

THE  
TESTIMONY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE  
AS TO  
EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT  
IN CONTRAST TO THE SO-CALLED  
RESTORATION OF ALL THINGS.

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"And this I say, to the end that no one may delude you by persuasive speech."—Col. ii. 4.

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## ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

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**E**TERNAL damnation! Who does not feel the deep, serious signification of this sentence of divine justice? Who does not tremble before a fate which, according to the clear unequivocal announcement of holy scripture, is the portion of every fallen and unrenewed man, and which will infallibly overtake him with unrelenting severity? Everlasting condemnation! Endless woe!

However serious and important, meanwhile, this portion of divine truth in itself may be for us, still a closer examination of it becomes imperatively necessary, since in our days questions are raised, with continually increasing vehemence, which are only too well adapted to shake the foundation of the truth, and to stifle its blessed influence on the conscience. The Lord Jesus has brought to light the reality of eternal damnation most clearly and decidedly; the Holy Ghost by the mouth of the apostles has confirmed it with all precision. Notwithstanding this, not only do thousands lightly allow room for doubts on this question, but not a few are bold enough to deny without hesitation the eternal and unlimited duration of damnation.

In the Romish Church, through the introduction of masses for the dead and the doctrine of purgatory connected with it, the edge of the divine judgments with regard to the eternal destiny of mankind is blunted. Rationalism and other still more sharply

defined species of unbelief threaten to undermine the simple truths of scripture. Through the deceitfulness of human reasoning, in our days, an error seeks to open a path for itself, which, supported by the freaks and fancies of unstable and more or less mystically inclined minds, under the name of the doctrine of the restitution of all things,\* has already taken root in the hearts of innumerable Christians, to spring up in due time and produce the most sorrowful fruits. We consider it therefore a holy duty to bring forth a simple testimony, based on the infallible word of God, against an error which, while it robs the truth of its power, not only checks the workings of grace in the conscience of a sinner, but also dims and blinds the eye of the believer, in regard to the counsels and ways of God in Christ, and thereby entangles and defiles the heart, and exposes it to the most destructive influences.

However, it is by no means our intention to commence a fruitless war with the determined and notorious advocates of this false system. For however earnestly we may desire and ask the Lord for their return to the truth, yet the experience of many years has convinced us that it requires a very special interposition of grace on God's part. And why? Because souls who are robbed of the light to such a degree that they, believing a lie, have received a certain error, have either never attained to a clear consciousness of salvation, and to the full knowledge of the truth, or through the deceitfulness of sin, have gradually lost their reverence for the authority of the divine word, and have lent a willing ear to the conceited overtures of their deceived hearts. Such souls

\* Undoubtedly this phrase is derived from Acts iii. 20, 21, though the passage does not furnish the slightest occasion for the reception of so corrupting a heresy. It only speaks of the restoration or restitution of *all things*, whereof God hath spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets.

not only wantonly and determinately turn away from the truth, but also commit themselves frivolously so as to apply the most unequivocal testimonies of the truth to their system and use them for their own ends.

Their condition undoubtedly betrays a secretly bad motive, which God must first expose, before a simple testimony against their heresy can be blessed to themselves. Alas! they only too clearly confirm the words of the Lord, "If thine eye is evil, thy whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness" (Matt. vi. 23). We can therefore scarcely hope to convince them of the error of their ways; but with God all things are possible, and may He have compassion on them! Our testimony is however intended for such souls as have not yet fully accepted this doctrine as an irrefutable truth, but have already begun to allow it a place in their hearts. And oh! it is alarming how great this number is in our day! As yet the truth, planted through the scriptures in their hearts, raises a barrier against the full reception of an error with which they begin to dally: as yet the light of their spiritual eye is not so completely extinguished as to cling to an error, which is most entangling and attractive for their poor unstable souls. But certainly the danger is imminent that, if the Lord Jesus does not come in, they will get farther and farther from the truth. If their heart is still in some degree upright, we cherish the hope in the Lord, that the reading of these pages under the mighty influence of His grace may serve to their establishment in the truth.

The warning of the apostle, "But this I say, let no man beguile you with enticing words," should incite us to follow, in all cases, the only infallible word of God with holy fear, as a shining light on our path. But whence comes the deplorable ignorance which we meet with in the present day with re-

gard to the truth of God in so many souls? Whence comes it, that so many of whom eternal life cannot be denied, "are carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness?" (Eph. iv. 14) and open their hearts to an error which relaxes the conscience, robs the truth of every support, and will inevitably entail the most disastrous consequences? Is not indifference to, and disregard of, this word the only cause of this lamentable state of things? Ah! how little is it searched with prayer, and under the living conviction of its divine power and majesty! How little is its influence to be perceived in the walk of many Christians! Oh that they might begin again to prize this precious word according to its divine value! Oh that the need might everywhere be felt anew to meditate therein day and night (Psalm i. 2), in order to experience its vivifying power, and enjoy its exhaustless fulness!

Truly the human understanding is not the touchstone of this word, but the word is the touchstone of the human understanding. "It is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, and pierceth even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12). When God Himself speaks, all the reasonings and imaginations of men must be silent. Everything may deceive—who can venture to deny it? But the word of God never deceives. The suggestions and wishes of our hearts may lead us astray; the word of God alone casts a clear light on our path. Reason and feeling are channels which are troubled and muddy by reason of sin; the word of God alone is a clear untroubled springing fountain. Leaning on this mighty unchangeable word, we give publicity to these lines. May the Lord in His grace and by His Spirit enlighten and lead the writer and the reader, so that both may earnestly withstand a power which, belong-

ing to the spirit of "this present evil age," has its root and its fruit in lies and the deceitfulness of sin.

Before entering on our subject, it will be necessary to give the reader a general sketch of the way in which the supporters of the doctrine of the restitution of all things view it.

This system branches out in two different directions. On the one hand, they proclaim a final universal salvation, which will include even the devil and his angels; while, on the other hand, they deny the universal immortality of the soul, and most positively maintain, that every sinner, after suffering for a time appointed by God "from the worm that never dieth and the fire is not quenched," will be given over to entire destruction and annihilation. The first of these ideas has many secret and open adherents in Germany, particularly in Wurtemberg; the last finds a fruitful ground in America and England, and will not therefore, as lying so far beyond our range, form the subject of inquiry in this paper. Only the view of the German advocates of this unscriptural system of a universal salvation will occupy us at present—a view that has chosen for its foundation the words, "God is love;" and from this precious irrefutable truth the adherents of this system draw the conclusion that the acceptance of a universal condemnation is irreconcilable with such a love.

They therefore contend for a universal restoration embracing all creatures, because otherwise the saving love would only be able to undo for a very small number the destructive consequences of the fall. "No," say they, "we reject a judgment that excludes love. Could even an earthly father ever feel happy who had cast out his disobedient child, and given him up to an indescribably dreadful punishment?" "And would the sorrow of God's heart as a Father ever cease, if through eternity the song of praise from the elect and the angels must be always mingled with

the howling and gnashing of teeth of the lost? No, it is incompatible with His love. What can the judgment to which the hardened and God-despising souls are doomed to be, but a continuous chain of those chastisements which have their origin in God's thoughts of redemption, and which are already applied down here to His creatures, till every trace of sin will be obliterated, and the gnawings of the worm and the pain of the fire be for ever ended?"

Such are generally the views of the adherents of this doctrine. Such an assertion, however, stamps all creatures as children of God, and builds its system on the foundation of a love which, measured by human notions, flatters human nature or the flesh, and shuts out the perfect righteousness of God, or at least robs it of its characteristic edge. Let us examine these ideas in the light of the only infallible word of God, and we shall find its beams sufficiently powerful to dissipate all the shadows of human imaginations and human presumption.

It is true God works according to the fulness of His love. Even before the foundation of the world this adorable boundless love was in activity and in motion. It has manifested itself ever since man became a living soul. It unfolded itself in its fullest, brightest lustre, and in its highest majesty, when God gave His only-begotten Son up to death for the ungodly and for sinners; and surely it will but shine in unhindered clearness when the last enemy shall be destroyed, the last judgment executed, and God shall be all in all.

And this love, which up to this very moment is occupied with the salvation of needy sinners, will never suffer a child of God to be delivered up to the sword of the coming judgment and the unquenchable fire of hell. That is impossible, for "there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1). And again, "He that believeth on

the Son hath eternal life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life" (John iii. 36 ; v. 24). All this is an undeniable truth. But he who presumes to assert that all men are in the relationship of children to God, gives the most positive evidence that he does not know the truth revealed in scripture, and that he is in entire ignorance both of the nature of God and of the sinner. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. viii. 9), says the word. We are only sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, and only we can cry, "Abba Father," when God has sent the Spirit into our hearts (Gal. iii. 26 ; iv. 6). It is therefore clear, that God does not enter into judgment with His children, but with a wicked world, that has scorned His love, rejected His word, and despised His only way of salvation, presented in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Evidently, therefore, the assertion of a universal salvation, on the ground of filial relationship, is nothing but an invention of the human mind, adapted to corrupt the sensibility, to perplex and deaden the conscience, and to shake and undermine faith in the truth of everlasting condemnation. Let us not deceive ourselves! Surely the love of God is boundless and infinite; but are His righteousness, holiness, faithfulness and truth therefore less perfect? Has His love at any time set aside the fulness of His other attributes? Ah! infallibly will all those perish who despise His love down here, and scorn the righteousness of God. And have we not the same right to ask, How can He bear this wail, if they only, as these persons admit, are exposed to indescribable torment for a period of a hundred or a thousand years?

Where then shall we find a measure for the righteousness of God? It is as perfect as God Himself. No human mind can fathom it. If we follow its

traees in the history of man, we shall find it everywhere walking about with iron front to weigh the doings of man in a divinely adjusted balance. Nothing has hindered it from pronouncing the judgment of death upon fallen man. The thunders of Sinai speak of its fulness and power, and reveal that jealous God who visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. The whole history of the children of Israel shows its straight way and steady step. Its lightning struck to the ground the refractory ones in the wilderness, and to this day the whole nation bears on its forehead the curse for the rejection of the Messiah. Notwithstanding this, Israel was His chosen people, whom He loved with such a zealous love that He threatened to blot out the remembrance of the Amalekites from under heaven, for fighting against them (Exodus xvii. 14), and caused His threatening to be executed by Saul, with the direction to spare none, but to slay men and women, children and sucklings (1 Sam. xv. 3). Can such a righteousness, which visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, be judged by human rules? And has God ever suffered Himself to be hindered in executing His righteous threats by what men would call love? On the contrary, had not Saul to suffer the consequences of his disobedience, because he failed to carry out the requirements of God's justice in every respect?

And if we place ourselves for a moment, in spirit, upon the spot where, in that hour of darkness, under the overpowering weight of our sins, the cry rose up to God from the lips of the dying Saviour, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" do we there meet a love that turned away the stroke of God's justice from the head of the only-begotten Son? Surely it was a cry of agony that told of the terrible depth of the sorrow of the righteous One made sin; and never before had such a cry of anguish reached

the ear of God, who is a God of love: and yet the sword of justice delayed not a single moment in striking the avenging blow. God saw our sins on the head of Him who voluntarily gave Himself up to the death for us; and that was enough to turn away His countenance from Him, and to execute on Him in all its severity the judgment hanging over the sinner.

Only the perfect righteousness of God could do thus, and blessed be God for ever! He has found so perfect a satisfaction in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that now every true believer can rejoice in the unhindered enjoyment of perfect and divine love. But is the character of God's righteousness therefore changed? Oh! let us not deceive ourselves! It will meet the sinner who opposes to the end such infinite love, with the same unrelenting severity, as then when the Saviour bowed His precious head to its death-stroke; and then will every one know that the righteousness of God is equally as perfect as His love.

It is therefore manifest, that a system is to be entirely rejected which has chosen a love for its foundation which is not in harmony with the character of God, but betrays itself as the phantom of imaginative minds to the exclusion of the divine righteousness, holiness, and truth. Would not God, after having given His law, or at least a conscience to man to distinguish between good and evil, be acting unjustly and unwisely, if He let sin go unpunished? And a ruler certainly does not merit the reproach of want of love to his subjects because he punishes the evil-doers: on the contrary, love imposes this as a duty on him.

But of God, who has proved His love to the sinner in the gift of His Son, we read "Thy right hand is full of righteousness" (Psalm xlviii. 10), and "He will judge the world in righteousness" (Psalm ix. 8):

and of Him it can be said with all certainty, that He punishes the evil-doers, because He loves His creatures. It is impossible, therefore, that one attribute of God can exclude the other: their connection, on the contrary, is inseparable.

We see in the cross of Christ the perfect love of God toward the sinner, as well as His perfect hatred against sin—His perfect grace, as well as His perfect righteousness.

But it is objected, "How can God who is righteous pronounce an everlasting punishment on sins which, committed during a short and limited period, were interrupted in their continuance?" Now where is the scale by which we can determine the amount of punishment for sin? It is quite evident that the duration of the punishment cannot be dependent on the length or brevity of the time in which the sin was committed. A person may commit a crime in five minutes, on which the best earthly government pronounces the punishment of imprisonment for life, or even of death. Even the action in itself does not determine the period of punishment. Two men, for instance, may be guilty of one and the same crime, and notwithstanding this, the court may sentence the one to two years, the other to twenty; because the one may be for the first time before the bar, whereas the other is known as a hardened and repeatedly punished criminal.

It is therefore impossible that the deed merely, as such, could determine the duration of the punishment. Much rather will the motives which led to it, and other accompanying circumstances, induce a mitigation or aggravation of the judicial sentence.

If then among men such a difference exists in the judgment of a wicked act, who is able to measure the punishment for the sin of men against God? Can man as the guilty one at the same time be the judge, to fix the duration of the punishment of his own sins

according to a divine and righteous scale? What folly! And when even a human judge increases the punishment in case of a repetition of the crime, what will be the judgment of God on a sinner who, in spite of all the warnings and reproaches of his conscience, and even despite of all the admonitions and entreaties of the love of God to be reconciled to Him, still continues in this course of sin against his Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor? Even in the most favourable circumstances man has never denied his true nature. Israel, God's chosen people, furnishes us with the saddest proof of this. From the lips of God Himself we hear the words, "I have nourished and brought up children, but they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider" (Isaiah i. 2-6). "Ah! sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters, they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." This is God's judgment of Israel. And what does Rom. i. say about the Gentiles? What a terrible picture does 2 Tim. iii. give of the position of those who bear the name of Christ! But if we want to see the carrying out of God's judgment upon sin in all its fearful reality, let us fix our gaze on the cross.

The believer may say, "Christ bore our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24). "He is wounded for our transgressions, he is bruised for iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon

him, and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah liii. 5). Has God given His only-begotten Son, and has the Lord Jesus willingly given His life to free the sinner from a punishment that is only temporal and passing? Why then did such a terror, such an indescribable anguish, fill His holy soul? Was it not because He, bearing our sins and made sin for us, was crushed under the terrible smitings of the wrath of a righteous and holy God? Did it need such a sacrifice if the consequence of our sins was only a temporal punishment? No. Nothing less than this shameful death of the Son of God come down from heaven on the cross would satisfy the justice of God, appease His wrath, and extinguish the flames of hell for him who believes. And surely this infinite price of redemption testifies that the damnation must also be unlimited—never-ending; and the word of God speaks always of an "eternal condemnation," of "everlasting" torment, of the "fire that is never quenched," and the worm that "dieth not." Ah! who are we that we can dare to judge the ways of God?

"But," say they, "can it be called just, if the condemnation of all the wicked is an everlasting one, though they have not all deserved the same punishment?" In answer to this question, we remark, according to scripture, In the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for some than for others (Matt. xi. 22-24), and that some shall be beaten with many, and others with few stripes (Luke xii. 47, 48).

But does this call in question the eternity of punishment? By no means. We will try to illustrate this again by an example. Two persons may by the same judgment be condemned to a punishment of equal duration; but whilst the one of these prisoners has nothing to lament but the loss of his liberty and still enjoys many little comforts, the other may have only bread and water, with hard

labour and corporeal punishment. We see therefore different degrees of punishment even down here, but still the time of imprisonment is the same. And if in human government such cases can exist, how much more may God, according as the evil deeds of men vary, multiply the punishment, while nevertheless it is an everlasting due for all?

We will take another example, and suppose the case of a person in debt, which he is not in a position to pay, and cast into prison till full payment is made. Every opportunity of getting money is naturally cut off from him; but the debt is there, and he is in prison till he pays it. Surely this punishment is on the principle of a never-ending one. Whether he owes five sovereigns or 500 sovereigns does not alter the case; he is, in the one case as in the other, imprisoned till he pays. Has not God a right to act in like manner? Has not man burdened himself with a heavy debt towards Him? And how will he pay it off? The judgment pronounced by God on Israel runs thus—"Thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Are we going to contend with Him on account of such a sentence? Certainly no one will venture to say that a person might not commit so great a crime as would impose on every righteous tribunal the necessity of passing sentence of imprisonment for life. Would it not from all sides be demanded that such a delinquent should be deprived of all the privileges which he hitherto enjoyed as a member of human society? Why then is God blamed when He finds it necessary to banish the ungodly for ever from His kingdom?

What is man? He denies God the very rights that he claims for himself. "But," say the advocates of this doctrine, "the word of God itself gives many passages which fully convince us that the punishment of the

wicked cannot be everlasting. We read, 'For the Lord will not cast off for ever, though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies' (Lam. iii. 31, 32). And again, 'He keepeth not his anger for ever, for he is merciful' (Micah vii. 18). And again, 'He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever' (Psalm ciii. 9; comp. Isaiah lvii. 16). Do not these and many other passages show clearly and distinctly that the wrath of God, and therefore the punishment of the ungodly, will come to an end after a certain time?" But nothing is easier than a refutation of this objection; for even those least acquainted with scripture will know that these words are addressed to Israel. This people, so beloved of God, but set aside for a time because of their unfaithfulness and determined rejection of the salvation offered to them in Christ, will, according to the testimony of God's word, once more be reinstated in these privileges as His earthly people. The wrath of God, which will have reached its height in the days of the outpouring of His judgment over the earth, will turn, and then humbled Israel will return, under the sceptre of their true King, and entirely on the ground of unbounded grace, into the land of Canaan in fulness of blessing. It is evident, therefore, that it is no question here of the deliverance of the wicked from the torment of the fire that never shall be quenched, but the return of a people, which, cast off by God, is at present wandering about.

Oh that it might be understood that he who chooses any passage he pleases, the meaning of which in its connection he has not learned, for the foundation of a system, either betrays gross ignorance as to the character God, or shows such presumption as human language can scarcely characterise!

"But," object our opponents, "it is proved that the word 'eternal' used in scripture does not always

denote an endless continuance, but often a temporal limited state." Accordingly, the Lord in Exodus xii. 14, 17, and Leviticus iii. 17; vi. 18, 28, relative to the passover and certain offerings, says to Israel, "This shall be a memorial, ye shall keep it a feast for ever, an everlasting statute, an ordinance for ever." It is indisputable that here the word "everlasting" cannot signify a never-ending condition, because the whole Jewish economy under the law, with all its memorials, statutes, and ordinances, has found its end in Christ. We grant this fully, but at the same time we dispute the right to draw conclusions from these passages which could cause any erroneous apprehensions as to the question of condemnation.

Let us, therefore, go to the root of the matter; and we hope fully to enlighten the mind of the upright reader as to the meaning of the word "everlasting" or "for ever," and to prove to him how untenable this objection is.

Let us, again, choose some examples from everyday life. When a person says to his friend, "I give you this book; it is yours *for ever*," he thereby simply expresses his intention not to ask for the book back again so long as it exists. But would the friend be in any doubt as to the meaning of the expression "for ever?" We believe not. Or, when Paul, writing to Philemon relative to the runaway slave Onesimus, says, "For perhaps he therefore departed from thee for a season that thou shouldest receive him for ever" (Philemon 15), will therefore the meaning of the word "for ever," applied to a relationship which at any rate ended with this earthly life, present any difficulty to the unprejudiced reader? Certainly not. And when in Exodus and Leviticus the above-mentioned "memorials, statutes, and ordinances" are spoken of as "everlasting," in order to give expression to this unchangeable character and continuous

validity whilst the Jewish dispensation lasted, is it therefore conceivable that on this account there is any want of clearness as to the expression "for ever?" Now if, in the above-mentioned passages, the meaning of "for ever" denotes the unchangeableness and continuity of a condition during the existence of another state of things bound with it, where is then that other state of things relative to the everlasting condemnation of the wicked which is of limited duration and in connection with the eternity of condemnation?

Let us examine attentively the following scriptures. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36). "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. i. 7-9.) "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Luke xvi. 22-26).

“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name” (Rev. xiv. 11). “And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched” (Mark ix. 43-46). Now where is the thing associated with condemnation, and the duration of which is for a limited period, that hinders the “abiding” of the wrath of God, checks “everlasting destruction,” cools the “parched tongue,” alleviates the torments of the flames, and removes the “great gulf” which hinders the lost from escaping the torments of the fire that never shall be quenched, and the worm that never dies? If therefore the Greek word translated by “everlasting” or “for ever” denotes in some cases a limited period, no one is therefore justified in transferring the same meaning to such cases which, as we have seen, the word of God places clearly and unequivocally before our eyes in other passages. Even heathen writers have used this word to describe a never-ending condition, and the Greek language possesses no word by which it could give a more precise expression to the uninterrupted continuance of eternity. The scriptures also employ this word in several passages in a sense the unequivocal character of which even the most determined advocates of this doctrine will admit.

When, for instance, the apostle says, “The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal” (2 Cor. iv. 18); and, again, “For we know, that if our earthly house of this

tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. v. 1); do these contrasts leave the true meaning of the contested word "eternal" still in any degree in question? Certainly not. Further, the idea that the term "everlasting" applied to the condemnation of the wicked is not the expression of an endless condition, must lead each believer to the saddest conclusions. If everlasting damnation is not everlasting, what right have we to the conclusion, and what security have we, that the same word, when it refers to life, to salvation, to glory, and to the inheritance of the ransomed, has the meaning of a never-ending condition? The word of God says with all certainty, "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched" (Mark ix. 43, 44; comp. Matthew xii. 8); "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire . . . and these shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Matt. xxv. 41-46); "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (2 Thess. i. 9); compare "to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever" (2 Pet. ii. 17), and "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 13); and "the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name" (Rev. xiv. 10, 11), and "her smoke rose up for ever and

ever" (chapter xix. 3); and, "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation" (Mark iii. 29); and "even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7). Nothing can be more decisive. But if, as these persons assert, by the expressions "everlasting fire," "everlasting torment," "everlasting destruction," "everlasting judgment," really immutably continuing conditions are not indicated, then this can be as little affirmed when the word of God speaks of eternal life (Matt. xxv. 46; Luke xviii. 30; John iii. 16, 17; v. 24; 1 John v. 20), of "everlasting habitations" (Luke xvi. 9), of everlasting consolations (2 Thess. ii. 16), of an "eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. iv. 17), of "everlasting glory" (2 Tim. ii. 10; 1 Pet. v. 10), of "everlasting salvation" (Heb. v. 9), of an "eternal inheritance" (Heb. ix. 15), and of "everlasting kingdom" (2 Pet. i. 11). If the reality of a never-ending condemnation of the wicked is in question, then is faith in an unbroken, continuous state of happiness also a mere fancy. Whoever denies the perpetuity of the one condition has no foundation for a belief in the perpetuity of the other. If it is not true that the wrath of God abides on the unbeliever, what security exists of everlasting life for the believer? Indeed everything loses its certainty as soon as man sets himself up as judge of the thoughts and ways of God. But what shall we say when the Lord says distinctly, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment?" (Matt. xxv. 46.) Have we not here before our eyes the sophisms of human speculation in all their poverty and folly? If everlasting punishment has an end, why not everlasting life also? One and the same word is used to denote the duration of

the one as of the other condition. The punishment of the wicked is eternal, and the life of the righteous nothing more than eternal. Would God indeed have used the same word for two conditions opposed to each other, and for all that have intended a double meaning?

The apostle says, "I would they were even cut off who trouble you" (Gal. v. 12). However, we find this expression denoting the time of condemnation equally applied not only to the life of the believer, to his redemption, his glory, his abode, his inheritance, but also to the existence and character of God, as well as to the time of the kingdom of Christ. "According to the commandment of the everlasting God" (Rom. xvi. 26). "To whom be honour and power everlasting" (1 Tim. vi. 16). "Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14). "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever" (John xii. 36). "The Creator who is blessed for ever" (Rom. i. 25). "God over all blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 5). But God "the King eternal . . . be honour and praise for ever and ever" (1 Tim. i. 17). "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Heb. i. 8). "That sat on the throne . . . that liveth for ever and ever" (Rev. iv. 10; compare xv. 17). "He will reign for ever and ever" (Rev. xi. 15). These passages will suffice; and certainly no one will dispute that here the Greek word, translated by "everlasting" and "for ever and ever," leaves no room whatever for any doubtful meaning as relating to the unchangeableness and endlessness of the existence of God and His kingdom.

And now I put the question to every honest reader, Is it not presumption to interpret a passage of scripture according to one's own fancy in order to gain support for any system? And does it not become still more evident, when in the seventy-one passages in the New Testament in which the word "ever-

lasting" is found, by far the greater number relate to the Holy Ghost, to God, as also to salvation, to life, to the inheritance and glory of the redeemed, and therefore place a continuous, endless perpetuity beyond all doubt? How can any one dare to take five or six passages, as he likes, out of these seventy-one, and to give them a meaning which forms an exception to the rule? In a word, if any one makes the assertion, because the term "everlasting" in isolated passages in the Old Testament denotes a period, that therefore the "everlasting" condemnation threatened by God can only be a passing temporary chastisement; then may another with equal right draw the conclusion from these passages, that neither "everlasting" life is a perpetual and endless condition, nor God Himself an unchangeable Being. May God in His grace preserve us all from such a terrible misuse of His holy word!

It is certainly a striking proof of the deeply sunk condition of man, that, in spite of the simple and distinct declarations of God's word in regard to his future destiny, he should be guided rather by the phantoms of his own erring reason than by the revealed truth itself. When, for example, scripture says, that "he that believes on Jesus is not lost, but has everlasting life," how can any one thence draw the conclusion that he who believes not shall one day enjoy the same lot? When with regard to the wicked it is said, "whose end is destruction," it surely does not mean that their end, though even for a time delayed, shall at last be as glorious and blessed as that of the righteous. When it is written, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," these words certainly do not announce the final salvation of the wicked and their entrance into glory: and when we read after this the following words, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal," how can we dare to

assert that the life is eternal, but the punishment temporal? In Revelations iv. 10 we find the words, "And they shall worship him who liveth for ever and ever." Also in chapter xiv. 11: "And the smoke of their torment rises up for ever and ever;" and lastly, in chapter xx. 10, "And they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Now when these passages clearly show that an equal duration is assigned to the punishment of the wicked as to the life of the saved, yea, as to the life of God Himself, then I should like to know whether the endlessness of condemnation could be painted in clearer colours. Or, does the Lord only wish to terrify men by a lie when he says of the blasphemer of the Holy Ghost, "He hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation" (Mark iii. 29).

But to return to a few more objections of our adversaries: they say, "Still it is written that every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil. ii. 10, 11), and that all shall be put in subjection under His feet (Heb. xi. 6, 9); all things shall be subdued under Him (1 Cor. xv. 27); we also read that Christ will reconcile all things unto Himself (Col. i. 20), and that God will gather together all things in Christ (Eph. i. 10); and lastly, we read, 'And when all things shall be subdued unto him then shall the Son also himself be subject to him who hath put all things under him, that God may be all in all' (1 Cor. xv. 28). Do not these passages speak in the most decided terms of a finally universal salvation?" Certainly not. If the advocates of this doctrine will draw in their own way upon the word of God to obtain a scriptural groundwork for their system, they cannot thus overturn the truth of God. They certainly have not thought, in their quotations of these passages, that they confound two things, viz., "subjection" and "reconciliation." I can be subdued by my adversary without being re-

conciled to him. Assuredly, all power and might will one day be annihilated, and all things be subdued under the feet of Jesus, and all enemies be brought to the acknowledgment of His lordship; yea, at last, even death itself will be done away. Its destruction stands in connection with the resurrection of the wicked, whom the voice of power of Christ calls out of their graves. Christ is clothed with all power and might; even death has lost its dominion over the wicked. He destroys death by raising these last to deliver them for ever "to the second death, the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 14). But where is reconciliation spoken of here? It is an undeniable truth that in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that "Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 10, 11); and none will dispute that all creatures that are in heaven and earth, and under the earth, will one day say, "To him who sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb, blessing and honour, and glory and power, for ever and ever." No creature is excepted; even those under the earth (or, infernal), *i.e.*, hell, with Satan and his angels, will be compelled to this homage. But has God therefore reconciled them to Himself? By no means; for when in God's word things reconciled are spoken of, there is no mention made of "things under the earth." In Ephesians i. 9, 10, we read, "In that he hath made known to us the mystery of his will, namely, to gather together in one all things both which are in the heavens and which are on earth in him." And again in Colossians i. 19, 20, "For in him all the fulness was pleased to dwell, and by him to reconcile all things to itself, whether the things on earth or things in the heavens." The things under the earth (or those which stand in connection with hell, the devil and his angels) have no place here. Only those

in the heavens and on earth partake in reconciliation. As regards the passage "that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 28), we really do not understand how these persons can regard these words as the pinnacle of a system resting on such a rotten foundation.

When will the subjection of the Son to the Father take place? Only when all things are put under His feet, when all authority and power are abolished, and all enemies are made His footstool, then will all things come to a final conclusion. The beast and the false prophet (Rev. xix. 20), the devil, death, hades, and all whose names are not found written in the book of life, are cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and "will be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. xx. 10, 14, 15); and now the Son delivers up the kingdom to God, even the Father. Will the Father introduce a government on new principles and reject and annul all the arrangements made hitherto by the Son? How presumptuous would be such an assertion! He accepts the kingdom as the Son delivers it to Him, at the subjection of which it is solely a question of the position of Christ as man and also His lordship as such over all things. He Himself is there in His position as man entirely in subjection to the Father, as He was down here, in order "that God may be all in all." He will take His place as man, as head of the whole redeemed family, although at the same time God and one with the Father, "blessed for ever." Can the word of God put this subject in a clearer light? Oh that this word might always be our only teacher, and our hearts humble enough to receive it in simple faith and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit!

Truly then one would always be able to distinguish the hiss of the old serpent, even when he, as once to the Lord, dared to say, "It is written." And certainly we should not then, above all things, lend an ear to the reasonings of a doctrine which sets the sacrifice of

Christ on one side, or at least calls in question its imperative necessity. "No," is the reply; "that is by no means our intention. On the contrary, we give the widest scope to the love of God, and own that the effect of the sacrifice of Christ stretches far beyond the grave; and is it not written, 'As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive?'" (1 Cor. xv. 22). The sacrifice of Christ is just that which constitutes the foundation of our teaching relative to the salvation of all creatures! And notwithstanding we still assert that the adherents of such a doctrine put the sacrifice of Christ on one side. Christ suffered and died for sinners! "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24). Was not this sacrifice fully sufficient to satisfy the demands of God's righteousness? Was it not enough to cleanse from sins, and to give to the believer pardon, peace, life, and righteousness? But if the possibility exists for any one who dies in his sins to be prepared for salvation by his own torments and pains of hell, is then the cross of Christ the only foundation of salvation? Certainly not; on the contrary, a proof would thereby be given that the justice of God had not found complete satisfaction in the death of Christ, but, in regard to certain creatures, required in addition the torments of hell fire. The full sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice would then be denied, for by every addition to this sacrifice it is not only weakened but abolished.

Let us take up the Epistle to the Galatians. The false teachers of that day preached circumcision. Was it their intention to reject the cross of Christ? Oh no! They only wish to add circumcision to it. And was not circumcision commanded by the law! But what says the apostle? "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to the whole law.

Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. v. 2-4). How solemn! An addition to the sacrifice of Christ is therefore nothing less than an entire abolition of it. If the pains of hell are still necessary to the salvation of one individual, then is the sacrifice of Christ not sufficient, not divine; and then certainly the justice of God has not been divinely satisfied. But what does the passage mean? "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22). Who are these alls?

In order the better to understand this passage, we must remember that among the Corinthians the error was preached that there was no resurrection of the dead (1 Cor xv. 12). If this was in reality so, "then," as the apostle says, "their faith was vain." (1 Cor. xv. 14). It treats here only of believers who have died and who are to be made alive again, and not of the life and redemption of all creatures, the wicked included. Adam and Christ, the two heads of two races, are brought before us. Adam brought death into the midst of all in association with him as his descendants, "for death passed upon all men." Christ, who is the life, brings this life into the midst of all who are His; all who believe in His name possess it in Him.

The first Adam and his race are characterised by death, the last Adam and His race by life.

The simple meaning of this passage therefore is—as all find death who stand in association with the first Adam, so will all who are associated with Christ be made alive. Nothing can be simpler or clearer.

But to what inevitable consequences will our opponents be driven, through the belief that all creatures will be redeemed? They must include the devil and his angels. Certainly many among them would not dare to give their ideas so bold a scope. But why should they shrink from such a consequence, when

they have the boundlessness of the love of God written on their banner?

Are not the devil and his angels creatures of God? But where do we find a sin-offering for hell and for Satan and his angels?

Christ must become man in order to glorify as such the God that has been dishonoured by men, and to take the place of sin-burdened man on the cross. If He must become man to save men, what would He have had to become to save devils? Christ died as man, and for men. But who became a propitiation for devils?

Is there still another reconciliation besides that of Christ? If all creatures will be redeemed, then I am forced to this conclusion, and then is the gospel worthless and without foundation. Such is the fearful consequence of this horrible doctrine of the "restitution of all things."

Our space, however, will not allow us to enter at greater length into the objections of our opponents. We believe that we have exposed the principal points of their false doctrine, and pointed out their utter groundlessness.

Every honest reader will feel with us how much we need sobriety and watchfulness, lest we should be entangled in the mazes of error.

For centuries has the eternity of punishment been believed and preached in the church, and in all times has this truth exercised an immeasurably blessed influence over the moral condition of men.

Thousands upon thousands, believing in an endless duration of the terrible consequences of their sins, turned to God, being condemned by their own consciences, and have been led through grace to find salvation by faith in the blood of the Lamb shed for them.

Can you who defend your unscriptural system with such obstinacy—can you deny the mighty workings

that belief in an endless, eternal condemnation has, during the long period of the church's existence, called forth in the consciences of countless souls? But what are the results of your teaching? On the ground of a love that excludes the righteousness of God, and dressed in the glittering robes of a mercy which drags the exalted majesty of the character of God into the dust of human weakness and human changeableness, you preach by word and pen, with regard to a hardened sinner, the torments of hell are able to bring about that which perfect grace was never to do. You do not remember that God exclaims over Israel, "Why should you be smitten any more? you will revolt more and more" (Isaiah i. 5).

You do not consider that in the day of the wrath of God, men, terrified even to despair, will continue blaspheming God, and will not repent (Rev. xvi. 11-21). You have never remarked that in regard to the wicked it will one day be said, "He that is unrighteous let him be unrighteous still," and he "that is filthy let him be filthy still," and "without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters," and "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Rev. xxii. 11-15).

Do these passages in any way give us the slightest ground for the supposition of a change and the salvation of the damned? Ah! man by nature is sin and enmity against God; he hates his Creator and will hate Him for ever, and most assuredly even in hell would he reject the sacrifice of Christ, just as he has rejected it here. And notwithstanding you continue to preach the non-eternity of punishment and the final salvation of all creatures, yea, even of devils, and to scatter seed that is beginning already under the influence of the enemy to flourish exuberantly, you violate the truthfulness of God, set aside His perfect justice, and undermine the veracity of His word, perplex the conscience, and make souls indifferent to sin.

We know, however, that there are many among you who dare not come to the light with these ideas so highly prized by you, and that they say rather, in their pretended wisdom, "We do not feel at all called upon to treat of this truth publicly, but keep it for ourselves, and let each have his own opinion." But why this peculiar reserve? Are you convinced of the excellence of your theory? Do you consider it one of God's revealed truths? Then step forth from your hiding place, that others also may become acquainted with your new gospel. Yes, go ye out into the streets and highways, and scatter your baneful but sugared poison on the hearts of unstable souls; and no doubt that great multitudes who fain would say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die" (1 Cor. xv. 32), and who would rather perish like the brute and be utterly annihilated, than enter into the presence of a righteous God—they will applaud you.

Draw near to the open graves of those who to the last have rejected the blood of Christ, despised the Spirit of grace, and say to the sorrowing bystanders, "Be comforted, for the loved ones whom ye now lament will assuredly enter into glory, where ye all shall meet them," and no doubt you will dry many tears; but ah, with a lie—a terrible deceit. Hasten with your doctrine from house to house, and you will be welcomed by thousands who feel the thought of eternal damnation insupportable; who do not wish to be disturbed in their sinful ways and their despising of God's word; who rather lend their ear to the sophistry of human calculations, and lull their conscience to sleep, than seize the salvation offered them in Christ, and thus for ever escape the lake burning with fire and brimstone. Yes, do all you can, but you will never be able to invalidate the truth of God, namely, the truth "that the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment"—there where "their worm never dieth and the fire is never quenched." For that

word remains irrevocably true—"After thine hardened and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. ii. 5, 6).

But you, dear brethren—you, who hitherto, thanks to the preserving grace of God, have not received this fatal error into your hearts, may the Lord give you light and grace at all times to perceive the deceitfulness of sin, and mightily to testify against the ever-increasing boldness of the adherents of the system which undermines the ground of the truth, though its sophistry shakes the whole teaching of Christianity in all its parts, and lulls the awakened conscience into slumber again.

Let us testify to these poor souls that it "is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," and that for him who down here despises the sacrifice of Christ, there remains nothing but "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. x. 26, 27). Let us testify to them that man, whether saved or not, must one day look eternity in the face, that he will one day find a dwelling-place somewhere and for ever—either in everlasting glory or in everlasting condemnation. And then, ah! but too late, the dreaded reality will scare away all human deceptions. Yes, but let us testify to them by word and walk that now the mighty arms of Jesus are wide open to receive every weary, heavy laden one, and lead him into the unspeakable blessings of a never-ending, eternal glory. "Behold now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

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