardinal objection against Christ's substitution is the philosophic one. It has, therefore, been reserved for separate and special discussion. As already stated, its claim, as a moral intuition, that a just government, human or divine, cannot transfer one man's guilt to another who is innocent, under any possible conditions, because punishment loses its moral significance, and becomes cruelty and wickedness as soon as it is transferred from the sinning person to another. Their position cannot be stated more clearly and boldly than in the following words, quoted from one of their leading professors of philosophy: "The first fundamental principle of ethics is that nobody can be righteous for anybody else. Righteousness is a thing that has to spring from the inmost personality of the person, and nobody can ever be a substitute either for my wickedness or my

goodness. Hence, if we believe the teachings of reasonable ethics, we have got to learn to interpret the symbol of the cross in some other way than that old fashioned one..... We are convinced that, for better or worse, enlightened mankind has, in matters of belief, taken a final leave of mere traditions and of blank authority of miraculism in every form. It is accordingly clear to them that henceforth the only safety for human practice lies in founding it in philosophic criticism that shall be luminous, unrelenting, penetrating to the bottom." Or, otherwise stated:

When a man comes and tells me, for instance, that Christ died on the cross for my sins, that he offered up a sacrifice for my sins, and that by virtue of this alone God imparts to me the righteousness of Jesus, if I exercise a mystic sentiment of faith, as it is called, I want to know how literally I am to take that; for if I am to take it literally, then I, as a philosophical thinker, have to say, point blank, it is not true.

The reader must understand what our opponent's position is, that whatever be the Bible's testimony for Christ's penal substitution, it cannot be true, because they know it to be false by an immediate, self-evident, necessary intuition, which is to say that they set their philosophy above all the authority claimed for God's word. To those who know the history of philosophy and the picture it presents of the uncertainty of human metaphysics, this towering self-confidence would appear ludicrous were not the results so tragical. If the philosophy, which they worship, has settled anything, it has agreed that these should be the traits of an intuitive judgment; it should be primary (resting upon no prior premises), self-evident, necessary, and universal. Should it not have given some pause to their philosophic dogmatism to remember that most Christians for several thousand years sincerely believed what these dogmatists pronounce

self-evidently false? How was it that not only the most devout Christians, but the greatest thinkers and philosophers of all ages -- a Lactantius, an Augustine, an Anselm, an Aquinas, a Luther, a Calvin, a Pascal, a Claude, a Turretin, a Butler, a Newton, a Chalmers, an Edwards, a Wesley, an Alexander, a Thornwell -- saw no difficulty in this proposition which our Socinianizers find so unspeakably absurd? There is modesty with a vengeance! One would think, to hear them, that intuitions had only been invented, like the telegraph and telephone, in the nineteenth century. Again, how comes it that our new philosophers were not aware that this despised old Bible asserted precisely their proposition, that no one can have righteousness or wickedness for anybody but himself, three thousand years before they were born? The old prophet said, "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it." Perhaps our opponents should have given the Bible, notwithstanding its offensive traits of inspiration and "miraculism," this much of credit, as not to be so silly and stupid as to contradict itself by then proceeding to teach penal substitution. It does teach both propositions; and had these readers been less overweaning, and better acquainted with its contents, they would have seen at least a probable solution in this thought, that the predications in the two propositions are different, so that they do not contradict each other. And this will be found the real solution.

Obviously, their cavil leads us into the midst of that famous Protestant contention, whether inspiration be entitled to make us admit what is to our minds a necessary self-contradiction, or whether the unquestionable presence of such a proposition in a writing claiming inspiration would not be good internal evidence against it? Men who tread with such arrogance the narrow boundary line between logic and theology ought at least to know the answer which true theology gives to these questions. To the first we answer

unhesitatingly, No; to the latter, Yes. This ground has been too thoroughly trodden in the long controversy between true theology and popery for the answer to be unknown to real scholars. These have not forgotten the famous apothegm in which John Locke summed up the Protestant position: that some propositions are agreeable to our reason, some are above it, and some contradict it. The first two kinds logical and rational men accept upon sufficient evidence; it is the last kind, only which they necessarily reject. The Protestant argument is short and clear. In order that any mind may have true and consistent intelligence, there must be in it at least some primary and regulative principia of judgment. In order for a permanent rivulet, there must be a headspring. Second, most certainly that God, whose bosom is the eternal home of truth and intelligence, who implanted these principia in us when he created our spirits in his own image and likeness, will not tell us anything which directly breaks and uproots these principles of thought. This, if attempted, could not be effectuated without uprooting our very intelligence, and thus rendering us incapable of receiving any rational inculcations. But after this simple statement, it is very plain that we are not entitled to deny any proposition claiming to be taught by God, because it seems to conflict with any favorite judgment of our own, unless we are entitled to be certain that our judgment really is one of these necessary principles of thought. And the history of human opinion warns us to be very modest and cautious here, for several reasons. We ought to know how prone our natural egotism makes us all to claim for our cherished opinions this self-evident authority, when in reality they are but deductions of our own, shaped by our prejudices and defective habits of thought. We ought to remember that, in the history of philosophy, several propositions have been long and almost universally held to be primary, self-evident truths, which a later and more correct philosophy showed to be not primary and even false. For instance, in the Middle Ages the

whole world of physicists held it to be an axiom, that "nature abhors a vacuum." Nobody now believes that this is either an axiom or a truth. The Italian, Torricelli, exploded it by a question: Then how comes it that in the pump-stock nature does not abhor a vacuum above thirty-three feet? It is related that when Sir Isaac Newton published his Principia, his great German contemporary, Leibnitz, objected, claiming it as an axiom that no one body can communicate energy to another body unless substantively present with it. So that Newton's induction of the attraction of gravitation, by which the mass of the sun pulls the earth and the moon at a distance of ninety-five millions of miles, must be an error. And that he added, "I don't see how Sir Isaac is to keep his planets moving in their orbits unless he can get an angel to go behind and push all the time." Who now feels Leibnitz's difficulty? It was with good reason, therefore, that while the great Protestant logicians refused to bind the human intellect by the "implicit faith" of the popes, they guarded their doctrine in this manner. The self-contradiction asserted must appear between the obvious meanings of two express texts of Scripture, or between such an expressed text and an unquestionable, necessary principium of thought, before we are entitled to reject the professed Scripture on this ground of self-contradiction. For, if the conflict exists only between an expressed text and one of our logical deductions, or between it and some gloss which we put upon another text, we have no right to say that there is self-contradiction. The error may be in our logic or in our gloss, not in the Scripture.

Now do our Socinianizers practice any such wholesome caution in condemning the Bible doctrine of penal substitution as absurd? They may exclaim, "Yes, it is an ethical intuition that one man cannot justly be made responsible for another man's righteousness or sin;" yet the slightest close analysis will show that they are making a very shallow confusion of their pet proposition with another which is

different. There is an intuition, universally held by thinking and just men, for which they mistake their opinion. The true predication is this: The consequences of righteousness or sin may not be transferred to another, unless he is in some way reasonably responsible therefor. Now, in order to identify this proposition (which everybody accepts} with theirs, they must assert that there is no way in which a moral agent can become reasonably responsible except solely by personally doing himself the moral or immoral actions in question. Is that self-evidently true? Is it at all true? Manifestly not. They have heedlessly begged the whole question. Every good jurist, yea, every man of common sense, knows that there are other ways in which moral responsibility may attach besides the personal doing of the responsible acts, as by the voluntary assumption of the responsibility for the sake of some valuable consideration. Here is another class of instances. The law justly holds "accessories before the fact" to a murder guilty of death. Here the law claims two victims for one murder, the life of the assassin and the life of the man who bribed him. Yea, if twelve men combine to hire him, there would be thirteen, each guilty of death for one and the same murder, while only one single hand perpetrated it. How comes this to be just? Because the twelve voluntarily associated themselves in the responsibility of an immoral act, which neither of them personally executed. Again, does the just law punish the accessory for the sin of suborning a murderer, or for murder itself? The correct answer is, for both: for his sin of subornation, because it was his own personal act and was evil, and for the murder, because he voluntarily associated himself in the responsibility of it.

Society presents other instances supporting our principle still more clearly. There are social disabilities which inflict real pain and calamity. which are deserved by men's vices, and which follow them by regular moral law, and are therefore penal, a part of God's

temporal punishment for transgression. Not seldom society visits a part of these penal consequences upon persons who did not individually transgress, but who are nearly connected with the actual transgressor. There are, for example, two citizens of high moral and social rank, each of whom has a marriageable daughter who is refined and beloved. One is sought in marriage by a John Doe, the other by a Richard Roe. Both these young men are personally reputable, industrious, and intelligent. The one parent says to John Doe, you cannot have my daughter; because a man whose father is now serving his long term in the penitentiary for a bad felony cannot be a son in my family, and husband to my pure daughter. The other parent gives the same refusal, and justifies it by reminding Richard Roe that he is filius nullius. The young men sorrowfully protest, and urge that these misfortunes were not their own faults; but each parent persists in declaring: I have nothing against you personally, but you cannot marry my daughter, become a son to her mother and a brother to my other children. But society fully justifies their decision, and there is not one of our opponents who would not concur. Here, then, is the partial transfer of penal responsibility where the consent of the second party is not even asked, yet the judgment may be just. Not seldom society presents counterpart cases which are settled upon the same principle. As a benefit is the antithesis of an injury, so gratitude, recognizing the benefactor's moral title, is the counterpart to just resentment, recognizing the aggressor's moral title to punishment. Sometimes the children of a benefactor share with their father the fruits of the gratitude in the heart of the beneficiary; and all just men regard this as proper. Thus, Barzillai the Gileadite had displayed a splendid loyalty, at the risk of his hoary head, to King David, when in seemingly hopeless defeat. After his triumph over the conspirators, David expresses his gratitude and wishes to recompense Barzillai for his most opportune assistance by honors and enjoyments at court. The patriarch replies

that he is now too old to enjoy such rewards, but he asks them for his son Chimham. Now, the history does not say that this youth had personally rendered any service to the king; he was, probably, a boy under military age. But the claim of recompense for him rested solely upon the father's services, which David had just recognized. Did David demur? Did he resort to any of this spurious ethical philosophy to argue that he owed Chimham nothing? Not he! He was too much the gentleman, a gallant and honest soldier. So he answers without a moment's hesitation, "Chimham shall go with me." It is a curious sequel to this history, and in strange correspondence with the tenacious traditions of the Orient, that many generations afterwards, there was at Bethlehem, the birthplace of David, a building still known as the caravansary of Chimham. It would seem that a part of the reward for his father's loyalty was a piece of property taken from David's private patrimony. Here, then, we have an unquestionable instance of the very thing which all our Socinianizers denounce as unphilosophical, contra-ethical, and absurd: one man rewarded for what another man did.

Our opponents, therefore, in their cavil, conflict with the common sense of mankind and with the usages and laws of all families, tribes, and commonwealths. What has so blinded them? We apprehend that they are misled very much by these three sophistical inferences. First, they observe that the principles of imputation and penal substitution are more rarely employed (they erroneously say never) in the ordinary civic laws of the civilized Christian nations. It is true that the use of these principles is much limited by the diminution of barbarism. So they jump to the conclusion that enlightened men have found out they are all wrong. Now, we explained in Chapter III. that the true reason why penal substitution is not much employed by us in this age is that the magistrates cannot usually find a man who can fulfill the conditions requisite for the

proper application of the principle, and not because we have found out it is essentially wrong. The grand importance of this point justices its repetition. We expressly granted, that wherever there is man or angel under a just government, human or divine, who is personally innocent, rectus in curia, and entitled to his franchise of immunity by his own satisfactory obedience to law, the just imputation of the guilt of another can never be made to that creature WITHOUT HIS OWN VOLUNTARY CONSENT. But usually no such human creature can be found; and if found, he has no right to give that consent as to any capital guilt, and that is the reason human legislators and jurists cannot resort to the principle in their usual administration. But in Jesus of Nazareth, the God-man, such a person was found for once, rectus in curia, above all law, having autocracy of his own life (John x. 18), and freely willing to give it to redeem the guilt of human sinners.

In the second place, these mistaken men are misled by the "vain philosophy" of the utilitarians; they persuade themselves that God's penal administration is nothing more than a benevolent expediency. Deluded by this ethical heresy, they insist on confounding retributive justice with mere revenge. They will not see this vital and holy truth, that such justice is not malice, nor anger, but essential moral principle, the very same in essence with that which prompts a holy God to reward merit, and as absolutely determined to invariable action by God's essential perfections and immutability as is his milder phase of the same attribute which rewards merit with blessedness. After thus stripping God of an essential attribute, what wonder if they misunderstand his moral administration?

Their third source of error is equally shallow and influential with them. Being, in fact, little acquainted with the Bible, its exposition, its logic, and its theology, they fail to make the simple, but vital,

distinction between righteousness and sinfulness as personal moral attributes of rational agents on the one hand [entitled to reward and guilt (obligatio ad poenam)] and their relations to the will of the Law-giver on the other hand. Then their common sense tells them, as it tells everybody else, that essential attributes, being subjective personal qualities, are not transferable from the person whom they really qualify to another person. And so they jump to the non-sequitur that therefore guilt is equally untransferable, and its imputation an immoral legal fiction. We need no other specimen convicting them of this confusion, than the words of the learned professor already quoted: "The first fundamental principle of ethics is that nobody can be righteous for anybody else. Righteousness is a thing that must spring from the inmost personality of the person, and nobody can ever be a substitute either for my wickedness or for my goodness." Just so; if by righteousness, wickedness, and goodness, he means a moral agent's subjective qualities, of course even a Calvinist says the same. But after he fallaciously substitutes two different concepts of title to reward and guilt, which are not qualities but relations, his inference is worthless. We have overwhelmingly evinced this by many appeals to the customs and common sense of mankind. The professor himself would promptly discard it in any practical case affecting his own rights. In syllogistic form the process of thought would be this enthymeme: personal subjective qualities are untransferable therefore a personal relation conditioned on actions which these qualities have determined, must be equally untransferable. Manifestly the suppressed premise must be the universal proposition: that all such relations are as inalienable, or as incapable of being substituted as such subjective qualities. But who is absurd enough to believe that? Is there any such canon in logic or science? None! No true logician ever dreamed of it. If we return to the familiar science of algebra, for instance, nearly every process contradicts the proposition; for the constant method of

procedure is by substitution the substitution of new but equivalent values in place of those which first stood in our equations to which new values the relations of equality division or multiplicity are logically transferred. Nor does the fact, that in the cases under discussion the relations to be transferred are conditioned on moral actions, make them an exception. On a utilitarian theory of the philosophy of punishments, there may be an appearance of such ground of exception. But that theory is worthless.

Let us take the true theory, that the just punishment of guilt is dictated primarily by God's essential attribute of distributive justice, not by expediency; that the remedial and deterrent effects of punishments among human sinners who are still under a dispensation of hope are secondary and subordinate in God's purpose; and that in his punishment of reprobate men and angels, these have no place at all, but God's whole purpose is moral equalization in his government by the due requital of sin (just as by the due requital of righteousness) to the glory of his own holiness and honor. Then there remains no reason why this purpose of retribution, pure and simple, may not be as completely gained from a substitute as from the sinner, provided a voluntary substitute be found who is able to fulfill the other proper conditions. Such a substitute is our Messiah.

The reasonableness and righteousness of this plan of vicarious redemption may be very shortly proved by pressing this plain question: Whom does it injure? God, the lawgiver, is not injured, for the plan is his own, and he gains in this way a nobler satisfaction to the penal claims of law and to his own holiness, truth, and justice, than he would gain by the punishment of the puny creatures themselves. The Messiah is not injured, because he gave his own free consent, and because the plan will result in the infinite enhancement

of his own glory. Certainly, ransomed sinners are not injured, because they gain infinite blessedness, and the plan works moral influences upon them incomparably more noble and blessed. The unsaved are not injured, for in bearing their due punishment personally they receive exactly what they deserve and precisely what they obstinately preferred to redemption in Christ. None of the innocent subjects of God's moral judgment on earth or in all the heavens are injured, because this vicarious redemption of believing men originated a grand system of moral influences far sweeter, more noble, more pure, and more efficacious than those which they would have felt without it. But how can there be injustice when nobody is injured'?

Chapter 9

What Scripture Says of Substitution

Much of our argument has been run into the field of rational discussion, because our opponents are rationalists, and they, by their attacks on God's truth, have made it necessary to follow them to their own ground. But the reader must not infer from this that we think that human philosophy is the superior, and Scripture the inferior source of evidence. Our comparative view of the sources of authority -- a view taught by a long acquaintance with the contradictions, mutations, and vagaries of the most boastful human philosophies -- may be truly expressed in the apostle's words: "Let God be true, but every man a liar." What saith the Scripture? When that is carefully and honestly ascertained, it should be the end of controversy. Therefore, the main thing which we have to allege in support of our thesis is this: that the doctrine of Christ's substitution under our penal obligations, and the imputation of his satisfaction for guilt to

be the ground of our justification, is, either implicitly or expressly, taught throughout the Scriptures. It is so intertwined as an essential part of the whole warp and woof of the fabric that it can only be gotten out of it by tearing it into shreds. This we shall now evince; First, By a brief array of the scriptural assertions of substitution; and, Second, By showing how many other heads of doctrine which are cardinal in the Bible system are vitiated or impugned when that doctrine is rejected. Decisive proof-texts are so numerous that all cannot be recited; all that can be here done is to classify the several groups of texts, giving sufficient examples under each group to show how they apply. This is also thoroughly trodden ground in Christian theology. All of its great teachers discuss the doctrine with sufficiency, and several of them with triumphant and exhaustive demonstration. Among these we will commend a purely biblical discussion, now too much out of fashion, Magee on The Atonement. He who will follow the Scripture citations and searching criticisms and expositions of this old book will be compelled to say that the doctrine of Christ's penal substitution, whether reasonable or not, is certainly taught in "Holy Writ."

We find our first argument in the meaning of the Old Testament sacrifices. These were first instituted by God in the family of Adam, before the gate of the lost Eden. They were continued by God's authority under every dispensation until the resurrection of Christ. Moses gave perfect regularity and definiteness to the ordinances of bloody sacrifice in the Pentateuch, which he did by divine appointment. Ancient believers knew that "the blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin" by any virtue of its own. What, then, did the sacrifices mean? They were emblems and types, teaching to men's bodily senses this great theological truth, that "without shedding of blood is no remission," and its consequence, that remission is provided for through a substitute of divine appointment;

for fallen man is "a prisoner of hope," not of despair. Next, the antitype to this ever-repeated emblem is Jesus. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" (John i. 29; 1 Cor. xv. 3; 2 Cor. v. 21; Heb. viii. 3; ix. 11 -- 14.) Now let us add the indisputable fact that these bloody sacrifices were intended by God to symbolize the substitution of an innocent victim in place of the guilty offerer; the transfer of his guilt to the substitute; satisfaction for it by the vicarious death, and the consequent forgiveness of the sinner. (Lev. i. 4; xiv. 21; xvii. 11, ed passim.) The very actions of the worshipper and the priest bespoke these truths as strongly as the words. The guilty worshipper laid his hands upon the head of the victim while he confessed his trespasses. Thereupon the knife of the priest descended upon its throat, the life-blood was sprinkled upon the altar and upon the body of the worshipper, and the most vital parts of the animal -- representing its living body in those cases where it was not a holocaust -- were committed to the pure flames, pungent emblem of divine justice. Now, when the types so clearly signified substitution and imputation, how can the great antitype mean less? Can it be possible that the shadow had more solidity than the substantial body which cast it before?

But the great truth is expressly taught in Scripture, in the following various forms and in many places, of which we cite only a few: Christ died "For us," "for the ungodly." (Rom. v. 6, 8; 1 Peter iii. 18, huper adikon), and for our sins. Socinians say, "True, he died, in a general sense, for us, inasmuch as his death is a part of the agency for our rescue; he did die to do us good, not for himself only." The answer is, that in nearly every case the context proves it a vicarious dying for our guilt. Romans v. 9: "We are justified by his blood." 1 Peter iii. 18: "The just for the unjust." Then, also, he is said to be antilutron for many. This preposition (anti) properly signifies substitution, see Matt. xxvi. 28, for instance. "Himself bore our sins;"

"He bare the sins of many," and other equivalent expressions are applied to him. (1 Pet. ii. 24; Heb. ix. 28; Isa. liii. 6.) The verb used by Peter is bastadzein, whose idiomatic meaning is to bear or carry upon one's person. And these words are abundantly defined in our sense by Old Testament usage. (Compare Num. ix. 13.) An evasion is again attempted by pointing to Matthew viii. 17, and saying that there this bearing of man's sorrows was not an enduring of them in his person, but a bearing of them away, a removal of them. We reply that the evangelist refers to Isaiah liii. 4, not to liii. 6. And Peter says: "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree." The language is unique.

Another unmistakable class of texts is those in which he is said to be made sin for us, while we are made righteous in him. (See 1 Cor. i. 30; 2 Cor. v. 21.) A still more indisputable place is where he is said to be made a curse for us. (Gal. iii. 13.) The orthodox meaning, considering the context, is unavoidable.

Again, he is said in many places to be our Redeemer, i. e., Ransomer, and his death, or his blood, is our ransom (antilutron). (Matt. xx. 28; 1 Peter i. 19; 1 Tim. ii. 6; 1 Cor. vi. 20.) It is vain to reply that God is said to redeem his people in many places, when the only meaning is that he delivers them; and that Moses is called the redeemer of Israel out of Egypt, who certainly did not do this by a vicarious penalty. In these cases, either the word employed or the context proves that the deliverance was only a metaphysical redemption, not like Christ's, a ransoming by actual price paid. Christ's death is a proper ransom, because the very price is mentioned. In Bible times the person ransomed was either a criminal or a military captive, by the rules of ancient war legally bound to slavery. The ransom price was a sum of money or other valuables, paid to the master in satisfaction for his claim of service from the

captive. This is the sense in which Christ's righteousness is our ransom.

It has been shown in a previous chapter at what deadly price our opponents seek to escape the patent argument, that if Christ did not suffer for imputed guilt, since he was himself perfectly righteous, he must have been punished for no guilt at all. But this argument should be carried further. Even if we granted that the natural ills of life and bodily death are not necessarily penal, but come to all alike in the course of events, the peculiar features of Christ's death would be unexplained. He suffers what no other good man sharing the regular course of nature ever experienced, the spiritual miseries of Divine desertion, of Satanic buffetings, let loose against him, and of all the horrors of apprehended wrath which could be felt without personal remorse. (Luke xxii. 53; Matt. xxvi. 38, and xxvii. 46.) See how manfully Christ approaches his martyrdom, and how sadly he sinks under it when it comes. Had he borne nothing more than natural evil, he would have been inferior to the merely human heroes; and instead of recognizing the exclamation of Rousseau as just, "Socrates died like a philosopher, but Jesus Christ as a God," we must give the palm of superior fortitude to the Grecian sage. Christ's crushing agonies must be accounted for by his bearing the wrath of God for the sins of the world.

The second head of our biblical argument is inferential in structure, yet scarcely weaker. When once Christ's proper substitution is denied, consistency forces men to pervert or deny most of the other doctrines which are characteristic of the gospel. Since these doctrines are also categorically taught in Scripture, that proposition must be false which necessitates their perversion. First, then, our assailants attack the divine essence by seeking to expunge one of God's immutable attributes, distributive justice. They have to

tamper with all those Scriptures, whether literal or figurative, which ascribe that attribute unequivocally to God; and before they have gotten all of these texts out of the way, they have to employ methods of exposition so unfaithful and licentious as to leave Scripture practically worthless as a rule of faith. They give us a God of expediency, instead of a God of righteous and eternal principles. They either have to deny God's providence towards his holy son Jesus, or else to represent him as exercising that providence in a way which leaves him an object of mistrust and terror rather than of reverence and faith. They must wrest the true account of God's penal administration in this world and the next, so as to leave it incompatible with his omniscience and omnipotence, and even with that benevolence which they would make his sole essential attribute.

Their doctrine concerning justice and punishment constrains them, if they are consistent, to reject the whole history of Scripture concerning Satan and his angels. Indeed, the most of them avowedly do this. The Bible says most explicitly, that Satan and his angels are condemned for the guilt of rebellion, falsehood, malice, and soul-murder, and that they are to be punished forever. Plainly, men must either give up the theory that God's holiness in punishing can only be defended by representing his penalties as only a benevolent remedial expediency, or they must get rid of this whole history. Some do so by declaring it fabulous, which of course assails the veracity of prophets and apostles, and of Christ; others, by representing all mentions of Satan and demons as mere impersonations of mischievous principles, a scheme of interpretation which may equally as well resolve the whole Scripture history into allegory.

Of course, the everlasting punishment of reprobate men must also be discarded. We must all be universalists. For, however guilty the criminals, there can be no everlasting punishments which are

manifestly not remedial, but only kill with the second death, and are not intended or expected to reform the sufferers, since they are to remain forever reprobate and grow worse and worse. Everlasting punishments cannot be explained as simply deterrent, because after the economy of redemption shall be closed at the judgment day, and all pardoned men and holy angels shall have entered into the "marriage supper of the Lamb," and shall be eternally guarded against evil example and temptation by the encircling walls of heaven, there will be nobody to deter. That is to say, nobody but the reprobate themselves, and they will not be deterred from continued rebellion by their own sufferings, or by the example of their fellows' miseries. But if God know this perfectly well, he cannot be charged with the policy of inflicting so much wretchedness for an object which he foresees to be futile.

The doctrine of original sin must be cast overboard. We must all become Pelagians also. For if the imputation of believers' guilt to Christ is an ethical absurdity, the imputation of Adam's guilt to our race must be worse, inasmuch as the consent of the race to this arrangement was not first obtained. Then we are left without any explanation why little children suffer the temporal penalties of sin before they are capable of intentional transgression and personal responsibility. All of that tremendous and tragical question is left without solution, to torture the hearts of sympathizing and bereaved parents. Have these precious little ones no providence over them, and do they suffer and die under the remorseless grind of a physical machine, as cruel as it is unknowing, which these people call "nature"? And while we stand watching their infant agonies, conscious of our impotence to stay the omnipotent machine, must we believe that there is no heavenly Father who concerns himself with their sufferings? Or must we believe that he punishes where he sees no guilt? If there is no imputation, there can be no federal theology,

no representative covenant of works or covenant of grace. The awful question, how birth-sin comes to infest the race of man, is left without any possible solution.

The cardinal doctrine of justification must be corrupted in a similar manner. None assert more clearly than our opponents, that if the imputation of our sins to Christ be absurd, then the imputation of his righteousness to us must be equally so. Thus the inquirer, having lost all claim to the righteousness of Christ as the meritorious ground of this pardon and acceptance, must seek an answer to the question, On what ground am I justified? For the sake of what am I to receive this precious title to immunity and reward, which I myself do not deserve, if it cannot be for the sake of an imputed righteousness? Is this act of grace on God's part a moral act at all? Would not this receive the negative if God's act has no moral ground? Then something must be sought for, possessing moral quality, which the believer does for himself. What is it? Pelagians and Socinians answer that the ground of both pardon and adoption is the merit of the Christian's own penitence, new obedience, and reformed life. Those who are not willing so flatly to contradict Scripture tell us that it is the believer's faith; that this being a moral act of the soul is graciously taken as a substituted righteousness for the life of obedience which he has not rendered. So he is justified not only by his faith, but on account of his faith. On either plan the true justification of the gospel is lost.

The doctrine of indwelling sin and sanctification must also be perverted in order to bring them into line with the new doctrine. Combine these positions Christ's righteousness is indeed perfect, but cannot be imputed to us. God's law is perfect and requires a perfect obedience from us; otherwise our defects would still condemn us. But is the obedience of the most penitent and reformed Christian

actually perfect? Must not perfection exclude even those defects and slips in duty which the best men in the world confess in themselves? Then the definition of perfection must be lowered. A perfect God and a perfect law call for a perfect life. Then the Pelagian dogma must be adopted, that the life which is prevalently right is perfectly right, that righteousness and sin consist only in right or wrong acts of will, and that the believer who has unquestionable sincerity of purpose is, under this gospel law, the perfect man. Thus the remains of indwelling sin and concupiscence must be pronounced not peccatum verum, but only fomes peccati, incurring no real guilt. Thus is the purity of God's law degraded, and a debased standard of obedience set up, which always leads to an actual life still more debased than itself. Such is the havoc which is wrought in the whole system of belief of the man who has rejected Christ's substitution, if he thinks consistently. The instructive fact is, that this error actually has led to all these perversions of doctrine in the creeds of sects which assert it.

Chapter 10

The Testimony of Christendom

The consensus of the Christian churches in their doctrinal standards does not amount to true inspiration; and we hold no rule of faith to be infallible and of divine authority except God's own word. But this general concert of beliefs among the various denominations of God's children carries great probable weight for those points of doctrine whereon the agreement exists: "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." The standards of a church are usually the mental work of its most learned and revered members, who have made most careful study of the Scriptures. Where so many good and competent men concur,

notwithstanding the different points of view from which, and habits of thought with which, they inspect and construe God's word, there is the highest probability that their harmonious construction is the correct one. Our assailants should remember that when they talk of their "advanced thought," their "intellectual progress," their "sloughing off of the old dogma," as superstitious and antiquated rubbish, they are disdaining the combined scholarship of the greatest and best men and of the most profound learning of all the centuries since Athanasius, and of all the nations and churches of Christendom. Such arrogance is the surest sign of heedlessness and superficiality.

The two ancient communions of the "Roman Catholics" and "Orthodox Greek" Christians are great and imposing for their antiquity, their learning, and their numbers. We believe that their creeds involve numerous great and fatal errors, chiefly the accretions of human traditions and priestcraft before and during the Dark Ages; but the Articles in which they still declare Christ's vicarious substitution for human guilt are the most respectable and least corrupted parts of their Confessions of Faith which come down to them from the creeds of earlier and purer ages. The force of their testimony is in this: that even these corrupt churches agree exactly with all the Protestant creeds concerning this ancient and vital doctrine. Hear, then, the Roman Church, in the "Dogmatic Degrees of the Council of Trent," Session sixth, Degree of Justification, Chapter II.: "Him God proposed as a propitiation through faith in his blood for our sins," etc. And Chapter VII.: "Our Lord Jesus Christ.... merited justification for us by his most holy passion on the wood of the cross, and made satisfaction for us unto God the Father."

Hear also the witness of the Russo-Greek church, which now contains the vast majority of the so- called "Orthodox Greek

Christians." The Larger Catechism of the Oriental Grecian and Russian Church, Article IV., Question 208; "His voluntary suffering and death on the cross for us, being of infinite value and merit, as the death of one sinless, God and man in one person, is both a perfect satisfaction to the justice of God, which had condemned us for sin to death, and a fund of infinite merit, which has obtained him the right, without prejudice to justice, to give us sinners pardon of our sins, and grace to have victory over sin and death."

We now pass to the great Protestant confessions, citing, first, the Lutheran Augsburg Confession, Article III.: Christ "truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, that he might reconcile the Father unto us, and might be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men." Again, Article IV.: "Their sins forgiven for Christ's sake, who by his death hath satisfied for our sins."

The Formula Concordia, the latest and most conclusive confession of the Lutheran body, speaks thus, Article III., Section 1: Christ, "in his sole merit, most absolute obedience which he rendered unto the Father even unto death, as God and man, merited for us the remission of all our sins and eternal life."

The same is the witness of the great group of the Reformed Protestant churches. The Heidelburg Catechism, Second Part, Question 12, Answer: "God wills that his justice be satisfied; therefore must we make full satisfaction to the same, either by ourselves or by another." And Question 16: "Why must 'Christ' be a true and sinless man?" Answer: "Because the justice of God requires that the same human nature which has sinned should make satisfaction for sin; but no man, being himself a sinner, could satisfy for others." The Confession of the French Reformed Church, Article XVIII.: "We, therefore, reject all other means of justification before

God, and without claiming any virtue or merit, we rest simply on the obedience of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to us as much to bear all our sins as to make us find grace and favor in the sight of God."

The Belgic Confession (Dort, 1561), Article XX.: "We believe that God, who is perfectly merciful and also perfectly just, sent his Son to assume that nature in which the disobedience was committed, to make satisfaction in the same, and to bear the punishment of sin by his most bitter passion and death."

First Scotch Presbyterian Confession (1566), Article IX.: Christ "offered himself a voluntary sacrifice unto his Father for us;... he being the innocent Lamb of God was damned in the presence of an earthly judge, that we should be absolved before the tribunal seat of our God."

The Thirty-nine Articles, the doctrinal confession of all Episcopalians throughout the world in the empires of Britain and the United States. Article II.: Christ "truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men."

The Confessions of the Waldenses, A. D. 1655, Section XIV.: God "gave his own Son to save us by his most perfect obedience (especially that obedience which he manifested in suffering the cursed death of the cross), and also by his victory over the devil, sin, and death." Section XV.:... Christ "made a full expiation for our sins by his most perfect sacrifice."

The Westminster Confession (1647) gives us the present creed of all the Presbyterian churches in the English speaking world, Scotch and Scotch-Irish, colonial, Canadian, and American. It is also the doctrinal creed of these great bodies, the Evangelical Baptist, and

orthodox Congregationalists in Britain and America, being expressly adopted by some of them and closely copied by others, as the "Saybrook Platform" of New England. In this great creed, Chapter VIII., Section V., is this witness: "The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him."

"Methodist Articles of Religion" (1784) are the responsible creed of the vast Wesleyan bodies of Britain and America. Many of these propositions are adopted verbatim from the "Thirty-nine Articles." This is true of Article II. which contains an identical assertion, in the same words, of the doctrine of Christ's penal substitution.

The Catechism of the "Evangelical Union" teaches these doctrinal views, in which all the churches concur which are represented in the "Evangelical Alliance." This document omits the peculiar, distinctive doctrines in which these churches differ from each other. It was the work of Dr. Philip Schaff, D.D., LL. D., 1862, Lesson XXVIII., Question 4: "What did he (Christ) suffer there? " "He suffered unutterable pains in body and soul, and bore the guilt of the whole world."

Such is the tremendous array of the most responsible and deliberate testimonies of all the churches of Christendom, save one little exception, the Socinian, in support of our doctrine concerning the penal substitution of Christ. This testimony was not formulated in the gloom of the ninth or tenth century: but between the sixteenth and nineteenth, after the great renaissance, after the splendid tide of Greek and Hebrew scholarship had reached its flood in large part,

after the full development of the scholastic and modern philosophies, synchronously with or after the Augustan age of theological science and exegetical learning, just during the epoch of the grandest and most beneficial development of human culture which the world has hitherto witnessed, concurrently with the splendid birth and growth of those physical sciences which have created anew our civilization. In this our boast we have not claimed the guidance of that Holy Spirit which Christ promised to bestow continuously upon his visible church, and which its pastors sought in prayer and supposed they were enjoying in these their most solemn witnessings for their Master. As our opponents usually repudiate this spiritual guidance for themselves, and prefer that of human philosophy, they will, of course, pay no respect to this higher claim. We only ask our readers to judge betwixt us, what is the modesty of that pretension which affects to thrust aside all these conclusions of the best ages as silly, antiquated, and self-evident rubbish. Is the irony of Job too caustic for this case? "Surely ye are the people, and wisdom will die with you."

Chapter 11

Conclusion

Reviewing now the course of this discussion, we gather the following results: The scriptural objections against the fundamental Christian concept were found to be entirely invalid and irrelevant. We found this concept justified by the common sense and practical judgment of all men, and all ages, including our own, in their social relations, and still applied, in some cases, by the jurisprudence of the most modern Christian nations. We found the true reason of the limited application of these concepts by human magistrates, not in

the essential injustice of the principle, but rather in the fact that men, under ordinary civil jurisdiction, cannot fulfill the conditions necessary for their proper application. We found God claiming for himself the just right to punish imputed guilt under certain conditions, and we perceive in his providence frequent instances of such judgments. We examined the philosophic cavil against this concept of substitution whence our opponents claim a necessary intuition against it, and we found their claim groundless, their postulate irrelevant, and their philosophy to be the false and degrading theory of the utilitarian ethics. We traced their sophism to its proximate source in a quite heedless and superficial neglect of the distinction between sinfulness and guilt; a distinction so plain that the most common minds act upon it in their own secular moral judgments. We showed that the Scriptures, claiming divine inspiration, beyond all honest question, mean to teach penal substitution and imputation; and that their denial necessitates the rejection of the most cardinal propositions clearly taught in these Scriptures. So that dissentients have no option except avowed infidelity or acquiescence in our doctrine. We arrayed the consensus of Christendom, showing that not only the popish and Greek communions, but all the Protestant, with one small exception, with all their best learning and logic, hold to our proposition as a necessary, constituent part of their common system of doctrine.

This, then, is our conclusion concerning the bitter death of the holy Messiah as given in the inspired words of Isaiah liii. 5, 6: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Is this an astonishing doctrine? Is the conception above the range of human imagination. So let it be. It may be that

only the divine wisdom was adequate to excogitate it, and only the infinite divine love was capable of applying it for the salvation of enemies. We thank God that it is not a deduction or invention of man's philosophy, but a revelation from omniscience. But after God has authorized us to think this thought, we find in it nothing but supreme reason, justice, holiness, and benignity. These high revelations of the necessity of satisfaction for sin, grounded in the immutability of God's distributive justice, complete, and exalt our conception of him and his government. When we discard the ethics of expediency, place the disciplinary results of chastisement in their subordinate rank amidst God's purposes, and when we recognize the truth that his supreme end in punishing is the impartial satisfaction of eternal justice, all reasonable difficulties concerning the transfer of guilt and penalty, the proper conditions being present, vanish away. Towards guilty but pardoned men God does pursue in the infliction of pains a remedial and disciplinary purpose; but when he comes to deal in justice with men and angels who are finally reprobate, these ends are absent; the only one which remains is the retributive one. To secure this end, the punishment of a substitute may be as truly relevant as of the guilty principal, provided the adequate substitute be found, and his own free consent obviates all charge of injustice against him personally; for now law is satisfied, guilt is duly punished, though the guilty man be pardoned. The penal debt is paid, as truly and fairly paid as is the bond of the insolvent debtor when his independent surety brings to the creditor the full tale of money. But let us suppose that the wisdom and power of God the Father and the infinite majesty and love of the Son combine to effect a substitution by which impartial justice and law are more gloriously satisfied than by the condign punishment of the guilty themselves. Then is a result obtained unspeakably more honorable, not only to justice, but to the divine love and every other attribute. God is revealed full-orbed in his righteousness, no longer wrenched out of

true moral symmetry by man's poor utilitarian ethics. Impartial justice appears even more adorable than in the punishment of the personally guilty. When God pours out his retributive justice upon the guilt of men and angels who have insulted him, caviling creatures, in their blindness and enmity, might charge that he was indulging, at least in part, a personal resentment inflamed by their outrages; but when they see him visit this justice upon his only begotten Son, infinitely holy in his eyes, notwithstanding his eternal and divine love, men and devils are obliged to admit that this is the action of nothing but pure, impersonal equity, as absolutely free from the taint of malice as it is majestic and awful. When we see that while, on the one hand, immutable righteousness restrains the Father from setting aside his penal law at the prompting of mere pity, infinite love makes him incapable of consenting to the deserved perdition of sinners, and makes him willing to sacrifice the object worthier and dearer in his eyes than all the worlds rather than endure the spectacle of this immense woe; we gain a revelation of God's love more glorious and tender than any other doctrine can teach. Our opponents charge that we obscure the delightful attribute of benevolence in God in order to exaggerate the awful attribute of vengeance. In truth we do just the opposite. It is our doctrine as taught by the gospel, which reveals depths and heights of the divine tenderness and love, which neither men nor angels could have otherwise imagined. The Socinian says that God's love is such an attribute as prompts him to forgive sin at the expense at once of the order of his great kingdom and of the glory of his own consistency. A very deep pity this! but a pity equally weak and unwise. The gospel teaches us that there is in God a pity infinitely deep, and equally wise and holy.

Let us suppose a human brother most gracious and virtuous who should speak thus; "I cannot sacrifice principle and honor to save my

erring younger brother; but I am willing to sacrifice myself. I cannot lie to save him, but I will die to save him." This declaration would excite in every just mind glowing admiration. Such an elder brother would be a feeble type, in his combined integrity and pitying love, of the God-man; and he answers us that in these exalted affections he represents exactly the attributes of the whole Trinity.

God's permission of evil among his creatures has ever been the insoluble mystery of theology, as it has ever been the grand topic of infidel cavils. Here has been through all the centuries the chief battle-ground of the Christian apologists against atheists and agnostics. It is from the apparent impossibility of reconciling God's voluntary permission of evil with his own attributes that all systems of dualism, such as those of Magians and Manicheans, have taken their pretext. If the Christian pleads that whenever a rational creature abuses his free agency by turning to sin, natural evil or misery must follow by an inevitable law of sequence as much natural as it is judicial, and that therefore it is the willfully erring creature, and not God, who is responsible for all the misery in the universe. Infidels are not satisfied. They rejoin: then if your God is omniscient he foreknew all the wretched results of this law; if he recognized it as a necessary natural law grounded in the very nature of free agents, and not proceeding primarily from his own retributive purpose and sentence, then he must have foreseen that it was necessary to protect his universe from moral evil or sin in order to save it from natural evil or misery, the unavoidable sequel of sin. Now, if he is what the Christians describe, he must have created all his rational creatures in moral purity and innocency. Why did he not take the pains to keep them all innocent, and thus to save them from the misery? They say that he is an absolute sovereign, that he is omniscient, that he is omnipotent, and that he is also infinitely benevolent. If he has all these attributes, then he was able effectually to keep all his rational

creatures holy; if he is infinitely benevolent, he must have felt a controlling motive to do so. It was vain for a Bledsoe, they argue, to attempt the evasion of this deadly point by saying, that the will of a moral free agent cannot be effectually controlled from without consistently with his free agency; for this is precisely what the Christian has no right to say. He teaches that it is proper for men to pray to God to regenerate and sanctify their sinful fellow-men. If prayer is answered, God is doing this very thing, controlling their sinful free agency from without. Again, the Christian says that there is an everlasting heaven, inhabited by elect angels and men, who are to remain forever holy and happy. Since these are still finite, the certain perpetuity of holy choice in them must be the effect of God's grace. It must be true, then, that he who is able to keep a Gabriel or a human saint forever holy in heaven, and who is able to convert a wicked Saul of Tarsus, could also have preserved a Satan and an Adam from apostasy without injuring their free-agency. Or if a Leibnitz offers us his ingenious optimism as a solution, teaching that God chose this present universe, notwithstanding the sin and misery which are in it, as, on the whole, the best possible universe; the assailants remain unsatisfied. They rejoin, that if God is absolutely sovereign, omniscient, and omnipotent, he is able to construct a universe containing everything that is holy and good in the actual universe, without any of the evils; so that this mixed universe is not the best possible one for him. And here the argument pauses, leaving the mystery of God's permission of evil, palliated indeed by our collateral arguments, but still unsolved.

The triumphant refutation of the caviler is our doctrine of redemption through Christ's substitution, and nowhere else. These are the essential points of our defense of God's providence: First, The restoration of Adam's apostate race was in no sense necessary to God's personal interest, glory, or selfish welfare. He is all-sufficient

unto himself. He was infinitely blessed end happy in himself before Adam's race existed. When it fell, he could have vindicated his own glory, as he did in the case of Satan and his angels, by the condign punishment of all men. He could have created another world and another race, fairer than ours, to fill the chasm made by our fall. Second, The price which he paid in order to avoid this just result of sin in our fallen race was the death of the God-man. Since the co-equal Son was incarnate in him, he was a person dearer and greater in God's eyes than any world, or all the worlds together. Being infinite, God-Messiah bulks more largely in the dimensions of his being than all the creatures aggregated. He was more worthy and lovely in the Father's view than any holy creature, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." This great fact may not open to us the deep secret of the permission of evil -- perhaps no finite mind could fully comprehend it were its revelation attempted -- but the glorious sacrifice of love does prove that no defect of divine benevolence can have had part in this secret. Had there been in God's heart the least lack of infinite mercy, had there been a single fibre of indifference to the misery of his creatures, Christ would never have been given to die for the guilt of men. The Messiah is our complete theodicy! But he cannot be such to the Socinian or the Arian, who denies his infinite Godhead, nor to any who deny his righteous vicarious substitution. In a word, God's moral government, in its ultimate conclusion, must be as absolute and perfect as his own nature; for, being supreme and almighty, he is irresponsible save to his own perfections. Therefore, if he is a being of infinite perfections, his government must be one of righteous final results. It will be an exact representation of himself, for he makes it just what he pleases. If there is moral defect in the final adjustment, it can only be accounted for by defect in God. It must be an absolute result, because the free act of an infinite being. The God whom we adore, to whom we peacefully entrust our

everlasting all, "is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth."

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