

If either of the unscriptural notions were true—namely, that the Lord Jesus made an atonement intentionally for all men, or that he made one sufficient for all men, yet neither of these would require one of infinite merit for its support. Even in either such a case, the foundation would be out of all proportion to the superstructure; for whatever ultimately may be the number of mankind, it will never be infinite, and, therefore, never can be the ground of a necessity for an infinite atonement. Respecting the other supposed ground for this necessity—namely, the infinite evil of sin, it should be understood that the atonement was neither required nor made for sin as one and indivisible, but for all the sins of many sinners. But even if we were to regard all the sins of all the saved as one indivisible, infinite evil, and the atonement of Christ as one indivisible, infinitely-meritorious requirement, our understanding would be put upon the hard duty of apprehending, and our faith upon the extraordinary labour of believing, that one infinity has been successfully employed to countervail, to exhaust, and to swallow up another. But, further, sins are many; and if there be an infinite evil in sin at all, there must be in every sin; and if there be an infinite evil in every sin, we shall then be put upon the very far more extraordinary business of understanding that one infinity countervails—these are the proper terms, we believe—exhausts, and swallows up an innumerable multitude of other infinities. Still further, sins are greater and less, and they have awarded to them appropriately a greater and less penalty, a less and more tolerable damnation. If, then, there is an infinite evil in every sin, and some sins are greater than others, it would seem, therefore, that there are greater and less infinities; and if so, our understanding and our faith will be put on the yet still harder duty of perceiving and believing that one infinity countervails, exhausts, and swallows up an unnumbered multitude of infinities of various dimensions. Verily, this is wonderful! But extremes meet;

and sometimes that which is taken to be sublime, turns out, on examination, to be only ridiculous.

The ground of the truth of this notion of an infiniteness of merit in the atonement is as unsound, as the grounds of its supposed necessity are extraordinary. It seems to be inferred, from the great Atoner being essentially the Infinite One, that he imparted somehow, but whether by design or of necessity does not seem clear, his own essential infinity into his atoning merit. But is infinity a transferable quality? Moreover, supposing that infinity were a transferable quality, if an infinitely meritorious atonement was not demanded as an equivalent in righteousness, and that it was, is by no means in proof, it would be supererogatory; and if such an atonement was made without being demanded, and no adequate occasion for its employment is ever presented, and it is presumed that no sane mind can imagine any such an occasion, then it will be, just so far as it exceeds in capability the design for which it was made, a superfluous provision.

Again, if it is supposed that there must be an infinite atoning sufficiency in the meritorious obedience of Christ arising necessarily from the Divine nature of the great Surety, will it not follow, according to this supposition, that something that is infinite must also necessarily arise out of everything he ever did, because he that did it is essentially Divine? And if not, why not? If, for instance, an infinity of merit necessarily arises out of his meritorious obedience because he is infinite who rendered the obedience, why must there not be an infinity of excellency arising necessarily out of every good thing he ever did for the same reason? Can any mind fail to perceive that, if we follow this notion to its legitimate consequence, we must fall into an absurdity?

That the Son of God has broadly and legibly stamped the character of his essential infinity on all he has done, just as the character of the Godhead of the Creator is stamped on the creature, may be seen of every man; and that he may have written the signa-

ture of his infinity on the atonement in a larger and more illustrious character than he has on anything else will be cheerfully admitted; but that he ever imparted a substantive infinity to anything which he has done, that he ever created, or made, or merited, or procured anything, no matter what, that is substantively infinite, is one of the strangest fancies that ever ran away with the head of any man gifted with the power of thinking.

One fancy begets others. It is sometimes said, and with no little rhetorical flourish, that one drop of the precious blood of Christ, on account of his essential divinity, is sufficient for the atonement of the sins of the whole world, had, as some put it, God so willed it; or, as others put it, if sinners would but avail themselves of it. But, however the efficacy may be put, whether on the will of God or on the will of the sinner, this saying is a mere rant born of a fancy. Yea, worse, in terms it is a bold impiety. For if one drop is sufficient, ought two to have been shed? Where were the wisdom and the justice of God when Jesus bled? Have not those that embrace this worse than silly sentiment the perspicacity to perceive that if it were true, a question of insuperable difficulty relating to the wisdom and justice of God in respect to the sufferings of his Son would be raised?

Another fancy begotten of that under consideration is a supposed distinction of value in the atonement, defined by the terms *intrinsic* and *extrinsic*. It is supposed that there is an intrinsic value in the atonement, above what is called its extrinsic value, which is as infinity to what there may be of value in the actual reconciliation of sinners to God that shall finally be brought to pass. Omitting to notice now the great truth taught in the Scriptures, that the atonement, whatever may be its value, is something acquired by an obedience that had a beginning, a progression, and an end—a truth which, if duly considered, would effectually dispose of more than one of the fanciful notions that have arisen on this great subject, let us ask, was the supposed intrinsic value of the atonement

ever employed, or ever intended to be employed, for any practical purpose? And if not, is this a suitable subject for grown men to discuss? All values, to be practically valuable, require a currency. Has this supposed excess of value ever had a currency, or will it ever have one? If, then, this supposed intrinsic value has never found and never will find a currency, will it not be something which never was and never will be realized by any persons in heaven or earth for their advantage, and something which never did and never will acquire anything to illustrate the excellency, or to advance the honour of the great Atoner? For what, then, and to whom is this intrinsic value valuable? If a speculation is a mental view of a thing which is not verified in practice and in fact, then this view of the value of the atonement is a veritable speculation; and we submit that this great subject is not one on which a speculative inclination should be indulged.

We, therefore, repeat that, estimated on purely moral grounds, and received in a purely moral sense, an immeasurable merit must be attributed to the very least gracious thought of the Son of God for sinners. But we are not in a condition to estimate his merit on these grounds, nor is his merit thus estimated. Circumstanced as we are, were his merit estimated thus, no legal right would be acquired, and no practical advantage would result. The only grounds on which his merit can be estimated for any practical purpose in our condition, are those on which justice, presiding in the realm of law, estimates things good and evil, and gives to every one his due. On these grounds, merit will be, of necessity, something acquired on terms, something due, and something which must be rewarded in full. Whatever sufficiency, then, there may in the merit of Christ, it is an acquired sufficiency on terms. Whatever sufficiency of merit he acquired on terms, just that sufficiency is his righteous due. And if the whole of his sufficiency of merit were not righteously rewarded, then justice would appear to be partial and imperfect in not rewarding that sufficiency of merit according to its due.

As, then, the merit of Christ is estimated on legal grounds, and for practical purposes, it will follow, of necessity, that his merit must be limited. Estimated on these grounds, an infiniteness of merit is not possible, and no absolutely infinite practical purpose could possibly be intended or accomplished.

CHAPTER V.

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS RELATION TO DIVINE JUSTICE.

THERE are some considerations which must, of necessity, be taken into account in the reward which Justice accords to the Saviour of sinners. Let us look at a few of these considerations.

I. Justice will reward the Saviour to the full extent of his representative capacity.

If the Lord Jesus held a representative capacity under supreme sanction, and if he discharged every obligation devolving on him by consequence thereof, Justice will surely reward him to the full extent of his due arising from the absolutely perfect discharge of every such obligation. But he did, and he does, hold such a representative capacity. It will be conceded that believers are represented in him. But it should be observed that believers do not begin to be represented by Christ when they believe in him. Their representation by him took place just as early as their election in him, and this took place before the foundation of the world. They were chosen in him; and their being chosen in him has respect to his federal relation to them, Election made Christ and all chosen in him, federally one.

The federal headship of Christ had a typical presentment in the federal relation of "The first man Adam." Adam, the type of Christ, as invested with a federal

character, disobeyed the injunctions of the law, and by his disobedience all whom he represented "were made sinners;" and Justice, giving to every one his due, with a certainty that has been unfailing in so much as a single instance, has secured the award due to the members through the demerit of the representing head. Every soul of man descending from him has been made a sinner. If, then, Justice is so precisely just in case of demerit, will it be less precisely just in case of merit? If the imagination can conceive the vile notion that Justice will be impartial to curse, and partial to bless, will not the judgment strangle the monstrosity at its birth? Is Justice readily just when it is a righteous thing to kill, and reluctantly just when it is a righteous thing to make alive? Is Justice heartily just in the matter of the first man, and hardly just in the matter of the Second man? Is Justice pleasurable just when punitive, and painfully just when remunerative? Yea, is Justice severely just in respect to the demerit of Adam, and cruelly unjust in respect to the merit of Christ? It is as clear as self-evident truth that, to whatever extent the Lord Jesus held a representative character, if his obedience for those whom he represented was sufficiently meritorious to make them righteous, he ought to be rewarded accordingly by their being "made righteous." If he did not render an obedience sufficiently meritorious for the ransom of all whom he represented, the failure is his, and he must bear the inglorious consequence; but if he did render a sufficiently meritorious obedience for the ransom of all whom he represented, and every one of them is not delivered "from going down to the pit," then he will not be rewarded according to his due, and Justice must for ever bear the stigma of having been cruelly unjust to the merciful and righteous Saviour of sinners. For, be it observed, when Justice, in its punitive character, has employed the requisite means to exact its due, it may not leave to accident to remunerate; but it is bound by every consideration of right, in its remunerative character, to employ the necessary means to secure the reward due to merit.

On what grounds, and with what object, we will not now enquire, but we do hear that, in popular discourses, it is sometimes said, *there are thousands in hell for whom Christ died*. If this false,—gratuitously false—if this calumniating, if this inexpressibly vile, if this unutterably horrible, if this ineffably execrable sentiment could be verified in the case of only one whom Jesus, the Son of God, represented, supposing his obedience unto death to be sufficiently meritorious to make that one righteous, and to give him the benefit of being made righteous, that single verification would fix on divine justice a deep, a dark, an abhorrent stain of infamous iniquity that could never be erased. Yea, it would unclot the Eternal of all his moral beauty, and dress him in the drabbed rags of an odious immorality.

For ourselves, while we bow submissively to the testimony of the Scripture concerning hell, while we derive no pleasure from thinking of the sufferings of our fellow-creatures in that dreadful prison, and await the doing away with knowledge “in part” in the light of heaven to acquiesce in its very existence, yet we dare not imagine or utter anything which might serve to lessen and to lighten, in the judgment of moral beings, the pain and despair of “the damnation of hell.” But we are sure that if there were any in hell for whom Christ died, and they were conscious of this supposed fact,—the infinite sufficiency of the Saviour’s merit for all men—that this consciousness would deprive hell itself of all its moral torment. The sufferers, whatever might be their pains, would feel they were the victims of a moral wrong perpetrated upon them in defiance of every principle of right, and would derive thence that solace which moral beings can derive in their sufferings from suffering wrongfully.

Such horrible extravagancies are not only heard in the heat of popular discourses on this subject, but the sophistical premises of these shocking conclusions are found in treatises on this great matter written in the quiet of seclusion, and, apparently, in the sober belief of their truth, by men of unquestioned learning and

godliness. When we may read in a treatise on the priesthood of Christ, written by an eminently learned and godly man, "We have found our Lord and Redeemer, described as a Priest,.....divinely appointed in a manner consonant with his unrivalled dignity, standing in an assumed relation to mankind, for the purpose of making a sacrificial and a consecrating offering; submitting to the most bitter sorrows, agonies, and death; effecting a real propitiation and expiation for the sinful state of mankind, in all senses and respects which are suitable to the immutability of the divine perfections, and the glorious honour of the divine government." When, we repeat, we may read such a statement as this written by a learned and godly doctor of divinity, we may abate our wonder that unlearned and ignorant men should, in the heat and ferment of mind sometimes incident to public speaking, utter the shocking abomination mentioned. Can not, or will not men see that Jesus Christ did not stand in an assumed federal relation to all mankind? Can not, or will not men see that the Son of God did not stand in an assumed federal relation for gracious purposes to, say, Judas Iscariot? A single exception will burst this bubble. If any man will say that the Son of God stood in an assumed federal relation to "the son of perdition;" that he, in any sense, was wounded for his transgressions and bruised for his iniquities, that he made "a sacrificial and consecrating offering" for him, that he effected "a real propitiation and expiation" for his sinful state, that man must be left to his hallucination or to his perverseness, whichever it may be. It will be of no avail to such a man to reason with him on the representative analogy there was between the high priest of the Jews and our High Priest. It will be of no avail to expound according to the proportion of faith and agreeably to fact, Rom. v. 12—21; and 1 Cor. xv. 22. It will be of no avail to assert after the apostle that "Christ is the head of the church." Such a man must be left. But can any other man fail to see that if Jesus Christ did stand in this assumed federal relation

to Judas Iscariot, if he did make a sacrificial and consecrating offering for him, if he did effect a real propitiation and expiation for his sinful state, that then that unhappy man's going to his own place must lie at the door of divine justice? If Jesus Christ represented Judas Iscariot as he did the crucified thief who was plucked out of the jaws of perdition, like a brand from the fire, in the last moments of his miserable and guilty existence here, Judas Iscariot ought not to have gone to his own place, but he ought, whatever may have been the requisite means within him or without him for the effectual accomplishment thereof, as a matter of righteousness, to be in Paradise with the ransomed and rescued malefactor.

Federal representation, then, rules the extent of the merit of Christ. He represented his people, and he came to save his people from their sins. He represented the persons whom he calls his sheep, and he laid down his life for them. He represented and he "loved his church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." What he intended to procure for his church by giving himself for it, that he merited for it. Beyond this limit, in a legal sense and for any practical purpose, he merited nothing; but, at the same time, every moral being in the universe of God who may be informed of this wonderful obedience unto death of the Son of God for sinners, especially those who are redeemed unto God thereby, will for ever feel that there is a moral merit in the redeeming interference boundlessly above reward, and as high above all blessing and praise.

CHAPTER VI.

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE ATONEMENT IN ITS
RELATION TO DIVINE JUSTICE.

II. ANOTHER consideration which falls into the account of the reward of Christ in respect of the atonement is his responsibility. Representation and responsibility were united in the official engagement of Christ. He accepted a responsibility for those whom he represented. He was Surety for them. If he has discharged his responsibility, it is due to him that he should be rewarded accordingly. But a question of meaning arises here which it will be proper to consider.

Words having a close affinity often step, with a good deal of freedom, out of their own proper domain into that of their neighbours. This licence may often be permitted without challenge, and sometimes may be invited with a welcome. But if on ordinary subjects, when accuracy is not of high importance, words of similar import or of nearly synonymous meaning may be often interchanged with an agreeable effect, it is far otherwise when the subject is of prime importance, and when accuracy is essential. The words *responsibility* and *accountability* are frequently interchanged with a good deal of freedom; and in matters of slight importance, wherein accuracy is of little consequence, it would be idly pedantic wholly to disallow the licence. But in relation to the momentous subject we are considering, no such freedom ought to be permitted. Each of these words ought to be rigorously confined to its own domain. We ought to be as exact here as if writing a dictionary, and, indeed, far more exact than writers of dictionaries sometimes are. In this case we should be just as justice itself—giving to each his due.

Accountability represents an obligation arising from a natural, a civil, or a privileged state. The accountability of man, for instance, as God's creature lays him

under the obligation of keeping God's law. Parents are accountable to God and to the state, according to the laws in force, respecting their children; and children are accountable by the laws of God and man to honour their parents. The accountability of a citizen lays him under the obligation of observing the laws of the state. The accountability of a Christian lays him under the obligation of whatever is due from him in his Christian state according to the commandments of Christ. A man's accountability obliges him, independently of his will. His will is never consulted in the matter of his accountability; and while a failure to discharge all the obligations arising out of his accountability draws down upon him a penalty, the perfect discharge of all the obligations arising out of his accountability merits nothing. Having done all, he has but done his duty.

Responsibility differs from accountability in essential particulars. In a case of responsibility, the will of the person becoming responsible is consulted. The obligations of responsibility do not fall on a man without his consent, but they are taken upon him by himself with free concurrence. He responds. When there is no response there is no responsibility; for to respond is essential to the creation of a responsibility. Hence, a state of responsibility is an official or an assumed, not a natural state. The duties and the obligations of this state are presented and accepted, and the acceptance is free. Everyone bound under a responsibility is bound by his own free act. In accountability there is no presentation to the understanding of terms, of obligations to be undertaken, and of reward to be given; no consultation of the will, and no formal and willing acceptance; but in a case of responsibility there are all these. If, therefore, a responsibility which has for its object the conferring of a benefit, is accepted on terms, the discharge of the voluntarily accepted obligations, unlike the discharge of any obligation which may arise in a case of accountability, will be meritorious. Something beneficial will then have been done in such a case, for

which the doer was not accountable, but for which he voluntarily made himself responsible.

The Lord Jesus is the federal representative and responsible head of his church. The obligations of his headship arise from a responsibility, not from an accountability. He responded, and he responded freely. In discharging these obligations he does not discharge obligations which naturally and necessarily fell upon him, but obligations which were presented to him, and were voluntarily accepted by him. Had he been accountable for their discharge, he would merit nothing by their discharge. He would then merely perform a duty, and from the performance of a duty no merit arises. But he discharges obligations in his representative character which arise from a responsibility. This is beyond natural duty. He discharges, not a natural, but an official obligation voluntarily assumed for a beneficial purpose, and he merits thereby accordingly.

Confining our thoughts within the limits of what the responsibility of the great Head of the Church was in respect to the atonement, it will be proper to inquire what was that responsibility. Nothing can be simpler than this inquiry and the answer thereto, yet nothing seems to be less clearly understood. If the Lord Jesus accepted a responsibility respecting an atonement, what could that responsibility be but to make an atonement? And what is an atonement but the making of a valid expiation of certain offences according to the judgment of Divine justice? Simple as these things are, there are few things about which men seem to be more confused and less of one mind than about the nature and the extent of the responsibility of the Son of God respecting the atonement, the discharge of his responsibility, the merit he acquired by that discharge, and the reward conferred on him for it.

We have already said that representation is limited. We now say, that representation and responsibility are co-extensive. We say that the Lord Jesus did not make himself responsible to acquire a limitless atoning sufficiency for all men, but that he made himself responsible to make

a valid atonement to the extent of his representative capacity. It will be allowed that he expiated offences by his death. For whom did he die? He himself said—"The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "I lay down my life for the sheep." True, we think we hear some say, but is it not also said—"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"? And also, "By him all that believe are justified from all things"? Is there not, then, a provisional sufficiency for all to be secured by whosoever will through believing in Christ? Doubtless these are testimonies of the Scripture, but those that so interpret these testimonies should know that there is an antecedent cause of believing in Christ, and of unbelieving. This antecedent cause of believing and of unbelieving is thus spoken of:—"He that is of God heareth God's words. Ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God." "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." "He that knoweth God heareth us. He that is not of God heareth not us." When Jesus said to his disciples, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned," he gave no intimation that he had made a provisional atonement for all the world then to be offered for acceptance universally, and to be secured individually by an individual belief; but he simply made a solemn declaration of fact relating to himself, for the information of all concerned.

But is it not an altogether wild notion to imagine a responsibility in any case so void of terms?—To imagine a presentation and an acceptance of a charge so utterly indefinite, and connected with results so absolutely accidental? In the case of a responsibility being undertaken to make a valid expiation of offences, is it supposable the offenders and their offences were not foreknown, and were not taken into the account? Is it not a downright violation of every notion of pro-

priety in one's judgment of things to imagine Christ, the Surety, making himself responsible, and actually discharging the obligation of his responsibility, for every wrong of everybody, if it may so happen, and for no wrong of anybody, if it may so happen? Did the Son of God pledge himself at a mere venture? Did he die at a mere venture? Was his compact with the Father termless? Is he awaiting at the right hand of the Majesty on High for what may result from mere accident for his reward? Responsibility is a distinctly and a strongly relative term. It is impossible not to associate in the mind, by even the most violent effort, the person responsible with the person or authority under whom, the persons for whom, and the matter about which, the responsibility is undertaken. If it is a hard saying, and difficult to hear, it is nevertheless certain that Jesus received his name because, as the angel interpreted it, "He shall save his people from their sins." To save his people from their sins exactly defines the limits of his responsibility in the matter of the atonement. Had he charged himself with more, more would have been done with the same certain results which follow what he has done. His atoning responsibility is a part of his saving responsibility. He not only made himself responsible to ransom his sheep by a price, but laid himself equally under an obligation to gather them from their ruinously wandering courses to his own fold. As he "ought" to have suffered for them, so he "must" bring together to himself those for whom he suffered. But we are now only concerned with his atoning responsibility and its discharge.

Jesus discharged the obligation arising from his atoning responsibility by his obedience unto death. When his obedience unto death was completed, his atoning responsibility was discharged. We have already distinguished his natural from his assumed obedience, although we have not dared to draw the line where the one ends and the other begins. We speak now wholly of his assumed obedience. This is that "obedi-

ence unto death" of which the apostle speaks. The rule of his obedience Jesus calls the will of his Father. We have no written copy of this rule, and can only form a judgment about it from what the obedient Son did. Human law would form a part, but only a part, of that rule. But it should not be imagined that the mere fulfilment of human law by the Lord Jesus for those who had violated that law is the measure of his obedience. Being a man he could obey that law, and he did, and this was necessary; but not because he is a man. This was not necessary for his own sake, because he was not accountable. No doubt the fulfilling of this law was a part of his obedience. Hereby it was that he magnified the law, and made it honourable. Yet the fulfilling of this law was only a part of his obedience. He had to obey the will of his Father so as to make an atonement for his people by the expiation of their sins. Hence, his was a peculiarly suffering obedience. He suffered much loss, much privation, much grief, much pain; and he died. This brings us to more much questioned matters relating to this subject.

Some think that, somehow, the Lord Jesus must have suffered infinitely, and that, by consequence, there must be an infinite merit arising from his sufferings, but on what grounds does not seem very clear. Some say he suffered infinity at a stroke, and eternity in a moment. Perhaps the rhetoric of this saying is felt to be so very fine that its logic may be taken for granted. On the other hand, there are others who, with no little philosophic lore and with much plausibility, have laboured to show that there was no measure in the sufferings of Christ having a direct relation to a definite cause of those sufferings, and to a definite design to be brought to pass by them; and they have taken occasion to speak with no little contempt of any such measure as an arithmetical calculation, and of the arithmetical calculation as a pitiful trifling. About an infiniteness in the sufferings of Christ in the discharge of his responsibility, and an

infinite merit arising therefrom, it will be unnecessary to say anything. If we tell those who contend so warmly for these infinitenesses that the term *infinite* represents a positive, inherent, essential, and intransferable quality, it will, it may be feared, set nothing right in their minds. We must leave them amidst their infinities. Such things are too wonderful for us. But about the measure of the sufferings of Christ for a definite cause and a definite end, it will be proper, speaking, as we are, of the discharge of his responsibility, to say a word.

We that say the suffering obedience of Christ was a measured obedience in discharge of a measured responsibility undertaken for the accomplishment of a measured purpose. We say that the purpose was measured by Divine sovereignty, and that the suffering obedience requisite to accomplish the purpose was measured by Divine justice; and we say this in the clear view of the unsearchably mysterious conclusions legitimately following the doctrine taught. If these conclusions create difficulties which utterly baffle human thought, they are not a whit more baffling than are a multitude of facts in this world which are patent to all, and which wholly refuse satisfactorily to accommodate themselves in the human mind to any apologetic principle yet discovered by human ingenuity. What, however, we know not now, we shall know hereafter. Where it is so wholly necessary to live by faith on so many other matters, blessed be God for faith enough to live by on this momentous matter!

That measure is to be predicated of the suffering obedience of Christ must appear to every sane mind. Ought anything justly urged that is true of the sufferings of Christ to be contemptuously spoken of as pitiful trifling? We repeat the question, Did chance, or sovereignty, or justice, preside over the measure of the sufferings of Christ? Is it imaginable that the measure of those sufferings bore no reference and no relation in righteousness to the discharge of a definite responsibility which that illustrious Sufferer had undertaken? It has been very sillily urged that some of the

sufferings of Christ came from the hand of man, and that these sufferings of the great Substitute were merely incidental things which simply exhibited the barbarous cruelty of man. Some of his sufferings did, indeed, come from the hand of man, and herein the cruelty of man was manifested; and some, too, of his sufferings came from the hand of the devil, and herein was the malignity of the devil manifested: but was not the hand of God over the hand of man and the hand of the devil in the whole? Were not wicked men and devils Jehovah's sword in Jehovah's hand which Jehovah himself bade awake against his Shepherd, the Man his fellow to smite him? Was not Jesus led of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil? If Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel gathered together against the Lord's Anointed, was not all this to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel determined before to be done? Was he not delivered to them by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God?

But it may be urged that many of the sufferings of Christ, and the peculiar forms in which they fell upon him, were endured for merely economical ends; that he suffered many things for the economical purpose of fulfilling "all things which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning him," that thereby the important truth that the Christ of history is the Messiah of prophecy might be unmistakably established. All this is true and very important withal. But it is equally true and equally important that the economical purpose of the Saviour's sufferings was subordinate to the judicial purpose, and that the judicial purpose wholly comprehended the economical purpose. The fulfilment of all those things which were written concerning Christ, wherein any suffering was involved, had a judicial cause anterior, and a judicial end ulterior, to the proof of his Messiahship. For, be it held in remembrance, that whatever he suffered, he suffered all in an assumed relation according to the counsel of God. He was under no

obligation from a natural accountability to suffer anything. If, then, he suffered a single loss, or privation, or grief, or pain, or any such thing, which did not diminish the obligation arising from his responsibility in his assumed relation, he suffered to that extent from a cruel injustice, according to—abhorred thought!—the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Can anything more revolting be imagined? Merciful Teacher, preserve men from speaking unadvisedly on the awful sufferings of the Son of God through the stupidity of ignorance or the rashness of folly!

The suffering obedience of Christ had a beginning, a progression, and an end. In the beginning, the accomplishment of a Divine design was commenced, in the progression that design was pursued, and in the end the design was finished. Jesus must needs do and suffer all that he did and suffered to fulfil that design. His obedience was itself perfectible, and was perfective of him. His responsibility was diminishable. His merit was cumulative. When his obedience was ended, his responsibility was discharged, and his meritorious acquirement was completed. Nothing can be plainer than the testimony of the Scripture on these points.

Foretelling his death to his disciples by a little while, the Lord Jesus said to them, "All things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished," or *ended*. When yet nearer to his death he said to them, "The things concerning me have an end." And when he gave up the ghost in death he uttered that thrillingly wondrous and never-to-be-forgotten word, "It is finished," or *ended*. The end of all things which were written in the law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning him was coincident with the end of his atoning responsibility. He himself said, "It is finished," or *ended*, as "knowing that all things were now accomplished," or *ended*. If any man will affirm that all this was ended for the fulfilment of the predictions of the Scripture otherwise than as that fulfilment, whatever other valuable purposes it might serve, and what-

ever other ends may have been accomplished thereby, was subordinate to the discharge of the atoning obligations of the Lord Jesus, the power of God only can cure that man of his blindness or perverseness.

Further, when all was ended, Jesus bowed his head and gave up the ghost. In the dazzling glory of the fulfilment of that Scripture, "A bone of him shall not be broken," another glory seems to escape the observation of many observers. The death of Jesus needed not to be hastened by that barbarous or humane practice, whichever it was, commonly resorted to in order to hasten the death of crucified persons. When the soldiers came to break his legs that he might die the sooner, he was dead already. At this Pilate marvelled. It was unusual, and as mysterious as unusual. How could this be? From the merely human view of the matter, was Jesus so exceptionally weak that he died thus unusually early in the crucified condition from exhaustion of vital power through the bodily hurt? That could not be. Nay, nay, the suffering obedience was ended, the atoning obligation was discharged, and, all being ended, he voluntarily bowed his head, laid down his life, and gave up the ghost. Oh, blessed consummation! This procures, this pleads, this claims my peace with God!

Again, the truth we are stating is illustrated and confirmed by the teaching of the apostle. In Heb. ii. 10, we read, "It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." We have one presentment of this truth we are stating in the title given to our Lord, and another in the testimony concerning him. But to make this clear, as it respects the title, we shall require that rendering of the apostle's word, here translated "captain," which it receives in the margin of chap. xii. 2, namely, "beginner;" and which, with submission, we deem by very far the best. The "Beginner" of the salvation of the sons was made perfect through sufferings. In its relation to *make perfect*, the word so rendered is

beautifully appropriate and clear; and so it is in relation to *bringing many sons to glory*; but the relation of the word "captain" to the connection here seems exceedingly misty. The leader of an army is not usually made perfect in any sense by his death in the field, nor is an army usually led to glory by the loss of its captain. Contrariwise, as must be apparent to all, a captain is made perfect as he is a conqueror, and more than a conqueror; that is, by a complete conquest, and by his life being spared to enjoy its fruits. And so far from an army being usually led to glory through the death of its captain, this event has mostly been a great calamity to it, often an irreparable loss, and sometimes has resulted in its rout and ruin by the enemy. But it was necessary to the Beginner of salvation to suffer, and through sufferings to be made perfect. By his suffering obedience the Lord Jesus became the Beginner and the Perfecter of the doctrine of faith. This is, as we take it, the meaning of Heb. xii. 2. By his suffering obedience also he became the Beginner and the Perfecter of the atonement, the substantive matter on which the doctrine of faith is founded, promulgated, and believed; and at the end of his suffering obedience the Beginner of salvation was himself made perfect through his sufferings. A surety charged with the obligations of his suretyship is not made perfect; a surety discharged from his obligations is. A redeemer who has not paid the ransoming price of redemption is not made perfect; but a redeemer who has paid the required ransom, so far as the ransom is concerned in the redemption, is made perfect. By the discharge of his obligations our Surety was made perfect, and by the payment of the ransom was our Redeemer made perfect.

We are taught by the testimony of the apostle here that Jesus was made perfect through sufferings. The Lord Jesus suffered many things. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he suffered, being tempted; he was reproached; he hungered and thirsted; he had not where to lay his head; he was