

Monergism

# THE ATONEMENT

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## **PREFACE**

IN the fall of 1866 the senior Editor of the "Presbyterian Banner," of Pittsburg, asked the author of this book to write a series of articles on the Atonement. The reason assigned was that our views of the great central doctrines of the gospel were frequently misrepresented by many outside of our own communion, and that for the instruction of our own people a restatement of the venerable faith of the Reformed Churches was now very much needed in a form specifically adapted

to the circumstances of the present generation. Being in full sympathy with the reasons given, I wrote the articles, which appeared before the public last winter. Those articles furnish about one fourth part of the present volume, which is now sent forth as the best contribution within my power to the vindication of the ancient faith of the Presbyterian Church.

While jealously guarding the essential principles of the Calvinistic system, I have designed to repel with all my might alike all those positive heresies which attack it openly, and with even greater solicitude that latitudinarian indifference to exact conceptions and careful statements of doctrine which tends secretly, yet not less certainly, to destroy the truth, and which in the present age is our chief source of danger. I would pray and labour that in gaining breadth we may not lose height, and in gaining peace and love we may not lose purity and truth. With all the very obvious imperfections of the offering, I trust that the condescending Saviour will graciously accept it, and render it an instrument of blessing to his Church, to its ministry, and to those hopeful candidates for its service to whose education my life is devoted.

ALLEGHENY CITY, PA., October, 7, 1867.

## **PART I:**

# **THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT**

## **CHAPTER I:**

### **INTRODUCTORY**

THE doctrine of the Atonement is evidently the central and principal element of the doctrine of Justification, which Luther truly affirmed



to be the article of a standing or a falling Church. The truth of this aphorism is obvious, both because this truth concerns the foundation upon which our relations to God as our heavenly Father, and consequently all our present life and our future hopes, depend, and also because our conception of this central principle necessarily determines our conception of all the other elements of the entire system of revealed truth; such as the moral attributes of God, the nature of his Moral Government, of Law, Sin and Penalty, the Person of the God-man, the Person and Office of the Holy Spirit, the Office of Faith, and hence the entire character of our religious experience.

In contradiction of the assertion of Bushnell, and the vague impression of many others, that no consistent view as to the nature of Christ's redemptive work has characterized the faith of the Church in all ages, I expect to show in the following chapters that, although the Church did not attain to a definite and complete scientific statement of the Doctrine of Redemption before the period of the Socinian controversy in the early part of the seventeenth century, it is nevertheless a fact that the whole Church, in its historical divisions from the apostolic age, and each branch of it in exact proportion to its general orthodoxy, has held essentially but one opinion on this subject. On the subject of the nature and objective reference of the redemptive work of Christ there was no controversy between the Reformers and the Church of Rome. All the great national churches of both the Lutheran and Reformed families, and all the authoritative Church creeds, are here, at the very heart of the gospel, at one. Even all evangelical Arminians, such as Arminius himself, John Wesley, and Richard Watson, by a happy sacrifice of logic, are on this vital question at one with Calvinists, and opposed to the more consistent Pelagianizing Arminians.

On the other hand, the lesson of history is none the less clear, that Rationalism, in all its forms and degrees, tends to pervert the testimony of Scripture as to the nature of Redemption, and that erroneous views on this subject are invariably connected, as cause or effect, with erroneous views on every other main principle of the

gospel. Thus Socinian views as to the Person of Christ have always been accompanied with corresponding views as to the nature of his work. The same is true precisely of high Arianism, and again of the semi-pantheistic Monism of Schleiermacher and the American Mercersberg theology. Arminianism is distinguished by its peculiar soteriology, corresponding accurately to its anthropology. Calvinistic advocates of general redemption, whether of the French, English, or American schools, have always been constrained to modify to a corresponding extent the common doctrine of all the Reformers and of all the Church creeds, as to the nature of Redemption and of Justification. The Pelagianizing speculations of the New England theologians—as to the nature of sin and of virtue, the extent of man's moral ruin in the fall, the necessity and nature of Effectual Calling and Regeneration—have in all their varying phases been accompanied with corresponding theories of the Atonement, so called. And every passing school of German Rationalists, old or new, and the neoplatonizing Rationalists of the Broad Church school in England and America, are characterized by the uniformity of purpose with which in various methods they seek to make void the teaching of Scripture on this vital theme.

Thus history puts it beyond question that a tendency to deny, or even to abate or to modify, the full truth on this subject, is always symptomatic of a tendency toward a total disintegration of the system of revealed truth. And all the indications of the present time also warn us that the whole Church is just now, in a pre-eminent degree, exposed to this very influence from many directions. From the recent amazing advancement of the physical sciences, and the corresponding development of the practical arts, and the wide extension of the secular interests and activities of the masses of mankind, and doubtless from many other causes unknown, the spirit of modern philosophy, whether intuitional or sensational, is beyond precedent naturalistic—that is, disposed to deny the supernatural as impossible, or to ignore it as unknowable. The subtle spirit of this mode of thought penetrates every sphere of mental activity, is diffused through every species of literature, and is far more

influential over the speculations of even truly religious minds than many are aware of. It is constantly, by an unfelt pressure, tending to lead the theologian away from the simplicity of the gospel. This is manifested in many essays at a rational explanation of the mysteries of revelation in conformity with the principles of natural reason and the analogies of human experiences. Doctrines are first formed to satisfy rational views of what they ought to be, and then a reference is made to the Bible to elicit inspired confirmation of truths otherwise derived.

The two great doctrines just at present most generally brought into question, and which have suffered most at the hands of Rationalistic criticism, are those concerning the nature and extent of Biblical Inspiration, and the nature of the redemptive work of Christ. These naturally stand or fall together. For if the inspiration of the Scriptures is plenary, then the Church doctrine as to the nature of Redemption remains impregnable. But if the authority of the Scriptures may be abated, the way is open, of course, in due proportion, to theories of Redemption adjusted to the "finer feelings," the "moral intuitions," and the administrative experiences of mankind. Thus we have in Broad Church literature—so widely circulated in the writings of Jowett, Maurice, Stanley, Dr. John Young of Edinburgh, and the sermons of Robertson, and the late elaborate treatise on "Vicarious Sacrifice," of Bushnell, and elsewhere—a republication in new forms of that which is in essence nothing else than the old Socinian heresy on the Atonement. A prominent Methodist minister, the Rev. Dr. Steele, as quoted by the Watchman and Reflector, declares, concerning that great evangelical denomination, that the old view that Christ died to satisfy the justice of God is undoubtedly disappearing among them, and that the "moral influence," or Socinian view, is generally taking its place. And it is notorious that the hybrid Governmental Atonement theory—orthodox in whatever it affirms and Socinian in all it denies—has for years been the accepted doctrine of what is called the New England theology, and of a large class of theologians in England.

There are three points to which I wish to direct the attention of the reader in this introductory chapter.

1. The first is the fact, too apt to be overlooked by eager controversialists, that all error, especially all effective and therefore dangerous error, is partial truth. The human mind was formed for truth, and so constituted that only truth can exert permanent influence upon it. But the truth revealed in the Scriptures is so many-sided in its aspects, and so vast in its relations, and our habits of thought because of sin are so one-sided and narrow, that as a general fact, the mind of any Church in any single age fails to take in practically and sharply more than one side of a truth at a time, while other aspects and relations are either denied or neglected. A habit of unduly exalting any subordinate view of the truth at the expense of that which is more important, or of overlooking, on the other hand, some secondary aspect of it altogether, is certain after a time to lead to a reactionary tendency, in which that which has been too much exalted shall be brought low, and that which has been abased shall be exalted. This principle is abundantly illustrated throughout the entire history of theological speculation as in the ever-repeated oscillations between the extremes of Sabellianism and Tritheism as to the Trinity, of Eutychianism and Nestorianism as to the Person of Christ, and in the history of speculations on the doctrine of Redemption. Every prominent heresy as to the nature of the Atonement, as the reader will find carefully acknowledged and defined in the following work, embraces and emphasizes on its positive side an important truth. The power, and hence the danger, of the heresy resides in that fact. But on the other hand, it is a heresy, and hence an evil to be resisted unto death, because it either puts a subordinate principle into the place of that which is central and fundamental, or because it puts one side of the truth for the whole, denying or ignoring all besides the fractional truth presented. It is plainly the policy as well as the duty of the defenders of the whole truth, not only to acknowledge the truth held on the side of their opponents, but to vindicate the rights of the perfect system as a whole, by demonstrating the true position and relation of the partial

truth admitted in the larger system of truth denied. By these means we double the defences of orthodoxy, by bringing into contribution all that is true, and therefore all that is of force, in the apologies of error.

2. The second point is, that systems of divinity and definite views of doctrine are not a matter of choice, but of absolute necessity to the Church, as long as the Bible is read with interest. This unquestionable necessity arises from the logical constitution of the human mind to which the Christian revelation has been addressed, and from the self-consistent reason of that infinite mind from which the revelation has originated. That all truth is one in God and in man is an invincible axiom. The man who intelligently denies this is ripe for atheism. The human mind—that of the individual and that of every community—ever strives to introduce unity into the whole mass of its knowledge. God's plans, purposes, administrations—whether through nature or from above nature, and his revelations, whether history or prophecy, whether doctrine, precept or promise—must all constitute one system, and hence, all their parts must sustain a consistent relation to one another. They cannot be conceived of truly unless they are conceived of as they are being accurately defined, and understood in their mutual relations.

At present there are two absurdly inconsistent attacks, originating in rationalistic sources, directed against that system of truth which the Christian Church has discerned in the inspired Scriptures. The first attack is made upon the plea that everything contained in a supernatural revelation—being a part of a great self-contained system of truth—must be forthwith explained and set forth, in all its relations, in the light of the human reason. Some, arguing from analogy, and others appealing to their own elementary intuitions and feelings, determine *à priori* what God can do and say, and therefore what God does do and say, thus using the materials of revelation in subordination to the law-giving power of reason. The whole class of errorists with whom we have to do, draw their doctrine in the first instance from rational principles, and they appeal to Scripture only

to show that it may be quoted in at least apparent conformity with what has been previously discovered and proved on other grounds. The second attack appears in the form of a protest against definite views of doctrine, and covers its real denial of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith under vague generalities. Coleridge, in his *Aids to Reflection*,\* denies that the Scriptures reveal anything to us of "the efficient cause and condition of redemption," except the bare fact that Christ has achieved it, and affirms that all that is revealed to us concerns the "effects of redemption in and for the redeemed" themselves. Hence a large class of theologians in England, and a smaller but growing one in America, are continually pleading for the bare implicit recognition of the Atonement as a fact, and protesting against all theories of the Atonement whatsoever; that is, against all definite views upon the subject.

This is at once very absurd and very dangerous, and none the less dangerous because of its absurdity. The present, above all other periods of human history, is intolerant of all vague, undetermined and loosely-held views. Sharp, clearly-defined logic and earnest faith will hold the field at the last. Besides, these very men necessarily violate their own principle, showing that practically it serves only as a cover under which their hostility to the truth is disguised. It is plain enough that Coleridge held and taught, under all the cloud of his mysterious language, the old, meagre and oft-discarded Moral Theory of the Atonement. The Rev. Sub-dean Garden, in the *Tracts for Priests and People*, makes it very plain that while his professed object is to maintain the Atonement as a fact, while all human theories as to its nature are alike rejected, his real interest in the matter is to reject the principle which has been always professed by the Church in all its branches, that the direct and central design and effect of Christ's death was to propitiate the principle of justice in the divine nature. The same is true in degree also in the advocates of the Governmental theory. Its positions are possible only when vaguely and generally stated. When a strict account is asked as to what is meant by "a substitute for a penalty," or as to the connection between the non-penal sufferings of an innocent person and the forgiveness

of the unpunished sins of the guilty subjects of divine government, no answer is made, and we venture to assert that upon their theory no answer is possible.

In answer to both of these pleas of Rationalism, we affirm that Christian doctrine has its ground in the inspired Scriptures alone. These contain the system of divine truth as a whole, as well as all the separate elements of that system. The true system of Redemption is in the Scriptures, inseparable from the facts, just as the true theory of astronomy has been from the creation with the stars in the sky, whether mankind read them aright or not. The theologian, like the astronomer, is nothing more than the interpreter, who observes the facts, who gradually reads the system in the facts, and who teaches to others precisely what he has read in the book, neither more nor less. We believe that what is called the Satisfaction theory of the Atonement is as certainly and as demonstrably taught in the Scriptures as it is in any or in all the creeds of the Reformed Churches. The teachings of the Holy Scriptures, with respect to the precise nature of the Atonement, when brought together, are, as I show at the close of Chapter XII., as definite as any statement which can possibly be constructed in the use of human speech. Let us reverently remember the awful woe which the Holy Ghost denounces upon him who either "shall add anything unto" or "shall take away" ought from that which God has revealed in the Scriptures. Rev. 22:18, 19. It is certainly as impious, and perhaps more foolish, to refuse to see clearly what God has revealed clearly, as it is to attempt to understand in detail great undefined facts which God has seen fit to leave upon the verge of our horizon. We hear of some dapper preachers who claim that the age has outgrown doctrine. They have advanced around the circle to the place from which they started, and hope they are ready again to enter the kingdom of heaven like little children, as far as ignorance is concerned. Let it be remembered that systematic theology has its essence simply in clear thinking and clear speaking on the subject of that religion which is revealed in the Scriptures. A man can outgrow systematic theology, therefore, either



by ceasing to be clear-headed, or by ceasing to be religious, and in no other way. I suppose some escape in their haste by both ways at once.

3. In the third place, as to the conditions of the argument, I have to make three preliminary remarks.

(1.) I insist that, as the Gospel is wholly a matter of divine revelation, the answer to the question, What did Christ do on earth in order to reconcile us to God? be sought exclusively in a full and fair induction from all the Scriptures teach upon the subject. From a survey of all the matter revealed on the subject, what, in the judgment of a mind unprejudiced by theories, did the sacred writers intend us to believe? The result of such an examination, unmodified by philosophy or secular analogies, is alone, we insist, the true doctrine of the redemptive work of Christ.

(2.) Reasonable objections against the evidences by which a doctrine is established have force, and should be duly considered. But rational objections to any principle fairly established by the language of Scripture have no force whatever, unless they amount to a palpable contradiction to other principles certainly known. And whenever this can be shown, the reasonable inference is, not that the teachings of Scripture are to be modified in conformity thereto, but that the Scriptures themselves are to be rejected as false. Nothing is more senseless than the attempt to modify the results of the inspiration of Jehovah in conformity with human reason.

(3.) The force of the argument in behalf of this or any other doctrine does not lie in special words or passages, nor in the several arguments regarded separately. These are like the sticks of the bundle which the boy in the fable broke one by one with ease. The overwhelming demonstration lies in the fact that all Scripture, both of the Old and New Testaments, when naturally interpreted, is as if the doctrine was true. The number and variety of converging lines are absolutely inconsistent with doubt as to the meaning intended. Our opponents are in the habit of demanding that we should show

that each text in detail not only may, but absolutely must, teach the doctrine we hold, and none other. In these tactics they have been greatly excelled by the more consistent Socinians, who, by a like process, have satisfied themselves that Christ's proper divinity is not taught in Scripture.

I propose, then,

First. To state the Church doctrine on this subject, defining all the points involved, and the terms used in the definitions.

Second. To present a summary of the several departments of the scriptural evidence by which the doctrine is established.

Third. To prove that the true Church has always, from the days of the apostles to the present, in all its branches, been in essential agreement as to the essential elements of the doctrine, as taught at large in the confessions of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches.

Fourth. To state and answer the principal objections made to the doctrine.

Fifth. To state, compare and expose the fallacy of the several erroneous views held in opposition to the truth.

Sixth. To state and prove the common doctrine of the Reformed Churches as to the design of the Atonement with respect to its objects.

## **CHAPTER II:**

# **STATEMENT OF DOCTRINE**

IT may elucidate the statement of the point involved in the orthodox as to the nature of Christ's Redemptive Work, which I propose to give in this chapter, if we first take a step backward, and attempt to estimate those conditions which made that work necessary. It is assumed that the end to be attained was to reconcile God and man. What, then, were the difficulties to be surmounted? What parties are to be affected by the introduction of such a provision into the administration of the divine government? And how do they severally stand in relation to it?

1. There is God. It is evident that whatever the nature of God demands, as the condition of this reconciliation, must be provided. And it is no less evident that the conditions, rendered necessary by God's nature, must take precedence of all others; and, indeed, since all created natures and relations are contingent upon God's nature, so all other conditions of redemption whatsoever must be contingent upon the demands of his nature. Now we expect to show (1) that the Scriptures teach that one of the attributes of the divine essence is abhorrence of sin for its intrinsic sinfulness, both in its aspect as pollution and in its aspect as guilt. It is of the essence of his moral perfection to forbid it and punish it. (2.) That God has, from the first enunciation of his law to Adam, pledged his incorruptible truth that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

2. There is the sinner himself in a certain legal relation, and with a certain moral disposition as it respects God.

(1.) As to his legal relations, the Scriptures clearly teach that, at his creation, he was put under the equitable Covenant of Works for a certain probationary period. This just constitution provided (a) everlasting well-being on condition of perfect obedience, and (b) everlasting ill-being on condition of disobedience. Now, although under that covenant man failed, it is evident that, nevertheless, both of these conditions must be maintained in their integrity. To relax them would be to violate the word of God, to dishonour his law, and to render his promises and his threatenings alike unworthy of

respect. The penalty, when once incurred, can be preserved inviolate only by being executed. The promise of everlasting well-being can be truthfully granted only when the condition of perfect obedience has been fulfilled. Suffering a righteous penalty entitles no criminal to a reward; and to offer eternal blessedness to such, on terms denied to unfallen Adam and to all angels, would be placing a premium on sin.

(2.) As to man's moral disposition toward God, Scripture and experience teach that it is a condition alike of conscious guilt and of alienation. (a) It is a condition of conscious guilt. Conscience is an indestructible element of human nature. It is God's incorruptible witness in the soul, in the midst of all its moral corruption, judging of sin as he judges of it. It is armed with the vindicatory emotion of remorse, which demands expiation, and which never can be pacified by mere pardon. Pardon allays fear; sanctification allays self-aborrence; but only expiation can appease remorse. (b) Man's condition involves a disposition of fear, distrust, sullen alienation as respects God. This might all be removed by an exertion of new creative power. But God works upon man in consistency with his nature as a rational and free agent. Such an exhibition of God's character and disposition toward man must be made, therefore, as shall tend, according to the laws of man's moral and emotional nature, to subdue his alienation and to dissipate his distrust.

3. There is the moral universe, embraced in one general system of divine government. If sin is punished in one province, government is strengthened throughout the empire. On the other hand, if law is relaxed and sin pardoned by mere sovereign prerogative in any one province, the government is just so far forth dishonoured and weakened throughout all provinces and for all time. Sinful men, therefore, cannot properly be reconciled to God until after provision has been made to demonstrate to all the subjects of God's government his immutable determination to punish sin in all cases without exception.

The orthodox doctrine provides exhaustively for satisfying all these conditions of redemption at once, by the one act of the Lord Jesus, in vicariously suffering the penalty of the broken law as the Substitute of his people. His motive was infinite love. The precise thing he did was to suffer the penalty of the law as the substitute of his people. His direct intention was to satisfy justice in their behalf, and thus secure, on legal terms, their salvation. In doing this, he also necessarily satisfied the natural demand of the sinner's conscience for expiation, and subdued his sullen alienation, and removed his distrust of God, by the supreme exhibition of divine love made on the cross. At the same time, and by the same means, he gave to the whole moral universe the highest conceivable demonstration of God's inexorable determination to punish all sin, just because he did so punish it even in the person of his Son. The Socinian, or Moral Influence Theory, supposes that the sole design and effect of Christ's sufferings was to subdue the wicked alienation of man by an exhibition of self-sacrificing love. It is evident that this view is not only partial and inverted, making the reconciliation of man to God everything, and the reconciliation of God to man nothing, but it is also absurd when detached from the central idea of expiation. Christ's sufferings subdue the alienation of man because they exhibit divine love. They exhibit divine love, because they were endured as the means necessary to remove obstacles otherwise insuperable even by God to the exercise of favour to sinful men. A tragedy gotten up for the transparent purpose of affecting our feelings, having no inherent principle or necessity in itself, would disgust rather than conciliate enmity.

The Governmental Theory, however its principles may be disguised by vague and general statements, essentially involves the assumption (1) that justice is only a mode of benevolence; (2) that the penalty was not executed on Christ; that his sufferings were not necessary to satisfy the rigour of divine justice; that, on the contrary, he suffered a substitute for the penalty, as an example of punishment to counteract in the moral universe, by exhibiting God's determination to punish sin, the evil effects that would otherwise ensue upon its

pardon. It is even more evident than in the case of the Socinian Theory that this view is not only partial and inverted, putting the claims of the moral universe before those of God, but absurd, also, when detached from the central idea of expiation, which it was invented to supersede. For how can his sufferings be an example of punishment unless Christ really suffered the penalty of the law? How can they demonstrate God's determination to punish sin unless sin was in very deed punished therein?

The orthodox doctrine as to Redemption involves the following points.

1. As to its Motive. This was the amazing love of God to his own people, determining him, in perfect consistency with his truth and justice, to assume himself, in the person of his Son, the responsibility of bearing the penalty and satisfying justice. The same identical essence and attributes are common to the Father and the Son. The justice demanding satisfaction, and the love prompting to the self-assumption of the penalty, are co-existent states of divine feeling and purpose.

2. As to its Nature. (1.) Christ assumed the law-place of his people. He owed no personal obedience, and he had sovereign right over his own life to dispose of it as he willed. Prompted by the infinite love common to the Father and himself, he voluntarily assumed all of our legal responsibilities. (2.) He obeyed and suffered as our Substitute. His sufferings were vicarious. By his obedience and sufferings he discharged all our obligations to the divine law, both in its federal and penal relations. His sufferings cancelled the claims of penal justice, and his obedience merited the rewards of the original covenant of life. (3.) While there was, of course, no transfer of moral character, he assumed the guilt (just obligation to punishment) of our sins. All their shame and pollution remain ours, while all their guilt (penal obligation) was willingly assumed by, and imputed to him—i. e., charged to his account. (4.) He did not render a pecuniary satisfaction, and therefore did not suffer the same degree nor

duration, nor in all respects the same kind of sufferings, which the law would have inflicted on the sinner in person. But he did suffer the very penalty of the law. That is, sin was punished in him in strict rigour of justice. His sufferings were no substitute for a penalty, but those very penal evils which rigorous justice demanded of his exalted person when he stood in our place, as a full equivalent for all that was demanded of us. The substitution of a divine for a human victim necessarily involved a change in the quality, though none whatever in the legal relations, of the suffering. (5.) He did not, of course, suffer in his divine nature. But because of the infinite dignity of his person, his finite sufferings constitute an absolutely perfect satisfaction, sufficient to expiate the sins of all men.

3. As to its Effect. (1.) It produced no change in God, any more than do acts of creation and providence. The efficient purpose existed in the divine mind from eternity. He acted upon it, as if accomplished from the fall of Adam. The infinite justice and the infinite love exercised in the sacrifice of Christ were in the divine mind from the beginning. The effect of the satisfaction was to render possible the concurrent exercise of the justice and the love in the treatment of the same sinful persons. (2.) It expiated the guilt of sin. It fulfilled the demands of law. It propitiated justice. It reconciled us to God. (3.) It actually secures our salvation, and does not simply put us in a salvable state. According to the terms of the Covenant of Grace, the impetration of redemption by Christ is infallibly connected with its application by the Holy Ghost. (4.) Not being the payment of a pecuniary debt, which ipso facto liberates, but a vicarious penal satisfaction, it remains, as far as we are concerned, as a matter of right, in the hands of God to grant its benefits to whom he pleases, when and on whatsoever terms he pleases. His granting it in any case is an act of sovereign grace. But since Christ acted by covenant, he has acquired by his performance of the stipulated conditions a strictly legal title to the salvation of all for whom he acted. As between God and the Mediator, the claim in right is perfect. As between God and the Mediator and sinful man, it is all free and amazing grace. (5.) Being the actual execution in strict rigour of



justice of the unrelaxed penalty of the law in the person of the God-man, it is the most impressive exhibition to the moral universe conceivable of God's inexorable determination to punish all sin. (6.) Being an exhibition of amazing love—of the costliest self-sacrifice, overcoming obstacles otherwise insuperable to the well-being of its objects—it effects what only such love can; it melts the hearts, subdues the rebellion, and dissipates the fears of sinful men.

## **CHAPTER III:**

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS, AND SPECIFICATION OF THE PRINCIPAL POINTS INVOLVED IN THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT**

EVERY science has its technical terms, and much depends, of course, upon their being accurately understood and consistently used. There is, moreover, a constant tendency in the language of theology—as is the case with all living human speech—to change, to admit new terms, to drop old ones, and to modify the sense of others. Advocates of different schools of theological opinions use common terms in different senses, and one main cause of the futility of theological controversy, and of the irritation with which it is accompanied, is due to the fact that they so inadequately understand each other's speech. In order, therefore, to establish a common understanding with my readers, I shall in this chapter define the sense in which certain terms are used in the theological writings of the Reformed Churches, and then enumerate several points involved in the statement of the

orthodox doctrine of the Atonement before given, to which I desire the attention of my readers directed throughout the subsequent discussion of that scriptural evidence by which they are established.

I. ATONEMENT. This word has been generally used in late years, both in England and in this country, to express the specific thing which Christ wrought in order to our salvation. The old term in use ever since the days of Anselm, and habitually used by all the Reformers in all the creeds and great classical theological writings of the seventeenth century, both Lutheran and Reformed, was SATISFACTION. We prefer the old term to the new one for the following reasons.

(1.) The word Atonement is ambiguous. It is used many times in the Old Testament to translate the Hebrew word  $\text{כַּפַּר}$ —to cover by making expiation. It appears but once in our English New Testament, and there (Rom. 5:11) as the equivalent of the Greek word  $\text{καταλλαγή}$ , reconciliation. Its etymology is not known, and is claimed by many to be at-one-ment. This the Socinians regard as the full force of the word, and as thus fully expressing the exact nature of Christ's work—that is, a reconciliation of God and man. Thus the word is sometimes understood to mean reconciliation, and sometimes that sin-expiating, God-propitiating work by which reconciliation was effected. When we say that we have "received the atonement," we mean that we have been reconciled to God. But when it is said that Christ, after the analogy of the ancient sacrifices, has "made an atonement for us," it means that he has done that which secures our reconciliation; i. e., has satisfied all the demands of law upon which the favour and fellowship of God were suspended. On the other hand, the word Satisfaction is not ambiguous. It always means precisely that which Christ did in order to save his people, as that work stands related to the nature of God and to his law.

(2.) The word Atonement, moreover, is too limited in its signification for the purpose assigned to it. It does not express all that Scripture declares that Christ did in order to satisfy all the demands of God's

law. It properly signifies the expiation of sin, and nothing more. It represents only that satisfaction which Christ rendered to the justice of God in vicariously bearing the penalty due to our sins, but it does not include that satisfaction which Christ rendered in his vicarious obedience to the law as a covenant of everlasting well-being. The word Satisfaction naturally includes both of these, while the use of the word Atonement to express the whole of Christ's work has naturally led to confused and defective views as to the nature of that work.

The word SATISFACTION is neither ambiguous nor defective. The Reformed Churches mean by its use (1) that Christ fully satisfied all that the justice and law of God required, on the part of mankind, as the condition of their being admitted to divine favour and eternal happiness. (2.) As the demands of the law upon sinful men are both preceptive and penal—the condition of life being "do this and live," while the penalty denounced upon disobedience is, "the soul that sinneth it shall die"—it follows that any work which shall fully satisfy the demands of the divine law in behalf of men must include (1) that obedience which the law demands as the condition of life, and (2) that suffering which it demands as the penalty of sin.\*

II. The Difference between a penal and a pecuniary satisfaction. These differ precisely as do crime and debt, things and persons, and therefore the distinction is both obvious and important. Many, who either are incapable of understanding the question, are ignorant of its history, or who are unscrupulous as to the manner in which they conduct controversy, are continually charging our doctrine with the folly of representing the sacrifice of Christ as a purely commercial transaction, in which so much was given for so much, and in which God was in such a sense recompensed for his favours to us that however much gratitude we may owe to Christ, we owe on this behalf none to God. Long ago the doctrine of the Reformed Churches was unanswerably vindicated from such puerile charges by all its most authoritative expounders. "Here the twofold solution, concerning which jurists treat, should be accurately distinguished. The one,

which ipso facto liberates the debtor or criminal because that very thing which was owed is paid, whether it was done by the debtor or by another in his name. The other, which ipso facto does not liberate, since not at all the very thing which was owed, but an equivalent, is paid, which, although it does not thoroughly and ipso facto discharge the obligation, yet having been accepted—since it might be refused—is regarded as a satisfaction. This distinction holds between a pecuniary and a penal indebtedness. For in a pecuniary debt the payment of the thing owed ipso facto liberates the debtor from all obligations whatsoever, because here the point is not who pays, but what is paid. Hence the creditor, the payment being accepted, is never said to extend toward the debtor any indulgence or remission, because he has received all that was owed him. But the case is different with respect to a penal debt, because in this case the obligation respects the person as well as the thing; the demand is upon the person who pays as well as the thing paid; i. e., that the penalty should be suffered by the person sinning; for as the law demands personal and proper obedience, so it exacts personal enduring of the penalty. Therefore, in order that a criminal should be absolved—a vicarious satisfaction being rendered by another hand—it is necessary that there should intervene a sovereign act of the supreme law-giver, which, with respect to the law, is called relaxation, and with respect to the debtor is called remission, because the personal endurance of the penalty is remitted, and a vicarious endurance of it is accepted in its stead. Hence it clearly appears that in this work (of Redemption) remission and satisfaction are perfectly consistent with each other, because there is satisfaction in the endurance of the punishment which Christ bore, and there is remission in the acceptance of a vicarious victim. The satisfaction respects Christ, from whom God demanded the very same punishment, as to kind of punishment, though not as to the degree nor as to the nature of the sufferings which the law denounced upon us. The remission respects believers, to whom God remits the personal, while he admits the vicarious, punishment. And thus appears the admirable reconciliation of justice and mercy—justice which executes itself upon the sin, and mercy which is exercised

towards the sinner. Satisfaction is rendered to the justice of God by the Sponsor, and remission is granted to us by God."\*

Hence pecuniary satisfaction differs from penal thus: (a.) In debt, the demand terminates upon the thing due. In crime, the legal demand for punishment is upon the person of the criminal. (b.) In debt, the demand is for the precise thing due—the exact quid pro quo, and nothing else. In crime, the demand is for that kind, degree and duration of suffering which the law—i. e., absolute and omniscient justice—demands in each specific case, the person suffering and the sin to be expiated both being considered. (c.) In debt, the payment of the thing due, by whomsoever it may be made, ipso facto liberates the debtor, and instantly extinguishes all the claims of the creditor, and his release of the debtor is no matter of grace. In crime, a vicarious suffering of the penalty is admissible only at the absolute discretion of the sovereign; remission is a matter of grace; the rights acquired by the vicarious endurance of penalty all accrue to the sponsor; and the claims of law upon the sinner are not ipso facto dissolved by such a satisfaction, but remission accrues to the designed beneficiaries only at such times and on such conditions as have been determined by the will of the sovereign, or agreed upon between the sovereign and the sponsor.

3. The significance of the term PENALTY, and the distinction between CALAMITIES, CHASTISEMENTS and PENAL EVILS. Calamities are sufferings viewed without any reference to a design or purpose in their infliction—that is, suffering considered simply as suffering. Chastisements are sufferings viewed as designed for the improvement of those who experience them. When viewed as designed to satisfy the claims of justice and law, they are Penal Evils. The sufferings of Christ were not mere objectless, characterless calamities. They could not have been chastisements designed for his personal improvement. They must therefore have been penal inflictions vicariously endured.\*

Penalty is suffering exacted by the supreme law-making power of the breakers of law. The penalty in case of any person and in view of any crime is precisely that kind, degree and duration of suffering which the supreme law-making power demands of that person under those conditions for that crime. Human law is necessarily generalized in an average adaptation to classes. But divine law with infinite accuracy adapts itself to the absolute rights of each individual case of crime and of punishment, the penalty in each case fulfilling all righteousness, both as respects the person punished and the crime for which it is inflicted. We say that Christ suffered the very penalty of the law, not because he suffered in the least the same kind, much less the same degree, of suffering as was penally due those for whom he acted, because that is not at all necessary to the idea of penalty. But we say that he suffered the very penalty of the law, because he suffered in our stead; our sins were punished in strict rigour of justice in him; the penal demands of the law upon his people were extinguished, because his sufferings sustained precisely the same legal relations that our sufferings in person would have done; and because he suffered precisely that kind, degree and duration of suffering that absolute justice demanded of his divine person, when found federally responsible for the guilt of all the sins of the elect. We believe that while the sufferer is substituted, the penalty as penalty, though never as suffering, is identical. We are willing to call it in accommodation a "substituted penalty," though we believe the phrase inaccurate. But the phrase insisted upon by the advocates of the Governmental Atonement Theory—viz., "a substitute for a penalty"—we believe to be absurd. Sin is either punished or not punished. The penalty is either executed or remitted. Justice is either exercised or relaxed. There can be no manifestation of penal righteousness without an exercise of penal justice.

4. The meaning of the words SUBSTITUTION and VICARIOUS. These terms are admitted in a loose sense even by Socinians, and are paraded by Young, Maurice and Jowett, and very much in the same loose, indifferent sense by Barnes and the advocates of the Governmental Atonement Theory generally. When these parties say

that Christ was substituted for us and his sufferings are vicarious, they mean nothing more than that he suffered in our behalf, for our benefit. We hold, on the other hand, that Christ was in a strict and exact sense the substitute of his people; i. e., by divine appointment, and of his own free will, he assumed all our legal responsibilities and thus assumed our law-place, binding himself to do in our stead all that the law demanded of him when he suffered the penalty due us, and rendered the obedience upon which our well-being was made to depend. Vicarious sufferings and obedience are penal inflictions, and acts of obedience to law which are rendered in our place or stead (vice), as well as in our behalf by our substitute. An alien goes to the army in the place of a drafted subject. He is the substitute of the man in whose place he goes. His labours, his dangers, his wounds and his death are vicarious.

5. The distinction between the terms EXPIATION and PROPITIATION. Both these words represent the same Greek word, ἱλάσκεσθαι. When construed, as it is constantly in the classics, with τὸν θεόν, or τοὺς θεούς, it means to propitiate by sacrificial expiation. In the New Testament it is construed with τὰς ἁμαρτίας, Heb. 2:17, and is properly translated to expiate. Expiation removes the reatus or guilt of sin. Reatus is that obligation to suffer the penalty which is inherent in sin. Sanctification alone removes the pollution of sin. Propitiation removes the judicial displeasure of God. Expiation respects the bearing or effect which Satisfaction has upon sin or upon the sinner. Propitiation has respect to the bearing or effect which Satisfaction has upon God. Sacrificial expiation among heathens, Jews and Christians has always been regarded as a true *pœna vicaria*; it is of the genus penalty; its specific difference is vicariousness. Propitiation, as a theological term, means that peculiar method of rendering placable which affects the heart of a Deity, who at the same time hates the sin and is determined to punish it, yet loves the sinner; and which proceeds by means of expiation, or the vicarious suffering of the penalty by a substituted victim.



6. IMPETRATION and APPLICATION. Arminians and the Calvinistic advocates of a general Atonement are constantly insisting upon the distinction between the IMPETRATION and the APPLICATION of salvation by Christ. By Impetration they mean the purchase, or meritorious procurement by sacrifice, of all of those objective conditions of salvation which are offered to all men in the gospel; that is, salvation made available on the condition of faith. By Application they mean the actual application of that salvation to individuals upon faith. The Impetration they hold to be general and indefinite; the Application they believe to be personal, definite and limited to believers. The Reformed Churches, on the other hand, teach that while the impetration of salvation is both logically and chronologically distinguishable from its application, nevertheless in the eternal and immutable design of God the impetration is personal and definite, and includes certainly and meritoriously the subsequent application to the persons intended; for "to ALL for whom Christ hath purchased redemption he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same."

7. REDEMPTION and ATONEMENT. The modern advocates of a general Atonement distinguish between the words REDEMPTION and ATONEMENT after this manner: Atonement they confine to the impetration of the objective conditions of salvation, which they maintain is general and indefinite. Redemption they use in a wider sense as including the actual personal application in addition to the general and all-sufficient impetration. Hence, while they speak of a general Atonement, they deny of course that there is a general Redemption. It must be carefully noted, however, that this distinction was not marked by this usage of the terms Atonement and Redemption by any of the controversialists, on either side of the question, during the seventeenth century, when the authoritative standards of the Reformed Churches were written. Baxter used the word Redemption as equivalent to Atonement in his work entitled "Universal Redemption of Mankind by the Lord Jesus Christ." So also the Arminian Dr. Isaac Barrow, in his sermons entitled "The Doctrine of Universal Redemption Asserted and Explained." In the

Westminster Confession, let it be remembered, the word Redemption is used in the sense of Atonement, or the sacrificial purchase of salvation for those for whom it was intended.\*

There is, however, unquestionably a distinction to be carefully observed between these words in their biblical usage. The precise biblical sense of Atonement (כַּפָּרִים—ἱλασμός) is the expiation of sin by means of a *pœna vicaria* in order to the propitiation of God. The biblical usage with respect to Redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις, &c.,) is more comprehensive and less definite. It signifies deliverance from loss or from ruin by the payment for us of a ransom by our Substitute. Hence it may signify the act of our Substitute in paying that ransom. Or it may be used to express the completed deliverance itself, the consummation of which is of course future. To say that "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13), is precisely equivalent to saying that he has made atonement for us. But when we speak of our "redemption drawing nigh" (Luke 21:28), of "the redemption of the purchased possession" (Eph. 1:14), of "the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23), or of "the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30), it is plain that the word signifies the deliverance of our souls and bodies, and the attainment for us of a heavenly inheritance by means of the payment of a ransom for us by our Lord—a deliverance which, although commenced now, will be consummated at a future day. Redemption being deliverance by means of the substitution of a ransom, it follows that, although the ransom can only be paid to God, and to him only as the moral Governor of the universe, we may still be said to be redeemed from all that we are delivered from by means of the ransom paid in the sacrifice of Christ. Thus we are said to be redeemed from our "vain conversation" (1 Pet. 1:18), "from death" (Hosea 13:14), "from the devil" (Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14), from "all iniquity" (Titus 2:14), and "from the curse of the law" (Gal. 3:13, and 4:5), while it is of course not meant that the ransom is paid to the devil, or to sin, or to death, or to the law. It is simply absurd to claim that these different representations are inconsistent. A captive is redeemed by a price paid only to him that holds him in bondage, but

by the same act may be redeemed from labour, from disease, from death, from the persecution of his fellow-captives and from a slavish disposition.\*

8. MERITUM and SATISFACTIO. Thomas Aquinas (1274) first signalized the distinction between the terms MERITUM and SATISFACTIO. By Satisfactio he intended the bearing of Christ's work considered as penal suffering, which satisfies the penal claims of law for the demerit of sin. By Meritum he intended the bearing of Christ's work considered as a holy obedience, fulfilling all the conditions of the original covenant of life upon which the eternal well-being of his people were suspended. These are in modern times both embraced under the one term Satisfaction (which see above), and the distinction intended by Aquinas is now expressed by the terms active and passive obedience. The whole earthly career of Christ, including his death, was obedience in one aspect and suffering in another. Inasmuch as it was suffering, it expiated the sins of his people; inasmuch as it was obedience, it merited for them the covenanted reward of eternal life.

PRINCIPAL POINTS INVOLVED. I will now enumerate several points involved in the orthodox doctrine of the Atonement as above stated. It follows, of course, that every argument which tends to establish either one of the principles involved in our view, tends just so far forth to establish the truth of that view as a whole. I shall give a bare statement of these principles, in order to bring out as fully as I may the true nature of the question in debate, and also in order to enable the reader to see the intended bearing of all the scriptural testimony about to be submitted. It is not proposed to offer proof of each one of these points separately; but the reader is requested to keep them in mind, and to observe continually whether the unforced language of Scripture is in their favour or the reverse.

These points are as follows.

(1.) Did the effect of the sacrifices offered by the ancient typical priests terminate upon the offerer, upon the spectators, or upon God? Were those priests ordained to represent God before men, or men before God? Was Christ only a Medium through which divine influences reached man, or was he also and fundamentally the Mediator, opening the way for man to return to God in peace?

(2.) Are the actions of God determined by motives and principles originating wholly in the divine nature, or may they be properly referred to considerations originating in the creation? We maintain the former alternative. God's immutable nature demands the punishment of sin, and therefore Christ, when made to occupy the place of sinners, suffered that punishment. The advocates of every other view of the nature of the Atonement must maintain the latter alternative, and refer the sacrifice of Christ to motives originating in the moral condition and necessities either of the individual sinner or of the moral universe in general.

(3.) May all virtue be resolved into disinterested benevolence, and all sin into selfishness? In other words, is there nothing else that ought to be except benevolence, and nothing else that ought not to be except selfishness? Is justice only a form or mode of benevolence—i.e., does God punish sin simply to prevent its recurrence or to limit its spread, and for the good of the universe as a salutary example? Is sin a relative evil only because it is the invariable cause of suffering to the sinner and to others? And is it punished simply to limit its influence? On all these points, the consistent advocates of the Governmental Theory must take the affirmative. On the contrary, we affirm that there are many virtues which cannot be included under the head of benevolence, and many sins which cannot be reduced to the category of selfishness; that virtue is that which ought to be for its own sake, as an absolute end in itself, and for no reason beyond; that sin is intrinsically evil, and deserves punishment because of its intrinsic evil, and for no reason beyond; that divine justice is an exalted perfection, determining God always to treat moral agents as

they deserve, and that he punishes sin because this attribute of justice demands that sin shall be treated appropriately to its nature.

(4.) Supposing it to be the purpose of God to make provision for the salvation of sinners, were the sufferings of Christ absolutely necessary to that end, rendered so by the constitution of the divine nature; or was the necessity for them only contingent upon the optional will of God or upon the conditions of the creature?

(5.) What is the nature of the divine law? Is it a product of the divine will, or a transcript of the divine nature? Hence is the law relaxable or immutable? Is penalty an essential or an unessential element of the law to which it is attached?

(6.) As a matter of fact, is Christ represented in Scripture as having come for the purpose of fulfilling the law, or of relaxing it?

(7.) Has God, as a matter of fact, established such a union between Christ and believers that they are legally one with him: that his death and his life, his Father and his inheritance, his standing and his rights, are theirs as matters of law?

(8.) Did Christ die not only for us, but in a strict sense as our Substitute, in our law-place and stead?

(9.) Was the guilt (legal obligation to punishment) of our sin imputed to Christ (justly charged to his account), because of that legal oneness which the divine will had constituted between him and us?

(10.) Thus bearing justly and legally the guilt of our sin, did he truly expiate that guilt, and thus satisfy justice?

(11.) Do the Scriptures teach that when the believer is justified, the righteousness or rewardableness of Christ's perfect obedience to the divine law in our place is justly charged to our account; or is Justification mere pardon?

(12.) Do the Scriptures teach that the design and effect of Christ's death is actually to save those for whom he died; or was it only to put all men in a salvable state? Did Redemption secure faith and repentance for those who are redeemed; or are all men redeemed, and then left to provide their own faith and repentance?

The central point to be kept always in view is represented by the question, Did Christ truly expiate the guilt of our sin?

An examination of all the scriptural evidence substantiating this doctrine would occupy us with the study of nearly every book both of the Old and the New Testaments; with an analysis of the nature and relations of every particular doctrine in the entire system of revealed truth; and with a detailed examination of innumerable words and passages. A bare outline of this argument is all that will be here attempted. The impression I wish to convey, in conformity with my own clear conviction, is, not that this or that text must mean what we suppose and nothing else, but that the whole of what Scripture says on this subject, when brought together, makes it impossible to doubt what the sacred writers meant us to believe.

## **CHAPTER IV:**

# **THE ULTIMATE MOTIVES OF ALL GOD'S ACTS ARE IN HIMSELF; AND THE IMMUTABLE PERFECTIONS OF THE DIVINE NATURE DEMAND THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN**

AS our first argument, we will appeal to what the Scriptures teach concerning the nature of God and his principle of action. In doing this, I shall attempt to prove (a) that the scriptural doctrine is that the ultimate motive and end of all God's actions are in himself; and (b) that the intrinsic and unchangeable perfections of the divine nature, lying back of and determining the divine will, determine him certainly, yet most freely, to punish all sin because of his essential holiness and its essential demerit.

I. Scripture and reason teach us that the ultimate reason and motive of all God's actions are within himself. Since God is infinite, eternal and unchangeable, that which was his first motive in creating the universe must ever continue to be his ultimate motive or chief end in every act concerned in its preservation and government. But God's first motive must have been just the exercise of his own essential perfections, and in their exercise the manifestation of their excellence. This was the only end which could have been chosen by the divine mind in the beginning, before the existence of any other object. It is also infinitely the highest end in itself, and the one which will best secure the happiness and exaltation of the creature himself. It is manifest that a creature cannot be absolutely an end in himself, but only a means to an end. And he is the most exalted when he is made absolutely subservient to that end, which is the highest possible even to the Creator.

The Scriptures are very explicit on this subject. (1.) They directly assert it. "All things were created by him and for him." "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things." "Who is over all, God blessed for ever." "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (2.) The Scriptures always make the glory of God the proper ultimate end of the creature's action. Peter says (1 Pet. 4:11), that whatsoever gift a man have, he should exercise it to the end that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ. (3.) They show that, as a matter of fact, God always acts with reference to that end in all his dealings with his creatures. Eph. 1:5, 6: We are predestinated "according to the good pleasure of his

will, to the praise of the glory of his grace." Rom. 9:22, 23: "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."

The ultimate motive, therefore, for the sacrifice of Christ must have been the divine glory, and not the effect intended to be produced in the creature. But glory is manifested excellence. And moral excellence is manifested only by being exercised. The infinite justice and love of God both find their highest conceivable exercise in the sacrifice of his own Son as the Substitute of guilty men.

II. The great fact concerning the nature of God and his principles of action, which is most certainly and conspicuously set forth in Scripture, is, that he is HOLY. When laying down the law of ceremonial purification, he says (Lev. 11:44), "Ye shall be holy; for I am holy." The seraphim which Isaiah saw around the throne in the temple, and which John saw in the same relation in heaven (Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8), "rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." This best expresses the sum of the results of their insight into his moral nature.

This, be it observed, is predicated of the unchangeable constitution of the nature of God, and not merely of the divine will. (1.) When God commanded the Israelites to be pure, the reason assigned is not "because I so will it," but, "for I am holy." (2.) If moral distinctions are the mere product of the divine will; if they exist only because God wills them to exist, and if they are what they are simply because he wills them to be so, then the proposition that God is holy conveys no meaning. It is only equivalent to saying that he is as he wills to be; and would be just as true when asserted of a wicked as of a holy being. (3.) Although God is most willingly holy, yet holiness is with him no more optional than is existence. Hab. 1:13: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." 2 Tim. 2:13: "He cannot deny himself." Heb. 6:18: "In which it was impossible for



God to lie." (4.) Our own elementary intuitions give us moral distinctions which are seen to be absolute, eternal and necessary. It is essentially repugnant to their character to conceive of them in any sense as contingent. They have their norm in the eternal and necessary nature of God.

Since God is eternal, his modes of feeling and states of mind are as eternal as his essence. There are in him none of those successions of modes or frames, and alternations of sentiment and impulse, which characterize our imperfect moral condition. From eternity to eternity he abides the same without change of state or affection. His holiness, therefore, is one infinite perfection of moral excellence, varied only in its outward exercises and manifestations, as it operates upon different objects in different relations.

Now the Scriptures teach us very plainly that this infinite moral perfection or holiness of God stands to sin as immutable and eternal hatred and vindictory justice; and this not only in some instances and in some relations, but invariably and under all possible conditions. (1.) God hates sin. He is said to hate all the workers of iniquity, and to be angry with the wicked every day. (Ps. 5:5, and 7:11.) Both the ways and the thoughts of the wicked are said to be an abomination to the Lord. This is manifested with terrible energy. Although the heart of God remains eternally as calm as it is deep and strong, the egress of his wrath is terrible. Nah. 1:2: "God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies." (2.) God treats sin as essential ill-desert, as intrinsically meriting punishment. Deut. 4:24: "For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God." Deut. 32:35: "To me belongeth vengeance and recompense." Isa. 59:18: "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay." Ex. 23:7: "I will not justify the wicked." Ezek. 18:4: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." 2 Thess. 1:6: "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you." Paul (Heb. 2:2) says that under the old dispensation every transgression and disobedience received a just

recompense of reward. Rom. 1:32: "Knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death." Over and over again, the reason assigned for inflicting a penalty is that the transgression is worthy of it (Deut. 17:6, and 21:22, &c., &c.), and no other reason is assigned. As God hates sin because of its intrinsic hatefulness, having in itself the reason of the hatred it excites, so he punishes it because of its intrinsic demerit, having the reason of its punishment in itself. Sin can no more exist without punishableness than it can exist without hatefulness. As it is inconceivable that God should in a single instance fail to hate sin as pollution, so it is inconceivable that he should in a single instance fail to punish it as demerit. There has often been forgiveness for the sinner, but not a single instance of forgiveness for the sin; and the sinner is never forgiven except on condition of the condign punishment of the sin. Paul (Heb. 9:22), in reviewing the old law, declared as the sum of the whole that without the shedding of blood there was no remission. It was the blood that made atonement for the soul. Lev. 17:11. And in order to the salvation of sinful men, it was necessary that Christ should expiate sin by his death, to the end that God might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:26); that is, to enable God to pardon the sinner without violating his own essential righteousness, which necessarily antagonizes sin.

To the question, Why God punishes sin, only four distinct answers are possible. (1.) That all punishment is designed for the reformation of the offender. This confounds punishment with chastisement, and is a solution obviously inadmissible in the case of the eternal perdition of the reprobate and of the vicarious sufferings of Christ. (2.) That the reason and necessity of punishment is to be resolved into the sovereign good pleasure of God. This position has been held by Dr. Twisse, prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly, and others, but is not held by any prominent party in these days. (3.) That God punishes sin in order to deter the subjects of his moral government from its commission. This is a necessary corollary of the theory that all virtue is comprehended in disinterested benevolence. In that view, justice is one mode of benevolence, prompting God to punish

the individual sinner for the sake of the the greater good of the moral universe to be secured thereby. (4.) The true view is, that God is determined, by the immutable holiness of his nature, to punish all sin because of its intrinsic guilt or demerit; the effect produced on the moral universe being incidental as an end, and dependent as a consequence, upon the essential character of punishment, as that which expiates guilt and vindicates righteousness.

This is the centre of the question in debate between ourselves and the advocates of the Governmental and of the Moral Theory of the Atonement. Both parties estimate it as a moral question of the utmost importance, and incapable of compromise. Dr. N. W. Taylor\* says that to punish sin on account of its intrinsic demerit, or for any other purpose except the promotion of happiness, "is beyond the capacity of infernal malice." A recent writer in the *New Englander* declares that our doctrine represents Jehovah as acting upon principles that would disgrace the Jew Shylock. So also Dr. J. Young: "That wild and daring transcendentalism, which, in a greater or less degree, essentially affects evangelical theology at the present hour, is not by any means the most fatal evil. The doctrine of satisfaction to divine justice is immeasurably worse in its moral tendency.... This, beyond all comparison, is the deadliest error." There is indeed not room for compromise. What these men blaspheme, the inspired Scriptures and the Christian Church revere and vindicate as an essential element of that holiness which is the crowning glory of our God.

1. Disinterested benevolence is not the whole of virtue. (1.) Some exercises of disinterested benevolence, for example, the natural parental affection, are purely instinctive, and have no positive moral character. (2.) Some exercises of disinterested benevolence, such as the weak yielding of a judge to sympathy with a guilty man or his friends, are positively immoral. (3.) There are virtuous principles incapable of being resolved into disinterested benevolence, such as a proper prudential regard for one's own highest good; aspiration and effort after personal excellence, holy abhorrence of sin for its own

sake, and just punishment of sin in order to vindicate righteousness. Ps. 97:10: "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil." (4.) The idea of oughtness is the essential constitutive idea of virtue. No possible analysis of the idea of benevolence will give the idea of moral obligation. This is simple, irresolvable, ultimate. Oughtness is the genus, and benevolence one of the species comprehended in it.

These principles, we take pleasure in saying, are clearly stated by Mr. Barnes in his work on the Atonement.\* He argues (a) that punishment is not intended, and does not even tend, to secure the reformation of the offender; (b) that the sole end of punishment is not to deter others from a repetition of the offence, and so protect the community; (c) "that punishment is intended as a proper expression of what is due to crime." "It is inflicted because it is right it should be inflicted. It is inflicted because the offence deserves such an expression."

2. As the essential and irresolvable characteristic of virtue is oughtness, and of sin its opposite oughtnotness, so it is an intrinsic and immutable attribute of sin that it ought to be punished. This obligation to punishment is an ultimate fact of moral consciousness; it cannot be resolved into any other principle whatsoever; it is intrinsic in sin without reference to any other principle. (1.) This is involved in every awakened sinner's consciousness of his own demerit. Ps. 51:4: "I have done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be just when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest." In its higher degrees this feeling rises into remorse, and can be allayed only by expiation. Thus many murderers have had no rest until they have given themselves up to the law, when they have experienced instant relief. And millions of souls have found peace in the application of the blood of Jesus to their wounded consciences. (2.) All men judge thus of the sins of others. The consciences of all good men are gratified when the just penalty of the law is executed upon the offender, and outraged when he escapes. (3.) This principle is witnessed to by all the sacrificial rites common to all ancient religions, by the penances in some form universal even in modern

times, by all penal laws, and by the synonyms for guilt, punishment, justice, &c., common to all languages. (4.) It is self-evident, that to inflict an unjust punishment is itself a crime, no matter how benevolent the motive which prompts it, nor how good the effect which follows it. It is no less self-evident that it is the justice of the punishment so deserved which renders its effect on the community good, and not its effect on the community which renders it just. To hang a man for the good of the community is both a crime and a blunder, unless the hanging is justified by the ill-desert of the man. In that case his ill-desert is seen by all the community to be the real reason of the hanging. (5.) That the Bible teaches the same doctrine has been shown above.

In answer to the foregoing, it is claimed that benevolence is as essential an element of the divine nature as is holy abhorrence of sin. It is asked why the sentiment of justice must, in the case of the elect, be gratified by punishing their sins in Christ, whereas in the case of the lost the sentiment of benevolence remains ungratified? Why must one sentiment take precedence of the other?

Nothing can be gained here by refinements of the speculative intellect. The Scriptures, the moral sense, and the common judgments of mankind are our only courts of appeal. Access to them is simple, and their answer certain. The infinite moral perfection of God stands affected as benevolence to all his creatures, considered simply as sentient beings. Without any change in itself, its relations only being changed, it is mercy in respect to all miserable creatures. Just so, itself unchanged, it stands affected to all guilty creatures as GRACE. Now it is self-evident that every exercise of grace must be optional. It is a matter of free will. But, on the other hand, holy hatred of sin, and the treatment of sin as that which ought to be punished, is not optional with God. He cannot do otherwise than right, and he cannot exercise grace otherwise than as a matter of sovereign discretion. This is self-evident. There is nothing contradictory here. In the case of the reprobate, God punishes sin in the sinner, and he declines to exercise that grace which never can be

a matter of right, but must ever be a matter of choice. And toward the guilty, benevolence has no existence except in the form of grace. In the case of the elect, on the other hand, God exercised both the grace and the justice. The grace, in freely saving the sinner in spite of his want of merit; and the justice, in the self-assumption of the penalty and its satisfaction in the person of his Son.

# **CHAPTER V:**

## **THE CHURCH DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT PROVED FROM THE FACT THAT THE DIVINE LAW IS ABSOLUTELY IMMUTABLE**

THE second testimony as to the nature of the redemptive work of Christ which I will adduce is derived from the absolute immutability of the divine law. I propose to show (a) that God's law is absolutely immutable; (b) that the penalty is an essential part of the law; (c) that as a matter of fact, Christ came to fulfil the law in our place, and not to relax its demands in accommodation to our lowered capacity.

1. The law of God is absolutely immutable. Grotius, the eminent juriconsult and theologian of Holland, in the first half of the seventeenth century, was the first to give a systematic exposition to what has since been known as the Governmental Theory of the Atonement. In his great work—"Defensio Fidei Catholicæ De Satisfactione Christi"—he maintains that the law of God is a product of his will, and not a transcript of anything inherent in his immutable nature. It hence follows that the law being a simple creation of the optional will of the lawgiver, he must inalienably possess the power at all times either to execute, or to abrogate, or to relax it by sovereign prerogative, as far as his own nature is concerned.

It is true, indeed, that in respect to the conscience of the creature, every precept is binding because it is the will of God; but, on the other hand, in respect to the will of God itself, it is evident, since his will is holy, and his "commandment holy and just and good," that he wills the precept because it is intrinsically right. If this were not so, there could be no meaning in predicating holiness, either of his will

or of his law. There must be an absolute standard of righteousness. This absolute standard is the divine nature. The infallible judge of righteousness is the divine intelligence. And the all-perfect executor and rule of righteousness is the divine will.

It is true, also, that all duties spring out of relations, and every relation which a creature can sustain must be determined by the will of the Creator. For instance, there could have been no law of chastity unless God had sovereignly constituted man with a sexual nature. Nor could there have been a law forbidding murder unless man had been made mortal. But the instant the relation is constituted by the divine will, the duty necessarily springs up out of the relation from a principle inherent in the divine nature. All moral agents are, by the very constitution of their nature, immutably bound by all that is morally good. The essence of all that is moral is, that it ought to be. Every—even the least—discrepancy from all that ought to be, even to the uttermost, is of the nature of sin. This of course applies to every part of the moral law as well as to the whole; "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10. All involved in the preceptive part is commanded because it is intrinsically right and obligatory, and the penalty is attached because all that is forbidden is intrinsically worthy of punishment. The law of God, therefore, as to its essential principle of absolute moral perfection, which is embodied in all positive statutes whatsoever, is not relaxable. Christ's declaration is that, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke 16:17. If it be claimed that this applies to the ceremonial law, may we not argue, *à fortiori*, that it must hold all the more true of the moral law?

The Rev. Daniel T. Fiske, D.D., of Newburyport, Mass., in his able defence of the Governmental Theory of the Atonement, admits\* (a) that the ultimate end of all God's actions is within himself; and (b) that the divine law commands that which is intrinsically good, and because it is so, and forbids that which is intrinsically evil, and because it is so. At the same time he maintains, as the fundamental



principle of his doctrine, that "law as to its origin and end emanates from a divine purpose to promote by means of it the highest good of the universe." But this is a manifest contradiction. For (a) if the ultimate end of God's actions is in himself—that is, the manifestation of his excellence by the exercise of his attributes—the real end and origin of the law can only be the same. The good of the universe, though a true end, can only be subordinate to the former. And (b) if the thing commanded is intrinsically right, then the true reason for the commandment is in the nature of the thing itself, and not in its effects upon the universe. But if the real end and origin of the commandment is the good to be effected in the universe, then not the goodness intrinsic in the thing commanded, but the goodness of its consequences, is the true reason of its being commanded.

The essential principles of righteousness, which are embodied in all divine laws, consequently have their ground in the eternal and unchangeable nature of God; but of course the forms in which the principles are embodied, varying endlessly with different times, circumstances and conditions of moral creatures, are determined by the infinitely wise, and righteous, and absolutely sovereign will of God. Hence there is no room for any puzzling distinctions, as far as concerns this discussion, between the ceremonial and the moral law. To the creature the revealed will of God is always an ultimate and absolute rule of right. Obedience is always a moral obligation. Disobedience to positive precepts, the reason of which is withheld, is no less a sin than disobedience to so-called moral precepts, some of the reasons of which are known. The Mosaic Institute may be viewed in three different aspects.

(a.) As a national and political covenant, whereby, under his theocratic government, the Israelites became the people of Jehovah and he became their God, and in which Church and State were identical.

(b.) As a system of prophetic symbols or types of Christ and his glorious work of sacrifice and intercession, setting forth more clearly

than was previously done the provisions of the Covenant of Grace.

(c.) In another aspect it was a legal covenant, because the moral law, obedience to which was the condition of life in the Adamic covenant, was now prominently set forth in the ten commandments, and made the basis of the new covenant of God with his people. Even the ceremonial system, in its merely literal aspect, and apart from its symbolical, was also a rule of works; for "cursed was he that confirmed not all the words of the law to do them." Deut. 27:26.

Hence it is, that considered as commandments, the so-called ceremonial law was as much moral as any other, and just as absolutely immutable. Not one jot or tittle of it could pass away until the entire righteous purpose of God in it was fulfilled. The Jews, at the time of Christ, did not make the distinction between the ordinances of God as moral or ceremonial, as binding for their own sakes, or as binding only for God's sake. The word law in Paul's epistles stands for the entire genus "divine law." The law of God, as a whole, condemns the sinner. Salvation by the law, as a whole, is impossible. By the whole law is the knowledge of sin. The whole law is a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ, and he is the end, the complete fulfilment of the whole law, for righteousness to every one that believeth. And the law (ceremonial as well as moral) is in its essential principles, and in respect to the divine purpose in the appointment of its variable forms, absolutely immutable.

2. The penalty is an essential element of the law. There can exist no law, or authoritative rule of conduct, for voluntary and morally accountable agents to which a penal sanction is not attached; and the reason of the penalty is just as intrinsic and immutable as the reason of the precept. As we have seen that the reason of the precept is the intrinsic rightness of the thing commanded, so the reason of the penalty is the intrinsic demerit of the thing forbidden. As the chief end of the precept is the glory of God, that is, the manifestation of his excellence through the exercise of his attributes as they are concerned in commanding, so the chief end of the penalty is his glory

through the exercise of his attributes as they are concerned in punishing. As the moral principle involved in every precept cannot be compromised, so the divine judgment of the ill-desert of sin involved in all penalty cannot be relaxed. The precept and the penalty alike express the infallible judgment of the divine intelligence, on a question of moral obligation founded on the divine nature.

Fiske admits that the penalty is an essential part of the law, and he defines it as "suffering to be inflicted by the lawgiver upon the sinner, proportionate to the degree of his sinfulness, and to express the lawgiver's hatred of sin and estimate of its intrinsic ill-desert." At the same time he maintains that the ultimate end of God in ordaining or in executing the penalty, is the good of the universe, and that its "sole value is its efficacy to enforce the law and maintain its authority, and so ultimately help promote the great benevolent end of moral government." This also is plainly self-contradictory. If the penalty expresses God's judgment of the intrinsic ill-desert of sin, then the reason of punishment is the penalty itself, as an expression of immutable moral obligation. But if the sole value of the penalty is to enforce law, and thus benefit the universe, it is plain that the ill-desert of sin is not intrinsic or moral, but that it simply is a matter of policy resulting from the character of its consequences.

The advocates of the Governmental Theory of the Atonement maintain that Christ did not suffer the penalty of the law, but a substitute for the penalty. That his sufferings, in some way or other, avail to secure the same ends that the actual infliction of the penalty on the transgressors in person would have done. These parties agree in maintaining that it is essential to the penalty (a) that it should, in each case, consist in some precise, definite kind and degree of suffering; and (b) that it should be inflicted on the wrong-doer in person.

On the other hand, some orthodox divines—as, for instance, Owen, in his reply to Baxter's strictures against parts of his work on

Redemption—have maintained that Christ suffered the very same penalty legally due his people for whom he was substituted, and not merely a full equivalent for it; that is, an idem and not a tantundem. The motive for this apparently excessive precision of expression was commendable. Those who make such difficulty in admitting that Christ really suffered the penalty of the law are no more ready to admit that what he suffered was a full equivalent, in any strictly legal sense, for the punishment of his people in person. They mean that he did not suffer the penalty in any sense, and their views as to the connection between his death and our deliverance from condemnation are most vague and unsatisfactory.

Turretin, L. 14, Q. 10, § 10, says, "But here again the penalty itself, which the judge exacts, is to be accurately distinguished from the mode and circumstances of the penalty, for they have not the same reason. For as respects the penalty itself, in genere, the right of God is in this respect indispensable, because it is founded on the righteousness of God. But as to the mode and circumstances of this penalty, that it should be executed on such a person or in such a manner, is not equally a dictate of natural law, but rather of positive and free law; and therefore a certain dispensation from the most wise goodness of God may be admitted, either with respect to time by delay of the penalty, or as to degree by its mitigation, or as to person by substitution. For although the person sinning always deserves punishment, and may be justly punished, this is not so necessary and indispensable but that for sufficient reasons the penalty may be transferred to a substitute. And in this sense it is said by theologians that the penalty is necessarily to be inflicted on every sin impersonaliter, but not therefore as a matter of course upon every sinner personaliter."

The following points, however, appear to be sufficiently certain. (1.) Christ did not suffer the same degree or duration of pain that his people would have suffered in person, nor in all respects sufferings of the same kind. Theirs would have been eternal, his were temporary. Theirs would have involved ever-increasing depravity of soul and

self-accusing remorse, while, on the contrary, his were consistent with (a) the divinity of his person, (b) the perfection of his humanity, and (c) the fact that he was always the well-beloved Son in whom the Father was well pleased. (2.) On the other hand, it is no less certain that the identity of the penalty does not consist either in the precise kind, or degree, or duration of the suffering, nor in the personal identity of the sufferer with the sinner; but in the relation of the suffering to the guilt of some particular sin or sins, and to the demands of divine justice in the case. Duty in any case is whatever the moral law says ought to be done. Penalty, in any case of disobedience, is precisely that kind, degree and duration of suffering which the same law decides ought to be suffered. Of this obligation to suffering in all cases whatsoever the nature of God is the ground, and the reason of God is the judge. The execution of precisely the same sufferings, if it had been possible, in the person of the God-man, that would have been the proper penalty of the law if executed in the persons of the transgressors themselves, would have been an outrageous injustice. It would not consequently have been the penalty of the law, but an illegal violation of that absolute righteousness which is the principium essendi of the law. The substitution of a divine and all-perfect person in the stead of sinners necessarily involves, as a matter of justice, the substitution within the penalty of different kinds and degrees of suffering. Christ suffered precisely that kind, degree and duration of suffering that the infinitely wise justice or the absolutely just wisdom of God determined was a full equivalent for all that was demanded of elect sinners in person—equivalent, we mean, in respect to sin-expiating and justice-satisfying efficacy—and a full equivalent in being of equal efficacy in these respects in strict rigour of justice, according to the judgment of God. Consequently, what Christ suffered is by no means the same with what his people would have suffered, when considered as suffering, but is precisely the very same when considered as penalty.

3. The Scriptures clearly teach that, as a matter of fact, Christ came not to relax the law, but to fulfil it. He says of himself (Matt. 5:17,

18): "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." The apostle declared (Rom. 10:4), that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." When discussing the great doctrine of justification by faith, Paul anticipates the objection (Rom. 3:31): "Do we then make void the law through faith?" and answers, "God forbid; yea, we establish the law." The law pronounced a curse upon the sinner, and "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law," not by waiving that curse, but by "being made a curse for us."

If the penalty is an essential part of the law; if the whole law is immutable; if Christ actually came to fulfil the law and not to relax its demands; then it follows, without doubt, that he suffered the penalty of the law as our Substitute.

John Young, LL.D., of Edinburgh, in two chapters of his late work (Life and Light of Men), entitled severally "Spiritual Laws" and "Eternal Justice," essays to overturn the entire conception of law and penalty upon which the faith of the whole Church, Greek and Roman, Lutheran, Reformed and Arminian, has always reposed. His points are as follows: (1.) The spiritual laws of the universe have their ground independent of God in the essential and eternal nature of things. (2.) They are necessarily and instantly self-acting. The penalty of every sin is so connected with the sin itself, in the nature of things, that "it is impreventable. It lies in the essential nature of things that it must come down. Ever and ever justice inflicts an inevitable penalty, and exacts the completest satisfaction." (3.) These laws are self-acting and independent of God; "the God of purity and love has no part in the punishment of sin." Sin punishes itself instantly and adequately. "The doom of the lost, be it whatever it may, is simply and wholly their own work. It is all, from first to last, not only their own doing, but their own doing in despite of God." (4.) Sin continues to punish itself as long as it exists. It can cease to be punished only by being annihilated. And the instant sin ceases to

exist in a sinner's soul, that is, as soon as he is sanctified, he ceases to be punishable. (5.) God is not just in the rectilinear human sense at all. He is never less than just. He is never unjust. But he is always more than just, that is, better to men than their deserts. Goodness is his grand distinguishing attribute.

This appears to us a very low and material view of the case. It is incipient Positivism, and Positivism is infallibly gross materialism. It conceives of the laws of a spiritual society of persons, personal subjects living under the righteous administration of a personal God, acting upon them by the light of truth and the influence of motives, by commands, benefactions, authority, promises, threatenings, as nothing more nor less than the necessarily self-acting physical laws of the material world or of the human organism. It grounds these laws in the "nature of things," independent of God. But what entity in the whole universe exists, except as the product of the divine will, but the uncreated essence of God himself? This uncreated essence is, as we have insisted above, the absolute norm of all spiritual laws. But this divine nature never expresses itself outwardly except through the acts of the divine will. This will, and not the "nature of things," makes and executes the moral law of the universe. That God rewards and punishes, and that he holds forth before men the prospect of future rewards and punishment for present conduct, is taught too clearly and universally in Scripture to need proof here. "The idea that the punishment of sin is only its natural consequences, and that remission is merely deliverance from the natural operations of moral evil in the soul, as freedom from the pain of a burn can be allayed only by allaying the inflammation, is so repugnant to Scripture and to common sense as to need no refutation. The expulsion of our first parents from Paradise; the deluge; raining fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah; the death of the first-born of the Egyptians; all the plagues brought on Pharaoh; drought, famine, pestilence threatened as the punishment of the Hebrews, were not the natural consequences of sin, but positive punitive inflictions. Indeed, almost all the judgments threatened in the Bible are of that character."\* "Taking vengeance" for sin is everywhere set forth as the personal,

deliberate, volitional act of a righteous moral governor. Deut. 32:35; Ps. 149:7; Rom. 3:5, and 12:19. At his second coming, Christ is to be "revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon them that know not God and that obey not the gospel." 2 Thess. 1:8. This taking vengeance is a personal act executed for a purpose, at such times, and under such conditions, and in such modes as best serve the purpose intended.

That this world is not a scene of rewards and punishments; that sin may be forgiven entirely previous to, and as the condition of, the work of sanctification; and that a sin, long past and repented of, if not punished in the past, will continue to demand punishment through all the future, are facts established by the teaching of Scripture as clearly as by the universal experience of the race. "It is not true that sanctification and remission are ever confounded; nor are they related as cause and effect. The two things are distinct in their nature, and are always distinguished in the Bible and the common sense of men. There neither is nor can be any sanctification or destruction of the power of sin in the soul, until there has been antecedent remission of the penalty. Paul teaches clearly, in the sixth and seventh chapters of his Epistle to the Romans, that so long as the sinner is under condemnation he brings forth fruit unto death; that it is not until he is delivered from condemnation, by the body or sacrifice of Christ, that he brings forth fruit unto God."\*

That God does not do all he can to remedy sin when it has once entered upon his domain, is a fact as prominent in the history of the different races and families of men as the great stars are on the face of the sky. The blessed Saviour said, "I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." That God, over and above being just, is also abundantly merciful, the Christian Church has always recognized as gratefully as Dr. Young. To us, certainly, he has been always good as well as just. But it is impossible that he should be unjust, and, as I showed above, justice is as essentially involved in the infliction of the penalty as it is in the imposition of the precept.



God cannot be unjust, and it would be unjust not to punish sin. Sin can be expurgated as a subjective condition of the soul only by sanctification; but its penalty, which is always eternal death, can be removed only by expiation, that is, by punishment endured either personally or vicariously. For the proof of these positions, and consequently for the refutation of those assumed by Young, I refer the reader to the entire argument of this book.

## **CHAPTER VI:**

# **THE THREE-FOLD RELATION WHICH MORAL AGENTS SUSTAIN TO THE DIVINE LAW**

BUT if the law is immutable, and if its demands are personal, how can the legal relations of one person be assumed by another, and all of his legal obligations be vicariously discharged by the substitute instead of the principal? In order to throw light upon this question, I propose the following considerations. Turretin\* well noted the fact that the relations which men sustain to the law may be discriminated under three heads—the natural, federal, and penal relations.

1. To every created moral agent in the universe the law of absolute moral perfection sustains a uniform and constant natural relation as a standard of character and rule of action. In this relation the law is absolutely perfect and absolutely changeless. All that is moral is eternally and intrinsically obligatory on all moral agents. All that is not obligatory is not moral. And every particular and every degree in which any moral agent comes short of the standard of perfect moral excellence in being or action is of the nature of sin. The demands of

the law therefore are everywhere and always the same; they are inherently, and therefore changelessly, obligatory and incapable of being either intermitted, relaxed, or transferred. In respect to this natural relation to the law therefore, Christ did not, and from the nature of the case could not, take our law-place. In respect to the inherent and inalienable claims of right, it is purely impossible that the obligations of law can be removed from one person and vicariously assumed by another. The law in this relation maintains for ever inviolable all its claims over all moral creatures whatever; equally over angels and devils, men unfallen, fallen, regenerate, in perdition, and in glory. The hideous heresy of the Antinomians consists in the claim that Christ has in such a sense fulfilled all the claims of law upon his people that they are no longer required to live in conformity to it in their own persons. This abominable heresy the entire Church has always consistently rejected with abhorrence, maintaining that the immutability of the law and the changeless perpetuity of its claims is a principle lying at the foundation of all religion, whether natural or revealed.

2. The federal relation to the law, on the other hand, has respect to a period of probation, into which man was introduced in a condition of moral excellence, yet fallible; and his confirmation in an immutably holy character, and his subsequent eternal blessedness is made to depend upon his obedience during that period. It appears to be a general principle of the divine government (1) that every moral agent is created holy, yet (2) in a state of instable moral equilibrium, and hence (3) that confirmation in an estate of stable holiness is a divine gift, above those included in the natural endowments of any creature, and always (4) suspended upon the condition of perfect obedience during a period of probation. As a matter of fact, this is precisely the relation to the law as a covenant of life, into which Adam (and all his descendants in him) was brought at his creation. He was created holy, yet fallible, and for a period of probation put under the law as a test of obedience. Upon this obedience his character and condition for eternity were made to depend. If he had obeyed for the period prescribed he would have attained the reward. The granting of that

reward would have confirmed him in holiness, and by thus rendering him impeccable, would have closed his probation and removed him from under the law in this federal relation for ever, while his subjection to the same law, in its natural relation, would have been continued and confirmed. We know that the angels have passed through a probation not essentially different. They were created holy, yet fallible, for some did fall. And all who stood at the first appear to have been consequently confirmed in character and the enjoyment of divine favour; since there is no intimation that any have since fallen into sin, and since we cannot believe that it is God's plan that any of his sinless creatures should continue permanently or even indefinitely in that state of instable equilibrium in which they were created. We may therefore assume it to be a general principle of the divine government that every new created moral agent is introduced into being holy, yet fallible, and subjected to the law as a covenant for a period of probation, conditioning upon perfect obedience ultimate confirmation in holiness and divine favour for ever.

It is evident that this federal relation to the law is in its very nature temporary in any event, being inevitably closed, ipso facto, either by giving the reward in case of obedience, or by inflicting the penalty in case of disobedience. It is evident also that this relation to the law has a special end: not the demanding of perpetual obedience because of its intrinsic rightfulness, but demanding it as a test for a definite period, to the end of an ultimate confirmation of a holy character, which confirmation will terminate the relation itself by securing the end for which it was designed. Hence this federal relation to the law, unlike the natural relation, concerns not at all the unchangeable demands of personal holiness, but simply those conditions upon which God's favours are to be shown. And hence, unlike the natural relation, the federal is neither intrinsic, perpetual, nor inseparable from the person concerned. Although, of course, it is ultimately founded upon the essential righteousness of the divine nature, yet all the variable conditions of the probationary period and test are evidently largely dependent upon the divine sovereignty, and the relation itself ceases as soon as the trial is closed, either by the grant

of the reward or the infliction of the penalty; and, if God pleases, the whole relation may be sustained by a substitute, and its obligations discharged vicariously, as was the case in the instances of Adam and of Christ.

3. The penal relation to the law is that which instantly supervenes when the law is violated. As shown above, the penalty is an essential element of the law, expressing the essential attitude in which absolute righteousness stands to transgression, just as the preceptive element of the law expresses the attitude in which that righteousness stands to the moral condition and action of the subject. Whenever, therefore the law is violated by disobedience, the penalty instantly supervenes, and continues for ever until it is fully exhausted in strict rigour of absolute justice.

It is consequently obvious that the penal and federal relations to the law are naturally mutually exclusive. The instant a moral agent incurs the penalty his federal relation to the law necessarily terminates, because the end of that relation—that is, his confirmation in a holy character—has definitely failed. Adam was created under the natural and the federal relation to law. When he sinned he continued under the natural, and passed from the federal to the penal, where his non-elect descendants remain for all eternity. And it is just here that with respect to the elect the infinitely gracious mediation of Christ intervenes. If it were not for the sovereign supervention of a gracious upon a purely legal economy, they would of course be left, with the rest of mankind, to the just consequences of their sin. Their probation having been abused, the promised confirmation in holy character having been forfeited, nothing but the penalty remains. But in behalf of the elect Christ comes as the second Adam, assumes and graciously continues their federal relation to the law just at the point at which Adam failed. If he undertakes their case, there is a need that he assume both their obligations to obedience, which was the original condition of their being raised to a stable equilibrium of moral character and receiving the adoption of sons, and their obligations to penal sufferings incurred by their

disobedience. The law in its natural relation of course remains binding on them as before, while they are for ever released from all obligation to obey it as a condition of life, and are confirmed in an immutable stability both of character and happiness through the vicarious discharge of all of their original obligations by their Substitute.

When we say that Christ as our Substitute assumed our law-place, the specific thing that we mean is, that he became the federal head of the elect under the Covenant of Redemption, which provided for his assuming in relation to them all the conditions of the violated Covenant of Works. The federal headship of Christ presupposes the federal headship of Adam. The latter is the necessary basis for the former, and the work and position of the former can be understood only when it is brought in mental perspective into its true relation to the latter. The solution of the question as to the true nature of the federal headship of Adam becomes, therefore, an essential element as to the nature of the Atonement. The apostle declares that the principles upon which sin and misery came upon the race through Adam are identical with those upon which righteousness and blessedness come upon the elect through Christ. No man can entertain false views as to the former without perverting his faith as to the latter. Hence I venture to ask the patience of the reader while I enter upon a digression from the strict line of scriptural proof bearing directly upon the nature of the Atonement, to consider the question whether the Scriptures really teach that in the Covenant of Works Adam in a strict sense represented all his descendants, and hence that the sin and misery of that estate into which they were born are the penal consequences of Adam's public sin?

## **CHAPTER VII:**

# **ADAM WAS, IN THE STRICT SENSE OF THE WORDS, THE FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RACE; AND THE ANTENATAL FORFEITURE, OF WHICH EACH OF HIS DESCENDANTS IS SUBJECT, IS THE PENAL CONSEQUENCE OF HIS PUBLIC SIN**

OUR doctrine is, that God as the legitimate Guardian of the human race, and acting for its advantage, ordered its probation under the law as a covenant of life in the representative agency or federal headship of Adam, the first root and natural head of the race, in circumstances and on conditions as favourable for the race as possible. Adam, although as well endowed and circumstanced as any individual of his natural order, while yet in a state of instable moral equilibrium, could possibly be, nevertheless fell; and his sin, according to the favourable conditions of their probation, is the judicial ground of the antenatal forfeiture of his children, of the penal withdrawing from them of the influences of God's Spirit; and hence their innate corruption is the penal consequence of Adam's sin. We may therefore discuss this subject by tracing downward from cause to effect the headship of Adam, the imputation of the guilt of his sin, and the penal consequences thereof in the sin and misery of his descendants. Or, on the other hand, we may trace from effects to causes the experienced facts as to man's natural condition up to the imputation of Adam's public sin. I prefer the latter method for the following reasons: (a.) Because the facts of the case are indubitably proved by the natural reason and universal experience of mankind, as well as by divine revelation. It hence follows that the weight of the facts bears as heavily upon every system of thought which admits the

existence of an infinite moral Governor as it does upon any school of Christian theology. (b.) Because this method will afford us the best possible opportunity of contrasting the solution which the Scriptures give us of the terrible facts of the case, by referring them to their legal ground in the judicial charging to his descendants of the guilt of the public sin of our representative, with every other solution ever suggested by human genius. This will bring out into clear relief the fact that the scriptural doctrine of the immediate and antecedent imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to his descendants, instead of being a repulsive and unnecessarily aggravated feature of Calvinism, is the most honouring to God and gratifying to the moral sense of men, of all the solutions of the awful but undeniable facts of the case which has ever been attempted. None are more ready to recognize the real difficulties inherent in the doctrine of the federal headship of Adam than its staunchest advocates. But it is certain that these difficulties are the same, both in kind and degree, with those which are inseparable from those broad facts of the case which are universally recognized by all except theoretical or practical atheists.

These patent facts as to man's moral and spiritual condition from birth, which I will here simply state and assume as universally conceded, are as follows. 1. Every individual human being is from birth and by nature totally depraved. This general truth involves three subordinate ones. (1.) Every human being habitually sins as soon as he enters a state of moral agency. (2.) Each human being is born with an antecedent effectual tendency in his nature to sin. And (3) this innate tendency in his nature to sin, with which every man enters the world, is itself of the nature of sin and worthy of punishment.\*

2. Every human being is born into and lives under the power of a social organization called the world, all the moral forces of which oppose virtue and secure the prevalence of vice.

3. All men are introduced into existence under the dominion of an unseen spiritual empire of apostate angels, of which Satan is prince.

These, then, are the portentous facts concerning the universal moral condition of mankind by nature. Each individual comes into existence with a nature itself worthy of punishment, and effectually predisposing him to sin. They are moreover born into a corrupt and corrupting social organization, and subject to the mysterious and prevalent influence of an apostate spiritual empire. Yet, notwithstanding this disability under which men are born, they are still held bound, under further penalty of eternal damnation, to fulfil in disposition and act the entire unmodified law of absolute perfection. These statements, moreover, do not represent the peculiar results of any school either of philosophy or theology, but the naked and undeniable facts of the case, authenticated as certain by reason, conscience and experience, as well as by revelation. The denial of Christianity affords no escape from them, much less, of course, the denial of the truth of Augustinian theology. We have no alternative but to face them in their full significance, and to adapt our speculations to the unquestionable facts.

It is here that the agonizing but unavoidable question arises as to the reconciliation of this state of facts with the character of a just, holy and merciful Creator. If God had seen fit to shed no light whatever upon this dark subject, it would still undoubtedly be our duty to exercise an unquestioning faith in him, and to appease our reason by the plea of mystery. But men must demand, and ought to demand, the full development of every element of relief from this great moral enigma which God has graciously vouchsafed to give us in his word. The ultimate intuitions of right are themselves a direct revelation from God, and when legitimately interpreted and applied, they are of as high authority as any dogma of theology. It is absolutely impossible for a devout mind to admit that God can be the immediate author of sin, or that he can treat a creature whose natural claims upon him, as a creature, have not previously been justly forfeited, as worthy of punishment. The most orthodox theologians agree with the Rationalists on the following points.

1. God cannot be the author of sin.



2. God cannot originally create agents with an inherent corrupt nature effectually predisposing them to sin, for that would constitute him the author of sin. And as a matter of fact he did create mankind and the angels holy; that is, with a positive, pre-existent disposition inclining them to virtue.

3. God will not inflict either moral or physical evil upon any moral agent whose natural claims as a dependent creature have not previously been justly forfeited.

4. Hence every moral agent ought in justice to enjoy a fair probation; that is, a trial so conditioned as to afford at least as much opportunity of success as liability to failure. Hence arise two distinct and unavoidable questions, which have been anxiously discussed by the philosophers and theologians of all times.

1. WHY, that is, on what ground of justice, does God inflict this terrible evil, the root and sum of all other evils, upon every human being at the instant his existence commences? What fair probation have infants born in sin enjoyed? And WHEN and WHY were their rights as new-created moral agents forfeited?

2. HOW—since we must believe that God originally creates every moral agent with a nature predisposed to virtue; and since as a matter of fact he did so create the first man—HOW, so that the author of the nature is not the author of the sin, is a sinful disposition originated in every human being as soon as he begins to exist?

It is self-evident that while these two questions relate to the same subject, they are themselves essentially distinct, and they must be treated as distinct, unless we should leave the entire subject in confusion. It is one thing to inquire how it is possible that sin shall originate as a connate predisposing cause of sin in every new-born infant, and yet the Maker of the infant not be the cause of the sin; and a very different thing to inquire WHY, on what ground of justice,

this direful calamity is brought upon those who have not previously offended in their own persons. The former question may possibly be solved by reference to some ascertainable physiological law of natural generation; it may have its ground in some general relation which all individuals sustain to the genus to which they belong. But the latter question essentially relates to the administration of the divine government, and to the character of those ultimate moral principles upon which it proceeds. If this important distinction had always been kept clearly in view, much of the obscurity, and of the error too, which have marred speculations and controversies on this subject, would have been avoided. Endeavoring therefore, to keep it steadily in view, I proceed to give a summary statement of all the important solutions of both these questions which have been offered.

All opinions upon this subject may be classified upon two distinct principles.

1. We may classify them as they are, on the one hand, excogitated on purely rationalistic principles, independently of revelation, or as, on the other hand, they are developed by a more or less faithful interpretation of Scripture.

Or, 2. We may classify them either as they affirm or deny the principle that all men have justly forfeited their rights as new-created moral agents before their birth into this world. I shall adopt the latter principle of classification, remarking that the two principles come to the same practical result in this respect, that nearly all the purely rationalistic solutions of the problem deny that men are born subject to antenatal forfeiture; while, on the contrary, nearly all those solutions which are professedly derived from the interpretation of Scripture affirm it.

I. I propose under this head to state briefly those solutions of the questions above stated which agree in rejecting the principle that man is born subject to a just antenatal forfeiture, and liable to the righteous penalty of a violated law.

1. The first attempted solution is afforded by the Manichæan dualism, which postulates the independent self-existence of two principles. On the one hand, God, an eternal, self-existent, absolutely perfect Spirit, is the Father of all spirits, and the centre and governor of the whole spiritual kingdom of light and purity. On the other hand, matter, or that ultimate essence of which matter is one of the forms, is an independent, self-existing principle, inherently corrupt in itself, and corrupting to all that comes in contact with it. All spirits being pure in their origin from God, become vitiated through entanglement with the matter composing their bodies.\* Although the magnificent speculations in which these opinions were first embodied have long since been forgotten, except by a few students of Christian antiquities, the radical idea of the self-existence and inherent viciousness of matter has not yet lost place among men's thoughts. Against the false view of sin embodied in this theory all the early Fathers of the Christian Church protested. Manichæism virtually amounts to a denial of the existence of moral evil altogether, because it resolves it into a physical ground, making it an attribute of matter, like attraction, or inertia, or the like. The essence of sin lies in the fact that it is a spontaneous state or act of a free moral agent, not in conformity to the law of absolute moral perfection. Sin is necessarily immaterial, spiritual, an attribute of moral agency, inseparable from persons. Manichæism limits Jehovah by the eternal and necessary co-existence with him of a hostile and independent principle. It wrongs him by attempting to vindicate his freedom from all complication with sin by exhibiting him as helpless to prevent it. And it destroys all moral distinctions by resolving sin into a physical accident, exterior to the personal soul, and moral responsibility for crime into misfortune.

2. A second method of answering both the questions, how and why men always commence their conscious existence habitual sinners as far as that fact relates to the agency of God in the matter, cuts the knot by affirming the absolute self-determining power of the human will, and the consequent absolute "impreventability of sin." While in many other respects they differ, yet at this point, touching the agency

of God with respect to this estate of sin and misery into which man has fallen, Pelagians, Socinians, and the class of Trinitarians represented by Bushnell and Young, are perfectly agreed.\* Every man creates his own character, being free to sin or not as he pleases. God did all he could to prevent the entrance of sin at the first, and ever since he has been doing all that is consistent with the necessary limitations of moral agency, to put each man in the best possible position, and to bring to bear upon him the best possible moral and spiritual influences.

Now it is evident that this answer gets rid of the difficulty by denying the plain fact of the total depravity of each child from birth and by nature, antecedent to all moral action, which is proved as well by an unexceptional experience as by revelation. The self-determining power of the human will may prove that sin is impreventable, and may account for the existence of sin in a few cases. As it is absolutely impossible for a man to believe, when the dice are thrown sixes successively a thousand times, that the dice are not loaded; so is it a thousand times more impossible to believe, when every human being of all nations and generations, without a single exception, begins to sin the instant he enters moral agency, that his will is not biassed by a previous effectual tendency in his nature to sin. Now the Bible, true psychology and uniform Christian experience unite in teaching that this innate previous tendency to sin is itself sin and worthy of punishment. The preventability of sin or the opposite is not the question. The fact to be accounted for is that all men sin as soon as they begin to act as moral agents. This universal constitution of things, which produces such uniformly dire effects, is God's ordering, and he is bringing new souls into it every day. It does not help the matter to say, that the sin of the parent is propagated to the child by generation, or by education and example. For God is the author of the whole system of human generation and social relations. The questions remain unanswered, why? and how? God either permits or effects such results, and yet remains just and holy.

3. The third solution is the one incident to pantheistic speculations in general, and developed prominently by the German philosopher Hegel, adopted by Emerson, and, in a modified form, held by Theodore Parker and many of the advanced Unitarians of America; namely, that sin is a natural and necessary incident of a finite nature conditioned as man is, and the appointed means of development and ultimate perfection. Sin, according to this view, is limitation, the necessary accident of a process of growth. Even Bushnell regards sin as a favourable incident of spiritual education, which, training the soul for stable and intelligent virtue hereafter, involves necessarily an experiment of evil, and consequently a previous fall, and temporary subjection to its power.

This theory at once destroys all proper ideas alike of God and sin. It is absolutely inconsistent with the infinite power, wisdom, goodness and holiness of God. Sin is essentially ἀνομία, and the divine law has its norm in the divine nature. Sin, therefore, is intrinsically opposition to God. It is not a limitation incident to finite existence, nor a condition incident to a stage in the development of a creature's life, for then it would be according to law. It is the spontaneous reprehensible attitude of a creature's will in opposition to God. God must hate and resist it and punish it, and no natural constitution of things which he ordains can involve it as a necessary incident. Sin can originate no otherwise than in the free, self-determined act of a personal spirit, acting in violation of, and not in accordance with, the law of its being.

4. The common view characteristic of the New England Theology was generated by an attempt to readjust the positions of old Calvinism in view of the rationalistic attacks made upon it by John Taylor, of Norwich, and the Socinians of America. This view was introduced by Dr. Samuel Hopkins, and developed by Edwards, Dwight, Emmons, &c., and has hence passed into general currency among all the adherents of that form of modified Calvinism called New England Theology. They found it necessary to protest in the interest of Rationalism against the principle that the descendants of Adam

should have been judicially held to have justly forfeited all their rights as new-created moral agents, simply because of the sinful act of their progenitor, performed ages before their own existence. They therefore deny that human beings come into the world subject to any antenatal forfeiture, or with any positive moral corruption of nature. In the place of these discarded positions of old orthodoxy, they explain the facts by saying that the human race exists under a sovereign constitution of God, which has provided, that upon the condition of Adam's sin in the garden, every one of his descendants shall infallibly sin as soon as he enters upon moral agency. Thus they ground the whole procedure ultimately upon the sovereignty instead of upon the justice of God. In answer to the question WHY this great evil is inflicted upon creatures just commencing their existence, they refer us simply to the sovereign good pleasure of God. In answer to the question HOW the uniform origination of sin is determined in the first responsible act of the recent creatures of a holy God, some of them content themselves with referring to an inscrutable divine constitution which secures that result; while others resolve the matter into the natural physiological laws of generation, whereby the parent begets an offspring morally, as well as intellectually and physically, like himself; and others again, as eminently Dr. Emmons, refer the result to a "stated mode of divine efficiency," whereby God, upon the antecedent condition of Adam's sin, proceeds to create a series of sinful acts through the agency of each of his descendants. This last view, which refers all human action to a direct divine efficient precursus, is virtual pantheism, and evidently makes God the author of all sin. On this side of divine efficiency Emmons developed the New England Theology to death. Since his time all the advocates of that system refer the origin of sin in men to their natural descent from Adam, the organic root and natural head of all mankind; so that inherited corruption, instead of being viewed as a penal consequent of Adam's sin, is regarded simply as a natural consequent of it, transmitted, like the nose upon the face, by the natural and universal laws of animal reproduction.

This so-called "improvement" of New England Theology is in principle identical with the doctrine broached by Joshua Placeus, Professor in the Theological Seminary of Saumur, France (circum 1640). He maintained that Adam's first sin whereby he apostatized, being his own personal act, could not be imputed to any of his descendants, because, since it was not their act, they were not responsible for it, and therefore could not justly be punished for it. But since Adam's apostasy necessarily corrupted his own nature, and since, by ordinary generation, the corruption of his nature determined the corruption of all those who were descended from him, it follows hence (1) that all descended from him by ordinary generation begin to sin as soon as they begin to act as moral agents, and (2) that they are justly condemned and punished for their own sinful acts which thence result.

After this doctrine, which is obviously identical with that of the New England view above stated, had been ventilated a number of years, the French National Synod, meeting at Charenton (Dec. 26, 1644; Jan. 26, 1645), passed with reference to it the following decree: "There was a report made in Synod of a certain writing, both printed and manuscript, holding forth this doctrine, that the whole nature of original sin consisted only in that corruption which is hereditary to all Adam's posterity, and residing originally in all men, and denying the imputation of his first sin. This Synod condemneth the said doctrine as far as it restraineth the doctrine of original sin to the sole hereditary corruption of Adam's posterity, to the excluding of the imputation of that first sin by which he fell; and interdicteth, on pain of all church censure, all pastors, professors and others, who shall treat of this question, to depart from the common received opinion of the Protestant Churches, who (over and besides that corruption) have all acknowledged the imputation of Adam's first sin to his posterity."\*

After this, in order to reconcile his doctrine in appearance with the requirements of the Synod, Placeus invented the distinction between immediate and antecedent imputation on the one hand, and mediate

and consequent imputation on the other. By the immediate and antecedent imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, he meant to express the established doctrine of the Reformed Churches, to wit: that Adam was in such a sense the covenant head and representative of his descendants, that their probation was merged into his, and that his action was made the condition upon which their confirmation in holiness or rejection and punishment was made to depend; and hence that the guilt or punishableness of his sin was charged to their account immediately upon their birth, and antecedently to their own action; and that consequently the entire corruption of nature with which they are born is the first consequence and most awful part of the punishment of that sin charged to them and punished in them. By the mediate and consequent imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, Placæus meant to deny the above doctrine of antenatal forfeiture altogether, and to teach that the descendants of Adam, deriving from him corrupt natures by ordinary generation, begin to sin after his example as soon as they become moral agents, and are consequently, like him, punished for their own sin. It is as plain as noon-day that there is no real imputation here at all, no charging of the punishableness of Adam's first apostatizing act to his descendants in any honest sense. The application of the term imputation to this theory by Placæus was uncandid and sophistical. His cavil was that he also held that Adam's sin was imputed and punished in his posterity mediately through and consequently to their own sin in compliance with his example. Thus Adam sinned, and was punished for his own sin. For his sin his posterity are in no way responsible, nor are they punished on account of it, but only cursed, by means of the natural law of generation, with corrupt natures. They consequently sin, and are all severally punished for their own sins. Hence, Adam's sin is charged to them mediately and consequently. This is nothing either more or less than the New England Root theory above stated, with this difference, that the New England theory honourably discards the sophistical and deluding use of the theological term imputation in a sense not only modified, but so perverted as to signalize the express



denial of that which from time immemorial all men had used it to affirm.

The objections to this theory are fatal.

1. It fails entirely and obviously to quadrate with the plain sense of those Scriptures (Rom. 5:12–19) of which, as I shall show below, the orthodox doctrine is the dogmatic expression. The evidence of this allegation I will present when I come to exhibit the evidence establishing the truth of the old doctrine.

2. While this improvement was excogitated, as the younger Edwards said, with the design of reconciling the doctrine of the fall with the demands of rational justice, it sets justice at defiance far more directly and uncompromisingly than does that orthodox doctrine against the injustice of which it protests. The orthodox doctrine affirms that God, the rightful Guardian of the human race, gave them the most favourable trial possible for a race so propagated—a trial, moreover, in which great and undeserved blessings were made possible, as well as a great loss. It hence follows that they were justly responsible for the penal consequences of Adam's failure, and hence that their natural rights were justly forfeited before their birth. This "improved" doctrine, on the other hand, refers the whole result to the arbitrary sovereignty of God. The orthodox doctrine demonstrates that every man had a fair probation in the person of Adam. The "improved" doctrine asserts that God creates every man into a state of virtual reprobation, without any probation at all.

3. This theory absurdly attempts to account for the origination of sin in the children of men severally, as soon as they begin to act, by a physiological theory of generation, instead of on a moral principle of righteous legal responsibility.

4. The whole peculiarity of this view is grounded on an assumption subversive of the entire foundation-principles of the gospel; namely, that it is inconsistent with justice that, under any circumstances, one

person should be held judicially punishable for a sin performed by another; while it is a matter of fact that Christ, in consequence of his federal union with his people, was justly punished for their sin, and they are justly pronounced righteous on the ground of his obedience.

5. This theory is conspicuously inconsistent with the fact of that parallel which the Scriptures affirm to exist between the principle upon which we are condemned for the sin of Adam and that upon which we are justified on the ground of the righteousness of Christ. The essence of redemption lies in the fact that Christ was justly punished for our sins as federally responsible for them, and that we are justly justified on the ground of his obedience, because by the terms of his covenant with the Father the rewardableness of his obedience reverts to us. If this be so, it follows that the guilt or obligation to punishment, accruing from Adam's sin to us, is by the terms of the covenant justly ours, and hence that native depravity and all other natural evils are justly inflicted upon us as the punishment of that sin. While, on the other hand, if it be held that we first derive corrupt natures from Adam as purely natural and physical consequents of generation, and then are punished for that innate corruption or for the sinful actions to which it gives birth, it would necessarily follow, as to the method of salvation, that we first derive by regeneration holy natures from Christ, and are then justified on the ground of inherent holiness, which is precisely that Moral Influence Theory of Redemption advocated by Bushnell and Young. If the ultimate ground of our forfeiture is our inherent personal corruption of nature derived by generation, then Paul's words are, EVEN SO, the ultimate ground of our justification must be our inherent personal holiness of nature derived by regeneration. Dr. John W. Nevin says: "Our participation in the actual unrighteousness of Adam's life forms the ground of our participation in his guilt and liability to punishment. And in no other way, I affirm, can the idea of imputation be satisfactorily explained in the case of the second Adam." That is, we partake by ordinary generation of the fallen nature of Adam, and are therefore condemned. In like manner we partake of the divine-human life of the incarnate Word through

union with the Church and the efficacy of the sacraments, and are therefore justified. Thus wonderfully do the latest "improvements" of old Puritan orthodoxy develop into that Mercersburg theology which has its roots in a pantheistic philosophy and a Romish religion.

II. We come now to consider that class of opinions which agree in maintaining that the members of the human family come into existence under a forfeiture justly incurred before their birth. With one singular exception, all the theories, as far as I know, which maintain the fact of this antenatal forfeiture, agree in referring it to the first sin of Adam as its judicial ground.

1. The singular exception referred to is the eccentric theory that the evil nature with which all men are born into this world has been self-originated by a free, personal self-determination to evil in a pre-existent state. As thus generally stated, this theory was first introduced into the Christian Church by Origen, and revived in the modern Church by Dr. Edward Beecher in his "Conflict of Ages," and by Julius Müller in his great work on the "Christian Doctrine of Sin." Beecher and Müller agree in holding that (a) every child is born with a nature morally corrupt; (b) that this innate corruption is guilt; that is, that every new-born soul is from the first morally responsible and justly punishable for that corruption; (c) but since a moral agent can be morally responsible for a moral character only when it has been self-originated by a previous unbiassed act of will, it follows that each human person must have had an existence in which responsible self-determination was possible previous to his birth in this life.

Beecher's conception of the matter is as follows. In the beginning all human souls were created like the angels, free, responsible, moral agents fully developed. Each stood alone and enjoyed a fair probation in his own person. Some of the angels stood the trial, and were confirmed in holy character for ever. Some of the angels, and all of those spirits subsequently born into this world as men, fell and became morally depraved, and righteously condemned because of their own personal apostasy. For the purpose of bringing this last

class of lost souls under a remedial system of grace, God created the physical universe for their habitation, and caused them to be born into material bodies and propagated by generation. They all come into the world, consequently, with their natures depraved and their natural rights forfeited by their own personal action in their pre-existent state.

The conception of Müller, though philosophically very different from the above, in a theological point of view amounts to the same. He adopts from the Idealism of Schelling the principle of a transcendental freedom as an attribute of all personal spirits. "Man in his origin is a morally undetermined not yet decided essence, and by virtue of his personality can only be such an one."\* "Only personal essences have a ground in their own act; it is the possession of freedom in this their now temporal root which distinguishes the spirit absolutely from nature." "In the kingdom of the intelligible, this silent, timeless, shadowy kingdom is, as it were, the maternal womb in which the embryos of all personal essences lie enclosed. Here we find the simple, undetermined beginnings of our being which precede its concrete contents; therefore, one is not in this kingdom to look for the fulness of the Godlike life, but only the power of deciding either in favour of voluntary union with God by subordination to his will, or for the persistency of selfhood in itself. Which ever way this primitive decision may take place, it forms for these intelligible existences the transition into space and time, into corporiety and development, &c."\*

This theory, in all its forms, is inadmissible, because (1.) It is absolutely destitute of any assignable evidence, either in Scripture or in the sum total of human experience. It is confessedly a pure creation of the human brain to reconcile the fact that all men are born responsible, guilty sinners with the speculative assumption that a moral agent cannot be responsible for its moral character, unless that moral character be self-determined by a previous unbiassed self-decision of the moral agent himself. (2.) This doctrine is plainly inconsistent with all the Scriptures teach us, either as to the origin

and original state of man, or as to the origin of sin. As to the origin of man, it is said, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Gen. 2:7. As to his original state, it is said, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him," Gen. 1:27; 5:1; 9:6; which image Paul declares consists in "knowledge, righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4:24, and Col. 3:10. At the close of his six days of work God saw everything he had made, man included, "and behold it was very good." Gen. 1:31. "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." Eccles. 7:29. As to the origin of sin it is said, "BY ONE MAN sin entered into the world, and death by sin." "By one man's offence death reigned by one." "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Rom. 5:12–21. "In Adam all die." 1 Cor. 15:22. (3.) This theory is as much inconsistent with all the experience and phenomena of human life as it is with the words of revelation. It is impossible to see or rationally to imagine anything in a young child and its early growth, except the original development of the germ of a new existence. This view represents the unconscious infant, with its slowly unfolding capacities, to be the veteran agent in a high act of conscious and responsible apostasy, accomplished amid the scenes of a former life.

(4.) This theory obviously fails, even upon the hypothesis of its truth, to account for the enigma which it was invented to explain. There appears to the reason of man no propriety, no moral significance, in punishing a moral agent for a personal sin of which he is utterly and necessarily unconscious. What the Scriptures and our own consciences condemn us for is our present morally depraved state and actions. This is the burden of human guilt, and it is impossible that we can be rationally or rightfully punished on personal grounds for that of which we are universally and invincibly personally unconscious.\*

It remains for us, hence, to consider only those remaining solutions of the questions in hand which agree in maintaining these two points: (a) that all human souls are born into this world subject to a forfeiture justly incurred before their birth; and (b) that this forfeiture was incurred in the guilt of the first sin of Adam.

All possible opinions, embracing both these elements in common, may be classed under one of the three following heads: (a) that all human souls were created simultaneously with Adam, and in some way consented with him in his sin; (b) that all human souls were actually in Adam (physically), and, as guilty co-agents, acted with him in his apostasy; (c) the doctrine of the Reformed Churches that all human souls were in Adam (representatively) as our Federal Head, and are therefore justly liable, with him, for all of the penal consequences of his act.

1. The first view, which represents all souls being created with Adam and consenting with him, need not be considered here, since it is held by no one, and since it is obviously open to all the objections alleged against the pre-existence theory of Beecher, while it is destitute of all its advantages.

2. The second view is, that since Adam was the entire genus homo, as well as the first individual of the series into which, by his agency, the genus has been subsequently explicated, it follows that every individual member of that series was physically numerically one with him, and in the entirety of the genus a guilty co-agent with him in his act of apostasy; and hence that the whole genus is guilty of that sin, and hence each individual into which the genus is severally propagated is really, essentially and inherently as guilty of that sin as Adam was. This is the Realistic view of the nature of our connection with Adam, recently advocated by Dr. Samuel J. Baird, in his *Elohim Revealed*, and by Dr. William G. T. Shedd, both in his volume of *Essays* and in his "History of Christian Doctrine."

Shedd maintains that sin can be predicated only of the will, its states and acts, and only of such states of the will as are consequent upon its own previous unbiassed self-determination. He does not, however, limit these responsible self-determinations to single volitions, in which the soul consciously chooses or refuses particular objects, which is the superficial theory of "the self-determining power of the will" held by the Arminians; but he includes the profound original self-determination of the whole inward being to evil instead of good, which antedates consciousness, which corrupted our moral nature, and which, by thus producing a corrupt nature, determined the character of all subsequent responsible moral action. Will, in this sense, by an act of self-determination to evil before consciousness, is the responsible guilty author of its own depravity. And this act was performed not by each one of us personally, but by our common nature, the entire genus homo, which existed as a whole in Adam. Adam he regards not as a mere receptacle, containing millions of individuals, but as the entire genus, as well as the first individual of the series into which it has been explicated. This genus has since, through Adam's agency, become varied and manifold through its development by propagation into a series of individuals. The responsibility and guilt incurred by his apostasy, therefore, inheres necessarily in the entire nature, and is consequently propagated into and made the personal attribute of each individual of the series who have part with the common nature.

Although I object, for many serious reasons, to the Realistic philosophy of Shedd, I believe it covers a doctrine of original sin perfectly orthodox. Any doctrine, to be orthodox in the sense of the Reformed Churches, must include the two positions (a) that the entire moral corruption of nature which characterizes every human soul from birth is a consequence of Adam's act of apostasy; and (b) that it is a most just penal consequence of that sin. This Shedd and all the advocates of his doctrine can affirm in the most literal sense, and with their whole heart. To the question WHY this great evil is brought upon all new-born souls, the answer they give is that we, in virtue of our share in the common nature, were really and

numerically one with Adam, active co-agents with him in his great act of apostasy, and hence the depravity of nature in which they are born is the just punishment of our common sin. To the question HOW original sin is originated in the new-born soul, the answer is that it follows by natural law from the development of the genus through generation into a series of individuals.

It has in the last few years been affirmed that this Realistic theory of our numerical physical oneness with Adam is an essential element of the doctrine of the Reformed Churches as to the imputation of the guilt of his first sin to his descendants. We believe this to be utterly and transparently groundless.

(1.) The Realistic philosophy did not prevail in the schools during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and hence this mode of thought was as foreign to the general mental habits of men in that age as it is in this. It hence certainly follows that if this had been the doctrine of the Reformers and their great successors, they would have explicitly stated and illustrated this point in their writings, which it is notorious they have not done.

(2.) The Church from the beginning has been divided on the question how the individual souls of men are produced. Now the belief that souls as well as bodies are produced ex traduce from their parents is consistent with either the Realistic view of our union with Adam or the federal and representative view. President Edwards\* and Samuel Hopkins† both held the Traduce theory, yet both held the doctrine of Placæus or the Root Theory, which excludes that idea of antenatal forfeiture which it is the end and boast of the Realistic theory to vindicate. But, on the other hand, the doctrine that each soul is severally and immediately created by God at the instant of conception is obviously and absolutely inconsistent with the Realistic view of human nature. No Creationist can be a Realist, and no man who doubts between Creationism and Traducianism can be a conscious and intelligent Realist. Now, let it be observed (a) that Augustine, who is so often claimed as a Realist, never decided



between Traducianism and Creationism. Tertullian was the advocate of Traducianism, Jerome of Creationism. Augustine doubted. He wrote to Jerome, "Teach me now, I beg of you, what I shall teach; teach me what I shall hold, and tell me if souls are every day, one by one, called into being from nonentity in those who are daily being born ... I desire that that opinion may be mine, but I am not yet certain." It is simply and absolutely impossible that a man talking so should be a Realist. Augustine often says that the whole race, being many, were one in Adam. Turretin, quoting such an expression, explains it thus: "A unity not specific nor numerical, but partly a unity of origin, because all are from one blood, and partly unity of representation, because by the ordinance of God one represented the persons of all."\* (b) The doctrine of the Reformed Churches could not have been Realistic, because Calvin and the Reformed theologians, almost to a man, were Creationists. This Shedd confesses. Hagenbach † says: "Bellarmine, Calvin, and the theologians of the Reformed Church in general, advocated the theory of Creationism." He quotes in illustration of this, Calvin, Beza, Peter Martyr, Bucanus, and Polanus; and he certainly might have quoted many more, as Heidegger, Turretin, De Moor, Witsius, Goodwin, Owen, &c. Turretin says with respect to Creationism, "Priorem (creationem) Orthodoxi fere omnes sequuntur." Realism is not the doctrine of the Reformed Churches. The truth is, it was simply not dreamed of by the men who wrote our creeds.

(3.) Not one of the creeds in question uses any terms or forms peculiar to Realism. Calvin, Beza, Turretin, Heidegger, &c., all of whom explicitly repudiate Traducianism, an essential element of Realism, unite in affirming that we were in Adam representatively; that we really and truly sinned in him because his sin is our sin, really and truly our sin as to its federal responsibility. Really and truly, though not physically, but morally; not efficiently with respect to personal agency, but virtually with respect to representative agency and just legal accountability, his act was our act, and we truly sinned in him. This is precisely what Turretin and Heidegger say in the Formula Consensus Helvetica, canons 10–12: "God entered into

the COVENANT OF WORKS not only with Adam for himself, but also in him, as the head and root, with the whole human race." "There appears no way in which hereditary corruption could fall as a spiritual death upon the whole human race by the just judgment of God unless some sin of that race preceded, incurring the penalty of that death. For God, the supremely just Judge of all the earth, punishes none but the guilty." "For a double reason, therefore, first on account of the transgression and disobedience which he committed in the loins of Adam; and secondly, on account of the consequent hereditary corruption," &c. Yet it is certain that these men were not Realists. In their personal writings they specifically explain their meaning to be that we were in Adam representatively. Our Confession and Catechism use the same language in the same sense. "The first COVENANT made with man was a Covenant of Works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience," (the Realists do not claim that we were in Adam personally).\* "They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation."† "The COVENANT being made with Adam as a public person, (here there is a distinct definition of the representative theory of Adam's oneness with the race, and not directly nor by implication a hint of his being the genus homo, or of our generic nature acting as an impersonal co-agent with him in his apostasy,) not only for himself but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression."

The objections to this Realistic theory are many and very serious. (1.) No logical dividing line can ever be drawn between Realism and Pantheism. For (a) if all men, of all varieties, all generations and local habitations, are numerically one substance, why may not a higher genus unite all animals or all entities in one numerical substance, one in essence, multitudinous in its transient modes. And (b) if will be not personal, if many thousand years before we existed as persons we were guilty co-agents in a crime in virtue of the ancient

existence of the total genus of which we are personal modes, what evidence have we left that the personal mode we call ourselves may not relapse into the essence from which it sprang, and that all things phenomenal may not be passing moments in successive modifications (personal or otherwise) of one underlying substance?

(2.) This theory has no shadow of ground in the Scriptures. It is purely a creation of human speculation in the effort to reconcile, speculatively, the facts of human experience with our abstract notions of what justice requires on the part of God. It therefore, even if legitimate as a philosophical theory, can never be admitted for one moment to the place of a doctrine.

(3.) But even as an attempted reconciliation between the fact of innate sin and our ideas of divine justice, it breaks down utterly. All the ideas we have or possibly can have concerning sin, moral obligation, guilt, justice or the like, are derived from our own moral sense and from Scripture. But the moral sense of every man and Scripture teach us nothing about moral agency or responsibility which is not personal. An impersonal will, an impersonal obligation, an impersonal sin, are all as utterly inconceivable as a square circle or a red sound. No man's conscience is bound, however much his mind may be confused by such words. The idea of a generic nature, acting as a guilty co-agent with a person in a crime, even if it were true, throws no light upon the justice of subjecting persons not then existing to a terrible personal penalty.

(4.) Hence this figment of the numerical union of every person of the race in Adam practically collapses into the poor Root theory of Placæus and the New England divines, which denies that antenatal forfeiture this Realistic theory was excogitated to defend, and maintains that the guilt of his sin is not ours, and that the depravity of his nature, consequent upon his sin, is made ours by an ordinary physiological law of generation. The effort to prove man a sinner on this scheme ends by reducing sin to the category of transmissible physiological accidents, such as red hair or a prognathous skull.

(5.) If the entire genus was in Adam, the entire post-diluvian race was, in the same sense, in Noah. If we were guilty co-agents in the first sin of the one, because of numerical and physical identity, we must be, for the same reason and to the same extent, guilty of every one of the sins of Noah. And every existing person must literally, and by direct consequence of identity of nature, be as guilty of all the sins of all his ancestors as he is of his own personal transgressions.

(6.) If the guilt as well as the moral corruption of the generic nature is inherent in that nature, and passes into every individual who shares in it, the awful consequence would follow that the guilt for which the human race is cursed attaches as much to the human soul and body of the Lord Jesus as to any other. Corruption of nature may be removed by divine power, but guilt never, otherwise there would have been no need for an atonement, for the absolute necessity of which Shedd argues so earnestly and so admirably.

(7.) In Romans 5:12–21, Paul asserts that the principle upon which we share in the righteousness of Christ is identical with that upon which we share in the guilt of Adam. If, therefore, we share in the guilt of Adam, because we were as to essence numerically one with him, and hence, in the totality of the generic nature, guilty co-agents with him in the act of apostasy, it necessarily follows that we share in the righteousness of Christ, because the eternal Word took into personal union with himself the total genus electorum; and because, hence, we were numerically one with him on the cross, and meritorious co-agents with him in his obedience and expiatory death. But the Scriptures teach us of the sovereign election of persons to eternal life. There is no intimation of the election of a certain slice of the genus humanum. But if the genus be one spiritual substance, how can it be divided? After its division, does it cease to be one? It is too horrible to think of, that he should be in union with the entire genus including the lost. If generation does not separate the genus into parts, then Christ must be in union with the whole genus. But if generation does separate the genus into parts, then it follows (a) that Christ's human soul and body are only individual

parts of the genus, and Christ, therefore, can sustain no generic relation to us; (b) that the elect who were born before Christ were already parts separated from the genus, and therefore his perfect humanity could not be propagated through the oneness of the genus to them; (c) that all infants, being born into the world corrupt, and being regenerated subsequently to their separation from the common nature, cannot receive, by any conceivable form of propagation within the genus or from the genus from which they are separated, that perfect humanity which, as second Adam, he communicates to his seed.

President Edwards holds a position on this subject which it is difficult to classify, because it is inconsistent with itself. His doctrine of identity, which, in his work on Original Sin,\* he applies to our relation to Adam, allies him, as far as the question of antenatal forfeiture was concerned, with the high Realistic view just examined. According to him, there is no real causal connection between the being, mode or action of any created thing in any one moment with its being or condition the next moment. Everything which exists is in every successive moment the result of the perpetual efflux of the vis creatrix of God. There is no real identity, therefore, no real connection of any kind, between the man and his state and acts any one moment of his life and the same man any other moment. It is a direct and purely sovereign act of God which constitutes the sameness that we call identity between created moments of being in themselves really different. It is God's bare will that makes any one of us identical with, and therefore responsible for, his youthful self. By a mere volition, he might make the age of one man identical with, and responsible for, the youth of another. As a matter of fact, he has pleased to make each one of us identical with (literally), and responsible for, the probationary life of Adam. Hence we are literally, and to the same degree, and on the same ground, and through the same method, identical with Adam and responsible for his sin, as he was himself, and as we are with respect to our own acts of disobedience. This is the doctrine of the antecedent and immediate imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity put upon the highest

ground possible. They are punished for it for the precise reason that he is punished for it—because they did it as much as they ever do anything, and because they were he as much as they ever are anything.

On the other hand, Edwards inconsistently teaches, and evidently makes his own thoroughly the doctrine of Placæus and Stapfer, that we are condemned with Adam only mediately through, and in consequence of, our having, by natural generation, corrupt natures like his. The corrupt nature is a natural result of his corruption, and the condemnation is consequent to the corruption. The corruption is not regarded as itself a punishment, and hence, on this side of his doctrine, Edwards does not teach the existence of any judicial ground of forfeiture previous to and conditioning the birth of mankind.

Having thus, by a process of exhaustion, shown that all of the prominent alternatives of the orthodox doctrine on this subject are alike unsatisfactory and unauthenticated, we have raised a powerful presumption in its favour, in spite of the large residuum of difficulty which confessedly remains in the question after all is said. The doctrine of the Reformed Church is that every human soul is born into the world under forfeiture resulting from our just legal responsibility for Adam's action as our federal head and representative. The several elements involved in this doctrine are as follows.

1. By a sovereign creative act Adam was constituted the natural head and root of all mankind.

2. According to a principle observed in the case of the angels, and we believe universal, God created Adam with a nature positively holy and inclined to good, yet fallible, and made his future character and destiny to depend upon his obedience for a definite period, called a probation, during which he remained in a condition of instable moral equilibrium. The alternatives placed before him were, that if he obeyed for the term appointed he should be confirmed in moral

excellence and rendered infallible and blessed for ever; and, on the other hand, if he disobeyed, his trial should be, ipso facto, closed, and he himself morally degraded in character and made an heir of misery for ever. This most natural and reasonable divine constitution is commonly called the Covenant of Works or the Covenant of Life.

3. In making this Covenant with Adam, and assigning him a favourable state and definite period of probation, God, acting as the guardian of the whole human race, and for their benefit, provided for all Adam's descendants the best conceivable conditions of moral probation for a race of moral agents propagated through an animal nature such as mankind, by appointing Adam their federal head and representative, and making their permanent character and destiny to depend upon his conduct during his period of personal trial. The ground in reason and right of this divine appointment of Adam as the federal head and representative of his descendants, as far as made known to us, is (a) the indefeasible right of God sovereignly to order the probation of the subjects of his moral government according to the pleasure of his infinitely wise, righteous, and benevolent will. (b) The evident fact that in the arrangement in question, God as the faithful Guardian of his creatures, has ordered their probation under the very best conditions—the holy and adult Adam in the virgin earth being in a condition for passing the trials of a moral probation far more favourable than any single infant or any number of infants developing into childhood could ever be. (c) Adam's natural relation to his descendants made him the proper person to represent them. Without going the length of Realism, it appears probable that the divinely ordained representative and substitutionary constitution, alike of the probation in Adam and the redemption in Christ, is conditioned upon the generic unity of men as constituting a race propagated by generation. (d) The headship of the first Adam is an inseparable part of that infinitely glorious system which culminates in the headship of the second Adam.

4. It is involved in this covenant headship that all Adam's descendants were federally embraced in him and represented by

him, so that in case either of obedience or of disobedience the corresponding reward or penalty is by the conditions of the covenant as justly and as really theirs as it is his.

5. It plainly follows that Adam's first sin, which, ipso facto, closed his probation and theirs, although it be as respects us a peccatum alienum when it is regarded simply as an action, is, notwithstanding, when considered in respect to its guilt or legal responsibility or obligation to punishment, as justly and as really ours as it is his, since by the law of the covenant he acted as our agent, and we are bound by his action. In one sense the sin is very plainly his, and not ours. It is ours only as the covenant makes our moral standing to depend upon his action. The personal character of one man never can be transferred to another. But, on the other hand, it is plain one man may be, under certain conditions, justly and morally responsible for the action of another man. Now, it is precisely the reatus, the legal responsibility the federal obligation to punishment incurred by Adam's sin, that is justly charged to each of his descendants. In this sense only is his sin their sin. And in this sense it is just as much and as really theirs as his.

6. Consequently God, by a strictly judicial, not sovereign, act, justly imputes Adam's apostatizing act to us: that is, God simply acts upon the facts of the case, treating us as legally responsible for Adam's sin, and justly obnoxious to its penalty. This imputation proceeds upon no fiction, makes no confusion between Adam's personality and our personalities, between Adam's agency and our agency, presumes no absurd transfer of Adam's personal subjective moral character to us, nor confusion of his subjective states with ours; but it simply (a) recognizes our legal oneness with Adam, and consequent common responsibility with him for the guilt of his public sin; (b) consequently charges the guilt of his sin to our account; and (c) most righteously treats us according to the demerit of that sin.

When we say that Adam's sin was imputed to us, the Reformed Churches have always understood by it that the guilt or legal



obligation to suffer the penalty of Adam's sin is judicially charged to our account as the legal ground of penal treatment. That this is the true sense of the scriptural phrase to impute sin will be found sufficiently proved in the eleventh chapter of this book.

7. Hence we are all born into the world under an antecedent just forfeiture of all natural rights, and righteously subject to all the penal consequences of apostasy under the terms of the Covenant of Works; that is, to the immediate penal withdrawal of that communion and support of the Spirit of God which is the condition of spiritual life and blessedness. Connate spiritual death, therefore, befalls us as the just punishment of the public sin of Adam, the penal responsibility for which is ours as truly as it is his. This imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to us, or this practical regarding and treating us as responsible for it, is (a) judicial, not sovereign, and (b) immediate and antecedent to the corruption of our nature, and to personal sinful actions, not mediately through them nor consequent upon them. It is to be remembered, however, that the antenatal forfeiture, involving the privation of those spiritual influences upon which spiritual and physical life depends, is the only penalty which comes upon us, consequent to Adam's sin, immediately and antecedently to our own action. Other temporal and eternal punishments are doubtless necessary consequents (unless God mercifully intervenes) of that withdrawment of God's Spirit which is the immediate penalty of Adam's sin; nevertheless, the Scriptures always represent these as being properly and immediately the punishment of our own personal sins of disposition and action. This matter is clearly and fully stated, in the sense I have above given, by Turretin.\* The doctrine of the Reformed Churches he sums up in the following unmistakable words: "The question returns to these terms, whether the sin of Adam, not any one, but the first sin (apostatizing act), not his sinful habit (that is, subjective state), but his act, is imputed to all his posterity proceeding from him by ordinary generation, by an imputation not mediate and consequent, but immediate and antecedent? They with whom we are now holding controversy either deny imputation absolutely or only admit a mediate imputation; we,

on the other hand, with the orthodox, affirm alike that an imputation is to be conceded, and that it is immediate and antecedent."

If, then, the question be asked WHY? on what basis of justice does God bring new-born creatures into existence under such penal conditions that total corruption of nature, the sum and root of all other evils in every case accrues? the answer is, that their natural rights were forfeited by the public act of their federal representative before they were born, and that they are in fact as truly, penally responsible for his sin as he was himself.

If, on the other hand, the question be asked HOW inherent moral corruption originates in a newly-created soul and yet the Creator of the soul be not the author of the sin, it must be confessed, in reply, that the Scriptures give us no direct solution, and that various answers have been given by men equally orthodox.

1. Some have maintained that, according to the great physiological law that like begets like, the depraved nature of Adam has been propagated to his descendants through their bodies, and that each soul newly created pure is morally corrupted the instant it is brought into union with its body, in which the vitiating virus resides.

The fatal objection to this view is that it is inconsistent with the essential nature of sin. Sin is a quality or accident neither of elementary matter nor of material organization. It can exist only as a moral quality of a rational spirit. A disordered condition of body may, as we all experience, occasion in an already apostate soul inordinate animal passions, but it could never cause in a holy soul aversion from God, pride, malice and other purely spiritual sins.

2. Another and by far more prevalent form of the ex traduce theory is that the souls, as well as the bodies, of children are propagated from their parents, and that thus the depraved nature of Adam has, by a natural law, been reproduced in his offspring in successive generations. Jerome held to the immediate creation of each soul at

the time of conception. Tertullian held to this doctrine of the generation of souls. Augustine was unwilling to decide the question either way. The Lutherans have generally held the doctrine of traduction, and the Reformed almost universally have maintained creationism.

3. The great majority of the Reformed theologians, since they maintain that each soul is a new and immediate product of creation have consequently held (a) that the only penalty inflicted by God on the new-created soul, as the immediate punishment of Adam's public sin, is privative, the penal withholding of those spiritual influences upon which the moral and spiritual life of the creature depends. (b.) That (as has been always held from Augustine to Edwards) sin in its origin\* is not a positive entity concreated in the soul, but a privative vice, resulting necessarily from the creation of the soul into a condition of justly incurred condemnation and alienation from God. Their common declaration was that innate corruption of nature is propagated neque per corpus, neque per animam, sed per culpam—not through the generation, either of the body or of the mind, but as a righteous punishment for crime. Ursinus, in his Explication of the Heidelberg Catechism, of which he was the principal author, says, "Original sin is communicated, neither through the body, nor through the soul, but through the guilt of parents, on account of which God, while he creates souls, at the same time deprives them of that original righteousness and of those gifts which he had conferred upon the parents upon this condition, that they should confer them or forfeit them for their posterity just as they retained or lost them for themselves." The Reformed doctrine therefore is, that corruption of nature is the penal consequent of Adam's sin, and that it is propagated, not on the physiological principles upon which it is the glory of the disciples of Placæus and of the New England Theology to rely, but by the penal deprivation of the new-born soul of those influences of the Holy Spirit upon which its moral life depends.

We believe that the doctrine thus stated is substantiated by the following considerations.

1. This doctrine of the Federal Representation of Adam, instead of adding anything either of mystery or of apparent severity to the undeniable facts of God's providential dealing with the human race, is, as I have shown by comparison, more rational than any other explanation of these facts ever suggested by the ingenuity of man. On the hypothesis that a race of moral agents, united to an animal organization and propagated through it in successive generations, as man is, was to be created, the conceivable alternatives are—either (a) that a probationary trial, such as it appears God imposes upon all moral agents as the condition of their being confirmed in indefeasible holiness and blessedness, should, in their case, be absolutely forborne, and they be endowed with the highest graces without passing through the conditions required of all other holy creatures; or (b) that each infant should stand his own trial severally as he struggles through twilight development of his corporeal and mental nature; or (c) the probation of the entire race must be held in the person of its holy adult progenitor, in the fresh vigour of his perfect manhood, surrounded with the purity of the new-born earth. Of the propriety of the first alternative we are utterly unable to judge. The execution of the second alternative would have certainly involved the whole race in ruin. It is certain, on the other hand, that the third alternative was the one actually chosen by God as the infinitely wise and benevolent, as well as righteous, Guardian of the interests of all rational spirits created in his likeness, for the benefit of the race in this case concerned. If Adam had succeeded, and we had received the excellent graces conditioned on that success, no human being would have ever doubted the surpassing wisdom and justice of the entire constitution.

2. The biblical record unquestionably represents Adam as sustaining a public and representative position (a.) He was named ADAM, that is, man, the man, the generic man. (b.) Everything that was commanded, or threatened, or promised him related to his descendants as much as to him personally. Thus "obedience," "a cursed earth," "liability to death," "painful child-bearing," concern us and our families as much as they concerned him. The

Protevangelion, or promise of redemption through the Seed of the woman, which was given to our first parents in immediate connection with their fall, of course is a gospel for us as well as for the original parties.

3. It is an undeniable matter of fact that the very penalty which God denounced upon Adam has in all its particulars come upon every one of his descendants, from their birth upward. Death, physical and spiritual, was the penalty denounced and executed on Adam the very day he transgressed; and in the same sense it has been executed upon each of his descendants at birth. If these were penal inflictions in the case of Adam, they must be penal inflictions in the case of each one of his children.

4. The truth we contend for is expressly taught in Scripture, Rom. 5:12–21. In this passage, so plain in spite of all that men have done to confuse it, Paul says that death, which is the penalty of the law, came upon all men through the sin of one man. This great evil could not be inflicted as a penalty for violations of the law of Moses, because it had been inflicted for ages before the law of Moses was given. It could not be inflicted upon individuals as a penalty incurred by their personal sins, because it is inflicted upon infants, who have never been guilty of personal transgression. It follows, so Paul argues, that by one man's offence death hath reigned, and that by the offence of one man judgment hath come upon all men to condemnation. Thus Paul in this passage affirms in precise terms the full doctrine of the Reformed Churches, to wit: (a) that the law of death, spiritual and physical, under which we are born, is a consequent of Adam's public disobedience, and (b) that it is a "judgment," a "condemnation"—that is, a penal consequent of Adam's sin—see also 1 Cor. 15:21, 22.

5. The apostle proves in the above passage that there is a precise parallelism between the way in which our "condemnation" follows from the disobedience of Adam, and in which our "justification" or "being made righteous" follows from the obedience of Christ. Rom. 5:18. "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all

men to condemnation; EVEN SO by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." If it be, then, the great central principle of the gospel that the merit or rewardableness of Christ's obedience, graciously imputed or set to the account of the believer, is the legal ground of his justification, it follows of necessary consequence, if the apostle's assertion of the parallelism of the two is correct, that the demerit or rightful obligation to punishment inherent in Adam's sin, imputed or charged to the account of each of his natural descendants, is the legal ground of their antenatal forfeiture. These two complementary doctrines, thus bound together in the Scriptures, stand or fall together. It is an historical fact that whenever the one has been denied or radically misconceived, the other has soon fallen with it, and thus the whole gospel been subverted.

6. The federal or representative principle upon which this doctrine is grounded is conformed to the entire analogy of all God's dispensations with mankind. Witness God's covenants with Adam, Noah, Abraham, and David. Witness the constitutions of both the Jewish and Christian Churches, in which the rights of infants are predetermined by the status of their parents. Hugh Miller draws the following deduction from a scientific review of the world and of the history of the various races and nations of its human inhabitants. "It is a fact, broad and palpable as the economy of nature, that parents do occupy a federal position, and that the lapsed progenitors, when cut off from civilization and all external interference of a missionary character, become the founders of a lapsed race. The iniquities of the parents are visited upon their children. In all such instances it is man left to the freedom of his own will that is the deteriorator of man. The doctrine of the fall, in its purely theologic aspects, is a doctrine that must be apprehended by faith; but it is at least something to find that the analogies of science, instead of running counter to it, run in precisely the same line. It is one of the inevitable consequences of that nature of man which the Creator 'bound fast in fate,' while he left free his will, that the free-will of the parent should become the destiny of the child."\*

7. It is a very strong presumption in favour of the truth of this doctrine in the form in which I have stated it above, that beyond question it is the common doctrine of the Romish, Lutheran, and Reformed Churches. It is accurately stated in the writings of Bellarmine and Pascal. As to the Reformed Church, the quotations I have given above, from the Formula Consensus Helvetica, from the Westminster Confession and Catechism, and from Ursinus and Turretin, must suffice, in connection with the following from Theodore Beza, the great pupil and friend and successor of John Calvin. Writing on Rom. 5:12, he says: "Two things should be considered in original sin, namely, guilt and corruption; which, although they cannot be separated, yet ought to be distinguished accurately. For as Adam by the commission of sin first was made guilty of the wrath of God, then, as being guilty, he underwent as the punishment of sin the corruption of soul and body; so also he transmitted to posterity a nature in the first place guilty, next corrupted. Concerning the propagation of guilt, the apostle is properly teaching in this passage, in contrast with which the imputation of the obedience of Christ is set forth. Hence it follows that that guilt which precedes corruption is by the imputation of Adam's disobedience, as the remission of sins and the abolition of guilt is by the imputation of the obedience of Christ. Nothing can be plainer."

## **CHAPTER VIII:**

### **CHRIST WAS, IN THE STRICT JEWISH SENSE, A SACRIFICE. THE JEWISH**

## **SACRIFICES WERE STRICTLY PIACULAR, AND THEY WERE TYPICAL OF THE SACRIFICE OF OUR LORD**

OUR third argument is derived from the fact that the Scriptures constantly represent Christ as dying, and thus effecting the salvation of his people as a SACRIFICE. The points involved in this argument are the following. 1. From the dawn of sacred history the first and everywhere prevailing mode in which the true people of God worshipped him with acceptance was in the use of bloody sacrifices. From the family of Adam this usage prevailed among the inhabitants of all countries and the votaries of all religions up to the time of Christ. And these sacrifices were universally regarded by those offering them as vicarious sufferings, expiating sin and propitiating God. 2. The sacrifices which God ordained under the Mosaic economy were certainly expiatory. 3. They were, moreover, certainly typical of the sacrifice of Christ; that is, Christ, in dying, expiated the sins of his own people on precisely the same principles that the Jewish sacrifices expiated the offerer's violation of the ceremonial law.

I. That sacrifices originated in the family of Adam, that down to the time of Christ they continued the inseparable accompaniment of all acceptable worship, and that they were diffused among the people of all lands and all religions, are simple matters of fact admitted by all. It has, however, been much disputed whether they originated in an immediate divine revelation, and whether their observance was at first imposed by divine authority. The early Christian Fathers generally, the learned and orthodox Outram, the great body of Socinian, rationalistic, and Broad Church writers, as Maurice and Bushnell, have answered this question in the negative; while the Unitarians, Priestly, Dr. John Young, and the great body of orthodox divines, have decided affirmatively. This is just as we should have expected to find it. The question as to the origin and character of the



primitive sacrifices is not necessarily bound up with the far more important questions which concern the Mosaic sacrifices and the sacrifice of Christ. Men may take orthodox views as to the divine origin of sacrifice, while they utterly misconceive its true nature and design. Yet truth is so self-consistent in all its parts, that it is eminently natural for all those who believe that the Mosaic sacrifices were piacular, and that they were typical of the work of Christ, to believe that the whole system of primitive sacrifices was ordained by God to be typical of that great event.

At any rate, their divine origin appears to be established with sufficient certainty by the following considerations. (1.) It is inconceivable that either the propriety or probable utility of presenting material gifts to the invisible God, and especially of attempting to propitiate God by the slaughter of his irrational creatures, should ever have occurred to the human mind as a spontaneous suggestion. Every instinctive sentiment and every presumption of reason must, in the first instance, have appeared to exclude them. (2.) On the hypothesis that God intended to save men, it is inconceivable that he should have left them without instruction upon a question so vital as that concerned in the means whereby they might approach into his presence and conciliate his favour. (3.) It is characteristic of all God's self-revelations, under every dispensation, that he discovers himself as jealous of any use by man of unauthorized methods of worship or service. He uniformly insists upon this very point of his sovereign right of dictating methods of worship and service, as well as terms of acceptance. The religion of unfallen men might, well enough, proceed on a basis of natural reason and conscience acting spontaneously. But since the salvation of the sinner must be only of grace, the religion of the sinner, in the principles on which it rests, the methods by which it is realized, and the very forms whereby it is to be expressed, must originate with God, and be dictated by him to us. Thus, all manner of "will-worship" and "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," are forbidden with equal emphasis in both the Old and New Testaments. Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7; Isa. 29:13; Col. 2:23. (4.) As a matter of fact,

the very first recorded instance of acceptable worship in the family of Adam brings before us bleeding sacrifices, and seals them emphatically with the divine approbation. They appear in the first recorded act of worship. Gen. 4:3, 4. They are emphatically approved by God as soon as they appear. From that time down to the era of Moses they continued to be universally the characteristic mode in which the people of God worship him acceptably. Gen. 8:20–22; 15:9, 10; 22:2–13; Job. 1:5; 42:8.

That these primitive sacrifices were strictly piacular appears to be certain—(1.) From the manner in which the sacred record presents the direct effect of the sacrifice of Noah. Immediately after he left the ark "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a savour of rest;\* and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake," &c. Gen. 8:20–22. (2.) Also from what is said of the occasion and design of the sacrifices of Job: "His sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day ... And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job all the days." Job 1:4, 5.\* (3.) The bleeding sacrifices which prevailed among all races of mankind, and the votaries of all the ethnic religions from the ages preceding all written history, were certainly regarded as piacular. This fact is freely admitted by Bähr and by all the advocates of the Moral Theory of the sacrifice of Christ.

Such writers as Jowett and Maurice, Young and Bushnell, reject the plain teaching of the Bible on the subject of vicarious and piacular sacrifices, because it outrages their instinctive moral judgments and sentiments. Maurice, Young, and Bushnell maintain that the sacrifices of the Mosaic institute were not piacular—that they were designed to express the repentance and spiritual aspirations of the worshipper, and not to effect the propitiation of God. Jowett, more

consistent than they in his Rationalism, as he far surpasses them in learning and genius, appears to admit that the sacrifices of the Old Testament were piacular, but denies that they are so far forth true types of the sacrifice of Christ. "Heathen and Jewish sacrifices rather show us what the sacrifice of Christ was not than what it was."\* Again, he affirms that "to state this view of the doctrine at length (that is, the orthodox view) is but to translate the New Testament into the language of the Old." † We point them to the fact that sacrifices, undeniably vicarious and piacular, have prevailed everywhere among all nations from before the dawn of history down, at least, to the Christian era. They respond by admitting the fact alleged to its utmost extent, but maintain that it is the result and expression of crude civilization and gross superstition. Michaëlis attributes the universal prevalence of piacular sacrifices to a *sensus communis*, having its ground in human nature. Thompson argues the same principle at length in the second of his Bampton Lectures. Bishop Butler says: "By the general prevalence of propitiatory sacrifices over the heathen world, this notion of repentance alone being sufficient to expiate guilt appears to be contrary to the general sense of mankind." This reduces the question to a direct issue between the cultivated moral consciousness of a few "advanced thinkers," self-styled, of the nineteenth century, on the one hand, and on the other, the natural moral instincts of all races and nations. This issue is made not by us, but by the "advanced thinkers" themselves. It appears to be a *reductio ad absurdum*, and a finished specimen of its kind.

II. That the sacrifices instituted by God, under the Mosaic economy, were vicarious and expiatory is susceptible of abundant proof. The death of the bleeding sacrifice was a *pœna vicaria*, a vicarious punishment, the life of the victim being substituted in the stead of the life of the offerer.

This is the traditional and orthodox view of both the Jewish and the Christian Churches, held in common by all writers of authority, from the Rabbins and the early Fathers down to very recent times. Even

among modern German writers it is supported by many rationalists, such as Gesenius, De Wette, Bruno Bauer, &c., who have no interest in any relation the Jewish sacrifices may have to the Christian atonement, as well as orthodox expositors of the first eminence for learning and genius, as Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Lange, Ebrard, Thomasius, Kahnis and Kurtz. As I shall show below, this view is plainly taught by the inspired record of the institution, observance and history of the Mosaic sacrifices, and also by the entire mass of whatsoever traditions related to the subject remain in the world.

The old Socinian view of sacrifice taught in the last century by the Latitudinarian Sykes and the Unitarian John Taylor, of Norwich, has in this generation been revived and advocated with great ability by Bähr, and through him disseminated among classes of men not confessedly Socinian, yet unwilling to accept the hereditary faith of the Church. His opinion was, that the death of the victim, instead of being a vicarious punishment, was no essential part of the transaction, but merely incidental as a means of affording the blood. The essence of the whole sacrificial service, according to Bähr, was the sprinkling of the blood, as the bearer of the life, upon God's altar, thus symbolizing the giving away of the offerer's life to God; "in other words, his returning back again to God, by repentance and faith and self-dedication, after being separated from him by sin." Jowett appears to give up the Jewish sacrifices as being as entirely unjustifiable as those of the heathen. He says, "Heathen and Jewish sacrifices rather show us what the death of Christ was not than what it was. They are the dim, vague, rude, almost barbarous expression of that want in human nature which has received satisfaction in him only." "The death of Christ is not a sacrifice in the Levitical sense." "Not the sacrifice, nor the satisfaction, nor the ransom, but the greatest moral act ever done in the world—the act, too, of one in our likeness—is the assurance to us that God in Christ is reconciled to the world."\*

Maurice, not being sufficiently advanced to reject with Jowett the Old Testament sacrifices as barbarous, must needs agree with Bähr

in making them mere symbolical expressions of the subjective state of the offerer, who presented his victim in place of himself as an expression of "his sense of gratitude, of obligation, of dependence." He admits that the inspired apostle applied the Greek words ἱλασμὸς and ἱλαστήριον to Christ, as sacrificed for us, in the sense which those words had always born in classical Greek. Yet he says that in its Christian use its uniform "heathen sense must be, not modified, but inverted."\* That is, Paul chose a word which always had meant, and which could only signify to his readers, the very opposite of what he intended to say. An admirable canon of interpretation, to be applied whenever the apostle says the opposite of what Maurice is willing to believe!

Bushnell is essentially in agreement with Maurice and Bähr. With him the Jewish sacrifices were the liturgy of the Jewish religion, a transactional liturgy, expressing the confession of guilt and repentance by the worshipper before God as a reconciling God. He holds that the only effect of the sacrifices was lustral. "Here, then, is the grand terminal of all sacrifice; taken as a liturgy, it issues in making clean; purges, washes, sprinkles, purifies, sanctifies, carries away pollution; in that sense absolves the guilty."

Dr. John Young, of Edinburgh, holds precisely the same view of the Mosaic sacrifices. "When a Jew brought his sacrifice to the altar, two distinct ideas were presented to his mind. On the one hand, here was a merciful divine provision for his animal life; on the other hand, the God who had made this provision was here laying claim to the reverence and love of his heart, and demanding his willing return and self-surrender. Every fresh offering was meant to be a new return and self-surrender to his God."

This theory has been fully sifted and refuted by Kurtz and Fairbairn. Its only ground is a moral (so-called) sentiment which refuses to accept the doctrine of expiation so plainly read by the whole Church in the words of Scripture. It is utterly without support, either in the natural sense of the Pentateuch, in the New Testament application of

the law to the gospel, or in the opinions of ancient Jews or Christians, who lived when sacrifices were in habitual use.

The bleeding sacrifices under the Mosaic law were of three kinds; the sin and trespass-offering, the burnt-offering and the peace-offering. The presentation, the imposition of hands and confession of sins, and the slaughtering, were the same in all. "But in the remaining functions, the sprinkling of the blood, the burning, and the sacrificial meal, we find characteristic differences, inasmuch as each one of these three stands out by itself as a peculiarly emphasized and prominent feature in one of the three kinds of sacrifice. The sprinkling of the blood was the culminating point in the sin-offering. In the others, it evidently fell into the background, the blood being merely poured around upon the altar; but in the sin-offerings the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, in which the whole worth of the altar culminated, were appointed as the object upon which the blood was to be sprinkled. In some cases even this appeared insufficient, and the blood was taken into the Holy Place, where it was sprinkled upon the horns of the altar of incense, towards the curtain before the Cappeloth, and sometimes even upon the Cappeloth itself, in the Most Holy Place. In the burnt-offering, עלה, an ascension or going up, and כליל, the whole, on the other hand, the act of burning was the culminating point. Lastly, the sacrificial meal was the main point and real characteristic of the peace-offering."\* From this we obtain a by no means unimportant insight into the nature and distinguishing characteristic of the sacrifices. There was confession of sin and the infliction of death, the vicarious penalty, in all alike; but in the case of the sin and trespass-offering, expiation of some special sin, the removal of some special penalty involving exclusion from the covenant of grace, is the great thing intended. In the case of the burnt-offering, atonement was made for sin as a constant habit and condition in a more general sense, and together with this there was an expression made of the entire consecration of the life and substance of the worshipper to his God. In the case of the peace-offering, the characteristic feature was, that after the sin had been confessed, imposed and atoned, the fat and richer portions of the

sacrifice were burnt upon the altar, and thus given to Jehovah, while the offerer and his friends feasted upon the remaining portions. "This was the symbol of established friendship with God and near communion with him in the blessings of his kingdom, and was associated in the minds of the worshippers with feelings of peculiar joy and gladness."

As it is undeniable that it was the sin and trespass-offering that were most specially typical of the work of Christ, and since it was in these that the idea of expiation was most explicitly set forth, it will abundantly suffice our purpose if we establish the truth of our general position with regard to them. It is, moreover, altogether unnecessary that we should complicate our investigation by discussing the long-debated and really obscure question as to the distinction between the sin-offering and the trespass-offering. Whatever that difference may have been, it can sustain no relation to our present discussion. As far as expiating sin and propitiating God by a *pœna vicaria* is concerned, "as the sin-offering is, so is the trespass-offering; there is one law for them." Lev. 7:7.

I shall attempt to make good my position, that the sin-offering expiated sin and propitiated God on the principle of vicarious punishment, by noticing (a) their occasions; (b) the qualifications and sacrificial designations of the victims; (c) the ritual of the sacrifice; (d) their declared effects; (e) the testimony of the inspired prophets, and of ancient heathens, Jews and Christians.

1. The law of the sin-offering is recorded Lev. 4–6:13. From this record it is plain, (a) that the occasion of the sin-offering was some special sin; (b) that this included moral as well as ceremonial transgressions, lying, stealing, false swearing, licentiousness, &c.; (c) that sins were in this respect divided into two classes—those which admitted of expiation and those which did not. Sins of ignorance and infirmity fell into the former class, and sins committed "presumptuously" or "with a high hand" were embraced in the latter class. The point to be observed is, that whenever a priest, or the

whole congregation, or a ruler, or one of the common people, became conscious of a sin, the punishment of which, if unexpiated, would have involved exclusion from the fellowship of the covenant people, he, or in the case of the whole congregation, their representatives the priests, were directed to bring the bullock or the goat and offer it in his stead.\*

2. The bleeding sacrifices, which were to suffer death in the place of men, were to be exclusively either sheep or bullocks or goats, or pigeons in a few cases. These last, in the economy of Jewish life, took the place occupied by the domestic fowl among us, and all classes were chosen from the highest classes of clean animals, those most immediately associated with man, and therefore of all possible living substitutes for man's life the most nearly human. These were to be selected, each individual the most perfect of its kind as to age, health and physical excellence. Lev. 22:20–27; Ex. 22:30; 29:28, &c. This physical perfection of the animal was symbolical of spiritual perfection in the man, and indicated that only an innocent and pure life could be accepted as a sacrificial substitute in the stead of a polluted one; thus typically foreshadowing the characteristics of him who was offered as "a lamb without blemish and without spot." And yet, notwithstanding the ceremonial perfection of the selected victim, considered in itself, the common name for them, considered as vicarious sacrifices bearing and expiating another's sins, were  $\text{חַטָּאת}$ , sin (Lev. 4:3; 8:20–28), and  $\text{זָבַח}$ , guilt (Lev. 5:6, 16, 19, &c., &c.) The victim is called sin or guilt, obviously because its entire character as a sacrifice is summed up in this, that it is a substitute for a sinner, and that its death is the punishment of sin. In perfect consistency with the type it is declared of the ever-immaculate Jesus that he who, considered in himself, knew no sin, was, as our vicarious sacrifice "made SIN for us." 2 Cor. 5:21.

3. The truth we contend for is made very plain by the ritual of the sacrifice, or the prescribed ceremonies, which preceded and accompanied the slaughter of the victims. These were—



(1.) The laying on of hands. This is prescribed in the case of all kinds of bleeding sacrifices, including the burnt and peace-offering. Lev. 1:4; 3:2; 4:4–15; 16:21; 2 Chron. 29:23. This is a natural and expressive symbol of transfer from the person imposing to the person or thing upon which they are imposed. Thus it is used to designate a personal substitute or representative. Compare Num. 8:10 and 8:16. Also to communicate official character and authority. Deut. 34:9; Acts 6:6; 1 Tim. 4:14. And to communicate the virtue which went out from Christ and his apostles when they wrought miraculous cures. Matt. 9:18; Mark 6:5; Acts 9:12, 17. Now the sacrifice had its reason only in the sin of the offerer, and the displeasure of God with him in consequence. He appeared before God with his sacrifice in his hand as a sinner. He uniformly accompanied the laying on of hands with the confession of sins. Outram quotes from the rabbinical writings the following "Form of deprecation used by a sinner offering a piacular sacrifice, who said with his own mouth, while his hands were laid upon the head of the victim: 'I beseech thee, O Lord; I have sinned, I have trespassed, I have rebelled; I have done this or that ... but now I repent, and let THIS be my expiation.' " Aaron Ben Chajim says, "Where there is no confession of sins, there is no imposition of hands, because imposition of hands belongs to confession of sins."\* When the sacrifice had reference to the sin of an individual, the man placed his own hands on the head of the victim and confessed. When it had reference to the sins of the whole congregation, the elders of the congregation (Lev. 4:15) laid their hands upon the head of the bullock and confessed as the representatives of the whole body. Hence, in either case, he or they could have transferred to the victim nothing more than the guilt or obligation to punishment incidental to his or their sin. This transference is expressly declared to be effected in the case of the sin-offering for the people on the great day of atonement. Lev. 16:7–22. The two goats presented at the door of the tabernacle are expressly said to be one victim; "two kids of the goats for a sin-offering," "so that the sacrifice consisted of two, merely from the natural impossibility of otherwise giving a full representation of what was to be done; the one being designed more

especially to exhibit the means, the other the effect of the atonement." That the two kids form but one sacrifice is plain from the entire reading of the passage. They are called so in verse fifth. They are brought and presented together to the Lord. The Lord decides by the lot which shall die and which shall go into the wilderness. The one stands by and is atoned for by the dying victim (see Hebrew of verse 10), and then bears away the sins thus expiated into the land of forgetfulness for ever. "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, PUTTING THEM UPON THE HEAD OF THE GOAT; ... and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited."\*

(2.) The slaying of the victim. The original sentence pronounced by God upon all sin, from the commencement, was death. Gen. 2:17; 3:3, 17, 19. The apostle declares that the principle abides for ever that "the wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23. To this the whole Mosaic law was conformed; for "without shedding of blood is no remission." Heb. 9:22. The sinner having presented his victim, and laying his hands upon its head, confessed and transferred his sin upon its head; "it was accepted for him, to make atonement for him," Lev. 4; and he executed upon it with his own hands the penalty incurred by the sins he had transferred. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul," Lev. 17:11; that is, the life or soul of the victim atones for the life or soul of the offerer, having been judicially executed as its substitute. Hence the altar of sacrifice, which was in an eminent sense the place where Jehovah met and held intercourse with his guilty children, was called by a name (מזבח) which etymologically signifies "the place of slaughter;" "for the way to fellowship with God for guilty beings could only be found through an avenue of death."

(3.) The sprinkling of the blood. All that precedes, the imposition of hands, the confession of sins, and the infliction of the vicarious

penalty of death, were common to all the bleeding sacrifices. In the case of sin and trespass-offering, in addition to these there supervened the sprinkling of the blood upon the altar, and especially upon the horns or more exalted and sacred parts of the altar. Lev. 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34. In the case of a sin-offering in behalf of the high priest and of the whole congregation, the blood was carried within the Holy Place, and sprinkled before the veil, and smeared upon the altar of incense. Lev. 4:5, and following. On the great day of atonement, when the most exact representation the ancient worship could afford of the all-perfect atonement of Christ was given, the blood was taken into the Holy of Holies itself, and sprinkled upon the Caphoreth. This brought the blood, which had thus vicariously discharged the penalty incurred by the worshipper, into immediate contact with God. It signified that the vicarious satisfaction was accepted, and that in each case the soul-bearing blood of the victim avails to cover from the judicial sight of God the sins attached to the soul of the offerer.

4. The Scriptures declare that the effect of these sacrifices was uniformly and actually to expiate the guilt of the offender and to propitiate God. Neither the Moral Influence nor the Governmental theory of the sacrifice of Christ finds the least support in the analogies of the sacrifice of the law. There is not the slightest indication that the design of any sacrifice was ever to produce a moral influence upon the transgressor, or to place him in a position in which the remission of the penalty was a possibility, or to exhibit God's determination to punish sin. The sin and trespass-offering were always offered with the single and definite design of securing the actual remission of the penalty. The effect is said to be "to make atonement for sin." "to reconcile," and the promise always attached is, "AND IT SHALL BE FORGIVEN HIM." Lev. 4:20, 26, 31; 6:30; 8:15; 16:10. Forgiveness is the immediate end sought and promised; and this necessarily issued in that ceremonial purification which Bushnell mistakenly describes as "the grand terminal of all sacrifices."\* But the forgiveness obviously was the condition of the purification, not the purification of the forgiveness. Sin, unexpiated,

excluded a man from the society of the covenant people. When expiated and forgiven, the person was, ipso facto, cleansed and returned to the full enjoyment of all ecclesiastical privileges. As we have seen above, these sacrifices secured the remission of the penalties denounced by the Jewish Theocratic State-Church law upon all sins, whether moral or simply ceremonial, except such as were committed "with a high hand." As far as this ceremonial State-Church penalty was concerned, these sacrifices effected a real expiation. But as far as the penalty attaching to the moral law, absolutely considered, was concerned, they were of course only symbolical of the principles upon which alone remission could be obtained, and hence typical of the one all-perfect sacrifice of Christ. "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins," Heb. 10:4; that is, sin viewed absolutely. But they did avail to "sanctify to the purifying of the flesh." Heb. 9:13. A member of the theocratic community broke the law, and incurred the penalty at once of the ceremonial and of the moral law. He presents a faultless victim, lays his hands upon its head, confesses his sins, slays it, giving life for life, and then the penalty is remitted. That is, the ceremonial penalty is remitted, ipso facto, upon the completion of a regular sacrifice, and the penalty of the moral law is remitted if the offerer, spiritually discerning the evangelical principles of which these sacrifices were the symbols, acted faith, however darkly, upon the promise of God relating to that sacrifice of which they were the types. The sacrifice of a dumb animal was fully sufficient, when divinely appointed, to satisfy for the infringement of the law, when considered simply in its character as a ceremonial; while the law, viewed as an expression of absolute righteousness, can evidently be satisfied with nothing else than either the full execution of the penalty in the person of the sinner, or a full equivalent therefor in the person of an adequate substitute.\*

The word habitually used to define the exact nature of the process through which the Mosaic sacrifices attained to their constant effect, forgiveness, is כָּפַר, to cover, to make expiation, to atone. Lev. 4:20, 26, 30, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 18, &c., &c. All admit that the Greek word

ἰλάσκεσθαι, and its cognates ἰλασμὸς and ἰλαστήριον, have universally and from time immemorial, the sense, when construed with God, of propitiation, and when construed with sin of expiation in the strict sense. And yet it is a fact that the authors of the Septuagint, three hundred years before Christ, while the Jewish and ethnic sacrifices were still in constant use, habitually translated the Hebrew כפר by the Greek ἰλάσκεσθαι, and the כפרת (mercy-seat) they translate ἰλαστήριον, propitiatorium, or seat of expiation and propitiation. The Septuagint was the version of the Old Testament habitually quoted by Christ and his apostles. Instead of ever hinting that the inspired Hebrew text was misrepresented by the Greek words used as equivalent, they adopt the same words themselves when speaking of the sacrifice of Christ. Christ is said to have been made a faithful high priest "to make expiation for the sins of the people," εἰς τὸ ἰλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ, Heb. 2:17. See also Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:2, and 4:10. See below, chapter twelve.

5. In confirmation of the truth of this interpretation of the Jewish sacrifices, we can cite the unanimous testimony of (a) the inspired prophets and apostles, and (b) the ancient heathen, (c) Jews, and (d) Christian writers. In opposition to this ancient external testimony to the meaning of sacrifices, the school of Bähr, Maurice, Bushnell, Young, &c., have not a single witness to cite.

(1.) As to the testimony of the prophets to the peculiar character of the Mosaic sacrifices, I cite the witness of Isaiah 53:4, 6, 10, &c. Speaking of the Messiah, the prophet says God "made his soul an offering for sin," a sin-offering; and to this end "laid on him the iniquity of us all," and hence he was punished in our stead; "he was wounded for our transgressions, ... and the punishment of our peace was upon him."\* As to the apostolic testimony, in part, compare 1 Cor. 5:7, where Christ is said to be "sacrificed for us," and 1 Pet. 1:18, 19, where it is said that we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as "a lamb without blemish and without spot," with Matt. 20:28, "The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many." "The prominent idea of ransom is that of payment—of vicarious

substitution—of one thing standing in place of another. No figure can so fully convey this idea as one drawn from purchases with money. What a source of misconception, then, would it have been thus to yoke the idea of sacrifice to that of vicariousness, if these ideas were not harmonious, but discordant? It sacrifice pointed to no substitution, no expiation, but only to self-surrender of the penitent worshipper, could any mode of speaking be devised more likely to mislead than calling the sacrificial offering a ransom—a λύτρον—the most potent symbol of substitution and exchange."\*

(2.) It would be entirely a work of supererogation for us to encumber our pages with citations from heathen authors, proving that they universally practised their sacrificial rites and used their sacrificial language in the sense for which we are contending, since no man living contests the point.

(3.) It is certainly important to know the opinion of the Jews with respect to their own religious rites. And it is an indisputable fact that the whole body of ancient Jewish theological literature is unanimous in expounding their national sacrifices as vicarious and piacular. Thus Rabbi Levi Ben Gerson, quoted by Outram, says, "The imposition of hands was a tacit declaration on the part of every offerer that he removed his sins from himself and transferred them to that animal." So also Isaac Ben Arama: "Whenever any one sins through ignorance, or even with knowledge, he transfers his sins from himself and lays them upon the head of the victim. And this is the design of those confessions,—I have sinned, I have been rebellious, I have done perversely,—as appears from the confessions of the high priest, pronounced over the bullock sacrificed as his sin-offering on the day of atonement." Rabbi Moses Ben Nachman says: "It was just that his blood be shed and that his body should be burned. But the Creator, of his mercy, accepted this victim from him as his substitute and ransom, that the blood of the animal might be shed instead of his blood; that is, that the life of the animal might be given for his life." Rabbi Solomon Jarchi says, referring to Lev. 17:11: "The life of every living creature is in the blood: wherefore I have

given it to make an atonement for your souls: life shall come and atone for life;" and Aben Ezra, "The blood makes atonement for the soul; the meaning is life instead of life."\*

(4.) Outram cites the following testimonies from the early Christian Fathers, and declares, that as far as his knowledge extended, they were agreed in understanding that the Jewish sacrifices were vicarious and piacular. "He laid his hands upon the head of the calf; that is, he laid the sins of mankind upon his own head: for he is the head of the body, the Church."‡ "On the head of the victim the offerer laid his hands, as it were his actions; for hands are significant of action; and for these he offered the sacrifice."\* "The priests laid their hands, not upon all victims, but on those that were offered for themselves, and especially their sin-offerings; but upon others the offerers themselves laid their hands. This was a symbol of the substitution of the victim in the room of the offerer for whom it was slain."† "An attentive observer may learn this very thing, also, from the law respecting sacrifices, which enjoins every one who offers a sacrifice to lay his hands on the head of the victim, and holding it by the head, to bring it to the priest, as offering the animal instead of his own head. Wherefore its language respecting every victim is, Let the offerer present it before the Lord, and lay his hands upon the head of his offering; ... whence it is concluded that the lives of the victims were given instead of the lives of the offerers."

III. It only remains for us, in this third division of our argument, to prove that the sacrifices of the law were typical of the sacrifice of Christ; that is, that the principles of vicarious and piacular suffering upon which they proceeded are identical with those upon which, by one sacrifice for sin, he has for ever perfected them that are sanctified.

"Every true type," says Litton, "is necessarily a symbol; that is, it embodies and represents the ideas which find their fulfilment in the antetype; but every symbol is not necessarily a type; a symbol may terminate in itself, and point to nothing future; it may refer to

something past. The difference between the two will become evident if we consider that the learned researches of modern times have made it more than probable that the religions of antiquity were all symbolical in character, or so framed as to convey, under sensible images, the ideas on which they were respectively based; but no one would think of calling the rites of heathenism types; they were a species of acted hieroglyphics, which reached the understanding through the senses,—and here their use terminated. A type is a prophetic symbol; and since prophecy is the prerogative of him who sees the end from the beginning, a real type, implying as it does a knowledge of the reality, can only proceed from God."

Now we claim that it can be proved that the Mosaic sacrificial system was not only symbolical of divine truth in connection with the then existing dispensation, but that it embraced types, or prophetic symbols, of the better things to come in the gospel. This is certain, because—

1. Christ himself declares that the whole Old Testament Scripture in all its divisions, the law as well as the prophets and the Psalms, spoke of him and his work. John 1:45; 5:39; Luke 24:27. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." And all these things stood in such a relation to him that all these things must be fulfilled which were therein written concerning him. Luke 24:44. And in what sense this was so, we can trace in John 19:36. John, as an eye-witness of the crucifixion, declares that the exemption of our Lord's person from the mutilation to which the two thieves with whom he was crucified were subjected, "was done THAT the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken." But the Scriptures say this only of the Pascal lamb. Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12. And the Apostle John declares that the saying this of the Pascal lamb was equivalent to saying this prophetically of Christ. That the Pascal lamb was a sacrifice in the strict expiatory sense is admitted by all modern theologians. It is expressly called קרבן (Num. 9:7), which everywhere means something offered to God. It is called זבח, sacrifice (Ex.



12:27), which is, in the Old Testament, only applied to the bleeding offerings presented to Jehovah. This the apostle distinctly asserts in the very sentence in which he declares that Christ is the Christian Passover; "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed (ἐτύθη) for us." 1 Cor. 5:7.

2. The sacrificial language of the Mosaic ritual is constantly applied to Christ. Jowett, no mean witness, admits that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews presents the "New Testament as hidden in the Old, and the Old as revealed in the New."\* But it is not confined to the Epistle to the Hebrews, but characterizes the whole Testament. John the Baptist, the last Old Testament prophet (John 1:29), stood as the index-finger, and spoke as the voice of the whole Old Testament dispensation, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Paul (Eph. 5:2) witnesseth of Christ that "He gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour," which certainly means that the effect of his sacrifice terminates upon God, and not upon either the sinful offerer or the moral universe. "Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ... having been once offered to bear the sins of many." "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Cor. 5:7. "We were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Pet. 1:19. "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God." "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:12, 14.

3. They are expressly said to have prefigured Christ and his work. These things, Paul says, "are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." Col. 2:17. The law had "a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things." Heb. 10:1. The tabernacle and its services were patterns of things in the heavens, and figures—antetypes—of the true tabernacle into which Christ has now entered for us. Heb. 9:23, 24. "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin,

are burned without the camp. WHEREFORE Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Heb. 13:11, 12. In this case, as in the case of the unbroken bones of the Pascal lamb, the antetype must conform to the type. The argument of the apostle, in Heb. 9:13, 14, necessarily involves the assumption of this identity of principle between the type and the antetype. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; HOW MUCH MORE shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" If the one can avail to effect the lower end on the same principle, how much more shall the infinitely better avail to effect the higher end? Young attempts, in the first place, to prove that the Mosaic sacrifices signified nothing more than an expression of the subjective exercises of the sinner, and then that these sacrifices are not typical of the greater and better sacrifice of Christ. But the correspondences which the apostles point out cannot be understood in the vague and general sense which Young prefers. They not only declare that there is, in some sense, an analogy between the sacrifices of the law and the sacrifice of Christ, but they affirm that the former were patterns, types, shadows, of the latter. They point out, in particular, wherein the analogy consists and wherein it fails. They show that it holds in all the essential particulars of "bearing sin," Christ being "made sin" (that is,  $\lambda\alpha\sigma\tau\eta$ , sin-offering), of being vicarious, of "giving his life as a ransom," of "redeeming us by his blood," of expiating sin, of propitiating God, of securing pardon. Matt. 20:28; Rom. 3:25; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 2:17.

4. And lastly, the Scriptures habitually assert, in the plainest and most direct terms that language admits of, that Christ accomplishes for the man who comes to God by him just what we have shown that the Mosaic sacrifices accomplished for the man who approached God by them, and that he accomplishes it in the same manner. "He that knew no sin was made a sin-offering for us." 2 Cor. 5:21. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."

Gal. 3:13. He says of himself, "The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45. "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin." 1 John 1:7. "He is the propitiation (ἱλασμός) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:2. "Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation (ἱλασμός) for our sins." 1 John 4:10. This making propitiation, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares, Christ effects as our "High Priest." Heb. 2:17. Paul says, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (ἱλαστήριον), through faith in his blood." Rom. 3:24, 25. "Much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be SAVED FROM WRATH through him. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. 5:9, 10. "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins" (περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν), which is the very phrase frequently used in the Septuagint to translate πλυσθ, sin-offering. See Lev. 4 and 16; Gal. 1:3, 4. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Eph. 1:7. "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Eph. 2:13. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins," and, "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself." Col. 1:14, 20. "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man (διὰ τοῦτου) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him (ἐν τοῦτω) all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:38, 39.\*

We claim that these passages teach the gospel, not in a figure, but in direct terms, to be understood according to the ordinary use of language and force of words. All that Jowett, and those who agree with him on this subject, can say to turn the force of the Scriptures is, that they are "figurative;" that we must take their "inward meaning,"

because their literal meaning is dishonouring to God, and revolting to the refined moral sense of advanced thinkers.

Thus we have the whole heathen world, the Jewish people, and the entire Christian Church, the Old Testament symbols, and the New Testament historical narratives and didactic statements, all on one side, and the Socinians, Rationalists, Jowett, Maurice, Bushnell and Young on the other.

## **CHAPTER IX:**

### **THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE PROVED BY THE FACT THAT CHRIST EFFECTED SALVATION BY ACTING AS THE HIGH PRIEST OF HIS PEOPLE**

THAT our doctrine as to the nature of Christ's work, as above stated, is true, we claim is established by our fourth argument, namely, that the Scriptures clearly set forth Christ as acting and suffering as the High Priest of his people. It is essential to the Moral Influence Theory to consider Christ solely as the medium through which God exerts a saving moral influence upon man.\* The point of the controversy of the Church with the advocates of that theory, as was truly stated by Limborch, is, whether Christ, by his death, removed obstacles to our salvation existing in the nature of God, as well as those existing in the nature of man. In opposition to their error, I propose to prove that the characteristic function of the ancient priest, and especially the high priest, was, that he represented the people before God; that, taken from among men, he was ordained to act in behalf of men in those matters which have a bearing upon God (τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν), that he may bring near to God both gifts and sacrifices for sin. Heb. 5:1. It is essential to the Governmental Theory to assume (a) that the work of Christ, in itself considered,

accomplishes only the salvability, and not the actual salvation, of any, and (b) that it is general and indefinite in its reference, having respect to no particular individuals, but to all sinners of mankind as such. In opposition to their error, I propose to prove that the ancient priest and high priest (a), in every instance, sought and obtained remission, not remissibility—reconciliation, not merely the possibility of reconciliation—for those for whom they acted; and (b) that hence the work of the priest had a definite reference to particular persons, whom he represented, for whom he offered expiation, and in whose behalf he interceded.

I. The distinctive character of the priest was, that he was divinely ordained to act in behalf of men in those matters which have a bearing on God. As the general character of the prophet was that of one qualified and authorized to speak for God to men, so the general idea of a priest is that of one qualified and authorized to treat in behalf of men with God. When Korah, Dathan and Abiram, and their colleagues, rebelled against the assumption of an exclusive priestly character on the part of Moses and Aaron, on the ground that it belonged to every member of the holy nation in common, Moses appealed to God, saying, "Even to-morrow Jehovah will show who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him; even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him." Numb. 16:5.

Hence a priest was one—1. Taken from among men to represent them. "Every high priest taken from among men was ordained for men, in things pertaining to God." Heb. 5:1. Especially did the high priest, in whom the entire priestly character culminated, act in all respects as the literal representative of the whole congregation. (1.) He bore the names of each tribe graven on his shoulders and on his breast-plate over his heart. Vitringa,\* quoted by Fairbairn, says, "This high priest represented the whole people. All Israel were reckoned as being in him." Ex. 28:9–29. (2.) If he sinned, it was regarded as the sin of the whole people. Lev. 4:3. (3.) He made atonement and offered intercession in behalf of the whole people. He

placed his hands upon the scape-goat and confessed the sins of the whole people, and laid them upon the head of the goat. Lev. 16:15–21.

2. He was chosen by God as his special election and property. "Jehovah will show who are his, and him whom he hath chosen to come near unto him." Numb. 16:5. "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Heb. 5:4.

3. He must be holy; that is, both morally pure and consecrated to the service of God. He wore, circling his head, a band of pure gold, on which was engraved "HOLINESS TO THE LORD." Ex. 39:30, 31. "They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God: for the offerings of Jehovah, made by fire, and the bread of their God, do they offer: therefore they shall be holy." Levit. 21:6; Ps. 106:16.

4. The priest's grand distinction was, that he had a right to draw near to God. Hence the common designation of priests was "those who draw near to Jehovah." Ex. 19:22; Numb. 16:5; Ezek. 42:13 and 44:13. The distinctive priestly act which marked his great function was to bring near, הִקְרִיב—translated habitually to offer. Lev. 16:6, 9, 11, 20, &c. Every offering which it was the office of the priest to bring near to God is distinctively called קָרְבָּן, or that which is brought near to God, or offered,—translated in our version, oblation, offering, or sacrifice. Lev. 2:1, 4, 5, and 27:11, &c. The fat, as the most excellent part of every sacrifice, was always entirely burnt by the priest on the altar, and so sent up to God as his portion. This is constantly called "God's food" or "God's bread," which it was the priest's grand prerogative to present to him. Lev. 3:11; 21:6, 8, 17, 21, 22; 22:25; Ezek. 44:7; Mal. 1:7, 12. This altar, upon which the priests presented their offerings to Jehovah, is called "God's table." Mal. 1:7, 12; 1 Cor. 10:17, 21, and Heb. 13:10. The offerings which it was the distinctive duty of the priest to bring near and to present to God, when properly presented are habitually said to be "a sweet savour, an offering to the Lord." Ex. 29:18, 25; Levit. 1:9, 13, 17; Numb. 15:7, 14, 24, &c., &c.

The distinction of the priest was that he was the minister of the sanctuary or temple. Here he came and discharged all his priestly functions as the representative of man and as the familiar of God. Only the priests could enter daily into the Holy Place, and only the high priest himself once a year into the Most Holy, in the presence of the Schekinah—and that in connection with the expiatory sacrifices—to sprinkle sacrificial blood on the altar of incense and on the Cappareth, and to present the incense symbolical of prayer. The constant biblical designation of the temple, to which all the priest's functions had reference was the "dwelling" or "house" of Jehovah. Ex. 25:8; 29:45, 46; Deut. 23:18; Josh. 9:23, and "tabernacle of the meeting;" that is, properly the tent of meeting between God and man, where God, propitiated by blood, met the Church through their representatives, the priests, who brought the propitiating blood into his presence.

5. Hence the two grand functions of the priest were (a) to propitiate with bleeding sacrifices, Heb. 5:1–3; and (b) to make intercession for the people. The nature of the former function I have sufficiently discussed in the last chapter. The symbolical design of the presentation of incense before the Lord is very clearly set forth in Scripture to be representative of prayer—the prayers of God's people in mass; and in the case of the priests, the representatives of the people, intercessory prayer. The altar of incense was placed on the outside of the veil, over against the mercy-seat or propitiatorium. Ex. 30:6. Incense was daily offered by the priests before the veil, behind which God sat enthroned. During the "time of incense" it was customary for the whole multitude of the people to be praying without. Luke 1:10. On the great day of atonement it was carried within the veil by the high priest, "that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not." Lev. 16:13; Ps. 141:2; Rev. 5:8 and 8:3, 4. All this proves beyond any question that the priest, as the representative of the people, as the minister of God's house, having authority to come near and to bring near, to present God's food on his table, and to present to Jehovah sacrifices, affording to God an odour of a sweet smell,—that in this

capacity the priest was for sinful men the only medium of acceptable approach to God. The priest's work terminated on God, and made return to God objectively possible to the sinner. The Moral Influence Theory makes Christ's work terminate on the sinner, causing the sinner to be subjectively disposed to return to God. But herein the New Testament Priest thoroughly corresponds to the Old Testament type. Jesus testifies of himself, "I am the WAY, the truth and the life: NO MAN COMETH TO THE FATHER BUT BY ME."

II. The work of the ancient priest secured the actual and certain remission of the sins of all for whom he acted, and it bore a definite reference to the persons of all those whom he represented, and of none others.

1. The priest is never in one single instance represented in Scripture as offering a sacrifice, the immediate design or effect of which was to produce a moral effect upon the transgressor, or to place him in a position in which remission is a possibility, subject to other conditions, or to exhibit God's determination to punish sin. The professed and uniform design and effect of the priest's work was to secure the remission, and not the remissibility, of the penalty due the sin of the person or persons for whom he acted. When an Israelite sinned, he went to the priest, who presented a sin-offering in his stead—life for life—and the immediate effect was forgiveness, remission of the penalty due. The constant promise attached to the command to sacrifice is, "and it shall be forgiven him." Lev. 4:20, 26, 31, &c., &c. The sacrifice, and not something else following the sacrifice, ipso facto, absolved.

2. The Jewish high priest offered intercession for precisely the same persons—for all of them, and for none others—for whom he had previously made expiation. He bore the names of the tribes of Israel upon his breast. He confessed the sins of the entire congregation, and made atonement for them with the goats of the sin-offering. He appeared before God, within the veil, in behalf of all the congregation. The entire work of the priest was one work. To speak



the language of Christian theology, the office which they discharged, both in the impetration and in the application of benefits, had respect to precisely the same persons. They sacrificed for, they interceded for, they blessed precisely the same persons, and none others. Numb. 6:22–27.

III. Christ was a real, and not merely a metaphorical priest, and his priesthood was, as to its essential characteristics, shadowed forth by the priests of the Mosaic economy.

1. The entire Epistle to the Hebrews is an inspired witness to the fact that the Levitical priests were types of Christ, and that he acted as the literal High Priest of his people. In this short letter he is called Priest six times and High Priest twelve times. Of the earthly tabernacle it is declared that it "stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come a High Priest of good things to come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us ... For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us ... For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never, with those sacrifices, make the comers thereunto perfect ... But this man, after that he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God ... For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. 9:10–24, and 10:1–14.

2. His work of propitiation, therefore, must have been real and not metaphorical, because it is declared to be the substance of which the services of the Levitical priests were the "shadows," "figures," or "types." But shadows are cast by literal substances, not by metaphors; and a type or image necessarily implies real characters and attributes which it represents.

3. This is rendered certain from the following facts. (1.) He was expressly declared to be a priest both in the Old Testament and in the New. "Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." Ps. 110:4, and Heb. 5:6; 6:20. Of the man whose name is the BRANCH, it is said that he shall be "a priest upon his throne." Zech. 6:13. (2.) The New Testament account of his person and character ascribes all the literal characteristics of a real priest to him. (a) He was taken from among men to represent them. Compare Heb. 5:1, 2, with Heb. 2:14–18, and 4:15. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same ... Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things πρὸς τὸν θεόν, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people." (b) He was chosen by God to his office. Heb. 5:4–6. (c) He was perfectly holy. Luke 1:35; Heb. 7:26. (d) He possessed beyond all others the right of nearest access to the Father, and the greatest influence with him. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and go to the Father." He said to the Father, "I knew that thou hearest me always." "If the blood of bulls and of goats sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God," avail to the salvation of our souls? "For Christ has not entered into the holy places made with hands, ... but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν). John 16:28; 11:42; Heb. 1:3; 9:11–14, 24. (3.) And finally, both the Old and the New Testaments declare that he literally discharged the functions of a priest. These are (a) expiation. Is. 53:10, 12. Daniel declared that after such a time the Messiah "should be cut off, but not for himself," and that he would make "an end of sins and reconciliation for iniquity." Dan. 9:24–26; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 9:26; 10:12; 1 John 2:2.\* (b) Intercession. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1.

4. Lastly, we maintain that the priesthood of Christ was a real and literal priesthood, because the whole history proves that the elaborate system of Levitical types, being images or shadows of his work, were preparatory to him, and found their fulfilment in him. Thus, for example, the apostle John declared that the fact that the soldiers did not break the limbs of Jesus, as they had done those of the two thieves, was in fulfilment of the law with regard to the Pascal lamb. John 19:36; Ex. 12:46; Numb. 9:12. The instant of Christ's death the veil of the temple, which had from the beginning marked the line between the priests, bringing near the offerings, and the unapproachable Jehovah, dwelling between the cherubim, "was rent in twain from top to bottom." Matt. 27:50, 51. This was true not only of each type or prophetic symbol in detail, but also of the entire system as a whole. It is a grand historical fact that the ancient temple, its ritual services, and its ministers and their functions, prefigured and prepared the way for the advent and work of Christ for nearly two thousand years. It is also a grand historical fact that the priestly work of Christ immediately and definitely superseded the work of the Levitical priesthood. The sacrifice of Christ made the Levitical priest, *ipso facto, functus officio*.

Hence we argue, since the ancient high priest was a type of Christ, and since he was a literal and not a metaphorical High Priest, that it certainly follows—(1.) That since "Christ is the one Mediator between God and man" in his character of High Priest (compare 1 Tim. 2:1, with Heb. 9:11–15), he cannot be primarily the medium of divine influences upon men, but, on the contrary, the mediating person, propitiating God in behalf of men, acting in behalf of men in those things which have a bearing upon God. (2.) It follows that Christ must have been in a strict sense the Representative of those for whose benefit he acted. (3.) That the design and effect of Christ's peculiar sacrifice of himself as the High Priest of his people could not have been to bring all men into a salvable condition, in which the remission of their sins is possible; but they must have been to secure with certainty the actual remission of the sins of all those for whom he died. And (4) it follows that Christ must make intercession for all

those for whom he made expiation. But (a) Christ's intercession is always efficacious. It is offered from a throne at the right hand of his Father. His formula of intercession is "Father, I will." His testimony is that the "Father heareth him always." And (b) he intercedes only for his "own people." John 17:9. "I pray not for the WORLD, but for them which THOU HAST GIVEN ME."

## **CHAPTER X:**

# **CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS WERE STRICTLY AND DEFINITELY VICARIOUS**

I PRESENT, as my fifth argument, that large class of Scriptures which teach that Christ's sufferings were vicarious; that is, that he suffered, in the strict sense of the word, as the Substitute of his people—not merely for their advantage, but strictly in their room and stead.

Bushnell has lately written a remarkable work, the logic of which may be judged of from the relation sustained by its title to its doctrine and design. It is entitled "Vicarious Sacrifice," and its design is to prove that the sufferings of Christ were not vicarious, but simply philanthropic—in sympathy with men and for their benefit. "The true conception is that Christ, in what is called his vicarious sacrifice, simply engages, at the expense of great suffering, and even of death itself, to bring us out of our sins themselves, and so out of their penalties; being himself profoundly identified with us in our fallen state, and burdened in feeling with our evils." ... "Love is a principle essentially vicarious in its own nature, identifying the subject with

others, so as to suffer their adversities and pains, and taking on itself the burden of their evils." ... "Motherhood, friendship, patriotism, are all vicarious." ... "The eternal Father before Christ, and the Holy Spirit coming after, and the good angels both before and after, all alike have borne the burdens, struggled in the pains of their vicarious feeling for men; and then, at last, now Christianity comes in to its issue, in begetting in us the same vicarious love that reigns in all the glorified and good minds of the heavenly kingdom." ... "What we call the vicarious sacrifice of Christ is nothing strange as regards the principle of it—no superlative, unexampled and therefore unintelligible grace. It only does and suffers, and comes into substitution for, just what any and all love will, according to its degree."\*

Thus, the only distinction between the relation sustained by the sacrifice of Christ to our salvation, and that sustained by the sympathies and sufferings of our mothers and pastors, is one not at all of kind, but solely of degree. The sufferings of Christ on the cross sustain precisely the same relation to our sins as do the prayers and tears of our mothers as they intercede for our salvation. Angels, the Father himself, and the Holy Ghost, all are wounded for our transgressions, and suffer, the just for the unjust, and give their lives ransoms for many in the same sense that Christ did, and to the same effect—only as they severally differ in degree. Now it stands to reason that, as certainly as pantheism is atheism, does this generalizing of vicarious suffering, which of right is the sole, inalienable and glorious function of the "one Mediator between God and man," amount only to a direct and absolute denial of the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice, and to the affirmation that the sufferings of Christ were mere incidental concomitants of his philanthropic interpositions in man's behalf. We disprove this denial of the vicarious character of the sufferings of Christ by proving that the Scriptures assert in many ways that they are vicarious.

There are several forms of expression which essentially present the same great principles, but with variations. His sufferings are said to

be vicarious. He himself is said to have been the Substitute of his people, and a Ransom for them, that is, in their stead. He is also said to have been their Representative before God, and the one Mediator between God and man. We have before seen that Christ was accurately prefigured by the bleeding sacrifice upon the altar, and by the high priest who brought the blood near to God within the veil. He was in like manner prefigured, at the same time, by the slain goat upon the altar, and by the living goat carrying away the expiated sins of the people into the wilderness. His office as Mediator included the functions at once of Prophet, Priest and King, and yet not one of his personal types embraced, in one person, more than two of these, as David and Ezra. The reason for this, of course, lay in the fact that the type was finite and transient, while the antetype was infinite and eternal. He was at once God, and priest, and bleeding sacrifice, dead and alive again for evermore, offerer and offering. When we say, therefore, that our blessed Lord is, in the strict sense of the word, our Substitute or our Ransom, we do not mean that for any single moment these relations exhaust all the relations borne or functions discharged by his infinite person. At the very same moment he is God, whose justice demands propitiation; and Priest, offering himself a sacrifice; and the sacrifice, offered to satisfy that justice. Let it be distinctly understood, then, that when we say that Christ was the Substitute of his people, and his sufferings, in the strict sense of the word, vicarious, we affirm this to be true of him viewed in his function as a sacrifice. When we say that he is the Representative, we affirm this to be true of him as the second Adam or federal Head, undertaking and discharging all the obligations of the broken law in our stead. When we say he is our Mediator, we affirm that to be true of him as our High Priest, as he is ordained for man in the things pertaining to God (τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν).

The place we occupied was "under the law." We were placed under it at the creation, and perfect obedience made the condition of our well-being. By our fall in Adam we became at once incapable of obeying the demands of the law and subject to its unrelaxable penalty. The law remains over us, therefore, as an inexorable

taskmaster, demanding the impossible, and as the organ of immutable justice, demanding our death. Christ, being a divine Person, was of course himself the norm and fountain of all law, and incapable of being subjected to any personal conditions of life; yet, as the Theanthropic Mediator in behalf of his elect, he "was made under the law," that is, transferred to that position, "that he might redeem them that are under the law." Gal. 4:4, 5. The place he took, therefore, was our law-place. In taking our law-place he necessarily assumed our legal responsibilities; for example, obedience as a condition of life, and suffering as a penal consequent of disobedience. And he did this "to redeem them that are under the law;" that is, all he did in our place was for our sake.

We accept fully Barnes's definition of a substitute.\* "The idea is, that the person substituted is to do or suffer the same thing which the person for whom he is substituted would have done." This is a fair statement of the true doctrine of substitution, which necessarily involves the true doctrine of the Atonement. The advocates of the Governmental Theory are able to admit that Christ died as our Substitute only in the loose sense of having died for our sakes. On the other hand, we maintain, as is implied in the above definition, that Christ suffered as our Substitute in the strict and proper sense of having suffered in our place or stead. The truth of this position is expressly affirmed in Scripture as well as indirectly involved in many related doctrines.

1. We saw, under a previous head, that in the Jewish sacrifices the victim was in the most literal sense conceivable substituted for the offerer to bear the penalty due him, and thus to discharge his obligations to the law. Reconciliation was effected through propitiation, propitiation through expiation, and expiation through the substitution of life for life. Christ suffered as a sacrifice, and hence was substituted in a sacrificial sense.

2. The preposition ὑπὲρ with the genitive, generally though not always, carries with it the idea of strict substitution. Caiaphas said

(John 11:50,) "It is expedient for us, that one man should die for (ὕπερ) the people, and that the whole nation perish not;" that is, that one should die in the place of the nation—that is, instead of their death. Paul (2 Cor. 5:20) says: "We pray you (ὕπερ Χριστοῦ) in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God;" that is, we do in Christ's place what he would do in person if present. Paul writes to Philemon that he sends back to him Onesimus, "whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead (ὕπερ σοῦ) he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel." Philemon 13. The same construction is habitually used to set forth the nature of Christ's substitution for us. "We thus judge that if one died for all (ὕπερ πάντων), then were all dead." 2 Cor. 5:14. "For he hath made him to be sin for (ὕπερ) us that knew no sin." 2 Cor. 5:21. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for (ὕπερ) us." Gal. 3:13. "That by the grace of God he should taste death for (ὕπερ) every man." Heb. 2:9. "For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for (ὕπερ) the unjust, that he might bring us to God." 1 Pet. 3:18.

3. The preposition ἀντί expresses more precisely than any other word in the Greek language the exact idea of substitution in the strictest sense of the word. This is the radical and definite usage of the preposition.\*

Thus it is said (Matt. 2:22), "Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of (ἀντί) his father Herod." Again, (Matt. 5:38) "An eye for (ἀντί) an eye, and a tooth for (ἀντί) a tooth." And when this word is used to express the relation of Christ to those in whose behalf he acted, its sense is rendered, if possible, more precise and emphatic by association with the word λύτρον, redemption-price. Thus (Matt. 20:28), "The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many (λύτρον ἀντί πολλῶν). The same is repeated in Mark 10:45; and in 1 Tim. 2:6. Paul, after his manner, combines in one most emphatic formula, the force of all the three words most exactly expressing substitution, "who gave himself a ransom (ἀντίλυτρον) for (ὕπερ) all;" that is, gave himself to be a substitutionary ransom in the place of all. If the Holy Ghost did intend us to understand that Christ was



strictly substituted in the law-place of his people, he could have used no language more exactly adapted to express his meaning. If this were not his meaning, we may well despair of arriving at the understanding of his meaning on any subject through the study of his words in any department of Scripture.

When the purpose is to express the relation which the death of Christ sustains not to the persons of his people, but to their sins, the prepositions used are *περὶ* and *ὕπὲρ*, with the genitive. Robinson says that *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, in this connection, signifies "on account of sin, or for sin; that is, for doing away or expiating sin." Rom. 8:3; Heb. 10:18, 26; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 John 2:2, and 4:10. The same authority renders *ὕπὲρ* when construed with *ἁμαρτιῶν*, as indicating the "ground, motive, or occasion of the action." 1 Cor. 15:3. See Heb. 5:1–3, and 7:27. This usage may give no additional force to the argument proving that Christ is our Substitute in a literal sense, which I have presented above, but it abundantly disproves the moral view of the atonement in any form it can assume. Christ died for, because of, our sins. This naturally suggests, and has, as a matter of fact, always suggested to the great majority of men, that the immediate reason of his dying was the removal of sin; not that our sin was the remote occasion which rendered his dying proper.

The advocates of the Governmental Theory maintain that Christ did not suffer the true penalty of the law; that is, he did not suffer what they would have done; that is, that he was their Substitute, while he lacked that which is essential to the idea of a substitute. It is true, as I showed above, that the person upon whom the penalty is to be inflicted being changed—one divine Person being substituted for many human persons—the law itself, on principles of essential justice, spontaneously adjusts the quality of the sufferings constituting the penalty to the quality of the victim. Sinners being the victims, the penalty includes remorse and eternal death. Christ being the substituted victim, remorse and eternal death, ipso facto, cease to be the penalty, and he, standing in our place, suffers precisely the very penalty of the law in our stead, that is, all that the law in rigour

of justice demands on the account of our sins, when that account is settled in his person. In every substitution there must be a constant as well as a variable quantity. A substitute is not a different man in a different place, but a different man in the same place.

## **CHAPTER XI:**

# **THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE PROVED FROM THE FACT THAT THE SCRIPTURES DECLARE THAT OUR SINS WERE LAID UPON CHRIST**

OUR doctrine is explicitly and emphatically taught in a large class of passages which assert that our sins were laid upon Christ—that they were charged to his account, and made his in such a sense that they were the legal cause of his suffering the penalty due to them. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Is. 53:6. "He bare the sin of many." Is. 53:12. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. 3:13. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." Heb. 9:28. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." 1 Pet. 2:24.

It is claimed that these expressions cannot possibly be interpreted literally; that it cannot be true that Christ in any literal sense was transformed into sin; that the all-perfect Son of God could not have been in any natural sense of the word a sinner. Those who reject the orthodox doctrine of satisfaction hence illogically conclude that since these terms are not to be interpreted literally, they have no definite

and certainly ascertainable meaning at all, but may be accommodated to any view of the atonement which we have reason on other grounds to prefer. In opposition to this, we maintain that the usage of Scripture with respect to the phrases "sin," "to bear sin," or "iniquity," "to impute" or "to lay upon" one "sin" or "iniquity," is uniform, and that their sense is both definite and certainly ascertainable; and that the meaning of the passages above quoted, when interpreted in the light of this usage, is unmistakably clear and consistent only with the doctrine that our sins were, in strict rigour of justice, laid upon and punished in the person of Christ.

1. The word sin is habitually used in Scripture to set forth moral evil in three aspects or relations. (1.) Sin considered as to its formal nature, that is, as transgression of God's law. 1 John 3:4. (2.) Sin considered as a moral quality inherent in the soul of the agent—as pollution—macula. Rom. 6:11–13. (3.) Sin considered with respect to its legal obligation to punishment—as guilt—reatus. In this last sense it is used in all those passages which speak of "bearing sin," of "laying on iniquities," of "imputing sin," &c. In this sense the Hebrew words for sin (חַטָּאת) and guilt (חַטָּאת) were used to designate the sacrifices, which were made to suffer vicariously the penalty due the ritual transgressions of the offerer. In like manner Christ is said to be made sin—that is, according to constant usage, a sin-offering—because he is the sacrifice who volunteers to suffer vicariously the penalty consequent upon our transgressions of the moral law.

2. The phrase to "impute sin," or "righteousness," in its scriptural usage signifies simply to set to one's account, to lay to one's charge or credit as a ground of legal process. The thing imputed may belong to the person to whom it is imputed originally. In that case it is imputed in the sense of being simply charged to him, made the ground of a legal indictment preparatory to judicial process. Or the thing imputed may not be originally his, but may be made his by the imputation, because of the legal connection subsisting between the person to whom the thing originally belonged and him to whom it is imputed. Thus, not to impute sin to the doer of it is of course not to

charge the guilt of his own sin upon him as a ground of punishment. To impute righteousness without works can only mean to credit a believer with the rewardableness of a righteousness which did not originate with himself. Rom. 4:4–8. God in Christ not imputing their trespasses unto his people, is, of course, God for Christ's sake not charging their trespasses to them as a ground of punishment. 2 Cor. 5:19. Christ must be made sin for us in precisely the same sense that we are made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. 5:21. But, as will be shown below, we are justified or pronounced righteous in Christ forensically, as a matter of legal relation, not made inherently righteous by the infusion of grace. The macula or pollution of sin might possibly be transmitted by generation. Otherwise it must ever remain the inalienable personal quality of the individual sinner. It is an absurdity, for which no class of Reformed theologians have ever been responsible, to represent personal character, either good or bad, as transferable from one person to another by imputation. All that can be imputed from person to person is the guilt or legal obligation to punishment of any sin, and that only in those cases in which the person to whom it is imputed has become in some way or other justly responsible for the action of the person the guilt of whose sin is imputed.

This usage of the word "impute" is not a creation of "artificial theology," as is asserted by Dr. Young and by all those who maintain either the "Moral" or the "Governmental" theory of the Atonement. This is evident, because (1) this sense is embraced in the classical usage of the word λογίζομαι. Its primary sense is to count, reckon. Then, when construed with a person in the dative and a thing in the accusative, it signifies to set down that thing to the account of that person, and is thus equivalent to the Latin term *imputare*.<sup>\*</sup> Ainsworth defines *imputare*—"to ascribe, to charge; to lay the blame or fault on any one." Suidas' Lexicon—"λογίζω, reputo; et λογίσομαι, computabo; et λογιοῦμαι, numerabo, computabo; et λογῶ, existimo, ut illud: et imputatum est ipsi in justitiam."

(2.) The same is true of the usage of the Hebrew **שׁוּב** in the Old Testament. The daughters of Laban complained (Gen. 31:15) that their father "counted" them strangers—that is, regarded and treated them as strangers. "If any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it; it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity." Lev. 7:18. The sacrifice was offered as a matter of fact, but was not set to the credit of the offerer as acceptable or effective. The heave-offering of the Levites was to be "reckoned as though it were the corn of the threshing-floor, and as the fulness of the wine-press." Numb. 18:27, 30. That Phineas slew the offending Israelite at Shittim "was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore." Ps. 106:31.

(3.) The same is true with regard to the New Testament usage of the word **λογίζομαι**. Christ, referring to Isa. 53:12, said: "For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors." Luke 22:37. "Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?" Rom. 2:26. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Gal. 3:6. "To him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt." "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." David speaks of the blessedness of the man "to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works—to whom the Lord will not impute sin." "Faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness." Rom. 4:3–9. "God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." 2 Cor. 5:19. "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me; I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge." 2 Tim. 4:16. "He was numbered with the transgressors." Mark 15:28. "But also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be counted for naught."\* Acts 19:27.

The Scriptures plainly teach, therefore, that all the guilt or obligation to punishment incurred by the sins of his people was imputed or charged to the account of Christ, as the legal ground of the execution upon him of the penalty involved in the case. Yet, notwithstanding that the guilt of all our sins is thus charged to Christ, and expiated in him, all their blame, shame, pollution and power, as inherent personal habits or principles, remain all the while inalienably ours. These sins are none the less ours, after their imputation to him, than they were before. (a.) The very force of the imputation is to make him "alienæ culpæ reus," that is, penally responsible for another's sin. They must remain ours in order that they may be to him the sins of another. (b.) Because personal moral qualities, and the pollution inherent in sinful ones, are inalienable and cannot be transferred by imputation. (c.) Because, as Owen pointed out long ago, to be "alienæ culpæ reus" makes no man a sinner, subjectively considered, unless he did unwisely or irregularly undertake the responsibility. (d.) Because our blessed Lord was a divine Person, and therefore absolutely incapable of personal sin in any sense or degree. While, therefore, he bore our sins, and consequently suffered the penalty involved, and hence was both regarded and treated by the Father, during the time and for the purpose of expiation, as vicariously guilty and worthy of wrath, he was all the while not one iota the less personally immaculate and glorious in holiness, and all the more the well-beloved Son of the Father, in whom he was well pleased.

All this the orthodox have always held and carefully expressed. We regard it, then, as an evident sign of weakness, and as an offence against honourable argument, when the advocates of the Governmental Theory (as for instance, Jenkyns, Fiske, and others), by studiously confounding the imputation of guilt with the transference of personal inherent sinful character, and by habitually setting forth the coarse and indiscriminating language of Luther on this subject as a fair representation of the Satisfaction Theory, disingenuously insinuate that at least the more self-consistent of the orthodox have held the blasphemy that Christ was made personally a sinner when he bore our sins upon the tree. On this subject, I

remark, (1.) No Christian ever did, or by possibility could, hold the doctrine of imputation which they thus covertly impute to us. It is nonsense on the one hand, and infamous blasphemy upon the other. (2.) Luther's language on this point was, characteristically of the man and of his age, coarse and wild, and neither to be defended nor imitated. (3.) But Luther was a good man, and no competent theologian believes, and no honest one will pretend, that he held a doctrine in any respect different from that which I have stated above as that of the Scriptures and of the Reformed Churches. (4.) But his language renders him peculiarly liable to misconception upon the part of the uninstructed. It is, therefore, an instrument peculiarly fitted for the use of controversialists, who, lacking argument, need to excite the prejudices of the uninstructed against their opponents. (5.) These very same gentlemen, who thus exhibit Luther to the public as a vile blasphemer, in order that all who hold the same doctrine of the Atonement may be silently implicated in the same charge, nevertheless honour him as a true Christian and a great reformer. But unless they misrepresent his doctrine of imputation he cannot be a Christian. Which alternative will they accept? Will they accept as a true Christian a traducer of their Lord? Or will they assert that Luther was no Christian? Or will they acknowledge that for purposes of controversy they have misrepresented his doctrine?\*

3. This doctrine of the imputation of the guilt of our sins is clearly proved by the passages above stated, when interpreted in careful comparison with the usage of the words translated "to bear sin," both in the Old and New Testament. Thus (1) the Hebrew word **נָסַב** has the precise sense of bearing—not of bearing away or removing, but in the sense of carrying. Thus (Lam. 5:7), "Our fathers have sinned and are not, and we have borne (**נָסַב**) their iniquities." This can only mean to bear the penalty of the sins of their fathers. So of Christ, "My righteous servant shall justify many; for he shall bear (**נָסַב**) their iniquities." Isa. 53:11. (2.) The word **נָשָׂא** has a more diversified usage than **נָסַב**, yet when construed with sin it always plainly means "to bear sin" in the sense of "being penally responsible" for it. "Not to bear sin" is not to have sin charged or imputed as a ground of

punishment. If a husband cause his wife to break a vow made with his knowledge, "he must bear her iniquity," Numb. 30:15; that is, he must be responsible for the punishment attached. If a soul sin, "he shall bear his iniquity;" that is, he shall be held guilty and liable to punishment, and therefore shall he bring a ram, and the priest shall make atonement. Lev. 5:17, 18. The consequence of bearing sin is death or penalty. Numb. 18:22. "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited." Lev. 16:22.

(3.) The authors of the Septuagint translation render these words sometimes with ἄνω, to bear—to bear away; but often also with φέρω and ἀναφέρω, which can only mean to bear in the sense of bearing on one's self in order to bear away. Robinson, who cannot be suspected of theological bias, gives the meaning both of φέρω and ἀναφέρω as "to take up and bear in the place of another; to take from another on one's self; to bear the punishment of sin; to expiate."

Bushnell\* says that Matthew's reference (Matt. 8:17) to Isa. 53:4 "is the one Scripture citation that gives beyond question the exact usus loquendi of all the vicarious and sacrificial language of the New Testament." The passage in Isaiah is as follows: "Surely he hath borne (Hebrew, נשׂוּ; Septuagint, φέρω) our griefs, and carried (Hebrew, נָסַח) our sorrows." The reference in Matthew is: "And he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took (ἔλαβε) our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." From this datum Bushnell draws two amazing conclusions: (1.) That the exact usus loquendi of all the vicarious and sacrificial language of the New Testament is to be derived from this single passage. (2.) That the only sense in which Christ bore either our sins, our sorrows, or our diseases was that he took them on his feelings—had his heart burdened with a sense of them.

To the first assumption we answer that the usus loquendi of the words can be determined only by a careful analysis and comparison



of all the passages in which they severally occur in the original Hebrew, in the Septuagint, and in the New Testament itself.

To the second assumption, we answer that it is a notorious fact, admitted by all scholars, that the New Testament writers quote the Old Testament freely, accommodating the sense to a present purpose. Isaiah affirms that Christ bore our sorrows—that is, bore them on himself in order to remove them. Isaiah uses the technical words נשׂא and נָסָה; the Septuagint translates by φέρω, but Matthew substitutes ἔλαβε. There is no contradiction; only Isaiah emphasized the carried, and Matthew emphasized the removed. The first pointed out the means, the other the result effected. The fact is that he endured visible sorrows, which made men believe that he was under divine chastisement; hence it is said, "We thought him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted ... But he was wounded for our transgression, the punishment of our peace was upon him."\*

## **CHAPTER XII:**

### **THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE AS TO THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT PROVED BY THE CHARACTER OF THE EFFECTS WHICH ARE ATTRIBUTED TO IT IN SCRIPTURE**

AS our seventh argument, we cite those numerous passages of Scripture which describe in various relations and lights the effects of

the redemption work of our Lord. These are set forth in three capital relations: (a) as these effects concern God, they are termed propitiation, and hence reconciliation; (b) as they respect sin, expiation; and (c) as they respect the sinner himself, redemption.

I. The effect of Christ's death, as it regards God, is revealed to be propitiation, and consequently reconciliation. The principal words which have been used by the Holy Ghost to express the effect of the atoning work of Christ as it regards God, are the Greek words καταλλάσσειν, καταλλαγή, ιλάσκεσθαι, ιλασμός, and ιλαστήριον, and the Hebrew word רָפָא.

1. The classical usage of the word καταλλάσσειν is (a) to change, to exchange; and (b) to change a person from enmity to friendship, to reconcile. And the usage with regard to the derivative noun καταλλαγή is precisely similar. When God is said to reconcile us to himself by Jesus Christ, the expression doubtless comprehends the whole result effected, and that evidently includes a mutual reconciliation of God to us and of us to God. Young and Bushnell, and the advocates of the Moral Influence hypothesis generally, insist that the word is used only in the sense of the persuasion of the sinner by God, through the cross of Christ, to lay aside his wicked alienation. But that the other sense of the propitiation, or rendering placable the divine nature in respect to sinners, is also included, and in some passages is the main sense intended, is plain from the following considerations: (1.) In Rom. 5:10, 11, the phrase, "We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," is explained by the parallel phrase, "being justified by his blood," so as to be "saved from wrath through him." (2.) In 2 Cor. 5:18–20, the phrase that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," is explained by saying in the same sentence, "not imputing their trespasses unto them." Not to impute sin is to forgive it. Rom. 4:5; 2 Tim. 4:16. (3.) The command addressed by Paul to gospel-hearers, "Be ye reconciled to God," is precisely parallel to that other command given by Christ in Matt. 5:24: "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, ... go thy way;

first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." This must mean, Go, cause thy brother to be reconciled to thee by removing the cause for his anger. So, "Be ye reconciled to God," must mean that they should accept Christ as their propitiation, as that whereby they might be reconciled to their God. (4.) The meaning of this word is rendered plain, and the doctrine I am insisting on is conclusively established, by the usage of the second Greek verb noted above, ἰλάσκεσθαι, and its association with the Hebrew word כפר.

2. In its classical sense the word ἰλάσκεσθαι means to propitiate an offended deity by means of expiatory sacrifices or penances. This was the universally received sense of the word and its uniform usage among all persons who used the Greek language ages before the translators of the Septuagint used it as the proper Greek equivalent of the Hebrew כפר; and it continued to be its sense without shadow of change down to the time when the inspired apostles used it to express the precise effect of Christ's work as it respects God. This fact is acknowledged by Young, although it is radically subversive alike of the Governmental Atonement Theory and of his own. Thus Christ is made a faithful high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for (ἰλάσκεσθαι) the sins of his people. Heb. 2:17. In 1 John 2:2, and 4:10, the Lord Jesus is said to be the ἰλασμός for our sins—a word used by the Seventy to translate כפרים, expiation. And in Rom. 3:25, he is declared to be an ἰλαστήριον through faith in his blood—that is, a propitiation by means of an expiatory sacrifice covering the sins of his people with his blood.

3. The Hebrew word כפר is the principal one used by the Holy Spirit to express the precise effect designed and accomplished by the sacrifices, (a) in respect to sin as a covering, and hence (b) in respect to God as a means of reconciliation. The root-meaning of the word is to cover, overlay, and this sense is carried with it through its entire usage. The Holy of Holies, in the temple, was God's immediate presence-chamber, and the mercy-seat, covering the Ark of the Covenant, was God's throne. In this ark, as the foundation on which his throne rests, were placed the two stone tables of the law, on

which were engraven those commandments summarily embodying the principles of perfect righteousness, constituting in this position God's terrible testimony against all sin and all sinners. The ark was covered with a slab of pure gold, called the כפרת or covering, rendered in the Greek, ἱλαστήριον; in the Latin, propitiatorium; and in the English, mercy-seat. Immediately over this mercy-seat, and between the cherubim, habitually dwelt the Schekinah, or visible manifestation of Jehovah's presence. On the great day of atonement, the high priest entered within the veil, first with the blood of the bullock slain, as an atonement for the sin of his house; and again with the blood of the goat slain, as a sin-offering for the sin of the people; and he sprinkled them both in turn over the mercy-seat, and seven times before it. Lev. 16:14, 15. Hence, when God looked down toward his law, on which rests his throne, and which called for the execution of the penalty upon every transgression, his eye rested first on the כפרת, or covering bearing the sacrificial blood; the sins were therefore covered, and God was reconciled. Hence this small slab of gold became the most important part of the tabernacle—the Holy of Holies being at times designated as "the house of the כפרת, or the house of the blood-bearing covering." 1 Chron. 28:11.\* Hence the word כפר, originally signifying to cover, came to be used by the Holy Ghost to express the effect of a sacrifice in expiating the guilt of sin, and hence in propitiating the infinitely holy God. Hence it is properly translated in our version, in different constructions, by the words to make atonement, to appease, to pacify, to reconcile, to purge, to purge away. Ezek. 16:63; Gen. 32:20, 21; Ps. 65:3, 4; 78:38; 1 Sam. 3:14; Numb. 35:33. And hence also the cognate word, כפרים is translated atonement, and כפר is translated sometimes ransom; Ps. 49:7. "If there shall be laid upon him a sum of money (an atonement, something to cover his offence), then he shall give for the ransom of his soul whatsoever is laid upon him." Ex. 21:30. "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee." Isa. 43:3; and sometimes satisfaction. Numb. 35:31, 32. Thus under the Old Testament, as well as under the New, sacrificial expiation is declared to be of the nature of a ransom; that is, of some person or thing given for another as the condition of

deliverance. But the fixed idea of the basis of the whole usage of the word and its derivatives is, that (a) God is reconciled to the sinner only by covering his sin, and (b) that sin is covered only by sacrificial blood. Thus, in Lev. 10:17, it is said that the "sin-offering is given to make atonement (that is, covering of sin by blood) for them before the Lord." Paul declares, as the sum of the Old Testament ritual, that "without shedding of blood is no remission," and "where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." Heb. 9:22 and 10:18. The Seventy habitually translate this word כפר (to cover sin by blood) by the Greek word ἱλάσκεσθαι, the fixed meaning of which was to propitiate by expiation. And the apostles, following the Seventy, apply the same word to Christ and his work. His "blood is shed for the remission of sins." Matt. 26:28. He is the ἱλασμός (1 John 2:2) and the ἱλαστήριον, or mercy-seat, covering our sins with sacrificial blood.

II. The effect of Christ's sufferings, as it respects the sins of his people, was expiation of guilt. Propitiation has reference to the bearing or effect of satisfaction upon God. Expiation has reference to the bearing of the same satisfaction upon the guilt of sin. It does not, in the least degree, remove the pollution or moral turpitude of sin. It removes only its guilt or moral obligation, and hence its legal exposure to punishment. The same words, alike in classical Latin and Greek, and in the originals of both the Old and the New Testaments, are used in different constructions to express this double bearing of a bloody sacrifice, now upon God and now upon sin. (a.) The words ἱλάσκομαι and ἱλασμός, translated in the English New Testament by the word propitiate, were habitually used by the Seventy to translate כפר, which can only, as a general thing, signify expiation by covering with blood. (b.) The word ἱλάσκομαι, when construed with God, evidently and confessedly is used by both classical writers and the Seventy in the sense of propitiation; but when it is construed with sin, it can only be used in the sense of expiation. Heb. 2:17. Christ was made a faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God (ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ), to expiate the sins of the people. In 1 John 2:2 and 4:10, Christ is twice declared to be the

expiation for our sins. (c.) The Hebrew word כפר is sometimes construed with God when it must be rendered propitiation, as, for instance, Ezek. 16:63: "When I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord." See Gen. 32:20. Whereas the same word is generally and more immediately, in accordance with its radical meaning, construed with sin, or with the person or thing in which the sin inheres. Isa. 6:7; Dan. 9:24; and Lev. 4:20; 5:6, 10; 16:6, 12: "And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin-offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself and for his house; ... and he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat (כפרת or covering) that is upon the testimony, that he die not. And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward: and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat: and he shall make an atonement (covering by sacrificial blood) for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins." Although a different word is used, this is evidently the idea of David when, in Ps. 32:1, he says, "Blessed is the man whose sin is covered;" which he explains by the parallel phrases, "whose sin is forgiven," and "to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." And Paul, in Rom. 4:5, declares that this is the principle on which, in the gospel, God justifies the ungodly without works, and reckons faith for righteousness.

Young supposes that he overthrows this entire body of proof by noticing the fact (a) that the Seventy sometimes translate the word כפר by the Greek terms ἀγιάζειν, to consecrate, and by καθαρίζειν, to purify, although he admits that their characteristic rendering is ἰλάσκεσθαι. (b.) That in those cases in which the word כפר is used to

set forth the ceremonial atonement for the sacred instruments of religion, as the altar (Ex. 29:36, 37), and for the plague of leprosy in the walls of a house (Lev. 14:48–53), it cannot possibly be used in the strict sense of making expiation for sin.\* We answer to the first point, that the very thing expressed by the habitual and always consistent usage of this word is, that a sinner can be reconciled, and his sin cleansed, and soul made holy, and his life consecrated to God's service, only as his sin is covered and so atoned by sacrificial blood. Remission of sins, the immediate effect of an acceptable offering, is in order to sanctification—sanctification is not in order to remission. But since sacrificial blood, by making expiation, and so securing remission, always effects purification, it is eminently proper that the instrumentality should be differently designated, as one or other effect might be in the special case most prominently thought of. To the second point, the answer is obvious, that the sin of man really brings, in a true sense, under condemnation with himself, his body, his world, and the very instruments of his daily life and religious service. The disease of leprosy was chosen as a type or image of sin. Leprosy in the walls of a house was treated as an image of that in man. The priest was directed to slay a bird, to sprinkle the house seven times to make an atonement for the house. This is of course a figure from beginning to end; but a figure of what? The leprosy is a figure of human sinfulness, involving guilt and pollution. The atonement is a figure of human redemption from sin. In both cases the cleansing comes through the atonement or covering, and the covering is effected through sacrificial blood.

When it is said that the Atonement had a bearing upon the divine nature, and in some real sense propitiated God's justice and so reconciled him to the sinner, it is by no means forgotten (a) that God is absolutely unchangeable in his states and moods, as well as in his essence, or (b) that instead of the Atonement being the cause of God's love for his people, it is itself the effect of that love pre-existing from eternity. For "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." John 3:16.

The scriptural doctrine of propitiation is no more inconsistent with the divine unchangeableness than the Scripture doctrine with respect to the real efficacy of prayer. We may not be able to define the method of that consistency, yet it is not difficult to believe that the atoning work of Christ was present, like every act of prayer, in the divine mind from eternity. It by no means follows that because there are no chronological successions in God, there are therefore to be traced no relations of cause and effect through his thoughts, purposes or actions.

In like manner, our doctrine is not in the least inconsistent with the glorious truth that the love of God for his own people is eternal and self-originated—the cause and not the effect of the Atonement. The fact is, that his love for their persons, and his holy displeasure for their sins, were co-existent states of mind from eternity. And yet the apostle takes upon himself to say that the very elect themselves, so beloved, were, because of God's righteousness, "by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. 2:3. The wrath of God is a verity, being revealed from heaven, and coming even now upon the children of disobedience, and in many cases fearfully treasured up against the day of wrath to come. Rom. 1:18; 2:5. But it is asserted over and over again that "we shall be saved from wrath through Christ" (Rom. 5:9), and that "Christ delivered us from the wrath to come." 1 Thess. 1:10. Absolutely considered, God is unchangeable. But such a change in our relations to God was wrought by the work of Christ, that his infinite righteousness coincides with his infinite love in all their blessed manifestations and operations towards his own people for ever.

Young complains that our doctrine of Satisfaction leads inevitably to the conception of two different Gods.\* "The one God is angry with the other God; and the incarnate God is represented as bearing the wrath of the first." He admits, that "When we bow in adoring reverence before the eternal essential Unity, it is not hard to think of distinct aspects blending mysteriously and harmoniously in one being, or of distinct agencies and influences springing out of one



source." Although we have not time to dwell upon the point, it is impossible not to notice the very significant fact that, although he professes to be, and doubtless is in his heart, a devout believer in the real divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, yet having adopted the Unitarian theory as to the nature of Christ's work, he necessarily gravitates towards the Unitarian theory as to the constitution of his person. In the above extract, which harmonizes with the tone of his whole book, he distinctly excludes the scriptural doctrine of the three-fold distinction of persons in the unity of essence. If the first clause, in which he speaks of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost as "distinct aspects," stood alone, we would credit him with being a Sabellian, holding that God is one single person as well as one single essence, and admitting a modal three-foldness in respect to manifestation and operation. But in the second clause, which doubtless he intends to be exegetical of the first, he represents the divine in Christ and the Holy Ghost to be "agencies or influences" springing out of a divine source. Neither Strauss nor Renan would object to such a statement of the Trinity as involved in a rational conception of the person of Christ. Let the reader, for the purpose of tracing the connection, compare Bushnell's book on the "Vicarious Sacrifice," in which he gives the Unitarian view as to the work of Christ, with the radically defective view of the person of our Lord given in his "God in Christ."

To the charge that our view of Satisfaction necessarily involves Tritheism, we answer—(1.) That the eternal subsistence of three distinct persons, capable of mutual personal interaction in the unity of one indivisible essence, is a truth clearly revealed in Scripture, yet one which no man can distinctly construe in his own mind. As it is presented in different relations in Scripture, every person who, with competent clearness of thought, observes his own mental states, knows that his mind oscillates between the extreme of too widely separating the persons (Tritheism), and the opposite extreme of too closely pressing the unity toward the extinction of the personal distinction (Sabellianism). Nevertheless, there are no truths more clearly taught in Scripture than these: (a.) That the true God is one

God. (b.) That Christ, in the highest sense the word bears, is the great God in person. (c.) That, at the same time, he is a distinct person from the Father. (2.) We answer, that our doctrine of the execution, by the Father, of the penalty of the law upon the person of the God-man as the Substitute of his people does not bear a tritheistic appearance any more than the undeniable representations given in Scripture of the relations sustained by the Son to the Father. They mutually love and are beloved by each other. The Son is commanded, is sent by the Father; prays to him; addresses to him the pronoun thou; uses, with reference to him, the pronoun he. When the Son came in the place of men, and suffered in their stead (ἀντὶ), then the Scriptures declare that the Father laid upon him the iniquities of us all, and made him to be sin and a curse. On the cross the Son cried in agony, the whole world darkening in sympathy, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

III. The Scriptures set forth the effect of the atoning work of Christ, as it bears upon the sinner himself, as a redemption; as a deliverance from the curse of the law by the payment of an equivalent as a ransom-price. The words which express this effect are of frequent recurrence, and are such as ἀγοράζειν, to buy. "Ye are bought with a price," 1 Cor. 7:23; "Redeemed us to God by thy blood," Rev. 5:9; Ἐξαγοράζειν, to redeem, to buy out of the hands of; "Hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. 3:13. Also λυτρόω, mid., to ransom, to redeem by payment of a ransom; "For ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." 1 Pet. 1:18. Christ is called our λύτρον, ransom (Matt. 20:28), and our ἀντίλυτρον, substituted ransom (1 Tim. 2:6) Λυτρόω is very frequently used by the Seventy to translate the Hebrew לָאָה and הָפָה, words of very frequent occurrence, and translated in our version by redeem and ransom. The Jehovah of the Old Testament habitually is described as the Redeemer of his people of Israel. Isa. 41:14; 44:24, &c. And the people of the Lord are constantly set forth as those who have been bought with a price—ransomed. Isa. 35:10; 51:11; 62:12, &c.

It has often been charged against the supporters of the orthodox doctrine of the Atonement that, by unduly pressing the literal sense of a few passages like those just cited, we have been led to represent the work of our Lord as purely a mercantile transaction. This objection is utterly unfounded. The orthodox have from the first carefully distinguished in statement, and in argument triumphantly vindicated their doctrine, in view of the distinction between a pecuniary satisfaction on the one hand and a penal satisfaction on the other.\* In a matter of pecuniary indebtedness, the claim respects exclusively the thing due, and not at all the person of the debtor. A pecuniary satisfaction, therefore, being the payment of the money due, which was all the claim required, ipso facto, liberates, no matter whether the debtor pays or another pays for him. The receipt in full of the creditor is purely a business acknowledgment that his claim is satisfied, and therefore extinguished by the simple force of the payment, and without any room for the exercise of grace on his part. In a case of debt, moreover, the demand is for the precise amount due. Nothing satisfies but the payment of the very thing nominated in the bond. Now the orthodox doctrine is, that the sufferings of Christ are a penal satisfaction to the demands of the law. In this case the claim of the law essentially respects the person of the criminal as well as the penal debt incurred. The claims of law, preceptive and penal, are all personal, and can be transferred from person to person only by the prerogative of the sovereign as a matter of gracious will. As a matter of mere law, no satisfaction can find acceptance other than the literal suffering of the penalty by the criminal in person. If the sovereign admits a substitute in the place of the criminal, it is a matter of pure grace. Even if the sovereign does admit a substitute, the solution of the penal debt by that substitute does not give any claim to the criminal represented, nor, ipso facto, liberate him from the legal bonds in which he is held. The only rights to which the vicarious solution of a penal debt can give rise accrue to the substitute, not the criminal, and the criminal receives the benefits thereof purely as a matter of grace, and at such times and under such conditions as may be settled between the sovereign judge and the substitute. In the case of a penal infliction, the demand respects not

any constant and definite kind and degree of suffering. The demand is for whatever kind and degree of suffering the infinitely righteous intelligence of God sees in each given case to be morally right; the crime to be expiated and the person to suffer being both taken into consideration.

The commercial language, above quoted, is not the invention of orthodox theologians. It is the spontaneous and very frequent language of the Holy Ghost, deliberately chosen to set before our minds the true nature and method of Christian salvation. It is moreover plain that this language, taken in its obvious sense, is most appropriate to the subject, if our view of the nature of the Atonement be true, while it is certainly unnatural and misleading if either of the alternative views should be true.

On the Moral Influence Theory the language must be emptied of all sense, and the ideas it suggests must not only be modified, but totally ignored. As a moral impression, the work of Christ terminates upon the heart of the sinner. But as a ransom, as an act of redemption out of the hands of justice for a price paid, it must respect the deliverance of the sinner from the claim and power of some person exterior to himself.

The Governmental Atonement Theory sets forth the sufferings of Christ as having only a general and impersonal relation to the mass of sinners, and a very indefinite relation to the law and its penalty. The sufferings of Christ, in this view, secured no claim upon God on Christ's part any more than on ours. It simply makes it consistent with governmental expediency to offer salvation on easier terms, and it puts the sinner in a salvable, not a saved condition. But this characteristic scriptural language of ransom, buying with a price, redeemed out of the hands of, &c., necessarily carries with it the ideas (a) of a personal reference to the individuals redeemed, that is, paid for; (b) of these persons being really saved by redemption, not simply put in a salvable condition; and (c) of Christ having acquired a right to that for which he had paid the price. There is an exact

correspondence between the representation that Christ assumed our law-place, and as our Substitute suffered, in our stead and behalf, the penalty of the law, and this scriptural language above quoted, that Christ is the ransom of our souls, the price paid for our redemption; that is, by which we were bought off from the claims of that law by which we were held.

There are three several generic forms of conception under which the work wrought by Christ for the salvation of men is set forth. These are (a) that of an expiatory offering for sin; (b) that of the redemption of the life and liberty of a captive by the payment of a ransom in his stead; and (c) the satisfaction of the law by the vicarious fulfilment of its demands. These different conceptions are designed both to limit and to supplement each other in a manner strictly analogous to the combination of the different perceptions of the same object by the different bodily senses. The sense of sight, although when educated in connection with the concurrent and mutually limiting and supplementing perceptions of the organs of touch and hearing, it is unmatched as to the extent and accuracy of its information, yet would, if left to itself, never have risen beyond an infant's vague perception of a surface variously shaded, without any sense of relation in space. All our knowledge of the material world, considered as an object of sense, arises from the education of our minds in the use of our bodily senses in combination, and the habits of judgment and inference which are thus produced. Men learn to interpret the impressions made upon them through their eyes by means of other impressions made upon them, in connection with the same objects, through the senses of touch and hearing, and vice versa. In like manner our knowledge of the true nature of the work of Christ and its bearing upon us results from all the various forms in which the Scriptures set it forth in combination, each at once limiting, modifying and supplementing all the others. It should be noticed, moreover, that the Scriptures do not present these several views as different sides of the same house to be taken in succession, but habitually present them in combination, as lights and shades blend together in the same picture in producing the same intelligible

expression. Thus, in the same sentences, it is said, "We are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Pet. 1:18, 19. Christ came "to give his life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:28. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. 3:13. "He hath made him, who knew no sin, to be a sin-offering for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21.\* That is, he redeems us not in the sense of making a pecuniary payment in cancellation of our debts, but by his vicarious suffering, like the bleeding sacrifices of the Mosaic ritual, of the penalty due our sins.

The fact here noticed, that the same inspired sentences represent Christ at the same instant and in the same relations as a ransom and as a sin-offering, and as made to endure the curse of the law for us, is worthy of careful study. The teaching of Scripture is not that Christ is a sacrifice, and a ransom, and a bearer of the curse of the law, but it is that he is that particular species of sacrifice which is a ransom; that his redemption is of that nature which is effected by his bearing the curse of the law in our stead, and that he redeems us by offering himself a bleeding sacrifice to God. Thus, the teaching of the Holy Ghost is as precise as any ecclesiastical theory of Atonement. Christ saves us by being a sacrifice. But not any one of the many kinds embraced in the whole genus sacrifice. He is specifically a sin-offering in the Jewish sense, because this was declared, while the temple was still standing, by a Jewish apostle to Jewish readers. More specifically yet, the offering of himself as a sin-offering is declared to have been equivalent to his making himself a ransom for us, and to his bearing the curse of the law in our stead, and that the design and effect of this ransom-paying, curse-bearing sacrifice of his is, that he redeems us from the curse of the law. It is not any kind of a sacrifice, but a ransom-paying, curse-bearing sacrifice. It is not any kind of redemption, but a sacrificial redemption. A given line of latitude a thousand miles long may be a very indeterminate definition of the geographical position of a city; but the precise point of intersection of a line of latitude and a determinate line of longitude marks a mathematical point with metaphysical precision.

The Holy Ghost has ideally represented the work of Christ as marked by the precise point of convergence of the bleeding sacrifice, of redemption by the substitution of a personal ransom, and of the vicarious bearing of the curse of the law by a substitute in the stead of the criminal.\*

Besides this, these different expressions are sometimes applied to different subjects. When it is said that Christ "has redeemed us by his blood" (Rev. 5:9), the term redemption of course is used to designate the nature and designed effect of his sacrifice, which he finished on the cross. But when it is said that Christ "obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12), and that we are "sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption," the word is of course used to include, in addition to the means whereby Christ obtained our salvation, also its application and complete realization by us—when not only the remission of sin and the complete sanctification of our souls will have been attained, but upon the consummated adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies, "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. 8:21–23.

## **CHAPTER XIII:**

# **THE TRUE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT PROVED BY THE NATURE OF THE UNION WHICH THE SCRIPTURES ASSERT SUBSISTS BETWEEN CHRIST AND HIS PEOPLE**

AS our eighth argument, I propose to establish, by an induction of scriptural passages, the fact that a UNION of such a kind subsists between the Lord Jesus and his people, as—however mysterious it may be in its own nature—yet when once admitted, on the ground of divine testimony, as a fact, involves, as a natural result, the consequence of his bearing our sins, and our being clothed upon with the rewardableness of his obedience, and which is utterly anomalous and meaningless if our doctrine of literal substitution and of penal sufferings is rejected.

The main objection alleged against the doctrine of vicarious expiation of sin by its opponents is, that it confounds all our elementary and necessary ideas of justice. This objection, in substance, though variously modified in form, is made by the Unitarian and Trinitarian advocates of the Moral Influence Theory, such as Socinus, S. Crellius, Bushnell and John Young, and by all classes of the adherents of the Governmental Atonement School. It may be considered in two relations: (1.) As it respects Christ, it is claimed that the judicial treatment of the innocent as if he were guilty is an outrageous injustice, involving the confusion of every moral principle. (2.) As it regards his sinful people, in whose stead Christ is said to have died, it is claimed that his punishment in their stead can, as a matter of abstract justice, avail them nothing, for the plain reason that the precise and only thing which justice demands is not the suffering of so much pain, but the judicial infliction of the pain upon the sinner in person. Fiske and many others insist, as do the Socinians, that it is essential to the idea of the penalty that it is pain inflicted by the lawgiver upon the transgressor in person. As to the first side of the objection, we admit that, in the common judgment of all men, to regard and treat a man as responsible for a sin for which he is not truly responsible is beyond question unjust. But this plain principle does not apply to the case of Christ suffering the just for the unjust; because (a) he, being the equal of God, the fountain of all law, and owing no obedience to the law on his own account, and having an unlimited right to dispose of his services and of his life as he pleased, voluntarily assumed our obligations and



made them his own. As far as Christ is concerned, therefore, there is obviously no injustice in the Father's exacting from him all the conditions of a suretyship which he has spontaneously assumed and voluntarily yields. Besides this, it is admitted on all hands that Christ suffered for his people. The advocates of the Moral Influence and Governmental theories of the Atonement maintain that our sins are the occasion of his sufferings. We say that they are the judicial ground of his sufferings. We all agree in maintaining that his sufferings are caused by our sins, and that they are self-assumed by him with the utmost freeness and spontaneity of love. If this be so, it is evident that there is no injustice in the one view of the case any more than in the other. (b.) Since the sufferings of Christ satisfy God, and maintain the honour of his law and the interests of his government, even better than the punishment of each sinner in person would have done, there can, of course, be no injustice involved in the arrangement as far as the interests of God and his government are concerned. (c.) This vicarious suffering is an infinite benefit to those sinners who are saved, and no disadvantage whatsoever to any who may be left to bear the penal consequences of their own sins. Therefore, if there be no injustice done to any one of the parties concerned, there can be no injustice in the case.

As to the second side of the objection above made, we confess that the divine administration, both as to the coming in of the curse through Adam, and as to the redemption from the curse through Christ, rests upon principles higher and grander than those embraced in the ordinary rules of human law. Our doctrine, although never contradicting reason, does not rest upon it, but upon the supernatural revelation given in the Word. But while the complete satisfaction which absolute justice finds in the vicarious sufferings of a substituted victim may transcend reason, it by no means conflicts with it, because (1) it is no part of the teaching of Scripture that sin can be imputed to any one, or its guilt be expiated by the sufferings of any one to whom it does not truly belong. There must be, of course, in every case such a union as shall in the unerring judgment of God be a firm foundation in justice for this imputation. It is no

mere mental assumption on the part of God of that which is not true in fact. On the contrary, it is a most wise and righteous recognition of the exact responsibility of each party in the relations in which he stands in the eye of law to all others. Grotius, who discussed the subject with great learning and ability, and certainly with sufficient deference to the claims of reason, maintains that while it is necessary to the essence of a penalty that it be inflicted on account of sin, it is not necessary that in every case it should be inflicted on the person of the sinner, if only there be such a union between the person who sinned and the person who is punished as justifies the imputation.\* Turretin says<sup>†</sup> that there are three kinds of union known to us which justify the imputation of sin, because they are of such a nature that, in the case of certain actions, the moral responsibility for the sin is common to all the parties involved. These are—(a) natural, as between a father and his children; (b) moral and political, as between a king and his subjects; and (c) voluntary, as between friends and between an arraigned criminal and his sponsor. Now the union of Christ with his people rests on stronger ground than any of these considered alone. It is, as we have seen, voluntary upon his part, who spontaneously assumed all the obligations he bore. But it was, moreover, the eternal and sovereign ordinance of the three divine Persons in council, whose behests are the foundation of all law, of all rights, and of all obligations. If it be a revealed fact that such a union subsists on such grounds, it is surely futile for a mortal to claim that it is a pure mental fiction, and that the judicial action that proceeds upon it is unjust. (2.) Providence constantly, as a matter of fact, proceeds upon principles which appear to be identical with that upon which the substitution of Christ in the place of sinners ultimately rests. God, as the Creator, Father and Guardian of the human family, acting for its advantage, placed the moral probation of the whole race in the conduct of Adam, the natural head and covenant representative of that race, during a limited period and under the most favourable conditions, in the Garden of Eden. Adam sinned, and as a matter of unquestionable fact, the penalty of that sin has been executed in common upon him and on each of his descendants from birth. The penalty denounced and actually executed upon him

included spiritual death, mortality of body, the earth cursed with briars and thorns, the necessity of winning bread by the sweat of the brow, and of bringing forth children in pain. Each one of these elements of evil has been executed upon his descendants universally, and literally in the same manner in which they were executed on him. They are not the mere natural consequences of his sin. If they were penal evils in his case, they are penal consequences of his sin in our case. This the apostle explicitly declares, Rom. 5:19: "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so [that is, upon the same principle] by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." As a matter of daily experience, also, we find the penal consequences of many sins passing over upon those who are providentially bound up with the sinful agents. Ex. 20:5. God does actually, as he says, visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate him.

Now we propose to prove (1) that the Scriptures plainly teach that God has established between Christ and his people a union *sui generis*, transcending all earthly analogies in its intimacy of fellowship and reciprocal copartnership, both federal and vital, and hence called by theologians "mystical" in the sense of being mysterious, in perfection and completeness transcending all analogy. And (2) that the fact of this union being established, it goes far to explain his community with us in the guilt of our sins, and our community with him in the rewards of his righteousness.

I. The Scriptures teach that such a union exists as a matter of fact.

As might be supposed, the Scriptures present this union to us simply as a matter of fact, to be credited solely on the ground of divine testimony. They attempt no rational explanations of its nature. We can understand its essential nature no more than we can the coexistence from eternity of the three divine Persons in the unity of the one essence; or the union of the two natures in the one person of the God-man; or the union of the whole race in the person of Adam. As it transcends all natural analogies, the Scriptures set forth its

variety and fulness, element by element, by means of many partial analogies. Thus they liken it to the relation the foundation of a building sustains to the superstructure erected upon it, configured to it, and supported by it (1 Pet. 2:4–6); to a tree and its branches. John 15:4, 5. "Abide in me, and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." It is also likened to the organic union of the different members of one body: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ." Rom. 12:4, 5. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, ... so also is Christ... Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." 1 Cor. 12:12, 27. "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and his Church." Eph. 5:30, 32, and 4:15, 16. Also, to a husband in his relation to his wife. Eph. 5:31, 32; Rom. 7:4; Rev. 19:7–9; and 21:9. And more particularly to the relation sustained by Adam to his descendants. Rom. 5:12–19; and 1 Cor. 15:22 and 45–49. He is called "the last Adam," and the "second man." It is a simple matter of fact, as we have seen, whatever philosophical explanation we may give it, that

"In Adam's fall we sinned all."

The literal penalty in all its parts has been from the first universally executed upon the entire race, in the same sense it was executed upon Adam. The apostle calls it a "judgment" and a "condemnation." The same infallible authority declares (a) that "even so," that is, we are made righteous through the obedience of Christ, upon the same principles as those upon which we have been made sinners through the disobedience of Adam. And (b) that our union with Christ is of the same order, and involves the same class of effects as our union with Adam. We call it a union both federal and vital. Others may call it what they please, but it will nevertheless remain certain that it is of such a nature as to involve an identity of legal relations and

reciprocal obligations and rights. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Rom. 5:19. He is said to have "borne our sins in his own body on the tree." 1 Pet. 2:24. We are said to "be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. To have been chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Eph. 1:3–5. "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." John 1:16. We are declared to be "complete in him, which is the Head of all principality and power." Col. 2:10. To be circumcised in Christ, to be buried with him in baptism, Col. 2:11, 12; and to be quickened together with Christ, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2:5, 6. In ourselves we are declared to be dead, and our life hid with Christ in God, and Christ to be our life. Col. 3:3, 4. We do not live, but Christ liveth in us. Gal. 2:20. We are baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27), and sleep in Jesus when we die (1 Cor. 15:18; 1 Thess. 4:14), and our bodies are members of Christ. 1 Cor. 6:15. His death is said to have been virtually our death (Rom. 6:8–11; and 2 Cor 5:14, 15), and his resurrection from the dead to involve the certainty of ours. 1 Cor. 15:20–22; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2. In him we have redemption—through his blood the remission of sins. Eph. 1:7. We share with him in his righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30), in his sufferings (Phil. 3:10, 11), in his Holy Spirit. Rom. 8:9. We are declared to be joint heirs with him, ordained to have fellowship hereafter with him in his glory, as now in his suffering (Rom. 8:17), and to sit with him on his throne. Rev. 3:21. As St. Augustine long ago noticed, "Such is the ineffable closeness of this transcendental union, that we hear the voice of the members suffering, when they suffered in the Head, and cried through the Head on the cross, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' And, in like manner, we hear the voice of the Head suffering, when he suffered in his members, and cried to the persecutor on the way to Damascus, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' "

The nature of this union is further set forth by means of several titles applied to Christ in view of his relation to us. Thus he is called our "second or last Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45–47), our "Head" (Eph. 1:22;

4:15; Col. 1:18), our "High Priest" (Heb. 9:11 and 5:1): "For every high priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." As I have abundantly proved,\* the function of the priest was uniformly to represent man before God, and not God before man. The efficiency of his work was designed to terminate upon God, and not upon man. He is called also our "Mediator between God and man" (1 Tim. 2:5), which is explained by the accompanying phrase, "who gave himself as a substitutionary ransom in the stead of all." And in Heb. 8:3–6 and 9:11–15, he is set forth as Mediator in his capacity of High Priest. Hence he cannot be Mediator, as Young insists he is, in his constantly referred-to note,\* in the sense of being the medium through which God produces a moral impression upon us. It must be interpreted in the sense of a medium through which we approach a reconciled Father. He is also called our "Advocate with the Father." "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the (ἱλασμός) propitiation for our sins." 1 John 2:1, 2. And finally, he is called our Surety (ἑγγυος). In its classical sense ἑγγυος means "Bondsman" or "Bailsman" with the Father. Heb. 7:22. This cannot mean, as the Socinians and their followers have, from the beginning, striven to prove, that Christ was Surety for the truth and fidelity of God to us. It must mean that he was our Surety for the solution of our legal obligations to God, because it is explicitly declared, in the only passage in which the word occurs, that he was Surety for us in his function as High Priest. "The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a PRIEST for ever after the order of Melchisedec: By so much was Jesus made the SURETY of a better testament."

We here, of course, attempt no philosophical explanation of the essential basis of that union. We can know it only so far as its nature and its consequences are made known to us by direct revelation. The disciples of Schliermacher, and Realists in general, maintain that this union essentially consists in the fact that the eternal Λόγος, in his incarnation, assumed the entire substance of human nature, and thus becomes, ipso facto, in the most literal sense, responsible for all

the sin of that nature. This view we have rejected for reasons assigned in a preceding chapter,\* and, whether true or false, it is no part of Christian doctrine, because no part of revealed truth, but at best a human attempt at the rational explanation of the truth revealed. All that is clearly taught in the Scriptures, and, therefore, all that ought to be received as Christian doctrine as to the nature of this union, is, (1.) that it is a real union, such as in the infallible judgment of God lays the foundation in right for his being punished for our sins, and for our being credited with his righteousness—that is, so far as to answer all the federal demands of the law upon us. (2.) That it is, in some way to us unexplained, conditioned upon the fact that our nature is generative, hence that the whole race is made of one flesh, and that he became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. (3.) That it is conditioned upon the eternal counsel of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. (4.) That our legal responsibilities were voluntarily assumed by the Logos, to be discharged by him as Theanthropos. (5.) That provision is made, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, for his becoming to all his people a "quickeningspirit" (πνεῦμα ζωοποιόν), 1 Cor. 15:45, and for their being made living members of that spiritual body of which he is the Head.

This much, and far more, the Scriptures teach to the same effect, the whole of which, taken together, conspires to form one perfectly self-consistent representation of a union most real and practical, though transcending all analogies. I do not deny that, by skilful selection and apposition, the advocates of each of the heterodox theories of the Atonement may show that the majority of these passages, treated separately, are not absolutely incapable of being reduced into conformity with their views. And this follows necessarily from the fact that each of their hypotheses, as is the case with respect to every heresy which ever existed, is a partial truth. But—

II. I submit that the induction of scriptural passages I have presented makes certain the following points: (1.) That the entire class of passages above presented are not only without exception consistent with, but when taken together naturally suggest, the central principle

of our doctrine, viz., that Christ, in the strict and proper sense of the term, was substituted in the law-place of his people. (2.) That the existence of this ineffable union, when established as a fact by infallible authority, goes very far to explain the relation which Christ has sustained to the penal sanctions of the law, and the effect which his work of active and passive obedience accomplishes in expiating the sins of his people, and in entitling them with himself to a glorious inheritance. And (3) that neither of the views which I oppose can, by any possible ingenuity, be adjusted to all that the Scriptures reveal concerning the union of Christ to his people, taken together as a whole. On neither hypothesis can a rational explanation of the application to the subject of such language in such variety and involution be afforded.

With respect to the Moral Influence Hypothesis, the truth of this assertion is more than sufficiently evident. If Christ comes to us merely that by a revelation of divine love he may persuade us to lay aside our wicked enmity to God, in what sense, consistent with the honest use of language, can he be said to be our "second Adam," our "Priest," our "Ransom," our "Advocate with the Father," the "Propitiation for our sins," our "Surety," or Bailsman before God? In what sense were we "predestinated in him," "baptized into his death?" In what sense was his death virtually our death, or his life virtually our life? In what sense is our life hid with Christ in God? In what sense do we have fellowship with him in his sufferings and in the power of his resurrection? In what sense is he our righteousness and we made righteous by his obedience?

The same essential incongruity will appear when we attempt to adjust the great central truth taught by these passages to the Governmental Hypothesis. If Christ was not strictly a Substitute in our place, and if he did not literally bear the penalty and expiate the guilt of our sins; if all he did was, by sufferings which were not of the nature of punishment, to prove that God will punish sin, and thus make it consistent with God's rectitude as King for him not to save any, but to put all in a salvable state; if this represents the whole



truth revealed as to the nature of redemption,—then it necessarily follows that, after all the Holy Ghost has said about it, the union between Christ and his people is not real, but only figurative. He helps us materially to help ourselves. But he never was literally one with us in the eye of the law. We are not truly of his flesh and of his bones, and he was neither our Ransom, nor our Bailsman. We are not truly joint heirs with him, but only beneficiaries. His obedience does not make us righteous, but his sufferings open the way for God's giving us an opportunity of becoming so. He did not bear our sin, and we are not clothed upon with his righteousness. Our sin was only the occasion of his suffering; and the same suffering is only the occasion, by means of which we may, if faithful, become personally righteous.

## **CHAPTER XIV:**

# **THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE, AS TO THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT, PROVED FROM WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH AS TO THE NATURE AND GROUNDS OF JUSTIFICATION**

AS the ninth argument in support of the truth of our doctrine as to the nature of the Atonement, I cite the clear and indubitable teachings of the Scriptures as to the nature of JUSTIFICATION and the grounds upon which it proceeds. For the ends of my argument, I shall define and establish by Scripture the true doctrine of justification, first on that side on which it immediately antagonizes the Moral Influence Theory as to the nature of the Atonement, and secondly, on that side on which it refuses to coalesce with the Governmental Theory of the same.

I. Those who hold that the entire design and effect of the vicarious sufferings of Christ was to produce a moral influence upon the sinner, and thus to reconcile man to God instead of propitiating God in behalf of man, must, of course, hold justification to be a divine work, effecting, by appropriate means, a subjective change in the moral condition of the individual. Judged from their point of view, it must signify to make inherently or personally just or morally good.

In opposition to all heretics of this class, as well as in opposition to the Papists, the Evangelical Protestant Church has always maintained, with an overwhelming weight of scriptural evidence, that that justification which God effects, of which Christ's sacrifice is the meritorious ground, and the people of Christ the subjects, is not an infusion of grace effecting a subjective change in moral condition,

but a declarative act pronouncing the believer to be forensically just, and thus effecting a change of legal relation, and not a change of moral character. This principle was the precise truth, the distinct and forceful enunciation of which, made the great Reformation of the Seventeenth Century what it was to the men of that and of all subsequent generations. It has been proved over and over again by such conclusive scriptural references as the following.

1. The common sense in which our English word to justify is used and understood in all secular speech and literature, is to declare a man to be in the right—never to make or to constitute him inherently so. To justify is to assert or to vindicate his innocence; it is to pronounce him to be in fact innocent, or clear of all the claims of that law or standard of conduct or character by which he is tested. This is not only the theological usage of the term, but the sense in which it is universally used in the common intercourse of life. The Latin words *justificatio* and *justifico* were never used by classical writers, but were newly-coined terms of ecclesiastical writers for the purpose of expressing theological ideas, and hence neither their etymology nor their usage can throw any additional light upon this subject.

2. The word which the Holy Ghost has chosen to express the truth he intends to reveal on this subject is *δικαιόω*. In classical Greek this word has substantially the same usage which the word to justify, by which it is translated in the New Testament, has in English. Suidas' Lexicon—"δικαιοῦν, to justify, has two senses: 1, punire; 2, justum censere. So Herodotus, &c." Liddell & Scott's Lexicon—"δικαιόω: 1, to hold as right or fair, to think right or fit; 2, to do a man justice; hence (a) to condemn, punish, and (b) to make just, hold guiltless, justify, N. T."

3. The Hebrew word *קָטַל*, in the vast majority of instances translated by the authors of the Septuagint by the Greek word *δικαιόω*, and in our version by the English word to justify, is always used in the sense of thinking or pronouncing just, acquitting, and never in the sense of making good by the exercise of a moral influence. Job 9:20: "If I

justify (ῥατ) myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." Job 32:2: The wrath of Elihu was kindled against Job, "because he justified (ῥατ) himself rather than God." Deut. 25:1: "Then shall they [the judges] justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked." Prov. 17:15: "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord." See also Isa. 5:23; Ex. 23:7; and Ps. 51:4.

4. The word δικαιόω occurs thirty-nine times in the New Testament, and in every case, without a single exception, it signifies to esteem, to pronounce, or to treat as righteous, and never once to make or constitute personally, inherently righteous. Sometimes the word is used to declare the fact that a person is inherently righteous, as Luke 7:29: "And all the people that heard him, and the publicans justified God;" and Matt. 11:19: "Wisdom is justified of her children." But in the great majority of instances it is evident that it was used in the sense of pronouncing and treating a person as just, not intrinsically, but in relation to the demands of law as a covenant or condition of life and favour. That is, in the simplest words possible, it is a declaration that all the claims of the law are satisfied. Thus Gal. 2:16: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Gal. 3:11: "But that no man is justified by the law, in the sight of God, it is evident." See also Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:7-9; 1 Cor. 6:11. If Christ died as God's medium of moral influence upon the sinner, and not as propitiating Mediator in behalf of men with a justly offended God, then to justify must mean to make just, to sanctify. What sense, in that case, can be put upon those passages which speak of our being "justified," that is, sanctified, "without the deeds of the law?" What meaning can be imported into such phrases as, "By the deeds of the law no flesh can be 'sanctified' " (Rom. 3:20), or, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, who are 'sanctified' by the law; whosoever of you are 'sanctified' by the law, are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4), or, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, ... to declare at this

time his righteousness, in order that he [God] might be holy, and the 'sanctifier' of him which believeth in Jesus."\*

5. The phrases, "to justify" and "justification" are in the Scriptures constantly used as the opposite of "to condemn" and "condemnation." "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth?" Rom. 8:33, 34. "Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. 5:18. See also Rom. 8:1; and John 3:18. Now the phrase "to condemn" must be taken in a legal sense. Therefore, "to justify" must be legal also. The opposite of "to sanctify" is to pollute, but the opposite of "to condemn" is to justify.

6. The same truth is established by the character of the terms which in Scripture are used interchangeably with δικαιόω to bring out the full sense of Christian justification. These are such as, "To impute righteousness without works;" "to forgive iniquities;" "to cover sins;" "not to impute or charge sin to account." Rom. 4:6–8. "Justified by his blood;" "saved from wrath;" "being sinners and yet reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Rom. 5:9, 10.

7. The same truth is proved by Paul's argument as to the gratuitous character of justification, Rom. 3:27, 28 and 4:3–5: "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.... Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." But if justification be only setting a man subjectively right, making him to be good in fact, why should "sanctification" by works be a ground of boasting any more than "sanctification" by faith? It is easy to understand how a man can be forensically just without works, on the credit of the works of a "surety." But what mortal can construe in thought the thing meant by saying that a man

is personally holy without works of righteousness? How can faith be counted for "sanctification" in the case of a man who has no works, but believes in a God who "sanctifies" the ungodly?

8. The sense in which Paul used the terms in question is put beyond all doubt by the nature of the objections which he introduces into his Epistle to the Romans as likely to be made to his doctrine. The question whether, being justified by grace, we should continue in sin in order that grace might abound, is both obvious and plausible, if the phrase, "being justified," be taken in the forensic sense attributed to it by the Protestant Church in all its branches. That is, will not the free, gratuitous acquittal of the sinner, without either obedience or punishment on his part, inevitably lead to licentiousness? But the question whether, being "sanctified" by grace, we shall continue in sin that grace may abound, has not even a decent appearance of plausibility, because utterly devoid of sense.

This doctrine, that justification is forensic, and that it is based upon imputed righteousness, was the watchword of the glorious Reformation—the one word of power which dissolved the venerable power of the Papacy, awakened the people from the sleep of ages, introduced the new world of modern history, and the stupendous career of progressive liberty and civilization which has issued from it. The state of the world as a whole, today, when compared with all the past, is a witness to its truth. All the achievements of modern Christianity, in all departments, are a monument to its value. Yet Bushnell says of this, "*articula stantis, vel cadentis ecclesiæ, I could more easily see the Church fall than believe it.*"\* The presumption appears overwhelming that Protestantism is right, and that Popery, Socinianism and the nondescript genus of Bushnells and Youngs, are wrong.

The work of Dr. John Young, of Edinburgh, entitled the "Light and the Life of Men," is, as far as the present writer knows, the most thorough, able and honest of all the modern essays in advocacy of the Moral Influence Theory of Redemption. In his chapter on

Justification, in the face of all the facts above given relating to the uniform usage of the Hebrew, Greek and English words involved in the question at issue, he claims that the analogies of the English language demand that we should substitute the word "to righten," in place of the word "to justify," as the English equivalent of the Greek δικαιοῶ. As we have in Greek δικαίος, δικαιοσύνη, δικαίωμα and δικαιοῶ, so we would have in English the uniform class of words, right, righteous, righteousness or rightness; and to righten or rectify, or set right.

But the only advantage Young gains in favour of his argument by this substitution results from the fact that his newly-coined term "to righten," having no established *usus loquendi*, is necessarily ambiguous. The word may with equal propriety be understood either in the sense of rightening a man subjectively, that is, making him inherently good, or of rightening the man forensically, or vindicating his claim to be regarded and treated as standing in a right relation to the divine law. The entire plausibility of Young's argument in the chapter in question results from this ambiguity of his chosen word. His theory of the nature of Christ's work demands that "to righten" shall mean to make a man subjectively right. On the other hand, as I have shown, the Scripture usage of the words קָטַל and δικαιοῶ, which are used by the Holy Ghost in the Old and New Testaments, to express his mind upon the nature of this "rightening," demand that they be represented by an English equivalent which, like the word to justify, means precisely to pronounce a man to be just in the eye of law—to be free of all legal demands. The newly-invented terra may be convenient to veil the real issue involved, but it is impotent to avoid it. Sense, candor, and a Hebrew and a Greek Concordance of the two Testaments, will settle this question both speedily and finally.

II. The advocates of the Governmental Theory of the Atonement, while they agree with us that justification is, as above shown, a forensic act, yet, nevertheless, are forced to differ from us as to the nature of justification in the following particulars.

1. As Christ, according to their view, did not suffer strictly in the law-place of his people, and as their sins were not really imputed to him, and as he did not die with the purpose of expiating the sins of any particular individuals, but to put all men generally into a salvable state, it follows that his righteousness is not imputed to the believer, and that it is only in some sense the occasion, but not at all the strict judicial ground, of our justification.

2. As Christ's righteousness is not imputed to the believer as the ground of his justification, it follows that that justification cannot be an act of God as Judge, pronouncing his judgment according to the fact that the man is righteous—that is, free of all unsatisfied claims of law, and entitled to the covenant rewards of righteousness; it can only be a mere executive pardon pronounced by God as King, remitting the penalty due to sin.

3. As justification is mere pardon, as it is a sovereign and not a judicial act, and since it is not founded on imputed righteousness, it follows that it must proceed upon a relaxation of law by sovereign prerogative—an exercise of prerogative in this case wisely guarded from abuse by the governmental device of an atonement. This wise relaxation of the claims of law, in which all the interests of God, of the moral universe and of the sinner are reconciled and provided for, involves two things; (1) the admission of the sufferings of Christ, in themselves of incomparably less value, in the place of the real penalty of the law; and (2) the admission of faith and evangelical obedience, in the place of that perfect obedience which the law demands as the ground of the sinner's justification. The first relaxation prepares the way for the second, and renders it consistent with the good of the moral universe. This makes faith the ground and not the mere condition of salvation, and assimilates the Governmental Theory, as to all essential points, with the Arminian Soteriology.

In opposition to this view of the nature of justification, the Scriptures fully support the truth of the doctrine common to all the Lutheran



and Reformed Churches, including the following points.

1. Justification is not mere pardon executed in virtue of his kingly prerogative, but it is a judgment pronounced by God as Judge, to the effect that the believer is in all respects free of the claims of law as a covenant of life.

2. The ground upon which justification proceeds is neither the sovereign prerogative of God, nor the faith nor gracious obedience of the believer accepted in view of Christ's exemplary suffering, but it is the all-perfect righteousness of Christ, which, in the just judgment of God as a matter of fact, belongs to the believer by the terms of the covenant and for the purpose of justification, and which hence fulfils, in the rigour of justice, all the demands of the law upon us.

1. Justification is not mere pardon.

It is of course believed on all hands (a) that justification includes pardon of sin as one of its main elements, and (b) that this pardon in relation to the unworthy subjects of it, who are selected from the great mass of humanity neither better nor worse than themselves, is a matter of grace absolutely sovereign. Hence justification is often set forth in Scripture as pardon (Isa. 55:7), remission (Acts 10:43), forgiveness (Eph. 1:7), and the non-imputation of sin (Rom. 4:8), &c. But that justification is not mere pardon is evident from the following facts.

Mere pardon is (a) the act of a sovereign waiving the claims of the law and discharging the penalty. (b.) It proceeds upon sovereign prerogative and the proprieties of governmental policy to relax the demands of law, but does not declare them satisfied. (c.) The effect of mere pardon is simply to remit the penalty; it does not advance the pardoned man to any positive favour, nor entitle him to any positive reward.

But, on the contrary, justification is a judicial act of God proceeding upon the fact that all the demands of law upon the persons

concerned are satisfied, and it pronounces believers to be entitled to the rewards conditioned upon obedience to the law as a covenant of life. This is certain (1) from the uniform classical and New Testament usage of the words δίκαιος, δικαιοσύνη, δικαίωμα, δικαιοῶ. The δίκαιος was "a person observant of rules, hence observant of the rules of right," the moral law, and hence a just man, or rectus. Δικαιοσύνη was the character of the δίκαιος; that in the man which conforms to and fulfils the law.\* Δικαιοῶ is to proclaim a man to be δίκαιος, that is, to possess a δικαιοσύνη, or righteousness. No person confounds in Greek any more than in English the ideas of justification and mere pardon; and the language which is uniformly used to express the one cannot, by any fair interpretation, be held to convey the other. The language necessarily suggests the function of a judge, not of a sovereign, and it implies that the law is satisfied, not relaxed, and that the person declared to be just is entitled to whatever benefits have been graciously made to depend, by covenant, upon the condition of perfect conformity to the law.

(2.) The Scriptures declare that justification proceeds upon the ground of a righteousness. "The righteousness of the law," "their own righteousness," is contrasted with "the righteousness of God," "the righteousness of faith." The former is declared not to be, but the latter to be, the ground of justification. Hence Christ is said to be "the Lord our righteousness" (Jer. 23:6), and "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:3–6); and we are said to be the "righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21, and 1 Cor. 1:30. Justification is paraphrased as "the imputation of righteousness without works," and "faith" is said to be "imputed for righteousness." Rom. 4:6, 22. "They who receive the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one JUDGMENT came upon all men to CONDEMNATION, EVEN so by the RIGHTEOUSNESS of one the free gift came upon all men unto JUSTIFICATION of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the OBEDIENCE of one shall many be made RIGHTEOUS." Rom. 5:17–19. The essence of pardon is that a man is forgiven without

righteousness. The essence of justification is that a man is pronounced to be possessed of a righteousness which fulfils the law.

(3.) According to his eternal covenant with the Father, the work of Christ secures for his people not merely pardon, but both (a) remission of the penalty due to sin, and (b) a title to the purchased possession. Eph. 1:14. Pardon effects nothing more than remission. But the promise is that "the just by faith shall live." Eph. 3:11. Justification carries with it the effects or consequences of "peace with God," "access and rejoicing in the glory of God," "reconciliation with God and salvation." Rom. 5:1–10. The blood of Christ is said to effect not only remission of sins, but also "inheritance among them that are sanctified," and the elevation of those for whom it was shed, to be "kings and priests unto God." Rev. 1:5, 6; Acts 26:18.

2. The ground upon which God pronounces the justification of sinners is not sovereign prerogative, but the all-perfect "righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone."

When we say that justification is a judicial and not a sovereign act of God, it is by no means intended by the most rigid adherent of the old Calvinism that ever lived to deny either of the following great and precious truths. (a.) That the substitution of the person of Christ in the place of his people, for the purpose of fulfilling both the precept and the penalty of the law in our place, was an act of absolute sovereignty, the only reason of which is the "counsel of his own will." Nor (b) that the election of any individual sinner to a part in that body which Christ represents in his obedience and suffering was an act of sovereignty. Nor (c) that as far as any claims of any sort on the part of the elect sinner himself is concerned, the application of this redemptive work of Christ to him in the gift of faith, repentance and their gracious sequences is any the less absolutely and unconditionally sovereign. These principles belong fully as much to the old Calvinism as to the New England Theology. But what we do mean to affirm is precisely this: that God having, as Sovereign, admitted the substitution of Christ in the law-place of his elect, and

having sovereignly chosen a given individual to a place in their number, and having, according to his promise to the Son, but sovereignly as far as concerns the man himself, conferred upon him the gift of faith, he then proceeds as Judge to pronounce the fact that the law is satisfied with respect to that man, because of the perfect work wrought in his behalf by his Substitute. Justification is precisely this judicial decision, recognizing the believer as righteous (forensically), and providing for his being so regarded and treated for ever.

Now the foundation of this act must be the righteousness of Christ, because (1) justification has been proved above to be a forensic and judicial act, and not to be mere pardon, but a pronouncing a man to be right before the law. It must, therefore, proceed upon the ground of a righteousness of some sort—that is, upon the application to the case of that which will in the sense of strict justice satisfy the demands of law, and not the self-will of the Sovereign.

But (2) the law demands either perfect obedience, past and present, or the execution of the penalty. Consequently, "by the law can no flesh be justified," if respect be had to their own imperfect obedience.

(3.) When the Scriptures declare that justification does not proceed on the ground of human works, they always use the words in a general sense to include works of whatever kind. This excludes, of course, faith and evangelical obedience, as well as obedience to the law of the Adamic covenant. "And if it be of grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise works is no more works." Rom. 11:6. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." Rom. 4:4–6.

(4.) The fact that this justification of the sinner proceeds upon the ground of Christ's righteousness made forensically the sinner's righteousness by imputation is directly asserted in Scripture. As we proved in a preceding chapter that the guilt or obligation to punishment attaching to our sins was charged upon Christ and expiated in his person, so we now see that the Scriptures teach with equal clearness the correlative truth that the rewardableness attaching to Christ's righteousness is actually credited to the believer, and rewarded in the whole process of his salvation. Christ is called "the Lord our righteousness." Jer. 23:6. He is said to be "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. 10:4. He is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30. "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, SO BY THE OBEDIENCE OF ONE SHALL MANY BE MADE RIGHTEOUS." Rom. 5:18, 19. It is often said that faith "is imputed for righteousness." Rom. 4:9, 22. But the specific faith which justifies is faith in or on (εἰς or ἐπί) Christ Jesus. Acts 9:42; 16:31; Gal. 2:16. Its very essence, therefore, is trust upon him and his sin-expiating and life-purchasing merits. Its very essence consists in its self-emptying, self-denying, Christ-grasping energy. The phrase "to impute or reckon faith for righteousness" represents no thinkable idea, unless it means to reckon as the righteousness of the sinner that righteousness which his faith trusts and appropriates. The mere act of leaning will never support a fainting man, unless he leans upon some object capable of supporting his weight. In that case it is the object which is reckoned his support, and not his act of leaning. The act of leaning is the same whether a man leans upon a broken reed or upon a rock, while the results differ. The act of trusting is the same whether a man trusts a false foundation or to Christ. The difference in the result arises from the fact that the righteousness of Christ, upon which his faith reposes, is made his so

far forth as to answer all the conditions and to secure all the rewards of the Covenant of Life.

## **CHAPTER XV:**

# **THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE, AS TO THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT, PROVED FROM THE TEACHINGS OF SCRIPTURE, AS TO THE NATURE AND OFFICE OF FAITH**

OUR view of the nature of the Atonement, and of the federal union subsisting between Christ and his people, is the only one consistent with the teaching of Scripture as to the nature and office of FAITH.

The most prominent and important characteristic of the gospel preached by the apostles is, that they habitually presented salvation to all their hearers as an instant gift to follow immediately upon the exercise by them of faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing beside this was required. No other condition was necessary in addition to this in order to render it effective. Whenever this condition was present, the gift of salvation was in no case either denied or delayed. The single direction given to every inquirer was, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Now it is susceptible of demonstration that this faith, as set forth in Scripture as the condition of salvation, is not mere assent of the mind to the claims of Christ's person or to the truth of his doctrine,

but that, together with this assent, it includes trust or reliance upon him and his finished work. This is certain, because—

1. To believe, "in" or "on" a person necessarily involves trust, reliance, of which his character and his doings are the ground, as well as credit or assent to the truthfulness of his communications. And it is a fact that the sole condition of salvation is habitually presented in the Scriptures by the phrases, "to believe in or upon Christ Jesus;" εἰς or ἐπὶ τὸν Χριστὸν, and εἰς τὸ ὄνομα Χριστοῦ, and ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ. John 3:18: "He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John 7:38: "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Acts 9:42; 16:31: "And they said believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (ἐπὶ τὸν Κύριον, &c.), and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Gal. 2:16: "Even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ."

2. We are said to be saved by faith in or upon Christ, πίστις εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν and ἐν Χριστῷ. Acts 20:21; 26:18; Gal. 3:26; Col. 1:4.

3. This one special act of faith, which is the single yet indispensable condition of salvation, is in Scripture illustrated by a variety of paraphrases, describing in other words the nature of the thing to be done. These are such as, "Coming to Christ;" John 6:35: "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst." Receiving Christ; John 1:12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Flying to Christ for refuge; Heb. 6:18: "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Committing all our interests to his keeping; 2 Tim. 1:12: "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

4. The effects inseparable from this faith are of such a nature as to show that the faith itself is an act of the whole soul embracing Christ, relying upon him and appropriating his whole work as the basis of our future life and happiness. By faith we are united to Christ. He dwells in our hearts by faith. Eph. 3:17. It is by faith that we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God. "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." John 6:56, &c.

It must be remembered that this form of presenting the gospel is not one form among several others, but it is the one sole way in which the gospel was offered by the apostles to sinners in their day, and it is the form in which the gospel has always been presented, when it has been accompanied with the witness of the Holy Ghost, from the day of Pentecost until the present time. And if the Church doctrine of the literal substitution of Christ in the law-place of his people, and his vicarious suffering of their penalty in order to expiate them and propitiate God, is acknowledged, then all this scriptural usage with respect to faith in Christ as the sole condition of salvation is very plain. If his sufferings exhaust the penalty for which we were bound—if his obedience merits an eternal reward for us—then all we can have to do is to accept and appropriate his finished substitutionary work, and to trust upon it implicitly as the legal and meritorious foundation on which our entire hope is built. And such a faith, when once exercised, will immediately secure its end. The instant we believe, the righteousness of Christ in all its fulness and federal rights is ours for ever. And the instant we exercise such a faith, we are united forensically to its object in an ineffable and perpetual communion (κοινωνία) of all relations, honours and rights.

On the other hand, according to the Moral Influence Hypothesis, a sinner may with evident propriety be called to credit the communications of the divine Messiah, and to yield obedience and sympathy to the spiritual influence of the heavenly Medium of the Father's love to man. But on this hypothesis, it is only in a very far-fetched sense that we could be said to trust on him, and to commit all our interests to his charge. And it is simply preposterous to pretend



that the Scriptures would make trust in Christ the one sole and essential thing to be done in order to the remission of sins, if the whole design and effect of the work of Christ was to produce a moral impression upon ourselves, that is, save us by persuading us to be good. If that were so, the one characteristic point of the gospel would be to make us look inward and reform. On the other hand, as above shown, and as the whole world knows, the one characteristic point of the gospel is to make us look outward to Christ, and trust self-abandoningly upon him.

It is true, also, that the scriptural language with respect to faith refuses absolutely to coalesce with the Governmental Hypothesis. If it be true that Christ did not suffer in the strict sense as our Substitute; if he did not occupy our law-place in the covenant upon the fulfilment of which our life was suspended; if he did not suffer the penalty of the law in our stead; if his righteousness is not credited to our account as the ground of our justification; if the effect of his death is actually to save none, but to put all men indiscriminately in a salvable state;—then, in such a case, there can obviously be no propriety in our being required to believe on Christ as the one sole condition of salvation. In such a case it would be congruous enough to require us to submit to God as Sovereign, and to credit the personal claims, the official character, and the infallible teaching of Christ. We may even with sufficient propriety be required to trust to his work as far as it is concerned in putting us in a salvable condition. But it plainly would be absurd, in that case, to make the one sole condition upon which remission of sins and actual salvation is instantly suspended to be trust upon Christ—ignoring the fact that his work, costly as it is, is only one of the independent grounds on which our salvation depends.

On the Governmental Hypothesis, faith must be either (a) the sovereignly imposed condition of salvation, or (b) as including evangelical obedience accepted in the place of perfect legal obedience for Christ's sake, as the ground of our justification. But since saving or justifying faith, as above shown, involves trust, its very essence

excludes the possibility of its being itself the ground upon which justification depends. Faith is in its nature self-emptying, appropriating and building upon that on which its trust terminates. If belief in or upon Christ is the sole condition of salvation, if it is the one thing to be done by the inquirer, and if salvation invariably follows upon its exercise, then it is beyond question that Christ's person and work, on which the faith terminates, must be the ground, the meritorious principle, on which the salvation rests, and the efficient virtue by which it is effected.

Thus the very nature of saving faith, as set forth in the constant language of Scripture, makes it evident that it is the instrument whereby we are united to Christ and made participants in his righteousness, and in all the covenanted consequences thereof.

## **CHAPTER XVI:**

# **THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE AS TO THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT PROVED FROM WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH AS TO ITS ABSOLUTE NECESSITY IN ORDER TO THE SALVATION OF SINNERS**

THE orthodox doctrine of the nature of the Atonement is further certainly established by the teaching of Scripture as to the sense in which the expiation of sin by Christ was an absolutely essential

prerequisite in order to the salvation of sinful men, and therefore NECESSARY to that end. It is earnestly maintained by all Calvinists that since all men are sinners, whose natural claims as mere creatures upon their Creator are justly forfeited, salvation must spring up, if at all, out of grace as a product of the sovereign will of God. If, therefore, salvation be a matter of grace and sovereignty, it cannot be a matter of necessity in any sense of the word whatsoever. But on the hypothesis that it is the purpose of God to save guilty men, the question must arise, In what sense, and on what grounds, was the atoning work of Christ necessary to that end?

This question has been much discussed among theologians, and different answers have been given by different classes of them, in correspondence with the fundamental principles of their respective systems. The Socinians hold that the work of Christ, as a whole, was one of doubtless many plans subject to God's selection, by which he could soften the hearts of men and bring them to repentance. The advocates of the Governmental Theory hold that his sufferings and death were necessary in order to make a moral impression on the subjects of God's moral government generally, so that the honour of the law may be upheld, and its subjects duly impressed with the evil of sin and the certainty of its punishment, notwithstanding the special instance of impunity allowed in the case of sinners among mankind. Dr. Twisse and others held it to be necessary simply because God had determined that he would forgive sin on no other condition. Thomas Aquinas\* held that it was impossible that the punishment of sin could be remitted absolutely—that is, inflicted neither upon the sinner nor upon his substitute—if justice be taken into the account. Yet he maintained that because of God's absolute sovereignty, it would not have been unjust in God, if he had so willed it, to ignore the claims of justice, and to remit sin by simple prerogative, without any satisfaction at all. The great body of the Church, on the other hand, have uniformly held that it is essential to the very nature of justice (a) that it should be voluntary, that is, spontaneous and free in the divine nature, but (b) that its exercise should not be optional. Hence the Church doctrine has always been,

that if the sinner is to be forgiven, an adequate satisfaction to divine justice, in the real expiation of the sin, is absolutely necessary to that end.

It is obvious that this question is identical with one discussed under a former head, viz., What is the reason why God punishes sin? Is that reason to be found in the bare fact of his own will; or in the moral state of the individual sinner; or in the moral impression it is desirable to make on the general community subject to the divine government; or does it lie in the immutable nature of God himself? It is evident that, if it depends upon the bare will of God, the necessity for its provision is purely contingent upon his will. If the reason for it results from the obduracy of sinners otherwise irremediable, or in the exigencies of the divine government, or in conditions of the public mind of the subjects of that government in general, then the necessity alleged is still contingent on the will of God, because these grounds or occasions for the Atonement might, of course, one and all, be removed by the gracious power of the Holy Ghost acting directly upon the hearts of his creatures, and inducing whatever moral state he desired, if he had so willed. But, on the other hand, if the necessity in question results from the immutable demands of the divine nature, it is obviously absolute in order to the forgiveness of the sinner, and contingent neither upon the divine will nor upon the moral condition of the creature. Hence, conversely, if the necessity for the Atonement be absolute, it follows that it must have its ground in the divine nature, and not in the exigencies of government or the condition of the creatures. The argument in both directions is conclusive, alike when it proceeds from the nature of the Atonement to its necessity, and when it proceeds from its necessity to its nature. I have in a previous chapter proved the necessity of the Atonement, and consequently its nature, from the holiness of the divine nature, and from the immutability of the divine law. At present, I propose to present those biblical statements which directly establish the fact that the necessity for the Atonement of Christ to the end of the remission of sins is absolute, and which, by immediate and unavoidable inference, establish the conclusion that the ground of

that necessity must lie in the divine nature, and neither in the obduracy of the sinner nor in the exigencies of the divine government.

The fact that the necessity for the Atonement, in order to the salvation of sinners, is absolute, is to be certainly inferred from the following scriptural data.

1. It may be inferred from the amazing greatness of the sacrifice. The Scriptures constantly speak of the sacrifice of the Son by the Father as an unparalleled wonder. All else that God will or can do is as nothing in comparison with the gift of Christ. If God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32. This sacrifice would be most painfully irrelevant if it were anything short of absolutely necessary in relation to the end designed to be attained—that is, unless it be indeed the only possible means to the salvation of sinful men. God surely would not have made his Son a wanton sacrifice to a point of bare will. Christ certainly would not have been sacrificed if divine wisdom could have devised, or if divine power could have executed, any other process capable of effecting the end designed—that is, the redemption of men from the curse of that law.

2. The same truth is asserted in effect in Gal. 2:21: "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." In the original there is no article before the word νόμος (law). The affirmation of the text is, that if righteousness by law (διὰ νόμου), by any law whatsoever, were possible for man, then Christ is dead in vain. So great a sacrifice as this is misplaced, is to all intents in vain, thrown away, made without adequate purpose, if any other means could have attained the end.

3. Again, in Gal. 3:21, it is said: "If a law had been given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." God can give no law whose requirements fall short of absolute perfection, otherwise he would deny himself. There can be no change or compromise of righteousness. But in the case of man this all-

perfect law can only demand and condemn. It is not the function of law to empower, nor to remit, nor to give life, nor to atone. Verily Christ would never have been sacrificed if righteousness could have been by law.

4. God expressly measures his love to his people by his gift of his Son to die for them. "God SO LOVED THE WORLD that he gave his only-begotten Son." John 3:16. "God COMMENDETH HIS LOVE TOWARD US, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." 1 John 4:9. This is an amazing truth, and it is true just because the sacrifice of Christ was necessary to secure the salvation of those God loved; and hence the greatness of his love to us is measured by the greatness of his sacrifice for us. But if the sacrifice was not necessary in the strict sense of that term, then there must have been some one or more alternatives at God's disposal, and hence the sacrifice of Christ, the alternative chosen, could be in no true sense a measure of his love for his people, but only of his own unwillingness to adopt any other one of the possible alternatives.

5. Paul declares, Rom. 3:25, 26, "That Christ was set forth to be a propitiation (ἱλαστήριον, expiation) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past." That is, the expiatory work of Christ is set forth as the vindication of the righteousness or essential holiness of God, in respect to the fact that he had remitted sins in time past. And he proceeds "to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." It is absolutely necessary that God should be just. This he eternally is. But that he should be just while he justifies the unjust, it was necessary that Christ should be offered a piacular sacrifice for sin. Therefore the sacrifice of Christ, considered as a means to the justification of sinners, was an absolute necessity. And therefore it follows, as shown above, that the ground of that necessity must lie in the divine nature—which is the one only absolute ground of necessity in the universe. And if the

ground for the necessity for the Atonement is in the constitution of the divine nature, it follows that the Atonement, as to its nature, is a satisfaction by vicarious penal sufferings of the demands of the divine nature.

## **CHAPTER XVII:**

# **THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT DETERMINED BY WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH AS TO ITS PERFECTION**

THE question as to the PERFECTION of the atoning work of Christ has often been agitated in the Church. It relates to two distinct points. (a.) Is that work perfect as to its intrinsic justice-satisfying value? Does it fully satisfy all the demands of the law by reason of its own inherent merit. And (b) as to its application and effect, is the atoning work of Christ so complete in itself that it secures the salvation of those for whom it was made? Or does it only put the sinner in a salvable state, leaving the result to depend upon other conditions?

I. The first point, it is evident, would have no relevancy whatsoever on the supposition of the truth of the Moral Influence Theory. If the one design of Christ's sufferings is to touch our hearts and subdue our affections, the efficiency of the work must depend upon every man's subjective appreciation of Christ's person, of his motives, and of the necessity and value of his interventions in our behalf. The

advocates of the Governmental Theory deny that Christ suffered the penalty of the law, or that his sufferings were in intrinsic value a full equivalent for the penal sufferings in person of all those in whose behalf he suffered. They maintain that since these sufferings are an expedient to secure certain ends in the administration of the divine government, they are introduced and acted on in the remission of sins by God in his capacity of a Sovereign, and not as a Judge. He wills to accept the satisfaction of Christ, not because in its intrinsic nature it is a full equivalent in rigour of justice for the personal punishment of his people, but because his wise and benevolent mind sees that he may do so with perfect safety to all the best interests of his general government.

Duns Scotus, referring the necessity for the Atonement ultimately to the will and not to the nature of God, consequently maintained that God could have forgiven sin without any satisfaction; that if he had so willed, he might have proposed conditions of forgiveness other than those fulfilled by Christ; and that the temporary and finite sufferings of Christ are accepted by God, in the gracious exercise of sovereign prerogative, as a substitute, but not as a full, legal equivalent for the eternal sufferings of men. This principle Scotus expressed by the term *acceptilatio*, borrowed from the Roman law, and defined as "the optional taking of something for nothing, or of a part for the whole."

Grotius, in his great work *De Satisfactione*, rejected the term *acceptilatio*, but retained substantially the idea. He refers the necessity of the Atonement to the interests of good order in the universe. He considers the optional will of God the ground and origin of law, and maintains that the demands of law may of course be relaxed by the choice of the same will that creates them. He held that Christ did not pay in the stead of sinners a *quid pro quo* but an *aliud pro quo*, which God graciously accepts; that is, God's law is not satisfied in rigour of justice by what Christ has done, but he has sovereignly relaxed it, so that it is virtually, that is, in practical effect, satisfied thereby. Limborch says: "The satisfaction of Christ is so



called (by some) because that he for our sakes endured all the penalties charged against our sins, and by fully discharging them he made satisfaction to divine justice. But that opinion has no foundation in Scripture. The death of Christ is called a sacrifice for sin; but sacrifices were not payments of debts, neither were they full satisfactions for sins; but the penalty was gratuitously remitted on condition that the sacrifice was offered."\* ... "In this they greatly err, because they consider the price of redemption to be in all things equivalent to those miseries from which redemption is secured. The price of redemption was determined by the estimation of him who held the captive, and did not release the captive on the ground of merit."

Curcellæus says: "Christ did not, therefore, as is commonly thought, make satisfaction by suffering all those penal evils which we merited for our sins; for, in the first place, this does not pertain to the nature or purpose of sacrifice; for sacrifices were not the payment of debts: secondly, Christ has not suffered eternal death, which was the penalty deserved by our sin, for he hung upon the cross only for a few hours, and rose again the third day. Even if he had undergone eternal death, it does not appear how he could have made satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world; for this would have been only one death, which never could have equalled all the deaths which individual men merited for their respective sins.... Fourthly, this opinion cannot possibly be made consistent with the gratuitous remission of all sins, which the Scriptures everywhere teach that God, in his infinite mercy, concedes to us in Christ."

The Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed Churches have held, on the other hand, that the penal satisfaction made by the sufferings of Christ to the law and justice of God is in its own intrinsic value a full equivalent in the strict rigour of justice for the penal sufferings of all men for ever, and that God accepts and acts upon this satisfaction in the justification of believers in his capacity of Judge, not in the exercise of sovereign prerogative, acknowledging its intrinsic value and full adequacy to the end designed, as a matter of fact, and not by

any gratuitous acceptilation or gracious estimation, arbitrarily raising the sacrifice up to the level of the law, nor by any sovereign relaxation letting down the law to the level of the substituted penal sufferings. We do not here appeal to the perfection of the Atonement to prove the truth of our view of its nature. On the contrary, we rather prove that our view, as to its inherent perfection, is correct from what has been already sufficiently proved as to its nature and necessity. If the Atonement was absolutely necessary in order to satisfy the immutable justice of God, and if it consisted in Christ's bearing in our stead the literal penalty of the law in full rigour, then it is plain that, in its intrinsic value, it was fully equal to all that the law demanded of those for whom he acted. Since he was a divine person, Christ was of course above all the possible claims of law. In virtue of his human nature a divine Person was made vicariously under the law for us. Hence his obedience, both active and passive, was evidently, as far as he himself was concerned, a work of supererogation; demanded not of himself; needed not by himself; and wholly accruing to the credit of those for whom he acted. And since he was the eternal Son of God, who condescended to suffer and obey, to suffer terribly and shamefully, to fulfil all his obedience, the details of "all righteousness," although it were but for a time, it is evident enough that the intrinsic value of his work is more than equal to all that his people could have suffered and obeyed under any possible conditions for any possible time. The difficulty which a Christian experiences is surely not to believe this, but rather to understand why infinite wisdom saw it to be necessary to exact so much of SUCH a Sufferer.

II. The second point debated concerning the perfection of Christ's satisfaction relates to its application or effect. Thomas Aquinas taught that the passion of the Redeemer was not only a sufficient but a superabundant satisfaction for the sins of men. The Romish Church adopted this idea, and adjusted it to their hierarchical system. Christ's merit is superabundant. It belongs to the Church, its depository and authorized dispenser. This merit avails directly, through the instrumentality of baptism, to the removal of the guilt of

original sin and of all those actual transgressions which preceded baptism. The penalty accruing for the guilt of post-baptismal sins has, in virtue of Christ's merit, been transmuted from eternal death to temporal pains, and all such temporal pains are accepted as sufficient only for Christ's sake. Nevertheless, a person guilty of post-baptismal sins must, in order to their forgiveness, expiate them either by penances and works of charity, or in the next world by the pains of purgatory; all of which are necessary and possess, for Christ's sake, a real expiatory virtue. And hence also the efficacy of sacramental grace, priestly absolution, plenary indulgences, &c., results from the fund of merit lodged in the Church, accruing from the superabundance of Christ's satisfaction.

The advocates of the Governmental Theory of the Atonement, and indeed all the advocates of an indefinite Atonement generally, necessarily hold, with respect to the designed application or effect of Christ's satisfaction, that it actually avails to save no one, but only by removing legal obstacles to make the salvation of all men possible. In this view, his satisfaction is only one of the conditions upon which the salvation of all men depends, but it is not its great efficient cause, carrying with it as subordinate to it all other causes and conditions. The work of Christ is thus in itself considered so far imperfect that it may totally fail of any saving effect in a single case, and it needs to be rendered perfect as an efficient cause of salvation by some co-operating cause *ab extra*, derived either (a) from the sovereign decree of God, or (b) from the free wills of men.

In answer to the Romanists we affirm—

1. The Bible represents all the sufferings of believers in this life as disciplinary, designed to advance their moral and spiritual improvement, and having no respect whatever to the expiation of guilt. The removal of condemnation is referred solely to the work of Christ (Rom. 8:1, 33, 34), and the design of discipline is referred solely to the paternal purpose of improving the persons exercised

thereby, "for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness." Heb. 12:5–11.

2. The Scriptures declare that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." 1 John 1:7. And that "by one offering for sin he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:12, 14. And that all Christians "are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." Col. 2:10.

3. Trust in the one sacrifice of Christ is made the sole condition of acceptance and favour at all times. But this act of trust necessarily, from its very nature, excludes all dependence whatsoever upon the expiatory value of our own sufferings, or upon the merit of our own services.

In answer to the Protestant impugners of the absolute perfection of the satisfaction of Christ as the alone procuring cause of the salvation of his people, I call to witness, in addition to what has been cited against the kindred position of the Romanists, the fact, that the Scriptures habitually and characteristically, and in every variety of form, assert that the satisfaction of Christ effects the deliverance, the redemption, the salvation, the adoption, the sanctification, &c., &c., of his people. Every reader of the Scriptures knows that they constantly declare that the Father gave the Son to death, and that the Son submitted to die, for the purpose of effecting these things. Every reader knows that the Scriptures constantly declare that the obedience and sufferings of Christ actually effect these things. They do, as a matter of fact, "save us," "redeem us," "reconcile us to the Father," secure for us "the adoption of sons," "the indwelling" and all the "fruits of the Spirit." If this be so, then unquestionably Christ, by his expiatory sacrifice, did not merely make salvation possible. His sacrifice must secure that salvation as a whole, and all that is included in it. Not the end without the means, but the end through the means; not eternal life without faith and obedience, but faith and obedience in order to eternal life. In this respect the redemption of Christ is like the eternal decree of God. It does not alter any natural

relation sustained by the several elements involved in the believer's life to the means of grace, the exercises of free will, and the necessity for gracious affection and obedience, but it does render the event it was designed to secure certain, and in order to that end secures all the antecedents and conditions upon which that event depends or to which it is related. We will not be saved without faith and obedience, but our precious Saviour left no such conditions unprovided for. The faith, the obedience, and the perseverance to the end were as surely purchased by the great ALL-PERFECT sacrifice as were the remission of the penalty and final salvation.

## **CHAPTER XVIII:**

### **THE SATISFACTION RENDERED BY CHRIST PROVED TO EMBRACE HIS ACTIVE AS WELL AS HIS PASSIVE OBEDIENCE**

I PROPOSE to prove, in conclusion, that our blessed Lord, having assumed our law-place, and, as our Substitute, become responsible for all our obligations to the law in its federal relation, has discharged them by his obedience as well as by his sufferings—having, by his sufferings, cancelled the claims of penal justice, and by his obedience merited the rewards of that original Covenant of Life under which all men were held.

In the third chapter I have stated the reasons why the word Atonement fails unambiguously and comprehensively to express the entire nature of the work wrought by our Lord for our redemption. (a.) While it properly, as the English equivalent for the Hebrew כפר,

means to make expiation for sin by means of a vicarious infliction or endurance of the penalty, it is nevertheless used by many to express mere reconciliation, at-one-ment. (b.) Even when it is settled that the word "to atone" is equivalent to the phrase "to make expiation," the difficulty still presses, that it is too narrow for the use to which it is put, and cannot properly cover all that Christ has done for the discharge of our legal obligations. The Scriptures teach us plainly that Christ's obedience was as truly vicarious as was his suffering, and that he reconciled us to the Father by the one as well as by the other. Now the word Atonement signalizes only the expiation of our guilt by Christ's vicarious sufferings, but expresses nothing concerning the relation which his obedience sustains to our salvation, as that meritorious condition upon which the divine favour and the promised reward have by covenant been suspended. On the other hand, the word Satisfaction exactly and exhaustively expresses all that Christ has done as our Substitute, in our stead, for our sakes, to the end of satisfying in our behalf the federal demands of the law, and of securing for us the rewards conditioned upon their fulfilment. His whole work was of the nature of a satisfaction. As far as it consisted of penal suffering, it satisfied the penalty of the law and the justice of the Law-giver; and as far as it consisted of obedience, it satisfied the conditions of the covenant upon which the divine favour towards his people was suspended.

The great defect of Symington's otherwise orthodox and excellent work on the Atonement is that, while he admits Christ's obedience to be vicarious, and to have merited for us the rewards of the Covenant of Life, he yet insists that the work of expiation, under the title of "Atonement," ought to be discussed separately, while his vicarious obedience, and its relation to the rewards of an impeccable moral character and eternal felicity, is left out of sight. On the contrary, I affirm—

1. In opposition to Symington—who, while admitting that Christ's obedience and sufferings were alike vicarious and alike essential in order to our salvation, yet unnaturally separates them—that since

they are inseparable parts of one perfect work of satisfaction, which are never separated either in the mediatorial work of Christ or in their effect upon the covenant-standing of his people, therefore, they cannot be properly separated in any complete account of his work. The whole earthly life of Christ, including his birth itself, was one continued self-emptying even unto death. His birth and every moment of his life, in the form of a servant, was of the nature of holy suffering. Every experience of pain during the whole course of his life, and eminently in his death on the cross, was, on his part, a voluntary and meritorious act of obedience. He lived his whole life, from his birth to his death, as our representative, obeying and suffering in our stead and for our sakes; and during this whole course all his suffering was obedience and all his obedience was suffering. The righteousness which he wrought out for his people consisted precisely in this suffering obedience. The righteousness of Christ, which is imputed severally to each believer as the ground of his justification, consists precisely of this obedient suffering. His earthly life, as suffering, cancels the penalty, and, as obedience, fulfils the precept and secures the promised reward; but the suffering and the obedience were not separated in fact, and are inseparable in principle, and equally necessary to satisfy the law of the covenant and to secure the salvation of the elect.

2. In opposition to all those who deny that Christ's obedience was vicarious, or, strictly speaking, any part of his work of redemption, I propose to show, that his obedience is an inseparable element of that righteousness which he wrought in our stead, and which is imputed to us as the ground of our justification.

In the sixth chapter I distinguished the three distinct relations which men may sustain to the law—the natural, federal and penal. The natural relation is that into which each moral agent is introduced by the very fact of his creation, and under which he continues necessarily to exist as long as he has being. It is unchangeable and inalienable, incapable of relaxation, intermission, modification or transfer; and under it the same law continues perpetually the

standard of moral character and obligation, alike to angels and devils, to men under probation, fallen and unregenerate, in perdition, regenerate and confirmed in glory. The federal relation is that temporary and special relation under which it has pleased God to introduce all of those orders of moral agents with which we are acquainted immediately after their creation. They are brought under it in the character of those created holy yet fallible, in a state of unstable moral equilibrium. The relation is special, because it has for its end the special design of affording those subject to it an opportunity of rendering obedience, while open to the full force of temptation and liable to seduction, as the condition of their being endowed by God with the supernatural grace of a confirmed and impeccable moral character, and the blessedness thence resulting for ever. This relation is temporary, because from its very nature it must, in every event, be terminated, ipso facto, either by the first sin which brings in the penalty, or by the granting of the promised reward when the conditions upon which it has been suspended have been accomplished. The penal relation comes in when the law has been broken, and the trial has ceased. It springs out of the essential nature of the law, and continues in force until that perfect righteousness of which the penalty is the outward expression is completely satisfied.

It is notorious that, as a matter of fact, men have sustained all of these relations to the law, and that by reason of sin they are condemned in each. They are under perpetual obligation to be conformed to the law as a standard of character and as a rule of action, but they are wholly unable to meet the obligation. Their hopes of eternal well-being were all suspended upon the conditions undertaken by the first Adam in the garden, but all this is already and for ever forfeited by past disobedience. They are justly subject to the penalty of eternal death. They must be restored to conformity to the law, in all these respects, by a power exterior to themselves, or they cannot be saved. As a matter of fact, believers are restored to conformity to the law, in its natural relation, as a standard of character and as a rule of life, by the Holy Ghost regenerating and sanctifying them. But their restoration to conformity to the law, in its



penal and federal relations, is accomplished by Christ through his one work of obedient suffering even unto death. If he assumed our place, so as to suffer the penalty in our stead, he must, at the same time, have secured our title to the reward conditioned upon obedience by means of his perfect obedience, which was inseparably implicated with his sufferings, and which was rendered in the same covenant relation in our stead as well as in our behalf. All that Christ did on earth he did as Mediator. He was acting in our stead while he was obeying as well as while he was suffering. The active and passive righteousness of Christ were never, in fact, separated from each other, and therefore, except in their logical discrimination, we should never exhibit them as separated. They were wrought together by Christ as our Substitute as his one work of redemption. It was with reference to both of these conjointly that Jesus is called "the Lord our righteousness." So says John Wesley, as quoted by Richard Watson.\* Therefore no view of the nature, relation and effects of the one which excludes all consideration of the other can be accurate, and much less can it be complete. They consequently should never be separated, but should be regarded as the inseparable parts of one organic whole, and signalized by a title capable of embracing both. Satisfaction is the genus including the two complementary species, obedience and penal sufferings.

The principle which lies at the bottom of this distinction was first discriminated by Thomas Aquinas, and by him denoted by the terms *satisfactio* and *meritum*. By *satisfactio* he meant the complete fulfilment of all the claims of law and justice with respect to the penalty. By *meritum* he meant that which secures, by virtue of the divine promise, the favour of God and everlasting well-being. Both the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches, recognizing the validity of this distinction, have maintained in their Confessions that Christ, as the second Adam, assumed all our covenant responsibilities precisely at that point in the process to which the first Adam had brought them when he fell. The penalty he exhaustively discharged, in strict rigour of justice, by means of all his life-long sufferings culminating in his death. And the condition of perfect obedience, on which the

promised reward was suspended, by the unfailing obedience of his entire life. Through the whole of Christ's life there ran an element of infinite humiliation, especially in his death. Every act, therefore, was, in one aspect, an item of vicarious suffering, and in another aspect, an item of vicarious obedience to the will of his Father. Both elements were necessary, and they are as inseparable as color and surface, or as matter and form. Yet it is necessary to discriminate them as to both their essence and their effects. That is, the perfect and painful obedience of his life and death must be viewed (a) as a guilt-expiating endurance of the penalty of the law in the stead of his people, and (b) as that which by God's free promise has been made, to all those represented by Christ, the condition of divine favour and of eternal well-being. In the one aspect, the obedience is called passive, to signalize it as penal suffering. In another aspect, the same obedience is called active, to signalize it as the doing of that which is commanded. "The question then returns, Whether the satisfaction rendered by Christ in our place is to be confined to his death, or to those sufferings which preceded and accompanied it; or whether it truly embraced all those things which Christ did and suffered for us from the beginning of his life even unto the end? Which last we affirm."\* The truth of this position is established by the following considerations.

I. The law, as a covenant of life, was accompanied by two sanctions: (a.) The promise of divine favour and eternal well-being, conditioned upon perfect obedience; and (b) the penalty of "death" suspended on disobedience. Moses declared that the legal condition of salvation was, that "the man that doeth these things shall live by them." Lev. 18:5. Compare Rom. 10:5, and Gal. 3:12. Christ declared the principle of the law to the young ruler thus: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matt. 19:17. Eternal life, the adoption of sons, the eternal inheritance, are conditioned only on obedience. The gospel does not proceed upon the ruins of the law, but "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," and the object for which he came in the flesh was "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." All the conditions, therefore, must

be met. If the whole work of Christ's satisfaction ended in his suffering in our stead the penalty due our sins, his people, as a consequence, would be replaced and left just where Adam was before he fell. There are then four, and only four, conceivable alternatives, one or other of which must be true. (1.) Either God must alter the conditions of human probation, and grant the rewards of the Covenant of Life to sinful men on very different and far lower conditions than those upon which they were offered to innocent Adam, or to the human race originally in him, or to any other order of creatures as far as revealed in their several probations. (2.) Or we must continue for ever destitute of any share in those rewards which were conditioned on obedience, that is, without confirmation in a holy character and without eternal blessedness. (3.) Or we shall be left to the necessity of fulfilling the conditions of the Covenant of Works in our own persons, rendering therefor perfect obedience of heart and life, and that, too, before we receive grace and as the condition of our reception of it. (4.) Or Christ must fulfil this part also of the requirements of the law as well as the penalty in our stead and behalf.

As to the first alternative, it is evident that if eternal blessedness is granted on any conditions short of perfect obedience, then the entire Covenant of Life, God's own ordinance for the human race, fails, and is dishonoured instead of honoured, is broken and supplanted instead of being fulfilled and magnified by the gospel. The essential principles of eternal justice would be violated if to mankind, as one of the consequences of their sin, confirmation in a permanent impeccable moral character, eternal life and the favour of God, were granted on conditions denied to newly-created angels and to Adam in innocency.

As to the second alternative, it is plain that we cannot endure to remain destitute of those rewards which the great original ordinance, which gives law to all that follow it, suspended upon the condition of perfect obedience. Moreover, the promises of the gospel and the experiences of Christians, inspired and uninspired, assure us that we

are not required to remain destitute of the rewards so essential to life.

We are, therefore, shut up to the choice presented in the third and fourth alternatives above stated, the former representing the Arminian and the latter the Calvinistic theories as to the legal grounds upon which the positive justification of the believer in Christ proceeds. The Arminian holds that, in some way never defined, the sufferings of Christ make it consistent with the rectoral justice of God to remit the penalty of the law in the case of believers, and to offer them on the lowered conditions of faith and evangelical obedience the same blessings that were originally conditioned on perfect obedience. The Calvinist holds that Christ, acting as our Representative in a strictly legal sense, has suffered in our stead the penalty of the law, in order to free us from eternal bondage to the same, and obeyed the precept in order to secure for us the blessings so conditioned. There is no third plan that can be substituted in place of these. Every conceivable plan of justification that admits the facts of the gospel at all, can, in its last analysis, be reduced to one or other of these. All logical Arminians have uniformly chosen the former. The Romish theory of co-operative justification (Christ's merits and the merit of good works) amounts to the same thing. The Governmental Atonement men, whenever they condescend to a definite statement of the nature of the grounds of justification, must come to the same conclusion. Emmons,\* for instance, maintains (a) that "justification, in a gospel sense, signifies no more nor less than the pardon or remission of sin." (b.) "That forgiveness is the only favour which God bestows upon men on Christ's account." (c.) "The full and final justification of the believer, or their title to their eternal inheritance, is conditional. They must perform certain things, which he has specified as terms or conditions of their taking possession of their several legacies." (d.) "That God does promise eternal life to all who obey his commands or exercise those holy and benevolent affections which his commands require." Good John Wesley and Richard Watson waver between the two views of justification stated, alike unable to acquiesce in either, or to find any stable position

between them. The same must inevitably be the case with all those who, while holding the truth with respect to the nature of sin, of grace and of expiation, refuse to accept, in their plain biblical sense, the complementary truths with respect to the sovereignty of God, the extent of the Atonement, and the imputation of sin and of righteousness.

Now we maintain that the Calvinistic side of this alternative must be true, (1) because, as proved in the fourteenth chapter, Christ's righteousness is the ground of justification. (2.) Because faith, which includes trust as well as assent, from its essential nature, excludes the possibility of its being itself the ground upon which anything can rest, and renders it certain that its true office is to apprehend as an instrument the righteousness of Christ upon which the trust terminates; which righteousness, consequently, must be the real ground upon which the justification proceeds. (3.) The law of God, which cannot be relaxed, demanded at the beginning, and must continue to demand to the end, perfect obedience, which, obviously enough, transcends the best gracious ability of any saint. Faith and evangelical obedience can never take its place. (4.) Every Christian knows, in his inmost heart, that he deserves nothing, and that the adoption of sons and eternal life are given to him freely, and on identically the same terms as the remission of sins itself.

(5.) The Scriptures everywhere set forth the truth, that the adoption of sons, eternal life, &c., are given to the believer freely for Christ's sake, as elements of that purchased possession of which the Holy Spirit is the earnest or first instalment. "In him also we have obtained an inheritance." "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." Eph. 1:11–13. The Spirit of the Son is called "the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." Rom. 8:15, 17. "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world." Gal. 1:4. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law ... that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. 3:13, 14. "Therefore being

by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." Acts 2:33. We are said to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ. Eph. 1:3. "He gave himself for the Church that he might sanctify and cleanse it, 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." Eph. 5:25–27. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Titus 3:5, 6. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that (ἵνα) he might redeem them that were under the law, that (ἵνα) we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4:4, 5. We are told to ask for everything we desire for Christ's sake alone. John 14:14, 15, and 15:16. And in heaven all the redeemed say continually, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." Rev. 1:5, 6, and 6:9, 10.

II. The Scriptures expressly declare that Christ saves by his obedience as well as by his sufferings. "Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous." This is an explicit affirmation of the principle for which we are contending. The phrase "obedience" of Christ, is evidently to be interpreted in its natural sense, because it is directly set in contrast with the "disobedience" of Adam. In the same sense in which the disobedience of the one is the ground of our condemnation, is the obedience of the other the ground of our justification.

III. Christ was a divine and eternal Person, and as such he was under no obligation to obey the law. He was himself, in the essential ground

of his being, a law unto the whole moral universe, and therefore could not be, as concerns himself, conditioned by any law exterior to himself. The divine nature is the norm of all moral principle, and the divine will is the ground and measure of all those relations from which many of the obligations of his creatures result. Therefore, the divine Being cannot be himself subject to any law except the spontaneous law of his own being. And Christ, who, though embracing a human nature, was always a divine Person, of course always transcended the claims of law, because these claims necessarily terminate upon persons, and not upon mere natures as such. Yet, as our Representative, he bore in the unity of his divine personality our nature impersonally ("a true body and a reasonable soul"), in order that he might thus be made vicariously under the law, to the end that by his purely vicarious obedience he might "redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4:4, 5. This means necessarily (a) that Christ was made under the law, that he did not belong there naturally, but was transferred to that position by an act of divine sovereignty. (b.) That he was placed there, not for himself, but in our stead. (c.) That he was made under the law for the purpose of securing for us, not the mere remission of sins, but also the adoption of sons; whereby we became "heirs of God through Christ" (διὰ Χριστοῦ), Gal. 4:7; all of which is conditioned, not upon suffering, but upon obedience. All that Christ did on earth he did as our Mediator, and all that he did as Mediator he did in the stead of those for whom he acted as Mediator. Therefore he said (Matt. 3:15), "For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness (πάντων δικαιοσύνην)," that is, all that God requires of his people.

IV. The inability of the law to justify resulted from the fact that it necessarily demands perfect obedience, which the weakness of the flesh, because of sin, makes it impossible for the sinner to satisfy. Rom. 8:3, 4. God remedies the matter by sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, into our law-place, and executing the penalty upon him, and so condemning sin in the flesh, and also accepting his obedience instead of our obedience; that thus, through

our Sponsor, the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW MIGHT BE FULFILLED IN US. Rom. 8:3, 4.

The phrase δικαιοσύνη, or δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου, is used in the New Testament to express the totality of that which the law demands as the condition of favour. In Adam, before he fell, the righteousness of the law was perfect obedience. In the case of all his descendants, since the fall, the righteousness of the law is perfect obedience plus the suffering of the penalty. To justify is to pronounce a man to be just, righteous, δίκαιος. Righteousness, δικαιοσύνη, is the character of the δίκαιος, that in him which satisfies the law. It is that, therefore, upon which justification proceeds. Moses declares the righteousness which is of the law when he says, "the man that doeth these things shall live by them." Rom. 10:5. Since the law demands of us perfect obedience and the endurance of the penalty, it is perfectly impossible for us to achieve a legal righteousness by our own personal agency. Hence, in the Scriptures, the "righteousness of the law" is unfavourably contrasted with the "righteousness of faith." Rom. 10:5, 6. That is, the attempted satisfaction of the demands of the law, made by the sinner in person, is contrasted with the vicarious satisfaction of the same by Christ, which faith apprehends and appropriates. To the same effect our own righteousness is contrasted with God's righteousness. Rom. 3:20–26, that is, our method of satisfying the law with God's method. "To declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." "For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Rom. 10:3. The grand requirement of the law was perfect obedience as the condition of favour. Obedience, therefore, is of the essence of righteousness. But "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. 10:4. By means of his work "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us." Rom. 8:4. We are said "to be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. He is called "the Lord our righteousness." Jer. 23:6. He is said to be "made unto us wisdom and righteousness." 1 Cor. 1:30. Paul declares his desire to



"be found in him, not having my own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. 3:9.

V. Piscator and Richard Watson object that the Calvinistic view represents Christ as rendering two distinct satisfactions to the law in behalf of his people. They maintain that obedience and penalty are alternatives, the presence of one excluding the demand for the other. If Adam had rendered perfect obedience, he would not have been required also to satisfy, by suffering, the penalty. Therefore, they argue, if Christ has satisfied the law by suffering the penalty due the sins of his people, he cannot be also required to render it in their stead the additional satisfaction of obedience.

We hold this to evince a very confused view of the case. God surely did not give Adam the choice between obedience and death, as between two equally legitimate alternatives. The simple facts are (a), that God placed Adam at his creation (and federally the whole race in him) in a middle position, with a character holy, yet liable to fall. Such a position is a fair one. It has its advantages and also its terrible risks. (b.) God promised Adam an advancement far above the position into which he was created, on condition of perfect obedience rendered for a definite period. (c.) He threatened him with that penalty which is inseparable from all moral law, of death in case of disobedience. The endurance of the penalty, therefore, is required of Christ's people in order that their sin may be expiated. And perfect obedience is required for a definite period, in order that they may be righteously advanced to the grace which had, from the beginning, been offered only on that condition. The active and passive obedience of Christ, the suffering of the penalty for the remission of sin, and the obeying of the law for life, do not therefore constitute two satisfactions, but are one complete and perfect satisfaction of the whole law in all its relations.

## **CHAPTER XIX:**

# **THE REFORMED DOCTRINE AS TO THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT PROVED TO HAVE BEEN THE FAITH OF THE ENTIRE CHRISTIAN CHURCH THROUGH ALL AGES**

IN this chapter I propose to prove that the doctrine which has been in the preceding chapters set forth, in connection with its scriptural evidence, has in its essential principles been the faith of the great body of God's people from the beginning; and especially that this has been the case in every particular age and section of the Church precisely in proportion to its general orthodoxy and spiritual vitality. If truth be an essential prerequisite in order to holiness, the general fact that a given system of belief has been found in association with all the vital godliness that has ever existed, is strong presumptive evidence of the truth of that system. And this presumption is very much strengthened if it can be shown to be historically true that, as a general fact, the evidences of spiritual life are obscured in proportion as the central and characteristic principles of the system are ignored or misconceived, and that they have never continued to exist at all where these principles have been intelligently denied. In order to apply this method of argument to the subject we have in hand, I will attend to the following points in their order. 1. To state precisely the several positions which I believe that the historical evidence accessible to us will fully prove. 2. To present, in as condensed a form as possible, quotations from representative theologians, and Church creeds which establish the points proposed to be proved. And, 3. To apply the historical facts as to the general faith of the Church, thus established, to our main argument, indicating what inferences from the universal consent of the Church of Christ to the truth of doctrine appear to be legitimate.

I. I have, then, in the first place, to state the points which I believe can be established with reference to the faith of God's people, as a general and characteristic fact, in all ages, with reference to the nature of Christ's redeeming work.

1. It is not pretended that the doctrine of Satisfaction as received in common by the Lutheran and Reformed Churches was conceived of in all its elements or stated with scientific accuracy in the early ages of the Church, or that in this complete sense it is possessed by all parts of the Church in modern times. Such a statement would not be true either historically or actually of any single doctrine embraced in the entire system of revealed truth. All the elements embraced under the heads of Theology and Anthropology, as well as Soteriology, were at first conceived obscurely, stated vaguely, and mixed with incongruous and even inconsistent elements, and have reached the mature form in which they are at present embraced by all evangelical Christians only through a process of growth. The fact is admitted that the early fathers wrote like children in the childhood of the Church on this as upon all other subjects.

But, 2. We maintain over against the advocates of the Moral Influence Theory that the following points are susceptible of historical proof. (1.) There is abundant evidence that from the first the faith of the true Church has uniformly embraced Christ on the cross as a sacrifice expiating sin and propitiating God. It is true that this element of their faith is often left to a remarkable degree in the background, and mixed up confusedly with other elements of truth or superstition, but indubitable traces of an objective bearing of the passion of Christ upon obstacles in the way of man's deliverance exterior to himself are always visible. (2.) That the doctrine that the central design of the Atonement is to produce a subjective effect upon the sinner has never prevailed among any considerable number of people for any length of time. That, on the contrary, even every false doctrine which has taken strong and permanent hold upon the human mind has always embraced in it precisely that principle which the theory in question excludes, viz., that the sufferings of Christ

were necessary to remove obstacles to our salvation existing exterior to ourselves. This fact is conspicuously illustrated in the prevalence of the eccentric idea that Christ was delivered up as a ransom-price to Satan for the purpose of redeeming sinful men from the power of the usurper, which so long confused and disfigured the ideas of ecclesiastical writers upon the subject of Redemption. (3.) We maintain it can be proved that the doctrine that Christ has redeemed men from the claims of divine justice by his vicarious sufferings has always been more clearly conceived and more frequently and emphatically insisted upon in the exact proportion as the Church has been faithful in the profession of other fundamental truths and abundant in the fruits of the Spirit. The best of the earlier Church teachers teach the truth we contend for. Those who were most eminent in the defence of the truth as to the supreme divinity of our blessed Lord, as Athanasius the Great; those who stood to the last faithful in resisting the inroads of Popery, as Claude, bishop of Turin (821–839); the best of the schoolmen, as Anselm, Hugh St. Victor, Bernard, Bonaventura and Thomas Aquinas; both of the two great sections (Greek and Roman) into which the Church divided; the great evangelical teachers who, in the immediately preceding centuries, prepared the way for the Reformation, as Wycliffe and John Wessel; the Vallenses who, isolated among the mountains, preserved the primitive apostolic faith through all the dark centuries of the Papal supremacy; Zwingle and Luther and Calvin, each independent in his origin, drawing from different sources, and marked by many profound characteristic differences from the others; and with them, all the four great spontaneous movements of reform, in Switzerland, Germany, France and Britain, each of which was so truly original, and marked by characteristic differences, which still survive after three centuries of change; and finally, all of the great evangelical denominations into which the Churches of the Reformation have been developed, who now embrace the sum total of Christ's kingdom on the face of the earth;—all these, and whatsoever persons or bodies of this kind have ever existed, in whatever else they have differed, have agreed in maintaining that the virtue of the redemption of Christ resides in its power to expiate sin

and thus to propitiate God. (4.) We maintain also, in the fourth place, that true religion has never flourished when this doctrine of expiation has been explicitly denied, but that the invariable sequence, if not consequence, of its denial may be read in the history of the ancient Gnostics and Arians, in that of such heretics as Scotus Erigena and Abelard during the Middle Age, of the Socinians of the sixteenth century, and of their successors, the Unitarians of England and America, and the Neologians of Germany, during the eighteenth and nineteenth.

3. We maintain over against the advocates of the Governmental Theory of the Atonement: (1.) That it is susceptible of proof that, with few exceptions, the whole Church from the beginning has held the doctrine of Redemption in the sense of a literal propitiation of God by means of the expiation of sin. (2.) That this view of the nature of Redemption has been held most definitely and earnestly, as a general fact, by those men, and in those branches and ages of the Church which have exhibited the most decided evidence of the Saviour's presence and favour. (3.) That each one of the great sections into which the Christian Church has been divided—the Greek and Roman, Lutheran and Reformed—unite in maintaining that the gospel is founded upon the expiation of guilt. (4.) That all of the later and more perfect Confessions, both of the Lutheran and of the Reformed Churches, agree in teaching in the fullest terms the strictly vicarious character of both Christ's active and passive obedience, and the imputation of that perfect obedience to the believer as the strictly judicial ground of his justification. And (5.) That the origin of the Governmental Theory of the Atonement among the semi-Socinian Dutch Remonstrants, and its affiliation with the speculations of the heretical French Professors of Saumur, give but a doubtful indication as to its possible connection, for a protracted period, with spiritual health and fruitfulness.

II. I now proceed to present the evidence which, I think, proves the points above stated. Let it be remembered that, as a matter of course, all that can be presented here is a mere specimen of much more that

remains behind. Let it be remembered, also, that our position, assumed in the first statement of our doctrine, is not that either of the heterodox theories we are here combating is false, but that they are each essentially defective. Hence it will in no way weaken the force of our argument if it be proved that the positive principles maintained by either or both of them have been taught generally or uniformly in the Church. If the principle of literal expiation be admitted at all in connection with those principles specially signalized by each of the other views, then, from the very nature of the case, the fact of expiation, since it concerns God, must be central; and the other principles, since they concern the creation, must be subordinate to it. It will be abundantly sufficient for all the purposes of my argument, therefore, if I succeed in tracing the principle I contend for as a constant element, more or less clearly discriminated, of the faith of God's people.\*

The Rev. Dr. John Young, of Edinburgh, has recently gone over the monuments of Patristic theology, &c., for the purpose of tracing the history of the origin and growth of the doctrine of Satisfaction. He claims that there is no trace of this doctrine in the Scripture; that it has its root in the ignorance and depravity of human nature; that it emerged in the Christian Church as a manifest corruption; and that it was developed into its present portentous form only slowly and after the lapse of centuries. His historical argument may be reduced to two heads. (1.) He draws this conclusion from the comparative silence of the early writers on this subject, even when they were treating of topics which rendered allusions to this doctrine, if it was in fact believed, apparently inevitable. (2.) From the imputed character, intellectual or moral, of certain men to whose agency he refers the origination and diffusion of the corruption; as, for instance, Athanasius and Calvin.

To the first of his points we reply by confessing that to an extraordinary degree his allegation is true, but that (1) it is at best but a negative argument, and avails nothing in opposition to the positive testimony presented on the other hand. As we have shown

above, from the essential nature of the principle involved, if its presence can be traced, however faintly, the conclusion will be inevitable that it is an essential part of the faith of the Church, and the central principle to which all others will ultimately be subordinated when all the elements of that faith are accurately discriminated and adjusted. And (2) that the force of his objection is greatly abated by the consideration of the fewness, and of the fragmentary condition, and the immaturity and confusion characteristic of the writings of the early Fathers, and the crudeness of their views upon many other subjects of Christian doctrine.

To his second point we answer, that the position we assume, as distinctly stated above, is not that certain men have taught the doctrine of expiation, but that it is the doctrine of all the representative Church teachers of all ages; that it has again and again, with amazing coincidence, been revived by great and good men acting entirely independently of each other; and that it has always been the more emphasized the more true spiritual religion has flourished; and, finally, that true spiritual religion has never flourished among those who have explicitly denied it. Very little light can be thrown upon the origin or value of such a doctrine by criticising the spirit or associations of individual men. The broad fact would remain to be accounted for, that the idea to which Athanasius, for the first time, gives a logically defined expression had appeared again and again in the writings of the best men who preceded him, and in the devotional writings of Augustine and his followers; that Claude, Bernard, Wycliffe, Wessel, the Vallenses, and all the best saints of the ages preceding the Reformation, held the same; that Anselm, in the Latin Church, and Nicolas of Methone, in the Greek Church, the two great systematizers of the Church's faith on this subject, wrought entirely independently of each other, although almost contemporaneously; that not only Luther and Calvin, but Zwingle also, the most independent and rationalizing of the Reformers, and that all the branches of the Church, Greek, Roman, Lutheran and Reformed, in all their subdivisions, hold the same faith. Any attempt to account for such facts as these by reference to

the personal character of individual men, however great or numerous, is manifestly absurd.

[A.] The doctrine of Expiation was received, though in a crude, unscientific form and in connection with much error, by the ante-Nicene fathers. With respect to the writers of this period, Young admits that "Injustice would be done to them, unless it be understood that most of them make use, though not frequently, of the New Testament language with regard to the death of the Redeemer, and also that in some instances they apply passages of the Old Testament—such as the 53 chapter of Isaiah, and the 22 Psalm—to that death. It is fully admitted that the ultimate and real question goes back to the meaning of the New Testament itself. No one could fairly dispute, that if the doctrine of Satisfaction be there, it is also in the post-apostolic writings. But if it be wanting there, as we have sought to show that it is, then unquestionably it has no place in them."\*

In answer to this position, thus candidly assumed, I present the argument to the contrary under the following heads.

1. It is unquestionably a strong presumptive evidence in favour of the truth of our position, that the most learned, impartial and minute students of the original sources of all knowledge on this subject, such as Neander, Dorner, Faber,\* Shedd, Schaff, &c., all in effect bear independent testimony to the substantial truth of the judgment pronounced by the first named in his Church history. "As it regards the work of Christ as the Redeemer of mankind, we find already in the language used by the Church fathers on this point, in the period under consideration, all the elements that lay at the basis of the doctrine as it afterwards came to be defined in the Church."†

2. Young confesses that the early Fathers applied to the work of Christ the ordinary sacrificial language borrowed from the Old and New Testaments. But in chapter viii. I showed that Outram has presented evidence to saturation that the heathen, Jews and



Christians of that age all agreed in understanding this sacrificial language as signifying, in a strict sense, the vicarious suffering of penal evils on the part of the victim in behalf of the transgressor. It will suffice for our purpose, at present, to cite only the testimony of the great Metropolitan, Cosmopolitan, learned Controversialist and Church Historian, Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea. His words are as follows: "An attentive observer may learn this very thing also from the law respecting sacrifices; which enjoins every one who offers a sacrifice, to lay his hands on the head of the victim, and holding it by the head to bring it to the priest, as offering the animal instead of his own head. Wherefore its language respecting every victim is, Let the offerer present it before the Lord, lay his hands upon the head of his offering; and this was observed in every sacrifice, no victim being offered in any other way; whence it is concluded that the lives of the victims were given instead of the lives of the offerers.... For as pious persons, who were familiar with God, and had their minds enlightened by the Divine Spirit, saw that they needed a great remedy for the expiation of deadly sins, they concluded that a ransom for their salvation ought to be presented to God, the disposer of life and death.... As long as men had no better victim, none that was great, valuable and worthy of God, it behooved them to offer him animal sacrifices in ransom for their own life, and as substitutes for their own nature."\*

3. I proved, also, in chapter viii., by arguments drawn directly from the Scriptures, that the Old Testament sacrifices did actually expiate offences by means of vicarious penal sufferings, and that they, by God's appointment, were eminent types and symbols of the redemptive work of Christ. It hence follows that the conditional admission of Young, that "if the doctrine of Satisfaction be there [in the sacrificial institutions and language of the Old Testament], it is also in the post-apostolic writings," becomes a simple statement of unquestionable fact.

4. In connection with and in addition to the foregoing evidence, our allegation is conclusively proved by the positive statements of many

of these early writers, which, as will be seen, involve in explicit terms the essential elements of the doctrine of expiation.

Polycarp (a pupil of John), in his Epistle to the Philippians,\* quoted by Shedd, says: "Christ is our Saviour; for through grace are we righteous, not by works; for our sins he has even taken death upon himself, has become the servant of us all, and, through his death for us, our hope and the pledge of our righteousness. The heaviest sin is unbelief in Christ; his blood will be demanded of unbelievers; for to those to whom the death of Christ, which obtains the forgiveness of sins, does not prove the ground of justification, it proves a ground of condemnation. Our Lord Jesus Christ suffered himself to be brought even to death for our sins; ... let us, therefore, without ceasing, hold steadfastly to him who is our hope and the earnest of our righteousness, even Jesus Christ, 'who bare our sins in his own body on the tree.' "†

Clement Romanus, a disciple of Paul, died circum A. D. 100. In his *Epistola ad Corinthos* (quoted by Dorner), he writes thus: "His blood has been shed for us, for our salvation; he has, according to God's will, given his body for our body, his soul for our soul." "Every interpretation of this passage," says Dorner, "is forced which does not recognize in it the idea of substitution, and that as well subjective, Christ's substitutionary design, as objective, the actual fulfilment of that design, and its objective results. There is connected therewith the fact that with Clement, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the name 'High Priest' is frequently applied to Christ."

Justin Martyr (A. D. 114–168), quoted by Neander, says: "The law pronounced on all men the curse, because no man could fulfil it in its whole extent. Deut. 27:26. Christ delivered us from this curse in bearing it for us."\*

The author of the Epistle to Diognetus, which is admitted by all to date from the early part of the second century, consequently, in the generation immediately succeeding the death of the Apostle John,

and which is usually published among the works of Justin Martyr, says, as quoted by Dorner: "Thus God delayed, that we might be made conscious of our own guilt and impotency. But as that was filled up, and it was rendered manifest that punishment and death duly awaited us, the one love continued true. It hated not, it departed not, it remembered not evil; but was long-suffering and bore; nay, itself took on our sins. It gave his only Son as a ransom for us; the holy for the unholy, the sinless for the wicked, the pure for the vile, the immortal for the mortal. For what else could cover our sins than the righteousness of him? Whereby could the unholy and ungodly be justified but by the Son of God? Oh! sweet substitution! Oh! what an unsearchable device, what unexpected blessing! The unrighteousness of the many to be hid by the righteous of the One; the righteousness of the One to justify many sinners!"

[B.] The doctrine of vicarious expiation accomplished by the sufferings of Christ was professed yet more explicitly, though still in a crude form and mixed with much error, by the Nicene Fathers and their successors up to the time of the Schoolmen. From the commencement of this period it is well known that a strange fancy, entertained by Origen (A. D. 185–254) and Irenæus (200), to the effect that Christ was provided by God to ransom his people out of the hands of Satan, as captives are ransomed by friends from the hands of pirates, continued for a long time to tinge the meditations of Christian writers upon the subject of Redemption. This fact, both curious and lamentable, is, of course, made much of by all those whose interest, for any reason, it is to show that the Church of Christ has never been committed to any fixed view as to the nature of Redemption, but has always drifted among various opinions of human origin, more or less rational. With respect to this view I would remark (a) that there is no evidence that it represented the definite and total conception of any one of the ancient Fathers as to the nature of Christ's work. It was a general and indeterminate form in which that work was conceived of in one of its aspects, suggested by such scriptural passages as Col. 2:15, and Heb. 2:14; and however inconsistent as a matter of logic, nevertheless coexisting in the same

mind also with vague conceptions of the very views which are common to the modern evangelical Churches. (b.) This view, grotesque as it is, involves, in common with the orthodox Satisfaction Theory, a principle which is utterly inconsistent with the Moral Influence Theory, and that principle is, that the direct design and effect of the sufferings of Christ were to redeem sinners from an obstacle to their salvation exterior to themselves. The prevalence of this fancy, therefore, in connection with more correct views as to the nature of Redemption, contributes to prove the truth of our allegation that all Christians have from the beginning, without exception, felt the need of being ransomed from a power under which they were held, and which they were impotent to resist. The following witnesses also make it evident that, in spite of the general prevalence of this form of error for a time, the true doctrine of the need of propitiating divine justice was never absent from the faith of the Church.

Irenæus (202) says: "We were God's enemies and debtors, as Christ in his priestly work fulfilled the law."\* And again, "And on account of this in the last times the Lord, through his own incarnation, restored us into friendship, having been made Mediator between God and man; truly propitiating the Father, against whom we had sinned, in our behalf."

Eusebius of Cæsarea (A. D. 270–340), quoted by Shedd, says: "How then did he make our sins to be his own, and how did he bear our iniquities?... The Lamb of God did not only these things for us, but he underwent torments, and was punished for us; that which he was no ways exposed to for himself, but we were so by the multitude of our sins; and thereby he became the cause of the pardon of our sins; namely, because he underwent death, stripes, reproaches, transferring the thing which we had deserved to himself; and was made a curse for us, taking to himself the curse that was due to us; for what was he but a price of redemption for our souls?"

Athanasius the Great—champion of the absolute divinity of Christ (A. D. 278–373), leading and representing a Church party very different from that represented by the former witness, the compromising Eusebius of Cæsarea (as quoted by Dorner)—says: "The death, which is termed his, the death of the Logos, was a ransom for the sins of men, and a death of death."\* "Laden with guilt, the world lay under the condemnation of the law; but the Logos took the judgment (krima) up into himself, and suffering in the flesh for all, he bestowed salvation upon all." "The first and principal ground of the Logos' becoming man was that the condemnation of the law, by which we are burdened with guilt and eternal punishment, might be removed by the payment of the penalty."‡

Cyril of Jerusalem (386), quoted by Shedd, says: "Christ took sin upon his own body. He who died for us was no insignificant creature, he was no mere animal victim, he was no mere man, he was not an angel; but he was God incarnate. The iniquity of us sinners was not so great as the righteousness of him who died for us; the sins we have committed are not equal to the Atonement made by him who laid down his life for us."§

Chrysostom (A. D. 354–407), quoted by Milner, says: "What a saying? What mind can comprehend it? He made a just person a sinner that he might make sinners just. But the apostle's language is still stronger. He doth not say he made him a sinner, but sin, that we might be made, not righteous, but righteousness, even the righteousness of God."

The great and good Augustine (A. D. 354–430), spending his whole strength upon the defence of the truth revealed in Scripture as to human sin and divine grace, against able and active opponents, was undeniably, to a great extent, in the dark as to the true nature of the piacular work of Christ. He generally uses the term justification in the general and indefinite sense in which it is now used by the Roman Catholic theologians, as including the remission of sins and the infusion of grace. Nevertheless, as Young candidly acknowledges,

"we find, especially in his Confessions, and in the touching utterances of his religious experience, that which plainly involves the idea, though the distinctive term is not employed, of a satisfaction to divine justice on account of human sin."\* As quoted by Milner: "He was made sin, as we are made righteousness, not our own, but of God; nor in ourselves, but in him, as he was made sin, not his own, but ours, nor was he appointed so in himself, but in us."†

"But Christ without guilt (personal) took upon himself our punishment, in order that he might thus expiate our guilt, and do away with our punishment."

"All men are separated from God by sin. Hence they can be reconciled with him only through the remission of sin, and this only through the grace of a most merciful Saviour, and this grace through the one only Victim of the most true and only Priest."

Gregory the Great (604), the most distinguished and influential representative of the Latin Church of his age in his *Moralia in Jobum*,\* quoted by Shedd, says: "Guilt can be extinguished only by a penal offering to justice. But it would contradict the idea of justice if, for the sin of a rational being like man, the death of an irrational animal should be accepted as a sufficient atonement. Hence a man must be offered as the sacrifice for man; so that a rational victim may be slain for a rational criminal. But how could a man, himself stained with sin, be an offering for sin? Hence a sinless man must be offered. But what man descending in the ordinary course would be free from sin? Hence, the Son of God must be born of a virgin, and became a man for us. He assumed our nature without our corruption. He made himself a sacrifice for us, and set forth for sinners his own body, a victim without sin, and able both to die by virtue of its humanity, and to cleanse the guilty upon grounds of justice."

John of Damascus (750), the greatest representative of the Greek Church in his age, in his *Expositio Fidei*, quoted by Shedd, says: "He who assumed death for us, died, and offered himself a sacrifice to the

Father; for we had committed wrong towards him, and it was necessary for him to receive our ransom, and we thus be delivered from condemnation. For God forbid that the blood of the Lord should be offered to the tyrant."

[C.] The doctrine of Redemption by the expiatory sufferings of Christ was held in common by all the prominent witnesses for pure Christianity during the Dark Ages, including the Vallenses of Piedmont, and the immediate forerunners of the Reformers; and it was positively rejected only by such open heretics as Scotus Erigena and Abelard. Claude, Bishop of Turin (A. D. 821–839), the faithful champion of the truth against the inroads of the ever-growing Papal superstitions and doctrinal and ritualistic corruptions, is a witness of special interest, because he is supposed to have been immediately associated with those heroic mountaineers (the Vallenses) who profess to have preserved their doctrine unchanged from the days of primitive Christianity. He says, in his Commentary upon the Epistle to the Galatians,\* as quoted by Neander: "Christ underwent the penalty designed for those who failed to obey the law, that he might liberate those believing upon him from all fear of such penalty." "Gal. 3:16. They are forced to confess that man is justified not by works of the law, but by faith." "Gal. 5:4. Now he," the apostle, "comprehends the whole law generally, by saying that they will profit nothing by the work of Christ who believe themselves to be justified by any kind of legal observance whatsoever."

The Vallenses, whom this faithful Bishop of Turin in his day nourished and encouraged, existed as a small but precious body of evangelical witnesses long before, and they continue essentially unchanged to the present time, with their head-quarters in the same mountain city. In the year 1530 their teachers sent a deputation to Œcolampadius, at Basle, making, in their Confession, presented on that occasion, the following declaration: "In all things we agree with you, and from the very time of the apostles, our sentiments respecting the same have been the same as your own." In 1544 they presented a Confession of their Faith to Francis I., King of France,

through Cardinal Sadolet. Concerning it, they affirm, that "this Confession is that which we have received from our ancestors, even from hand to hand, according as their predecessors in all times and in every age have taught and delivered." As to the nature of the Atonement, they say: "We believe and confess that there is a free remission of sins, proceeding from the mercy and mere goodness of our Lord Jesus Christ; who died once for our sins, the just for the unjust, who took away our sins in his own body on the cross; who is our Advocate with God, the price of our reconciliation; whose blood cleanses our consciences from dead works, that we should serve the living God; who alone made satisfaction for the faithful, so that their sins are not imputed to them, as to the unbelieving and to the reprobate."

The first attempts to develop the doctrine of Redemption in a manner scientifically accurate and complete were made almost at the same time, yet in entire independence of each other, in each of the two great divisions of the Church, by Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the West; and Nicholas, Bishop of Methone, in Messenia, in the East. From the fact that the essential principles involved in Christ's work of vicarious expiation were, by these men and their successors during the entire era of Scholasticism, made the subjects of a more thorough and systematic investigation than ever before, the enemies of the truth have often pretended to believe that these principles were inventions of the Schoolmen, and have disparagingly designated our doctrine the "Scholastic Theory of Satisfaction." This notorious fact makes it unnecessary for me to quote the words of the representative theologians of those ages to prove that they understood the work of Christ in the same sense as ourselves. Anselm of Canterbury and Nicholas of Methone acted as the organs of a spontaneous movement of the whole Church. It is undeniable, also, that the advocates of the doctrine of the literal satisfaction of divine justice by Christ, such as Anselm, Bernard, Hugh St. Victor,\* Bonaventura, Thomas Aquinas, &c., were, with all their faults, the best, in every Christian sense, of the Schoolmen. It was the Pantheistic John Scotus Erigena (circum 860) who denied



this truth. It was the semi-Pelagian Duns Scotus (A. D. 1265–1308) who depreciated the value of Christ's vicarious sufferings, and the necessity for satisfaction—placing that necessity in the optional will instead of the immutable justice of God, and making the satisfaction of Christ but putative only—a satisfaction (so called) of love, and not of justice. And it was the infamous Abelard (A. D. 1142) who taught in precise terms the Moral Influence Theory of Socinus and Bushnell and Young, and others. As we might expect, the latter was earnestly combated on this, as upon other points involving deadly error, by the deeply religious Bernard of Clairvaux (A. D. 1153), quoted by Milner and by Hagenbach. After noticing Abelard's Moral Influence Theory, he says: "Is this the whole then of the great mystery of godliness—this which any uncircumcised and unclean person may easily penetrate? What is there in this beyond the common light of nature?" "For if one died for all, then were all dead, that the satisfaction of one might be imputed to all, as he alone bore the sins of all; and now be who offended, and he who satisfied divine justice, are found the same, because the head and the body is one Christ."

Of such "Reformers before the Reformation" as Wycliffe (A. D. 1324–1384) and Weasel (A. D. 1419–1489) Hagenbach\* testifies "that they attached importance to the theory of Satisfaction in its practical bearing upon evangelical piety, and thus introduced the period of the Reformation." Wycliffe † (quoted by Baur) says: "And since, according to the third supposition, it behooves that satisfaction should be made for sin, therefore, it behooves that the same nature of man should satisfy for as much as it had become indebted in its great progenitor, which no man was able to do, unless he was at the same time both God and man." "It is a light word to say that God might, of his power, forgive this sin (Adam's) without the aseeth (satisfaction) which was made for it, for God might do so if he would; but his justice would not suffer it, but requires that each trespass be punished either on earth or in hell. And God may not accept a person to forgive him without satisfaction." Milner quotes the following sentences from an Apology for Wycliffe, preserved in the library of the Cathedral of York, by Dr. Thomas James, some time librarian at

Oxford, the contents of which are chiefly extracts from Wycliffe's own manuscripts: "He persuaded men to trust wholly to Christ, to rely altogether upon his sufferings, and not to seek to be justified in any other way than by his justice." "That unbelievers, though they might perform works apparently good in their matter, still were not to be accounted righteous men; that all who followed Christ became righteous through the participation of his righteousness, and would be saved."

John Wessel, of Groningen (quoted by Ullman), says: "According to the second or servant form, the Lord Jesus is not only Mediator between God and man, but is rather Mediator for man, between the God of justice and the God of mercy; for it behooved that the whole law of justice should be fulfilled without failure of one jot or tittle; and as this has now been achieved by Jesus, it is easy to find the way in which mercy can flow forth in streams of compassion. The wisdom of the Father, however, made this way by the device of a Mediator."\* "Among all the miracles, not the least is the same justice which is armed with divine and eternal laws against man, not only restrains the sword in judgment, but also the sentence, and not only absolves the criminal whom it had determined to condemn, but orders him to be exalted to dignity, honour and glory. Who is not here surprised to mark how the truth of the threatenings has been changed into the truth of the promises, and upon both sides the truth secured? These things, so contrary to each other, the gentleness of the Lamb alone has blended. For Christ, being himself God, and Priest, and Sacrifice, has satisfied himself, for himself and by himself." † "Our loving Father has willed thee his loving Son to be a Surety, Sponsor, Bailsman, for the fully obeying and the fully suffering (satisfaciendo et satispatiando), by an equal pledge on account of all my disobedience and misery."\*

[D.] At the opening of the Reformation, Zwingle, Luther, Calvin, Knox and Cranmer, the organs of independent movements of reform in five different nationalities, differing among themselves in almost everything not essential to the integrity of Christianity, all, without

exception, agree in teaching the doctrine of vicarious expiation. And as far as this principle is concerned, the Greek and Roman Churches agreed, with the Protestant.

There is no need of illustrating the truth of this position by quotations from the writings of Luther, Calvin or Knox. Their opinions will not be questioned, and it will fully answer our present purpose to show that Zwingle and Cranmer accurately agree with them on the question.

Zwingle (A. D. 1484–1531) was the first, as he was intellectually the most independent and rationalistic, of all the Reformers. In his *Expositio Christianæ Fidei De Christo Domino*, he says: "But he suffered, for the purpose of expiating our crimes, a most humiliating form of suffering." "Wherever sin is, death of necessity follows. Christ was without sin, and guile was not found in his mouth.... And yet he died this death, he suffered in our stead. He was willing to die, that he might restore us to life; and as he had no sins of his own, the all-merciful Father laid ours upon him." † "He is the sacrifice and victim, satisfying for the sins of all the world for ever."

Archbishop Cranmer (A. D. 1489–1554), in his *Defence of the True Doctrine of the Sacraments*,\* says: "One kind of sacrifice there is which is called a propitiatory or merciful sacrifice; that is to say, such a sacrifice as pacifies God's wrath and indignation, and obtains mercy and forgiveness for all our sins, and is the ransom for the redemption from everlasting damnation.... There is but one such sacrifice, whereby our sins are pardoned and God's mercy and favour obtained, which is the death of the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ."

The "Orthodox Confession of the Catholic and Apostolic Eastern Church"—composed by Petrus Mogilas, Metropolitan of Kiew (A. D. 1642), and sanctioned by the Synod of Jerusalem (A. D. 1672)—says: "The death of Christ was of a very different kind from that of other men in these respects: first, because of the weight of our sins;

secondly, because he wholly fulfilled the priesthood even unto the cross: he offered himself to God and the Father for the ransoming of the human race. Therefore even to the cross he fulfilled the mediation between God and men."

"Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies, on account of his great love wherewith he loved us, merited justification for us by his most sacred passion on the tree, and satisfied God the Father for us." "The first and most excellent satisfaction is that by which whatever is due by us to God, on account of our sins, has been paid abundantly, although he should deal with us according to the strictest rigour of his justice. This is said to be that satisfaction which we say has appeased God and rendered him propitious to us; and for it we are indebted to Christ the Lord alone, who, having paid the price of our sins on the cross, most fully satisfied God."\*

[E.] Luther and Calvin, and the fully pronounced Creeds of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, all teach the full doctrine embraced in the statement given in the second chapter of this book, to the effect that the Satisfaction rendered by Christ includes both his active and his passive obedience, and infallibly secures for the believer alike remission of the penalty incurred by his sins and a title to the covenanted rewards of obedience.

"Another principal part of our reconciliation with God was, that man, who had lost himself by his disobedience, should by way of remedy oppose to it obedience, satisfy the justice of God, and pay the penalty of sin. Therefore our Lord came forth very man, adopted the person, and assumed his name, that he might in his stead obey the Father; that he might present our flesh as the price of satisfaction to the just judgment of God, and in the same flesh pay the penalty which he had incurred."

"When it is asked, then, how Christ by abolishing sin removed the enmity between God and us, and purchased a righteousness which made him favourable and kind to us, it may be answered generally,

that he accomplished this by the whole course of his obedience.... In short, from the moment in which he assumed the form of servant, he began, in order to redeem us, to pay the price of deliverance. Scripture, however, the more certainly to define the mode of salvation, ascribes it peculiarly and specially to the death of Christ.... Still there is no exclusion of the other part of obedience which he performed in life."\*

"A man will be justified by faith when, excluded from the righteousness of works, he by faith lays hold of the righteousness of Christ, and, clothed in it, appears in the sight of God, not as a sinner, but as righteous. Thus we simply interpret justification as the acceptance with which God receives us into his favour as if we were righteous, and we say that this justification consists in the forgiveness of sins, and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ." "Hence when God justifies us through the intercession of Christ, he does not acquit us on a proof of our own innocence, but by an imputation of righteousness, so that, though not righteous in ourselves, we are deemed righteous in Christ."‡

"By which the apostle means that we are accepted in his (Christ's) name by God, because he has expiated our sins by his own death, and his obedience is imputed to us for righteousness. For since the righteousness of faith consists in the remission of sin, and gratuitous acceptance, we attain both through Christ."

The Heidelberg Catechism—one of the most generally adopted of all the Reformed Confessions, composed in 1563 by Ursinus and Olevianus—in answer to Question 60, "How art thou justified in the sight of God?" says: "Only by a true faith in Jesus Christ; so that though my conscience accuse me, that I have grossly transgressed all the commandments of God, and kept none of them, and am still inclined to all evil; notwithstanding God, without any merit of mine, but only of mere grace, grants and imputes to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of Christ; even so, as if I never had had, nor committed, any sin; yea, as if I had fully

accomplished all that obedience which Christ hath accomplished for me; inasmuch as I embrace such benefit with a believing heart."

The Second Helvetic Confession—composed by Bullinger in 1564, and of very high authority among the Reformed Churches—says:\* "For Christ has taken upon himself and borne our sins, and satisfied the divine justice. God, therefore, on account of Christ as having suffered and risen, is propitiated with reference to our sins, neither does he impute them to us, but reckons the righteousness of Christ as ours, so that we are now not only cleansed and purged, or rendered pure from sins, but are also endowed with the righteousness of Christ, so that we are absolved from sins, death or condemnation; and, in fine, righteous and heirs of eternal life. Properly speaking, therefore, God alone justifies us, and he only justifies us on account of Christ, not imputing our sins, but imputing to us his righteousness."

The Gallic Confession (A. D. 1559), Article 18, says: "Therefore we utterly repudiate all the other grounds upon which men think they may be justified before God; and every thought of virtues or merits being cast aside, and entirely rely upon the obedience of Jesus Christ alone, which is indeed imputed to us, so that both are all our sins covered, and also we attain to favour before God."

The Belgic Confession was drawn up by Von Bres, in 1561. "In 1571, it was revised and adopted by the entire Church of Holland in the sixteenth century. After another revision of the text, it was publicly approved by the Synod of Dort, 1618." Article 22: "But we by no means understand that it is faith itself, properly speaking, which justifies us, or that we are justified on account of faith, for that (faith) is only an instrument by which we apprehend Christ our righteousness. There Christ, imputing to us his own merits, and very many most holy works, which he accomplished for us, is our righteousness."

The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, produced in their present form in 1562, Article 2: ... "One Christ, very God and very man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt (non tantum pro culpa originis), but also for all actual sins of men." Article 31: "The offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone."

The Formula Concordiæ—drawn up by Andrea and others (A. D. 1577), the most scientific of all the Lutheran Confessions—says: "That righteousness which before God is of mere grace imputed to faith, or to the believer, is the obedience, suffering and resurrection of Christ, by which he for our sakes satisfied the law, and expiated our sins. For since Christ was not only man, but God and man in one undivided person, so he was not subject to the law, nor obnoxious to suffering and death (suæ personæ) because he was Lord of the law. On which account his obedience (not merely in respect that he obeyed the Father in his sufferings and death, but also that he for our sakes willingly made himself subject to the law and fulfilled it by his obedience) is imputed to us, so that God, on account of that whole obedience (which Christ by his acting and by his suffering, in his life and in his death, for our sake rendered to his Father who is in heaven), remits our sins, reposes us as good and just, and gives us eternal salvation."\* "We are pronounced and reputed good and just on account of the obedience of Christ, which Christ from his nativity until his ignominious death upon the cross accomplished for the Father in our behalf."†

The Westminster Confession—(A. D. 1648) which all the Presbyterians of Scotland, Ireland and America profess to embrace sacredly and candidly as the Confession of their own personal faith—says: "The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up to God, hath fully satisfied the justice of the Father; and purchased not only

reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him." "Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth; not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their person as righteous, ... not imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them."\*

The Formula Consensus Helvetica—"composed in Zurich (A. D. 1675) by Heidegger, assisted by Francis Turretin of Geneva, and Gereler of Basle," and designed to rebuke the errors introduced by the Professors of the French Theological Seminary at Saumur, who taught a mixed system, in general character the same with that system among us styled "New England Theology"—says: "But by the obedience of his death, Christ, instead of his elect, so satisfied God the Father, that in the estimate, nevertheless, of his vicarious righteousness and of that obedience, all of that which he rendered to the law, as its just servant, during the whole course of his life, whether by doing or by suffering, ought to be called obedience. For Christ's life, according to the apostle's testimony (Phil. 2:7, 8) was nothing but a continuous emptying of self, submission and humiliation, descending step by step to the very lowest extreme, even the death of the cross; and the Spirit of God plainly declares that Christ in our stead satisfied the law and divine justice by his most holy life, and makes that ransom, with which God has redeemed us, to consist not in his sufferings only, but in his whole life conformed to the law."

When the name of EDWARDS is spoken, all men think of one man—President Edwards, Sr., the great writer on the Will and Original Sin. Surely all honest use of language demands that if any doctrine be styled the "Edwardean Theory of the Atonement," it should be his. He, as all his readers know, maintained on this point precisely the doctrine of Luther, and Calvin, and Turretin. Yet the prestige of his great name has uncandidly been perverted into the support of the



Governmental Theory, which he never taught. "As there is the same need that Christ's obedience should be reckoned to our account, as that his atonement should; so there is the same reason why it should. As, if Adam had persevered and finished his course of obedience, we should have received the benefit of his obedience, as much as now we have the mischief of his disobedience; so in like manner, there is reason that we should receive the benefit of the second Adam's obedience, as of his atonement of our disobedience. Believers are represented in Scripture as being so in Christ, as that they are legally one, or accepted as one, by the supreme Judge: Christ has assumed our nature, and has so assumed all in that nature, that belongs to him, into such a union with himself, that he is become their head and has taken them to be his members. And, therefore, what Christ has done in our nature, whereby he did honour to the law and authority of God by his acts, as well as the reparation to the honour of the law by his sufferings, is reckoned to the believer's account."\*

III. It remains for us now only to indicate the conclusions as to the truth of the doctrine we advocate, which the historical facts, now approved, appear to sustain.

We have already conceded to our opponents that the facts show that the mind of the Church advanced more slowly in the development of the doctrine of the Atonement than in the case of any other of the great fundamental doctrines of Revelation. But we claim that the men and confessions quoted above truly represented the Church of their respective ages, and that in their character as representatives they fully prove that the Church of Christ had, as a general fact, always understood the redemptive work of the Lord to be a vicarious expiation of sin in order to propitiate a justly-incensed though loving God in behalf of sinners. If this be so, we argue against all who deny this great truth, that it is impossible that Christians should thus have mistaken Christianity. The question is not whether grave, or even fatal, errors have prevailed in the visible Church, nor whether true Christians may or may not fall into grievous misconception as to important truths. But the real question involved is, whether it is

possible that the whole Church in all ages, as a general and characteristic fact—and whether with especial uniformity the more spiritual and fruitful portion of the Church—should have entirely mistaken the nature of that foundation upon which their trust reposes, and of that redemption of which they have been the subjects.

As far as the Moral Influence Theory is concerned, the adverse presumption raised by the history of opinion on this subject is overwhelming. The spiritual followers of Christ have always lived a life the conscious principle of which was faith in a sin-expiating sacrifice. Socinians and Rationalists have believed in the Moral Influence Hypothesis when they have seen fit to believe anything. Let the doctrines be judged by their fruits, and by the seal of the Holy Ghost on the hearts of their respective professors.

Young says of the Evangelical Churches from the Reformation down to the present hour: "If there has been success anywhere in the spread of Christianity, if there has been manifest power, power for highest good, anywhere, it has been in connection with them. Undeniably God has been in them and with them, and the Spirit of God has marvellously wrought, through them, for the conversion and moral regeneration of the world."\* Yet he continues a few paragraphs after: "That wild and daring transcendentalism which, in a greater or less degree, essentially affects evangelical theology at this hour, is not by any means the most fatal evil. The doctrine of satisfaction to divine justice is immeasurably worse in its moral tendency.... This, beyond all comparison, is the deadliest error." † This is a sheer absurdity. The faith in the work of Christ as an expiation of guilt has been a constant element in the living Church. The partial prevalence of the doctrine advocated by Young has been a constant symptom of the decay of spiritual life and fruitfulness when these have reached the crisis of death. Young hates the doctrine of the satisfaction of justice. He will have none of it. But his will, like the Pope's bull against the comet, is impotent, as well to expunge it from the page of history as from the page of revelation.

The adverse bearing of this historical review upon the position of those who advocate the Governmental Hypothesis is not less evident. The Governmental, as well as the Moral Theory, necessarily denies that the effect of Christ's death was to expiate the guilt intrinsic in sin, or to propitiate the justice intrinsic in God. Both these theories agree in making the direct and essential effect of the Atonement to be simply exemplary and moral; a display of principles, not a veritable exercise of divine attributes. On the contrary, the history proves beyond question (1) that the one point held in common by all the people of God in all ages is precisely this, that like the function of the ancient priest and the virtue of the ancient sacrifice, the effect of Christ's death terminates, not on the sinner nor on the universe, but on God. The simplest and constant form of the Confession is, that Christ, by his sacrifice, has expiated sin and propitiated God. This theory of Satisfaction, as thus generally stated, is the faith of the Greek and Roman, of the Lutheran and Reformed and Arminian Churches in all their branches; and what is true of the Church to-day has been true of the Church from the beginning. (2.) All the creeds of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches teach the full doctrine stated and advocated in this book, and they can, by no amount of ingenuity, however able or unscrupulous, be explained away into even a plausible conformity with the characteristic positions of the Governmental Hypothesis. Nor can its advocates truly claim that while accepting and conserving all that is essential and valuable in the older faith of the Church, their doctrine is simply to be regarded as an "improvement in theology" in the line of legitimate progress. We believe in such progress. We thank God that it has been made by the Church in its comprehension of this very doctrine in the past. We acknowledge that there is both room and need for more such progress just here. We hope that the Spirit may soon lead us to more truth in this direction as in all others. But it is absurd to propose that as an improvement which essentially consists in the denial of the original and uniform faith of the Church in the premises.

When Grotius, in his celebrated work, written professedly to defend the common doctrine of the Church from the attacks of the

Socinians, first developed the Governmental Theory, and admitted that the Atonement was not designed to satisfy an immutable demand of the divine nature, but to produce a sin-detering effect upon the universe, all saw that he had betrayed the very life of the cause he had professed to defend. Even the great Arminian theologian, Limborch, saw clearly that this was so, and said, in criticising the work of Grotius, "that the gist of the matter in respect to the doctrine of the Atonement lies in the question, 'An Christus morte sua, circa Deum aliquid effecerit?'"\* This is indeed the heart of the question. The whole Christian Church, Apostolic Fathers, Schoolmen, Reformers, Greek, Roman, Lutheran, Reformed, and even the Arminian Churches, all answer in one voice in the affirmative. The Arians, Socinians, Rationalists, and advocates of the Governmental Hypothesis, answer together in the negative. Let them not pretend, therefore, that their doctrine is an improvement of that old theology the root of which it destroys. Their doctrine is as strange to the history of the Church as it is to the page of Revelation.

## **CHAPTER XX:**

### **THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIONS TO THE CHURCH DOCTRINE STATED AND ANSWERED**

MY original scheme embraced the purpose of devoting a separate chapter to the discussion and solution of the various objections which have been brought against the Church doctrine of the Satisfaction rendered by Christ to divine justice, and another chapter

to the discussion and refutation of the several erroneous views held in opposition to the truth. I have, however, found it to be impossible to avoid noticing and answering these objections, and stating, contrasting and refuting these rival theories, as they were severally brought to notice in the development of the true doctrine at the different points upon which they severally bear. I could not define the true doctrine without excluding the false doctrine coterminous with it at each several point. I could not prove the true doctrine without, *eo ipso*, disproving the false alternative, and solving the objections which were made to the doctrine we advocate or to the evidences by which it is substantiated. I will in this place, consequently, do nothing more than repeat—for the sake of perspicuity and impression—very briefly, the principal objections made against the doctrine of Satisfaction, and the answers to them. I wish, however, in the first place to repeat, with emphasis, the second of the three conditions of argument which I laid down in the Introductory Chapter of this book: "Reasonable objections against the evidences by which a doctrine is established have force and should be duly considered. But rational objections to any principle fairly established by the language of Scripture have no force whatever unless they amount to a palpable contradiction to other principles certainly known. And whenever this can be shown, the reasonable inference is, not that the teaching of Scripture is to be modified in conformity thereto, but that the Scriptures themselves are to be rejected as false. Nothing is more senseless than the attempt to modify the results of the inspiration of JEHOVAH in conformity with human reason."

We maintain that it is proved beyond gainsaying that the doctrine of the Christian Church as to the nature of the satisfaction of Christ is explicitly taught in Scripture. Our opponents have only one of three things to do: (a) show that the Scriptures do not teach our doctrine; (b) accept that doctrine themselves; or (c) reject the Scriptures. We notice their objections to the doctrine, not for the purpose of erecting the demonstration of its truth upon the demonstration of their insufficiency or total falsehood, but simply for the purpose of

showing that the teachings of God's word do not contradict the teachings of that reason with which he has endowed us.

1. All our opponents deny that justice in our strict and absolute sense of the word is a virtue. Hence they deny that it is a divine attribute. Hence they object that our doctrine revolts their moral sense by ascribing vindictiveness to God.

(1.) The advocates of the Moral Influence Theory deny that the disposition to punish every sin irrespective of any ulterior object is an absolute perfection of the divine nature. Socinus said, "If we could but get rid of this justice, even if we had no other proof, that fiction of Christ's satisfaction would be thoroughly exposed and would vanish."\* Priestly says that "justice in the Deity can be no more than a modification of that goodness or benevolence which is his sole governing principle."† Young denies that there is any such thing as rectilinear justice in one sense in God at all. He admits that God is just in the sense of never defrauding any one of any good thing due to him, but he denies utterly that any moral excellence demands the infliction of evil upon a repentant sinner. In like manner Bushnell,§ through all his dishonouring caricatures of the faith of the Church, denies that there is any excellence in the divine nature determining him to treat sin according to its intrinsic ill-desert, and that the punishment which God inflicts upon sin is in any way different from paternal chastisement designed for the good of the offender.

(2.) All the advocates of the Governmental Theory of the Atonement, although they talk of justice in a manner very different from the class just referred to, yet hold an opinion which in its last analysis comes to the same thing. They both deny that the disposition to treat sin as it deserves, because of its own intrinsic evil, is an excellence, or that it belongs to God. They both hold that the sole motive for the penal evils attached to the violations of the divine law is that simple benevolence "which," in the words of Priestly, "is God's sole governing principle." The only difference is that the advocate of the Moral Influence or Socinian view of the Atonement makes the good

of the individual concerned, in every given case, the absolute end of the benevolence of God in his chastisement, while the Governmental Atonement Theory makes the good of the subjects of God's moral government in general the the absolute end of that benevolence. Dr. N. W. Taylor says:\* "Justice, on the part of a perfect moral Governor, is a benevolent disposition to maintain, by the requisite means, his authority as the necessary condition of the highest happiness of his kingdom." "Justice always implies a correspondent right somewhere to some good or benefit which is the object of the right.... As punishment is in no respect a good to the transgressor, it can in no respect be the object of a right on his part, and therefore cannot, in this respect, be an act of justice to him, nor an act of justice to him in any sense, except that he, by his act of transgression, has created a right to his punishment on the part of the public;" that is, because his punishment will directly or indirectly contribute to the happiness of the public.

That is, both of these false theories of the Atonement resolve justice into benevolence. We hold this to be a metaphysical absurdity. We challenge the world either (a) to prove that mankind are destitute of the ideas of "right," of "oughtness," of "justice," &c., or (b) to trace the generation of either one or all of these ideas from the ideas of benevolence or of happiness. We agree that benevolence respects the happiness of others, and that benevolence is a moral excellence which ornaments the divine nature, and which men ought to possess and to exercise. But the idea of oughtness is more elemental than the idea of benevolence, and it cannot be analyzed into anything more elemental. It is an independent and ultimate idea which stands by itself. But if the idea of moral obligation is ultimate and independent, it follows, from its very nature, that it is intrinsically supreme and absolute. Its dictates may coincide with those of benevolence, but if not, they must take precedence of them. The man would prove himself to be a moral idiot who could question whether that which is right ought to be done in preference to that which is the cause of happiness, no matter to whom. Besides this fact, that no metaphysician has ever been able to trace the genesis of the ideas of

"rightness," "oughtness," "justice" out of either of the ideas of "benevolence" or "happiness," every sane man in the spontaneous judgments of his life distinguishes between benevolence and justice as things generically distinct. Every human being judges practically of sin in himself and others that it is intrinsically ill-deserving. A repentant sinner would deserve punishment as much if he was the only creature in the universe as he would in a thronged world.

The form in which the principle upon which this objection to our doctrine rests, as entertained by the advocates of the Governmental Theory, is bad enough, but it is much worse as it is pressed by the advocates of the Moral Influence Theory. Their sickly sentiments are in obvious contradiction to all the sacred and profane history of God's providential dealings with men from the beginning until now, to all the moral judgments of men, to the principles of all human laws and religions, and to all the revealed principles of the Scriptures. That God does not do all within his power to save all men; that all the penal consequences with which he follows sin are not designed to benefit the offender; that God does punish some sinners eternally, and that eternal punishments cannot be designed to benefit the victims upon whom it is inflicted, are facts absolutely certain, and unquestionably inconsistent with the fundamental principles upon which Socinus, Priestly, and Young and Bushnell push their objections to the venerable faith of the Church. Vindictiveness is a miserable vice festering in the heart of a sinful creature, cherished against a fellow-creature because of a personal injury. But an inexorable determination to treat all sin according to its intrinsic ill-desert is a peerless excellence crowning all the other moral attributes of a wise, righteous and benevolent Ruler.

2. In the same spirit with the last objection our opponents insist that the theory of Satisfaction excludes the element of grace from having any share in the salvation of men. Socinus insisted that penal satisfaction and remission or forgiveness mutually exclude each other. If a sin is punished, it is not forgiven; if it is forgiven, it is not punished. This is evidently a miserable quibble, founded upon that



very confusion of persons and things that they falsely charge upon us. The sin is never that which is forgiven, but the sinner is forgiven and the penalty due his sin not executed upon him. As far as the sinner is personally concerned, his forgiveness is no less free and the remission of the penalty is none the less perfect because the penalty is executed upon a voluntary Substitute than if it was sovereignly abrogated altogether.

Our unfriendly critics are very much in the habit of charging us with regarding the Atonement as a mere commercial transaction, and then in their criticisms falling into the same miserable mistake themselves. Thus, they argue that if Christ by his obedience and sufferings fully satisfied all the federal demands of the law in the stead of his people, then there is no grace exercised in the forgiveness of men. They assert that our doctrine puts the Father and the Son in very opposite attitudes in respect to the salvation of mankind. The Father inexorably demands the payment of the uttermost farthing of the debt due to him, and will relax his claims not one iota in order to spare his helpless creatures or his suffering Son. The Son, in order to propitiate the inexorable Father in behalf of the helpless objects of his displeasure, takes pity upon them and pays their debt with his own blood.

This whole talk foolishly or wilfully confounds a pecuniary with a penal satisfaction. We did not owe God money. God is not vindictive, bent upon fining us for a personal injury. God is infinite in moral perfection and must do right. We are sinners and ought to be punished. The claim terminates not upon the thing done, but upon the person sinning. Vicarious satisfaction does not, ipso facto, liberate, but can be admitted, if at all, only as a matter of sovereign grace. Christ is not of a different nature from the Father, but is of one essence, nature, feeling, mind and purpose with him from all eternity. He did not die to make the Father cease to hate us, but was given because God SO LOVED THE WORLD, in order to reconcile that infinite love with his infinite justice in their concurrent exercises with regard to their common objects—that is, those whom the Father

had given the Son. God would of necessity have to sacrifice either his elect, or his Son, or moral principles. It is self-evident that God shows immeasurably more grace in saving his elect at the expense of his "BELOVED SON" than he could do either by a sacrifice of moral principle, or, in case it had been possible to save us, without any sacrifice at all. No exhibition of human depravity that has ever disgraced the earth is more amazing than this denial, that the self-assumption of the penalty of the broken law of God in the stead of his elect is an exercise of sovereign and disinterested love. Christ is the one satisfied as well as the one satisfying, the one punishing as well as the one punished; but he loves us enough to punish himself in our place. This is THE wonder of eternity. This is the inexhaustible theme of the heavenly song of adoration and gratitude for ever.

3. By far the most plausible objection that is brought to our doctrine is that the demands of justice for penal satisfaction are essentially personal. The Church argues that there is an immutable principle in the divine nature, lying back of, not determined by, but itself determining, the optional will of God demanding the just punishment of all sin, and hence the absolute necessity of a penal solution of the claims of the law in the case of every sinner. But this demand is that the agent sinning, and not another person, shall suffer therefor. If God is able, in the exercise of sovereign prerogative, to substitute person for person, the objectors urge, why is he not able, by the same prerogative, to dispense with the punishment altogether? It is asserted, that in the view of the moral sense of all men there is and can be no connection between the punishment of the sin of one man and the sufferings of a different person. That vicarious punishment, in the strict judicial sense of those terms, is a simple absurdity. How can the demands of the divine nature be satisfied by pains inflicted upon a person arbitrarily substituted in the place of the criminal by the divine will?

There is force in this objection, and, I think, it must be conceded by all that justice cannot demand and execute the punishment of a sin upon any party that is not truly and really responsible for it, and that

the sin of one person cannot be really expiated by means of the sufferings of another, unless they be in such a sense legally one that in the judgment of the law the suffering of the one is the suffering of the other. The Realistic doctrine of the numerical oneness of the race, and the actual coagency of all the race in Adam and of all the elect in Christ, was excogitated to meet this difficulty. We object to it because it makes the oneness to be physical and not moral. Now, the eternal Logos, in council with the Father and Holy Ghost, assumed the responsibility of the federal relations of his elect to the law from all eternity. They were created and permitted to fall to the end of their redemption in Christ. All God's dealing with them, from the very beginning, has had reference to their relation to Christ, and to Christ's covenant responsibility for them. The conditions are all absolutely unique. The case is without parallel except in that of Adam, who was made the representative and agent of the whole race for their benefit in those transactions upon which their eternal confirmation in holiness and happiness or everlasting loss depended. Surely in a case embracing conditions so unparalleled, it is absurd for human reason to decide that the God-man was not, in the eye of omniscient justice, really and truly penally responsible for the sins of his people, and in such a sense morally one with them; that is, his suffering the penalty due to their sins is in full legal effect equivalent to the execution of the penalty on them.

In the body of this book I have shown that if the Scriptures are true, then Christ does sustain this unique relation to his people. The negative decision of reason in the case ought to be very direct and certain if it is to be admitted as of sufficient force to balance reasonably all the external and internal, natural and supernatural, historical, moral and spiritual evidences of the Christian religion.

4. Socinus objected that the temporal sufferings of Christ were in no sense an equivalent for the execution of the penalty of the law in the persons of all sinners. Each and every sinner had incurred the penalty of eternal death for himself severally. But Christ did not suffer eternal death, and his temporal death is only one. For both

reasons, therefore, because it was temporal, and because it was but the death of one man, it could not be intended to be a satisfaction to divine justice in the stead of the eternal death of an incalculable multitude. On this ground Socinus consistently rejected the atonement of Christ altogether. Duns Scotus (A. D. 1308), Grotius, the great author of the Governmental Atonement Theory, and the Arminian theologians Episcopius, Limborch and Curcellæus, all admitted the fact that the single and temporal death of Christ was no equivalent for the eternal death of all men severally, but they refused to admit the inevitable conclusion that therefore the forgiveness of sins was based ultimately upon a simple act of sovereign prerogative, and that justice was in no sense propitiated, because it was not in strict rigour satisfied. Scotus held that God graciously "accepted" the single and temporal death of Christ as a sufficient satisfaction. Grotius held that the demands of the law were so far sovereignly "relaxed" by God that the intrinsically inferior work of Christ was found sufficient. The Arminians said that God graciously "estimated" Christ's work for more than its intrinsic value.

The principle upon which this objection proceeds is both rational and conclusive if the Socinian view of Christ's person is true, but it is both preposterous and insufferable from the mouth of any one professing to believe in the supreme divinity of our Lord. Christ suffered solely in his human nature. But his person is infinite and divine. All legal relations and obligations whatsoever, whether original or vicarious, are necessarily personal. We cannot of course explain psychologically the relation between the two natures and their concurrent experiences and interactions in the unity of the theanthropic Person. But this much we do know—the humanity was necessarily impersonal. It began and continued to exist only within the eternal personality of the Logos. The eternal, august, supreme, second Person of the Godhead obeyed and suffered in the stead of sinners. The heavens darkened and the earth trembled in the presence of the amazing fact. Away with all blasphemous impertinence with respect to the "relaxation" of the law in order to lower it to the terms of such a satisfaction, or of the gracious

"estimation" of such a satisfaction in order to raise it to equality with the demands of the law! On the contrary, the law is "magnified" by such an obedience and by such a penal suffering, as it could not be by the several eternal sufferings of all creatures actual or possible; and justice is not only satisfied, but glorified, borne aloft and set ablaze in the crown of God.

5. It is constantly objected by the advocates of the Governmental Atonement Theory that the Church doctrine necessarily involves an absurd theory of imputation. They insist that the "Satisfaction Theory," as they call it, has always been associated with the doctrine that the personal, sinful character of his people was transferred to Christ, and that the personal good character of Christ was transferred to them. This objection would be crushing indeed if it happened to contain a single grain of truth. But since it is utterly false as a matter of history, and absurd as a matter of criticism, its effect is to be seen only in its recoil upon its originators. The Church doctrine always has been simply that the legal responsibilities (penal and federal) of his people were by covenant transferred to Christ, and that he, as Mediator, was regarded and treated accordingly. The sinful act and the sinful nature are inalienable. The guilt or just liability to punishment is alienable, or no sinner can be saved. Our evil nature remains inalienably our own until we are changed by the Holy Ghost in regeneration and sanctification. The obligation to punishment, according to the terms of the eternal covenant, has been taken from the elect and fully discharged in the sufferings of our Substitute.

They object that although Christ did not owe punishment for himself, yet like every other created nature his humanity was conformed to the law of moral perfection as the condition of its own excellence, and hence that it was incapable of any works of supererogation, and hence he must have been incapable of rendering a vicarious obedience in the stead of his people.

These objectors should, however, remember that that obedience which Christ rendered in our stead was not that which the law demands of all moral agents, unchangeably and inalienably in its natural relation, but precisely that obedience which God, as Sovereign, moral Governor and Guardian of all human souls, required as the probationary condition of their being confirmed in a holy character for ever, and being endowed with "the adoption of sons." Christ, in his divine nature, is from eternity the essential embodiment of this law of absolute moral perfection. In his human nature he was generated by the Holy Ghost into perfect conformity to this law, and ever since sustained therein. As to his person, however, he is absolutely divine and sovereign. The federal claims of law all necessarily terminate upon persons and not upon natures. The law can claim nothing of his divinity, because his nature is itself the fountain of all law, and his will its rule and expression to the entire creation. When he, therefore, condescends to be "born of a woman, to be made under the law," and under the conditions of human life thus "to fulfil all righteousness," surely such obedience, performed with such design, is, as far as his divine Person is concerned, a work of supererogation; that is, demanded by no law, except the free-will law of electing love; and hence such an obedience may, by the terms of the covenant between the Father and the Son, be rendered vicariously by him in the stead and for the benefit of his people.

## **CHAPTER XXI:**

# **THE MORAL INFLUENCE AND THE GOVERNMENTAL THEORIES OF THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT DISCUSSED AND REFUTED**

ALL the theories of the Atonement which men in this age of the world have any interest to consider may, as I have already several times declared, be grouped under one or other of the following heads. (a) Those which regard the sufferings and death of Christ as designed solely to produce an effect terminating as a moral impression in the subjective condition of the individual sinner. (b) Those which, while including the preceding idea, regard them as chiefly designed to produce an effect terminating as a moral impression in the public mind of the subjects of the moral government of God. (c) Those which, while including both of the preceding ideas in their order, regard Christ's sufferings and death as a vicarious penalty, designed to produce a justice-propitiating effect, terminating upon God. The last of these views is that taught in Scripture, professed by the Church of Christ in all its branches, and advocated in this volume. The other two I will now very briefly discuss in their order.

I. The general view that the great end of the death of Christ was to produce a moral impression upon the hearts of sinners, and thus lead to their moral and spiritual reformation, has been taught in various forms by many successive teachers, and has been uniformly rejected as a heresy by the Church. Hagenbach\* says that "Socinus defined the object of Christ's death positively as follows: (1.) The death of Christ was an example set before men for their imitation. (2.) It was designed to confirm the promises made by God, thus giving assurance of the forgiveness of sins. (3.) It was the necessary means, preparatory to his resurrection, by which he entered into glory. 'Christ died that through death he might attain to resurrection, from which arises the strongest confirmation of the divine will and the most certain persuasion of our own resurrection and attainment to eternal life.' "† Thus, according to Socinus, the designed effect of Christ's death is wholly a subjective impression upon the minds of sinners, to stimulate them to emulate his heroic virtue; to prove and to illustrate the love of God and his willingness to forgive sin upon the repentance of the sinner; to confirm the truth of all the doctrines he had taught and of the promises which God had made through the

prophets or through himself; and by giving opportunity for his resurrection from the dead to demonstrate the fact of a future life, and to prove and illustrate the future resurrection of his people. The modern theories of Jowett, Maurice, Bushnell, Young, &c., differ from that of Socinus only in being rhetorical where his is logical, confused where his is clear, and narrow and partial where his is comprehensive. The lines between truth and error with regard to this central doctrine of the gospel were already definitely drawn in the first half of the twelfth century, at the very opening of the Scholastic era. As to the entire essence of the doctrine, Anselm then stood precisely where the whole Church of Christ in all its branches has ever since stood; and the infamous Abelard taught in every essential respect the doctrine maintained by Socinus, and by Maurice, Bushnell, and Young, in our own day. Baur, as quoted by Hagenbach,\* says: "Thus the two representatives of Scholasticism in its first period, when it developed itself in all its youthful vigor, Anselm and Abelard, were directly opposed to each other with respect to the doctrines of redemption and atonement. The one considered the last ground of it to be the divine justice, requiring an infinite equivalent for the infinite guilt of sin; that is, a necessity founded in the nature of God. The other held it to be the free grace of God, which, by kindling love in the breast of man, blots out sin, and with sin its guilt."

To the same effect Bushnell says: "The true and simple account of his (Christ's) sufferings is, that he had such a heart as would not suffer him to be turned away from us, and that he suffered for us even as love must willingly suffer for its enemy." "Vicarious sacrifice was in no way peculiar to Christ save in degree."‡ "The Holy Spirit works in love as Christ did, and suffers all the incidents of love—compassion, wounded feeling, sorrow, concern, burdened sympathy, violated patience—taking men upon him, to bear them and their sins, precisely as Christ himself did in his sacrifice." He "simply came into the corporate state of evil (sum total of natural consequences of sin), and bore it with us—faithful unto death for our recovery."\* He "came simply to be the manifested love of God."† "Christ became incarnate



to obtain moral power" (that which belongs to a developed character). "The understanding is to obtain through him, and the facts and processes of his life, a new kind of power; viz., moral power—the same that is obtained by human conduct under human methods. It will be divine power still, only it will not be attribute power. That is the power of his idea (that is original power, intrinsic to the divine nature). This new power is to be the power cumulative, gained by him among men as truly as they gain it with each other. Only it will turn out in the end to be the grandest, closest to feeling, most impressive, most soul-renovating, and spiritually sublime power that was ever obtained in this or any other world."

To the same effect, also, Young writes over and over again in many passages exquisitely beautiful, and true also when accepted as an expression of one side of the truth—an inestimably precious side too. "The infinite Father in boundless pity looked down upon his undutiful children, and yearned to rescue them by regaining their hearts and drawing them back to allegiance and to peace. With God-like mercy he unveiled all that was possible of divine purity, and truth, and beauty, and sweetness, and lovingness, and compassion. He humbled himself, descended to the level of his creatures, walked among them, spoke with them face to face, and appealed, as he still continues to appeal, to their hearts through the gentleness, the tenderness, the wisdom, the meekness, the patience, the sufferings, the tears, the blood and the death of Jesus Christ.

"The distinction here is radical and fundamental. The sacrifice was not offered up by men at all or by a substitute in their room; and it was not required to appease God's anger, or to satisfy his justice, or to render him propitious. The sacrifice was not offered by men to God, but was made by God for men and for sin, in order that sin might be for ever put down and rooted out of human nature. This stupendous act of divine sacrifice was God's instrument of reconciliation and redemption, God's method of conquering the human heart, and of subduing a revolted world and attaching it to his throne—pure love, self-sacrificing love, crucified, dying love."\*

The objections to this view are conclusive.

1. The precious truth which it undeniably contains has always been held by the Church as an integral part of the orthodox doctrine of the piacular sacrifice of Christ. All that is negative in the Moral Influence Theory is refuted by the overwhelming evidence we have recited in establishing the Church doctrine as to divine justice and vicarious punishment, while all that is positive in that theory is maintained with far greater consistency and illustrated with far greater force on our view of the nature, necessity, and design of his sacrifice than on theirs. We believe that God could have changed man's subjective moral condition by the direct action of his Holy Spirit upon the human soul, without the objective exhibition of his love by means of such a sacrifice as that made in the person of his Son. The position that this is impossible is unreasonably presumptuous and entirely unsusceptible of proof. If, then, there remains the conceivable hypothesis that God might have attained his end in the moral regeneration of human souls in some other and less expensive way than the one chosen, it follows that the infinite love of God for man is less luminously exhibited, upon the supposition that the necessity of his dying was only as one of two or more alternative instrumentalities to subdue the distrust and alienation of the human heart, than it is upon the supposition that he died because his death was the absolutely necessary means of removing obstacles to the salvation of men posited in the unchangeable nature of God. It is all the greater love, because the sacrifice was absolutely necessary to attain its object. It is all the sweeter and holier love, because, while making such entire sacrifice of self, it refuses all sacrifice of principle. As a matter of practical experience, that view of the sacrifice of Christ which maintains its strictly piacular character has inspired all the hymns of the Church and has melted the hearts of all the multitudes either in Christian or in heathen lands who have been won by the story of redeeming love to the discipleship of Christ. It is the Church doctrine, and not the Moral Influence understanding of the character of Christ's death, which has been preached in all revivals and been carried forth by all missionaries, and which has kindled the flame in

the hearts of the Lollards and Vallenses, Lutherans, Puritans, Moravians, and Methodists; while it is the boasted Moral Influence Theory which has just claim to whatever of moral regeneration and spiritual life distinguish the history of Abelard and his disciples, of Socinians, Unitarians, Rationalists, and whatever other of this sort Young and Bushnell may please.

Bushnell, with singular simplicity, after having written a volume to prove that the doctrine of piacular sacrifice as held by the Church is revolting to the moral sense and dishonoring to God; after insisting through five hundred pages that Christ's death was a simple martyrdom, and its sole effect a moral one on the hearts of men, concludes by acknowledging that the Moral Influence Theory is unable of itself to produce a moral influence result, and hence the Church doctrine must in idea be substituted in its place. That is, he confesses that his doctrine, on its own ground of subjective moral influence, is not only no more effective than the repudiated doctrine of Christ's Church, nor merely that it is less effective, but that it is in fact, when brought to the test, absolutely impotent, and must be practically supplanted by the other. "In the facts, outwardly regarded, there is no sacrifice, or oblation, or atonement, or propitiation, but simply a living and dying thus and thus. The facts are impressive; the person is clad in a wonderful dignity and beauty; the agony is eloquent of love, and the cross is a very shocking murder triumphantly met; and if then the question rises how we are to use such a history so as to be reconciled by it, we hardly know in what way to begin. How shall we come unto God by help of this martyrdom? How shall we turn it or turn ourselves under it so as to be justified and set at peace with God? Plainly, there is a want here, and this want is met by giving a thought-form to the facts which are not in the facts themselves. They are put directly into the moulds of the altar, and we are called to accept the crucified God-man as our Sacrifice, an offering or oblation for us, our Propitiation; so to be sprinkled from our evil conscience, washed, purged, purified, cleansed from sin. Instead of leaving the matter of the facts just as they occurred, &c. ... And so much is there in this that, without these

forms of the altar, we should be utterly at a loss in making any use of the Christian facts that would set us in a condition of practical reconciliation with God... We want, in short, to use these altar-terms just as freely as they are used by those who accept the formula of expiation or judicial satisfaction for sin; in just their manner, too, when they are using them most practically. We cannot afford to lose these sacred forms of the altar."\*

Our first argument, then, is that according to the confession of its ablest expounders, that moral effect which the theory in question maintains is the sole aim of the redemptive work of Christ is at least as well produced by our view of the work of Christ as by theirs.

2. We go further in our second argument, and affirm that upon their conception of its nature the work of Christ is in no sense adapted to accomplish even that effect which they represent to be its sole design. Upon their theory there is utter incongruity between the attempt to produce such effects by such means and the ordinary and unchangeable principles of human nature. This can be shown to be true both with respect to the work itself objectively considered and with respect to the process whereby the mind of the individual sinner must appropriate that work in the aspect presented, for the sake of the moral impression it was designed to effect.

(1.) With respect to the nature of the work itself, it is unquestionably a law of human nature that while tragic suffering voluntarily incurred in fidelity to high principle and out of unquenchable love for us, in order to remove obstacles to our well-being exterior to ourselves, has more power over the depths of the heart than any other conceivable thing; on the other hand, such suffering, intentionally gotten up with the design of producing a pathetic effect upon us, not as a necessary incident to a work for us, but as a calculated part of a work upon us, necessarily defeats itself and excites disgust. If Christ had come, as Socinus was wise enough to insist he did, solely in the character of a prophet to reveal the will of God to man, and to afford an example of eminent virtue, and if his

painful martyrdom was an undesigned end incidental solely to his persistence in his labour of love, in spite of the fierce opposition of his enemies, then indeed that heroic exhibition of truth and love would have been effective in making a deep moral impression on every susceptible heart. But the Scriptures explicitly assert that Christ came into the world for the purpose of suffering and dying. The fact, the time, many of the detailed circumstances and horrors of his death, were not only foreseen, but were foreordained. Matt. 26:24, 54, 56, and 27:9, 10, 35. The death of Christ was God's act: "Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:23. "But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." Acts 3:18. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before (προώρισε) to be done." Act 4:27 and 28. If the sole design of the redemptive work of Christ is to produce a moral effect upon the sinner, as these men insist, the glorious transactions of Gethsemane and Calvary, which the Church has always regarded as infinitely real, intense with divine attributes in action, are reduced to the poor level of scenes deliberately contrived for effect, finding their sole end in their effect as scenes. If the Moral view of the Atonement should prove true, our astonishment and indignation in view of the stolid indifference of men to the moral power of the cross would need to be materially abated.

(2.) The utter inappropriateness of the work of Christ upon hypothesis of the truth of the Moral Theory to effect the end for which it was designed is made more clear when we come to consider the process by which, upon that view of the case, the sinner must proceed to appropriate that work for his own benefit. This difficulty is very effectively exhibited by Bushnell, to whom the Church is thus indebted for the most conclusive refutation of his own theory which this age has produced. "The principal reason for setting forth the

matter of Christ's life and death as an oblation (piacular sacrifice) remains to be stated, viz., the necessity of somehow preventing an over-conscious state in the receiver. It was going to be a great fault in the use, that the disciple, looking for a power on his character, would keep himself too entirely in this attitude of consciousness or voluntary self-application. He would be hanging around each fact and scene to get some eloquent moving effect from it. And he would not only study how to get impressions, but, almost before he was aware of it, to make them. Just here accordingly it was that the Scripture symbols, and especially those of the altar-service, were to come to our aid, putting us into a use of the gospel so entirely objective as to scarcely suffer a recoil on our consciousness at all.... Doubtless there will be a power in it—all the greater power that I am not looking after power, and that nothing puts me thinking of effects upon myself.... Our subjective applications of Christ get confused and grow inefficacious."\* Thus we see that it is confessedly the Moral Influence Theory of the death of Christ which fails utterly to produce a moral impression, and that it must be disguised under the ideal forms of the opposite and inconsistent theory of sin-expiating, God-propitiating sacrifice before any corresponding effect can be attained. It is a singular case, indeed, if a false view of the Atonement can produce a better moral effect than a true view, and if a divine provision for the salvation of men can attain the end God designed it to effect only by means of a practical and voluntary misconception as to its nature.

3. Our third argument is that this view of the nature of Christ's work necessarily proceeds upon the denial of those great fundamental principles as to law and justice, as to the nature and effect of the Jewish sacrifices, as to the nature of justification, &c., which we have so fully established from Scripture in the preceding chapters of this volume. The establishment of the doctrine of the Christian Church is, of course, the virtual refutation of all inconsistent theories.

4. The Scriptures explicitly declare that Christ was the Saviour of those who died before his advent in the flesh as well as those who

came afterward. If Christ did suffer the penalty due to his people, and so expiate their sins, it is clear what is meant when he is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," Rev. 13:8, and when he is declared to be set forth by God to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his (God's) righteousness in respect to the passing over the sins that were past (previous to his advent) through the forbearance of God. Rom. 3:25. The eternal God assuredly may as well act upon a future as upon a present or a past expiation. But upon the hypothesis that the sufferings of Christ were designed simply for a moral effect upon men, it is self-evident that he could be a Saviour only after his advent and the fulfilment of his tragedy to those who witnessed it, or at best to those to whom an adequately graphic account of it had been reported. It will not be pretended that a man can be saved by a moral influence before it is exerted, nor that the influence can be exerted before that exists which is to exert it. Hence it follows, if the Moral Hypothesis be true, that all who died before the passion of Christ perished, or were saved in some other way.

5. This theory of Young and Bushnell is no novelty—in no sense, even if true, "an improvement in theology." It has appeared again and again. It has been rejected uniformly in every age by the immense majority of nominal Christians. It has always been associated with Pelagian and Socinian heresies and incipient infidelity. It has never been associated among a single body of men for a measurable period of time with a respectable degree of spiritual life and fruitfulness. The principles which it denies have, on the contrary, been in vital connection with the entire current of spiritual life issuing from the person of Christ along its entire course. Its history condemns it, and ought to put its abettors to shame.

II. The Governmental Theory "places the necessity of the Atonement of Christ in the exigencies of God's moral government; not in the demands of an involuntary organic emotion of retributive justice, common to God and man. The Atonement was necessary for the same reason, precisely, that the penalty annexed to the divine law

was necessary; it takes the place of that penalty, in respect to those who repent and are forgiven; answers the same end as would have been answered by the infliction of the penalty; viz., it maintains the law and authority of God, and by maintaining that law and authority promotes those great interests for which moral government exists. Hugo Grotius was, probably, the first man who distinctly stated and defended the fundamental principle of this theory. His design was to defend the Satisfaction Theory against the Socinians, his work being entitled 'Defensio fidei Catholicæ de Satisfactione Christi.' The result, however, was that he actually rejected the foundation principle of that theory, and argued that the satisfaction of Christ was rendered, not to the distributive but to the governmental justice of God.... He did not develop a complete and consistent Governmental Theory of the Atonement; nor, after him, does there appear to have been any material progress made towards the full development of such a theory for more than a century and a half. The Catholic view upon the one hand, and the Socinian view on the other, generally prevailed. It was reserved for certain New England divines of the last century, first clearly to state and defend as a whole what has been variously called the New School Theory, the Edwardean, the Hopkinsian Theory, the Consistent Theory, or more commonly and appropriately the Governmental Theory. To Jonathan Edwards, Jr., more than to any other man, belongs the honour of giving to the world this new theory of the Atonement. His three celebrated sermons on the subject, published in 1785, which marked an era in the history of this doctrine, contain, perhaps, the most thorough exposition and defence of this doctrine which has yet been made. The elder Edwards, and his intimate friends Bellamy and Hopkins, by their suggestive discussions of the subject, while retaining the general features of the old view, yet contributed not a little to the development of the new view. Among those eminent divines who early accepted the Governmental Theory, and helped give it currency, were Smalley, Maxey, Burge, Dwight, Emmons and Spring, who, while differing on minor points, were yet agreed in holding and advocating the essential principles on which the theory rests. It now



holds a recognized place in that doctrinal system which is distinctively called the 'New England Theology.' "\*"

The main points of this theory are, 1. All moral excellence is ultimately reducible to benevolence. " 'The attributes of God are not so many distinct qualities, but one perfection of excellence, diversified in our conceptions by the diversity of the objects towards which it is manifested.' This is a felicitous statement of the truth, provided that LOVE OR BENEVOLENCE be that 'one perfection of excellence.' "\*" "All the moral perfections of the Deity are comprised in the pure love of benevolence." † 2. God is a wise and benevolent ruler. The origin and end of the moral law lie in the divine purpose to promote by means of it the good of the universe. The ultimate ground of the divine government as a whole, and of both the precept and the penalty of the law therefore, is to be found in the benevolence of God. The law is a product of pure benevolence, designed to effect the highest good of all its subjects regarded as a whole. The annexed penalty is for the purpose of vindicating and maintaining the law. Hence it follows (a) That the motive and end of the law is also the motive and end of the penalty; that is, the penalty also is a product of benevolence, designed to effect the highest good of the subjects of moral law as a whole; and (b) that "the sole function of penalty is that of a legal sanction;" that is, a violent motive addressed to the intelligent self-love of all the subjects of the law, inducing them to observe it for the general good. 3. "That the sufferings of Christ (the atonement) were not, literally and strictly, the penalty of the law, but a substitute for it, and an equivalent; that is, had the same efficacy in respect to the divine law and government that the penalty was designed to have, and would have if inflicted in cases where it is remitted." 4. The atonement renders the salvation of all men possible, and it bears, from its very nature, precisely the same relation to the non-elect that it does to the elect. Its sole design and effect is to remove legal obstacles out of the way of the salvation of all men indifferently. It secures nothing more than this for any man. The principles which secure its actual application to individual men, whether these lie ultimately in the free-will of men or in the

sovereign election of God, in either case have no place in the atonement itself. Emmons\* strives to prove that the only thing Christ purchases for mankind is pardon on condition of faith, and that after we believe we are rewarded for our own goodness, on the same principle that Adam would have been if he had continued obedient.

This theory has, upon the whole, many practical advantages over the Socinian view. (a.) Because it includes and exhibits with far more practical effect all the elements of truth which the Socinian view embraces. (b.) Because in addition to those elements, the positive principles signalized in the Governmental Theory with respect to the bearing of the atonement upon the administrative righteousness of God and the general interests of his moral government are unquestionably truths of the very highest importance. (c.) Because this theory, although when viewed in reference to a better standard, it is itself deplorably defective in these respects, yet much excels the Moral view in taking high ground with regard to the ill-desert of sin, the punitive justice of God, and of the necessity of the atonement a parte Dei in order to the remission of sin. (d.) Because it yields a far more natural interpretation of Scripture upon this subject, recognizing the objective bearing of the atonement as the one to which its subjective bearing is necessarily subordinate and incidental.

On the other hand, the objections to this theory are very many and very conclusive.

1. All the positive truth which this theory signalizes is far more profoundly taught and effectively presented in the general doctrine of the Church. According to the Governmental Theory, penalty is merely a sanction of the law, designed to act as a violent motive upon the minds of the subjects of the divine government, inclining them to obey the law. According to this theory, the Atonement is a substitute for the penalty, designed to take the place of the penalty, and to produce the very same effect as the penalty would do if executed in the case of those whose sins are forgiven, and whose punishment is

remitted. Now, it is self-evident that nothing can possibly so exactly take the place of the penalty and effect the precise end for which the penalty was designed as the penalty itself. Nothing in the universe can so express God's hatred of sin as the veritable visible exercise of his just wrath upon the sinner's Substitute. Nothing else possible can so effectively demonstrate the inflexibility of the law as its literal fulfilment in precept and penalty. Nothing can so act as a sin-detering motive as the demonstration that sin shall be punished in every case without exception; and nothing can so thoroughly demonstrate that sin shall be punished without exception as its actual and vicarious punishment in the person of the eternal Son. As we showed that the orthodox doctrine far excelled the Moral Influence view in producing the very moral influence sought, so now we show that the orthodox doctrine just as far surpasses the Governmental Atonement view in effecting, as a governmental expedient, the law-vindicating and sin-detering impression sought to be effected.

2. It is utterly impossible for the advocates of this theory to show the connection between the sufferings of Christ and the effects which, they say, flow from it. They insist that it is of the essence of penalty that it be inflicted upon the sinner in person. Fiske insists that God's justice can no more be satisfied by the vicarious suffering of another than the sinful agent, than a man's thirst can be slaked by another man's vicariously drinking water for him. We have admitted that this is the precise point in which the scriptural doctrine of the Atonement transcends human reason. But the whole difficulty lies in our inability to discern fully the grounds upon which the legal oneness of Christ and his people depends. But the advocates of the Governmental Theory deny that the sacrifice of Christ is a *pœna vicaria*. They say it is a substitute for a penalty—something in the place of the penalty to effect the same purpose. But (a) how can anything that is not of the nature of penalty effect the same purpose as penalty? And (b) how can sufferings of one person sustain any relation to the sins of another person if the legal relations and responsibilities of the two persons are not identical? Suffering has

relation to sin or it has not. If it has relation to sin, it must either be designed as chastisement or as penalty. The sufferings of Christ had relation to sin, and they were not personal chastisement; they must, therefore, have been penalty; of the genus penalty and of the species vicarious penalty. If this be denied, let some one state definitely what they were, and let it be shown precisely how his suffering, which by hypothesis is not penalty, takes the place and secures the end of the literal punishment of persons whose identical legal obligations do not rest upon the person suffering. How in the name of reason is it possible that the undeserved sufferings of Christ, which were not the penalty which the law demanded, should make it consistent with God's rectoral justice to relax the law, and omit the penalty altogether in the case of repentant sinners? If God's abhorrence of sin is really and adequately expressed in the sufferings of Christ, how is it that his distributive justice is not strictly satisfied therein? and how could he truly and really express his abhorrence of our sins by means of the sufferings of Christ, unless the real legal responsibility for our sins were first laid upon Christ, and they were then strictly punished in him?

The truth is, that this Governmental Theory is an invention designed to escape the pressure of Socinian objections levelled against the true doctrine of the Atonement. The point at which rational objections to the true doctrine of the Atonement are most efficient is that which concerns the satisfaction of strict justice in the person substituted in the place of the actual criminal. In order to avoid this objection, the advocates of the Governmental Hypothesis admit its force, deny that Christ was punished in the place of sinners, or that he satisfies the demands of distributive justice at all, and claim that the death of Christ was a contrivance to take the place of the penalty of the law, and to make it consistent with God's rectoral righteousness to omit the penalty in the case of believers altogether. But Jowett says truly: "This second theory has no advantage over the preceding (orthodox), except that which the more shadowy statement must ever have in rendering difficulties themselves more shadowy."\* Whenever they attempt a precise statement, in opposition to the Socinians, of their

positive belief as to the manner in which the sufferings of Christ are related to the sins of his people, and of the manner in which his sufferings, which are no penalty, avail to express God's abhorrence of sin, or to make it consistent with his rectoral justice to omit the penalty altogether, they always necessarily fall back upon the fundamental principles of the Satisfaction Doctrine. And again, the very moment they turn to distinguish their position from that Church doctrine which includes their special theory as one of its provinces, they always necessarily fall back in their negations upon Socinian ground. They thus ceaselessly oscillate between the two—orthodox in all they affirm, and Socinian in all they deny. Their champions put one in mind of a landless laird straddling the line-fence between two farms. He is always found standing upon that leg which is the other side of the fence.

3. The fundamental principle which distinguishes this theory, namely, that in its last analysis, all virtue may be resolved into benevolence, is both false and pernicious. To resolve all colour into sound would be theoretically to annihilate colour, and so to resolve all virtue into benevolence is theoretically to annihilate virtue. The idea of moral obligation is simple, unresolvable, ultimate, because it is utterly impossible analytically to resolve it into any elements more simple, or synthetically to compose it out of such elements. It is plain that neither a desire for our own well-being springing out of self-love, nor a disinterested desire for the well-being of others by itself, yields the idea of moral obligation. It is true that these states of mind are obligatory, but the moral obligation which attaches to them is something which is independent of the self-love or the benevolence. If the question be asked why we ought to do right, no other answer can be given than that moral obligation is an ultimate fact of consciousness, having its own reason in itself, and from its very nature necessarily supreme.

Taylor, Fiske, and the advocates of their theory generally, maintain: (1.) That the orthodox view represents the justice of God as pursuing its gratification blindly like a physical appetite. Their doctrine is that

divine justice demands the punishment of the sinner only as a means to an end; that is, in order to maintain divine government, the sole end and purpose of which is the attainment of the best interests of the subjects of that government. But it is very plain that their view only removes the ultimate end in which justice "blindly" terminates one step further. We say that God punishes sin, because it is an ultimate fact that moral excellence demands that sin must be punished; because it is an ultimate fact that sin is intrinsically in obligation to punishment. They say that sin must be punished in order to maintain moral government, and moral government is necessary in order to the best interests of the moral universe; and it is an ultimate fact that the best interests of the moral universe ought to be sought as a paramount end. The fact is, that intelligence, moral and personal agency are inconceivable without ultimate, unresolvable principles of action and of thought for which no reason can be given. It is just as certain and as intelligent and self-luminous a proposition that right is intrinsically binding, and that sin must be punished because of its intrinsic ill-desert, as that the best interests of the universe ought to be secured at any cost. If benevolence is the sum of all virtue, this benevolence must regard either the happiness or the excellence of its objects as its ultimate end. Hence it follows necessarily that either happiness or moral excellence must be the ultimate end, and hence the ultimate motive, of moral action. If the last is true, it must be because virtue is for its own sake intrinsically the highest good and vice intrinsically evil. Virtue must have, therefore, the ultimate reason of its attracting divine approbation, and vice the ultimate reason of its attracting divine displeasure in itself. In that case the orthodox theory of the Atonement follows. But if the first is true, and ultimately there is "nothing good," as Taylor says, "but happiness and the means of happiness, and nothing evil but misery and the means of misery,"\* then the distinction between men and swine is only one of degree.

(2.) Feeling the force of this infallible result of their system, these gentlemen are very fond of covering its nakedness with the comely terms proper to the fundamental principles of the Church doctrine,

and of insisting that they also maintain that virtue is intrinsically a good for its own sake, and that sin deserves punishment as an ultimate fact. Fiske says: "Sin is intrinsically hateful and ill-deserving; it is an evil per se, and not merely on account of its tendencies and consequences. This we hold to be a fundamental point in all our ethical and theological inquiries." "The preceptive part of the law must require of all creatures perfect holiness, forbidding all sin; because perfect holiness is inherently right and excellent; and being inherently right and excellent is indispensable to the highest good; and because sin is inherently wrong and evil, and being inherently wrong and evil, tends to interfere with the highest good of the universe." "The sole function of penalty is that of a legal sanction. Its sole value is its efficacy to enforce the law and maintain its authority, and so ultimately help promote the great benevolent ends of moral government." This theory "harmonizes with a just conception of the origin and end of law (including precept and penalty), as emanating from a divine purpose to promote, by means of it, the highest good of the universe."\* This is very astonishing. It seems that the ultimate, that is, real end of commanding at all is certain consequences to be secured by the commands, and yet that virtue is commanded because it is intrinsically good, and it is intrinsically good because certain of its consequences are good. The real end of forbidding is to attain certain consequences, and yet vice is forbidden because it is intrinsically wrong, and it is intrinsically wrong because some of its consequences are injurious. Vice is punished because it is intrinsically ill-deserving, and yet the ultimate end of all punishment is to be found in certain consequences it is designed to effect.

The ultimate end of law, precept and penalty is the good of the moral universe. The sole function of punishment is, as a sanction to law, to promote the benevolent ends of moral government. All virtue is benevolence; that is, a desire that all others shall be happy and virtuous—that is, be happy and wish all others happy. Punishment, therefore, is a violent motive addressed to the self-love of the subjects of law to induce them to wish all others to be happy.

Atonement is a substitute for the penalty, to take its place and to produce precisely the same effect. Therefore it follows, according to this boasted Governmental Theory, the highest lesson of the crucifixion of the eternal Son of God is that "honesty is the best policy!!!"

4. This theory is utterly intolerable, because it represents the sacred tragedy of Gethsemane and Calvary as an illusive example of punishment where there was no real punishment—an "expression" of divine attributes which were not really exercised in the case. The orthodox doctrine is that Christ really satisfied the justice of God by really suffering the penalty of sin in our stead. The Governmental Theory is that the sufferings of Christ were not the punishment of sin, not the exercise of divine justice upon Christ, but an example of punishment and an expression of God's just wrath. "Grotius, as well as Socinus, attached principal importance to the moral impression which the death of Christ is calculated to produce, with this difference only, that Grotius takes this principle negatively, Socinus positively; for in the opinion of Grotius, the moral effect of Christ's death consists in the exhibition of the punishment due to sin; according to Socinus, in the moral courage which Christ manifested in his death." It is very grievous that the sacred death of our Lord should be thus characterized as an attempt upon God's part, unveiled and rendered for ever impossible by these very theorists, to impose upon the moral universe an "expression" of attributes not actually in exercise, an "exhibition of punishment" where there is no punishment, and to make an example in which sin is dealt with without punishment an emphatic demonstration of his purpose always to punish it. Jowett says truly: "This doctrine (Governmental) is the surface or shadow of the preceding, with the substance or foundation cut away." "If this scheme avoids the difficulty of offering an unworthy satisfaction to God, and so doing violence to his attributes, we can scarcely free it from the equal difficulty of interposing a painful fiction between God and man. Was the spectacle real which was presented before God and the angels on



Mount Calvary? This theory avoids the physical illusion of the old heretics, and introduces a moral illusion of a worse kind."\*

"There is certainly no manifestation of the excellence and perfection of the divine law, or of the necessity of maintaining and honouring it, if, in the provision made for pardoning sinners, it was relaxed and set aside—if its penalty was not inflicted, if there was no fulfilment of its exactions, no compliance with its demands." The law was either literally fulfilled or relaxed. Sin was either really punished or the punishment was remitted. God either poured out his wrath really and truly upon Christ as a vicarious victim, or he did not. And we may be most sure that if there was no exercise of justice, there was no expression of it; if there was no punishment, there was no example of it; if there was no wrath felt, there was no manifestation of it. Whatever it may not have been, we know that it was the most intensely real transaction this earth has ever witnessed.

5. This doctrine is false, because it involves the denial of those scriptural principles as to the nature of divine justice, as to the immutability of the law and the absolute necessity of the Atonement, as to the nature and design of the typical sacrifices and priesthood, as to the full force of the language which teaches that Christ came in our stead, as our Ransom, and that he bore our sins, &c., which have been so fully proved in the previous chapters of this volume.

6. This theory is untrue, because it teaches necessarily that Christ died indifferently for all men, and that the only effect of his death was to remove legal obstacles out of the way of the gratuitous forgiveness of all men on condition of repentance. It necessarily teaches that all which Christ purchased for any was that pardon which he purchased conditionally for all, while the application of the benefits of his work to the individual is left undetermined by the Atonement itself. This is, of course, disproved by all those scriptural arguments by which we have proved that Christ purchased for those for whom he died faith and repentance, the adoption of sons, and an eternal inheritance.

7. It is false, because it is essential to it that justification should be mere pardon and that faith should be the divinely-accepted condition upon which the pardon proceeds for Christ's sake, while all other spiritual gifts are given us as the gracious rewards of our own holy obedience. This leads to that theory of co-operative justification which is the fundamental vice of the Romish system and it is disproved very plainly by all that we have proved from Scripture as to the nature of justification, of faith and of union with Christ.

8. If not disproved it is greatly discredited by the fact, not only confessed but paraded, that it is the "New Theory" of the Atonement. We have proved sufficiently (a) that the doctrine which maintains that the sufferings of Christ were a true *pœna vicaria* has been at the heart of the faith of the Church from the beginning; and (b) that this Governmental Theory is in no intelligible sense a development or improvement of the other. It is a different faith. If then it is "new" in this day, it must withstand the tremendous weight of the presumption that all God's dear children could not have continued under a delusion with regard to the meaning of Christ's death and the nature of the gospel, which they believed and preached for seventeen hundred years.

9. This theory is discredited by the fact that it is not developed in the first instance by a careful exposition of and strict induction from Scripture. Its advocates do not pretend that they generate it out of Scripture; the most they claim is, that having developed it as a product of speculation, they are able to show that it harmonizes with all the facts of Scripture. The argument is, of course, treated very variously by different writers. But upon the whole, it may be fairly said that the main sources from which they attempt to draw the materials of which to construct a theory as to the nature, the design and the effects of the atonement fall as a general fact under these two classes. (1.) A priori ideas as to the nature of God, of his essential attributes, and of the nature and ends of his moral government, founded upon original, moral and spiritual intuitions and feelings. This is supposed to afford us an adequate ground for determining a

priori what God will do and what he will not do—what he ought to do and what he ought not to do under given conditions. (2.) Analogies drawn (a) from our observations of the course of providential dealings with individuals and communities, general and special; and (b) from the principles upon which and the methods by which human governments are administered and society conserved. On the other hand, I have aimed to show what the Church has always believed, that the true theory of the Atonement is inseparable from the facts of Scripture, and therefore just as much in Scripture as the facts themselves—just as much as the Copernican system has always been with the stars in the sky. Intelligent observation and accurate interpretation is the limit of legitimate human agency in both cases. The Atonement can be known by us only as it is revealed. The humble, patient induction of the law from all the data given in Scripture is the only method which in such investigations can for one moment be allowed. And the pursuit of such a method certainly never issued in the Governmental Theory of the Atonement.

10. There is no doubt whatever that in the great majority of instances the real predisposing cause, giving force and currency to this view of the Atonement, is a prejudice, not unnatural, but certainly not enlightened, against what is often though erroneously called a limited Atonement. "The last objection we will here urge against this theory (Satisfaction) is, that it leads, by a logical necessity, either to the doctrine of a limited Atonement, on the one hand, or to the doctrine of universal salvation, on the other."\*

Now, as will be seen in the following chapters, I show that, when thoroughly analyzed and accurately defined, the true doctrine, that Christ satisfied the retributive justice of God by bearing the very penalty of the law, does not logically lead to any consequences which can be accurately expressed by the phrase limited Atonement. The expiatory work of Christ is (a) exactly adapted indifferently to each and every man; (b) is sufficient for all; (c) is offered in good faith to each man to whom the gospel comes; (d) it removes all legal obstacles out of God's way to the salvation of any one indifferently

whom he pleases; (e) it makes salvation in an objective sense possible to every one to whom it is offered, if he has, or as soon as he obtains, the necessary subjective condition, faith. But God's pleasure is eternal; therefore he pleases to save now precisely those whom he pleased to save when he gave Christ; therefore he gave Christ with the design of saving those whom he does save, in other words, the elect; and therefore the expiatory work of Christ was, not in respect to the sufferings in themselves considered, but in respect to Christ's intention in suffering, definite and not indefinite in its relation to persons. The question concerning the personal bearing of the Atonement, when analyzed, yields but five elements: (a.) Its adaptability—which is unlimited; (b) its sufficiency—which is unlimited; (c) its offer—which is unlimited; (d) its intended application—which every Calvinist must admit is peculiar to the elect; (e) its actual application—which is peculiar to those who are not lost. If any Calvinist disagrees with the above statement, let him either state wherein it fails to exhaust the whole case, or let him show how the denial that the "intended application" of the Atonement relates only to the elect is consistent with the doctrine of unconditional election.

It is very plain, therefore, (1) that the doctrine of the definite design of the Atonement is not so revolting as its opponents imagine. I have shown that the doctrine presented in the little work entitled "Gethsemane"\* never was the accepted doctrine of the Reformed Churches. And it is precisely against this perversion or caricature of the old Calvinism that the objections in question are directed. (2.) That the doctrine of the definite design of the Atonement is far more inseparably inlocked with the fundamental doctrine of Calvinism, viz., the unconditional eternal election of individuals to eternal life, founded upon the sovereign good pleasure of God, than it is with any peculiar views as to the strict vicarious and penal character of Christ's sufferings. (3.) That it is not necessary for men to adopt false views as to the nature of the Atonement in order to support them in their prejudiced preference for confused views as its extent. Let them prefer to occupy the ground of the Lutherans—an honourable

company of scholars and saints, who hold at once the strictest views as to the sin-expiating, justice-satisfying nature of the Atonement, and the broadest views as to its indefinite and universal design.

11. The origin, history and logical development of this doctrine demonstrate that it is radically and necessarily inconsistent with the system of Calvinism. The idea of an integral element of Calvinism being generated out of the speculative development of Arminianism is as absurd as that of looking for figs from thistles, or, if you please, for thistles from figs. The germ of the Governmental Theory was furnished by Hugo Grotius. Coleridge says of what is called Arminianism that, "taken as a complete and explicit scheme of belief, it would be both historically and theologically more accurate to call it Grotianism, or Christianity according to Grotius."\*

We have shown that this theory leads to essentially Arminian views; (1) as to the nature of justification in chapters xiv. and xviii.; and (2) as to an indefinite and general Atonement in Part II., chapter iii. It is sufficiently plain that the adoption of Arminianism on these points involves logically the definite adoption of Arminianism as a whole, as the immediate tendency and ultimate result. We are glad to believe that the conviction is becoming very general among those who have been foremost in testing the "improvements" that the Calvinism of the Reformed Churches is a self-contained system which must be either received or rejected as a whole. The doctrines of Satisfaction, Imputation, &c., are found not to be excrescences, but in such a sense integral and inseparable that the system becomes untenable to those who will not admit them.

**PART II:**

**THE DESIGN OR INTENDED  
APPLICATION OF THE ATONEMENT**

**CHAPTER I:**

**INTRODUCTORY**

THE Design or Intended Application of the Atonement. Did Christ die with the design of making satisfaction to divine justice in behalf of all men, indiscriminately, or in behalf of his elect seed personally and definitely?

We consider this a question whose interest is less essential and intrinsic than derived from its relation to principles which are intrinsically important, and fundamental to the system of faith known as evangelical. I claim to have established, on its own independent evidence, the great question concerning the Nature of the Atonement, which is the real interest for the sake of which this book is written. There, and not under the present head, lie the principles which are the true cause of debate between us and our present opponents. I take up this question as to the design and personal reference of the atoning work of Christ only as it is subsidiary to the former, and for the purpose chiefly of analyzing the question and defining its real elements, and of showing the necessary relations which they sustain to the other elements of the system of faith; as, for instance, to the nature of the Atonement, and to the sovereignty of the divine decrees.

It is evident that the opinion that the Atonement is general and indefinite must be held and defended by the Calvinistic Universalist

under conditions very different from those under which it is comprehended and vindicated by the far more consistent Arminians. I propose, therefore, in order to clear the way for the accurate understanding of the elements involved in this question in all their bearings, to consider for a moment the design of the Atonement; (a) as it is involved in our controversy with the Arminians; and (b) as it is involved in our controversies with the abettors of the various modifications of Calvinism.

1. As far, then, as this question is involved in the Arminian controversy, we are ready to admit the reality of the great importance which they attribute to it. If they could prove that the love which prompted God to give his Son to die, as a sin-offering, on the cross, had for its objects all men indiscriminately, and that Christ actually sacrificed his life with the purpose of saving all indifferently on the condition of faith, then it appears that their inference is irresistible that the central principle of Arminianism is true; that is, the principle which makes the destiny of the individual to depend upon his own use of divine grace, and not upon the sovereign good pleasure of God. It is at this point, very wisely as we think, the Arminian erects his main citadel. We freely admit that just here the advocates of that system are able to present a greater number and variety of texts which appear to favour the distinguishing principles of their system than they are able to gather in vindication of any other of their main positions. On the topics of divine decrees, of unconditional election of certain persons to faith, and through faith to eternal salvation, and of efficacious as distinguished from common grace, the Scriptures are so obviously as well as overwhelmingly Calvinistic, that our opponents are reduced to the defensive, and are able to do little else than appeal to reason and human conceptions of justice, and attempt in detail to show that the passages of Scripture to which we appeal may possibly mean something less than they appear to say. Thus along a greater portion of his line of defences the necessary tactics of the Arminian are as negative, as purely defensive, and as much confined to a skirmish in detail, as is the enforced policy of the Socinian along his line when

the Scriptures are appealed to as the medium of proof; while the Calvinist carries on an aggressive war upon both. At this point, however, supposing this to be the weakest point of the Calvinistic defences, with their unwonted accession of scriptural texts, they turn the tables upon us, and force us to the defence of showing, in our turn, why the phrases "all" or "world" in their several proof-texts may not or cannot be intended by the Holy Spirit to include all and every man indiscriminately. Then gathering together their scriptural evidence for the general and indefinite design of the Atonement, they proceed with great appearance of force to argue inferentially against the out-flanked Calvinistic positions of unconditional election and efficacious grace. In this manner Richard Watson in effect puts the strain of his entire argument upon this one position. He starts from the demonstration of the indefinite universality of the Atonement, and builds up subsequently from that foundation; thus practically resting the weight of his whole system upon it. We, on the other hand, claim that it is one evidence of the superior biblical character of our system that we are able to bring positive and direct proof in evidence of every doctrine separately, without resting the weight of one upon its logical bearings on others. The true doctrine as to the design of Christ in dying is perfectly consistent with the true doctrines as to election and grace, and every other theory as to the former will be found to be logically inconsistent with the true doctrine as to the latter; and these consistent doctrines must, in virtue of that very consistency, yield mutual support to one another. Nevertheless, the doctrine of the Satisfaction of Christ, both as to its nature and design, is a perfect whole in itself, and is abundantly established by direct scriptural evidence, independent of any relation it may sustain to any other doctrine. At present, however, it is no part of the task I have assumed to show the truth of the Calvinistic or the falsity of the Arminian systems, except in so far as the fate of these systems may be involved in the establishment of the true doctrine as to the nature and design of the Atonement. I have the unquestionable right, as far as the present discussion is concerned, to assume the truth of those great scriptural principles which are characteristic of the Calvinistic system as a whole.



2. This will necessarily confine the discussion to that form which the question assumes when brought in debate between those who hold that Christ died to secure the salvation of the elect personally, and those who, while maintaining that the design of his death was general and impersonal, nevertheless more or less fully adhere to the other characteristic positions of Calvinism. These last again fall into two classes, whose distinguishing characteristics materially modify their relations to us in the matter at present in hand. (a.) Those, who like Amyraldus of Saumur, in the sixteenth century, and Wardlaw,\* Balmer, and John Brown, James Richards<sup>†</sup> of Auburn Theological Seminary, of the age just past, hold the true doctrine as to the nature of the Atonement with great accuracy, and whose divergence from the theology of the Reformed Churches is confined to the single point of the pretended general reference of the Atonement. (b.) Those, who like Jenkyn, Taylor, Fiske, and others, in various degrees, yet materially, depart from the true faith as to the nature of the Atonement, and whose views as to its indefinite universality is a necessary corollary of their views as to its nature.

As far as the former of these parties is concerned, I think that their exceptional position as to the design or intended application of the Atonement is to be referred to a hardly conscious dissatisfaction with the peculiarities of Calvinism, giving rise to these first movements of an undeveloped and hence unconscious Arminianism; or, as I hope is true in a majority of cases, and as can be shown to be certainly true in some of them, their divergence on this point is to be referred solely to an absence of clearness of thought, and consequent inaccuracy in the use of terms. I believe it ought to be a recognized principle that when it is certain that men intelligently and honestly agree in maintaining all other peculiarities of Calvinism, and especially accurate views as to the nature of the Atonement, any question as to its design which can possibly arise among such men must be regarded and should be treated as a mere dispute of words. The use of illegitimate language here may mark a tendency, but it cannot, under the conditions I suppose, mark an heretical opinion, for at this point and under such conditions there is no room for a

possible thinkable peculiarity to come in. This, however, does not justify carelessness in defining either in thought or words our own position nor indifference to the confusion of others. This consideration should all the more enforce upon us the necessity of clear views, of exact use of language and of technical definitions upon a central point from which so many roads diverge, which, springing up in apparently unessential discriminations, instantly lead to irreconcilable conclusions.

As to the latter of the two species of Calvinistic Universalists, with whom our argument in the preceding part of this volume has been chiefly concerned, we charge that their position as to the design of Christ in dying is only a necessary corollary, dependent upon and subordinate to their doctrine as to the nature of his work. The doctrine as to the design of the Atonement is as necessarily and as essentially subordinate to the doctrine as to its nature, with them as it is with us. The attempt which is often made to exalt the question as to its design into a distinct and independent head of doctrine, the various solutions of which distinguish one school of Calvinistic theologians from another, indubitably proves the want either of candour or of competent knowledge as to the true state of the controversy. We without doubt intend to hold all those who in any way pervert or obscure the true doctrine as to the nature of Christ's redeeming work to the real point at issue. This involves the very essence of salvation by Christ. All men can see that the differences which divide us here are of a vital interest. We insist, moreover, that honour requires that each champion shall define the cause in which he appears both exactly and openly. None can be allowed to bring in surreptitiously a defective view as to the nature of the Atonement, under pretence that he is bringing in only an unimportant distinction as to its general reference. At present we have nothing to do with the evidence establishing the true doctrine as to its nature. We assume that the strict theory of Satisfaction, as taught in the symbols of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, has been proved in the preceding portion of this volume to be the doctrine taught in Scripture.

What I have to say on the present subject of the design of the Atonement will be grouped under the following heads: (1.) The exact statement of the real question in debate, excluding all irrelevant issues, and sharply defining the only point about which men can differ on this subject. (2.) A discussion of the true relation which the question as to the design of the Atonement necessarily sustains to the previous and more important question as to its nature. (3.) A brief sketch in outline of the history of opinion on this subject, especially the different forms the controversy has assumed among Calvinists. (4.) An answer to the questions, What were the personal views of Calvin? What is Calvinism? What is the standard of that system of faith held by common consent by the Reformed Churches? and especially, What doctrine is solemnly professed by all those who adopt the Westminster Confession, ex animo, as the confession of their faith? (5.) An exhibition of the scriptural evidence relied upon to establish the doctrine of the Reformed Churches as to the personal and definite design of the Atonement. (6.) An examination and solution of the several arguments presented by the advocates of general and indefinite redemption as refutations of our doctrine and as evidences establishing the truth of theirs.

## **CHAPTER II:**

# **THE TRUE DOCTRINE AS TO THE DESIGN OF THE ATONEMENT ACCURATELY STATED**

I PROPOSE, then, to give an exact statement of the true question at issue between those who maintain the definite and personal and those who maintain the general and indefinite design of the vicarious work of Christ. Whatever may be the subject in debate, it is evident that the exact discrimination of the point in question is the first thing to be done, the well-doing of which is of the very highest importance. But this is far more than ordinarily true in the present instance, because it so happens that among those who agree as to the nature of the Atonement and as to the sovereignty of the divine decrees there is no thinkable difference here possible. The bare statement of the question will, itself, therefore, dissipate as irrelevant the vast mass of objections made to the orthodox doctrine by its adversaries, and manifestly reduces to a mere contest of words the only issue which can possibly be debated by intelligent and honest Calvinists.

The question, then, (1) does not relate to the SUFFICIENCY of the satisfaction rendered by Christ to secure the salvation of all men. The Reformed Churches have uniformly taught that no man has ever yet perished, or ever will perish, for want of an atonement. All Calvinists agree in maintaining earnestly that Christ's obedience and sufferings were of infinite intrinsic value in the eye of law, and that there was no need for him to obey or to suffer an iota more nor a moment longer in order to secure, if God so willed, the salvation of every man, woman, and child that ever lived. No man can have a moment's doubt upon the subject who acknowledges the supreme divinity of the glorious Victim. It is insisted upon by Turretin, Witsius, and by John Owen,\* as earnestly as it is by Jenkyn or any other. Not one of the advocates of general redemption, Arminian or Calvinistic, has ever given stronger expression to the great truth of the infinite fulness, freeness and sufficiency of Christ's expiatory work. We all heartily believe that after eighteen hundred years the stream of Atonement is found unexhausted alike in its volume and its virtues. Surely, this is even less than the glorious truth. It will be none the less true after eighteen millions of years. But this question has never been debated by the Reformed Churches. We unite with all other Christians in glorying in the infinite sufficiency of the satisfaction of

Christ to reach and to save all men who have been or who will be created or creatable.

2. The question does not relate to the **APPLICABILITY** of the satisfaction rendered by Christ to the exact legal relations and to the necessities in order to the salvation of every lost sinner in the world. Christ did and suffered precisely what the law demanded of each man personally and of every man indiscriminately, and it may be at any time applied to the redemption of one man as well as to another, as far as the satisfaction itself is concerned. Putting these two things together, therefore, the sufficiency for all and the exact adaptation to each, it is plain as the sun in the heavens that the death of Christ did remove all legal obstacles out of the way of God's saving any man he pleases. In this sense, if you please, Christ did make the salvation of all men indifferently possible, a parte Dei. He can apply it to any whomsoever he will; but since his will never changes, there can be no distinction between his present will and his eternal design.

3. The question does not relate to the **ACTUAL APPLICATION** of the saving benefits of Christ's work to each and every man. All who stop short of maintaining universal salvation agree with us that all those who do not cordially accept and appropriate the salvation freely offered to them in the gospel must be lost. The doctrine of universal redemption cannot be shown, after all their parade of its superior liberality, to extend the real benefits of redemption to one single soul beyond those embraced by a definite Atonement. We believe that Christ died with the intention of saving all those whom he actually does save. They hold that the large majority of those whose salvation Christ designed to effect by his death finally perish. This certainly fails to convey any advantage to those that perish, while it materially detracts from the value of Christ's death and from the efficacy of his purpose to save.

4. The question does not relate to the **UNIVERSAL OFFER** in perfect good faith of a saving interest in Christ's work on the condition of faith. This is admitted by all. Since, then, the work of Christ is exactly

adapted to the legal relations and need of each, and since it is abundantly sufficient for all, and since, in perfect good faith, it is offered to all men indiscriminately, it necessarily follows that whosoever believes on him, non-elect (if that were subjectively possible) just as truly as the elect, would find a perfect atonement and cordial welcome ready for him when he comes. In this sense we joyfully acknowledge that not only is the salvation of each and every sinner rendered legally and morally possible to God, if he wills, but the Atonement of Christ is itself objectively most certainly and freely available to each and every sinner to whom it is offered, upon condition that he believes.

5. Nor does the question relate to the design of Christ in dying as it stands related to all the benefits secured to mankind by his death. It is very plain that any plan designed to secure the salvation of an elect portion of a race propagated by generation, and living in association, as is the case with mankind, cannot secure its end without greatly affecting, for better or worse, the character and destiny of all the rest of the race not elected. Indeed it is impossible for us to know what would have happened to Adam and Eve if that gracious system, the meritorious ground of which is the Atonement of Christ, had not been introduced. The instant damnation of the heads of the race, or the introduction of a scheme of redemption, appear to be the only possible alternatives. But the scheme of redemption is conditioned exclusively upon the expiatory work of Christ. Hence all that happens to the human race other than that which is incidental to the instant damnation of Adam and Eve is part of the consequences of Christ's satisfaction as the second Adam. For aught we know the propagation of the race in all of its successive generations may be in consequence of that work. The entire history of the human race, from the apostasy to the final judgment, is, as Candlish says, "a dispensation of forbearance" in respect to the reprobate, in which many blessings, physical and moral, affecting their characters and destinies for ever, accrue even to the heathen, and many more to the educated and refined citizens of Christian communities. These come to them through the mediation of Christ, and coming to them now, they must

have been designed for them from the beginning.\* We maintain the simple and apparently self-evident proposition that Christ, in dying, designed to effect by his death all in every particular which he has actually accomplished. If he be God, there can be no discrepancy between his design and his accomplishment. He must accomplish precisely that which he designed, and he must have designed to effect precisely that which in fact he does effect.

6. But the question does truly and only relate to the design of the Father and of the Son in respect to the persons for whose benefit the Atonement was made; that is, to whom in the making of it they intended it should be applied. We contend that the following heads absolutely exhaust every possible question as to what is called the extent of the Atonement: (a.) Its essential nature, involving its exact adaption to the legal relations and necessities of each and every man indifferently; (b) its intrinsic sufficiency for all; (c) its honest and authoritative offer to all; (d) its actual application; (e) its intended application. We defy our opponents to show that this statement does not exhaust the case. The first three, all agree, are without any limit, thank God; the fourth, all agree, is limited to believers; the fifth all Calvinists must believe to be limited to the elect. Now the advocates of universal and indefinite redemption hold that Christ died with the design and effect of making the salvation of all men possible, and nothing more. The Reformed Churches hold that he died with the design of actually and certainly saving his elect people; that is, for the purpose of actually saving those whom he does actually save.

Amyraldus make a distinction between objective and subjective grace. The former, rendering salvation objectively available to all men, he held was universal. The latter, which gives the gracious ability to accept the gospel, he admitted was designed for the elect alone. We believe that as far as the heathen are concerned, to whom Christ is never offered, salvation is no more objectively available than subjectively possible. It is true that Christ did make salvation, as an objective fact, possible to all men to whom it is offered, if they will believe. But the Reformed Churches maintain that a purpose to make

salvation objectively available to those who were never intended to enjoy it must, in the very nature of things, not be an independent purpose in itself, but one purely subsidiary to the main design of actually and entirely effecting the salvation of all whose salvation was intended to be in fact realized.

The Schoolmen were accustomed to affirm that Christ died *sufficenter pro omnibus*, *efficienter pro electis*, and this form of expression was adopted by Calvin\* and by the early Reformed theologians previous to the thorough sifting of this subject occasioned by the speculations of the French theologians Cameron, Amyraldus, Testardus, &c. This Scholastic expression is inaccurate and inadequate rather than false. Christ did die *sufficenter pro omnibus*, but as an element of his design this otherwise inoperative and futile purpose must have been in thought, precisely as it is in execution, altogether subsidiary as a means to an end to his real—because actually accomplished—purpose of effecting the salvation of his elect. In other words, the actual ends effected are the exact measure of the real ends designed.

This question is capable of being stated in several different forms, while the identity of the essential principle involved is preserved and placed more distinctly in view.

Thus, (1) was it the design of the redemptive work of Christ that it carry into effect the purpose of election, or was it the design of God's sovereign election that it should carry into effect, in part, the general purpose of redemption? The theology of the Reformed Churches was broadly characterized by its subordination of redemption to election. Their habitual mode of representation is that God, having of his mere good pleasure elected some men to everlasting life and to all the means thereof, sent his Son to effect that purpose by his obedience unto death. All the advocates of indefinite redemption, on the other hand, must agree in maintaining that God provided the Atonement for the good of all men indiscriminately, and that election comes in subordinately to redemption, either conditioned on foreseen faith (so



the Arminians), or as a sovereign purpose, upon the part of God, to make certain the success of the general purpose of redemption at least in the case of the persons elected (so the Calvinistic Universalists).

Jenkyn\* represents the dispensation of sovereign electing grace as supervening to prevent the failure of redemption, so far at least as the elect are concerned. "The entire failure of the Eden dispensation would have clouded the divine character if it had not been rescued by the introduction of a compensative Atonement; ... the entire failure of the Sinai experiment would have reflected dishonour upon the divine glory, but it was redeemed by the establishment of a better hope.... The whole mediatorial work of Jesus Christ is so worthy and so meritorious that it deserves that measures should be taken to ensure it from entire failure." The italics are his. On this theory, since so many of God's "experiments" "entirely fail," and since even the awful sacrifice of his own Son is barely prevented from entire failure by special intervention, and after all is an utter failure as to the larger part of all it was set to do, who shall ensure us that heaven shall not fail, or that the salvation of the saints may not be at last confounded? Behold also what this redemption, which these men so glory in, is worth. It saves no single soul. It is prevented from being an absolute failure by a divine intervention. This view gives all the glory of salvation to election. The measure of the virtue of redemption may be seen in the fate of the non-elect.

(2.) Was the motive which prompted God to give his Son to die for men, and which prompted Christ to die, the highest conceivable love which God can have for a creature, making it certain that he will also with him freely give the objects of that love all things, and was it a personal love of certain definite individuals foreknown from eternity, or, on the other hand, was it a general and impersonal philanthropy, or love of mankind in general, coexisting with a good pleasure to allow the majority of those so loved to perish, some without even the knowledge of the redemption provided at such cost, and others without any saving interest in it? All the Reformed Churches believe

that the former of these alternatives is the true statement of the motive prompting the Father and the Son in the work of redemption; while all the advocates of a general and indefinite Atonement necessarily maintain that the latter is the true statement.

(3.) Did Christ die with the design and effect of making the salvation of all men indifferently possible, and the salvation of none certain, or did he die in pursuance of an eternal covenant between the Father and himself for the purpose as well as with the result of effecting the salvation of his own people?

(4.) Is the impetration (sacrificial purchase—meritorious procurement) of salvation so connected in the plan of salvation with its gracious application that they respect specifically the same persons, and the latter follows certainly upon the first, or is the impetration general and indefinite, while the application is personal and limited? This is the precise form in which the question was debated by Testardus, Amyraldus, Daillé, Spanheim, Rivetus, De Moulin, Richard Baxter and John Owen. Hence this is the precise issue met by the deliverance of the Westminster Assembly in the very midst of these controversies: "To ALL those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same, &c."\*

(5.) And finally, did the Lord Jesus Christ impetrate or purchase the gracious influences of the Holy Ghost and all the fruits of the Spirit for those for whom he died? Or did he effect, by his sacrifice, nothing more than the removal of legal impediments out of the way of their salvation, either leaving them to provide their own faith and repentance, or sovereignly providing for an exceptional few, selected out of the mass of those for whom he died, out of a benevolent principle altogether different from that exercised in the gift of redemption? The Reformed Churches uniformly hold the former, while the advocates of universal redemption necessarily hold the latter of these alternatives.

## **CHAPTER III:**

# **THE QUESTION, WHAT IS THE TRUE RELATION WHICH THE PROBLEM AS TO THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT SUSTAINS TO THAT AS TO ITS DESIGN, EXAMINED**

HAVING thus presented an accurate and, as I hope, clear statement of the real question in debate, between the representatives of different schools of theology, upon the topic in hand, I now proceed to discuss briefly the true relation which this question as to the design of the Atonement necessarily sustains to the previous and more important question as to its nature. It is supposed by many that there is necessarily such a connection between the two that the views entertained as to the one must, in every case, determine those entertained as to the other. There is indeed a good deal of ground for this opinion, yet, in order that we may know exactly how the matter stands, we must examine in detail the bearing which each separate doctrine as to the nature of the Atonement has upon the question as to its design.

1. It is very obvious that upon the hypothesis that Christ's work was designed to effect its end simply by exerting a moral influence upon men, it must have been designed for all men indiscriminately, at least for all indifferently, to whom it is presented. The whole effect of the Atonement, according to this view, is moral and subjective. And

the question of its success, in every given case, is determined by the spontaneous acquiescence, or the reverse, of the sinner himself.

2. Again, the matter is no less plain from the point of view entertained by the advocates of the Governmental Theory as to the nature of Christ's work. If Christ died only as an example of punishment, if his sufferings were made a governmental expedient by means of which it is rendered consistent with the general interests of the divine government for God to remit the punishment of all those who either elect to believe or are by him sovereignly elected to believe, then it necessarily follows that this work can have no special reference to one man more than another. All that it can do for any it has done for all. It has removed legal obstacles out of the way of all, and hence has indifferently rendered possible the salvation of each.

3. If the view presented in a little work entitled "Gethsemane," published in England, and republished in Philadelphia early in this century, is accepted as true—that is, if the vicarious work of Christ is conceived of strictly as a commercial transaction—then, of course, the doctrine that the Atonement is limited in the proper sense of that word necessarily follows. If the sufferings of Christ were in exact proportion to the number of his elect and to the amount of heinousness of their sins; if Christ would have suffered less had he expiated the sins of a smaller number, and if he would have needed to suffer more in order to atone for more,\* then it is plain enough that the Atonement is limited as to its very essence, just as in a commercial contract between men the purchasing power of a hundred dollars is limited to one hundred dollars' worth. It has been very convenient for our opponents to charge this view upon the Reformed Churches. That this is altogether a false representation I have shown above by reference to chapter and section of the testimony of such representatives of Calvinism as Turretin, Witsius, John Owen and William Cunningham.

4. The entire Lutheran Church agrees with the Reformed as to the nature of the Atonement. They hold that Christ by his active and

passive obedience fully satisfied all the demands of law upon those in whose place he acted, and that he purchased for them the operations of the Holy Spirit, and all the fruits thereof;\* and yet they hold that Christ died in this sense indiscriminately in behalf of all men. There is no doubt that the great mass of learned and able Lutheran theologians have explicitly held both of these views. This is certainly a practical proof that both sides of their doctrine may be intelligently held as true in the same mind at the same time. And yet it is no less plain that the several positions they adopt as to sin, human ability, divine grace, foreknowledge, predestination, redemption, &c., are obviously incapable of being reduced even to the appearance of logical consistency. They teach that Christ purchased faith and repentance for all for whom he died. If any man repents and believes, they deny his co-operation with grace previous or in order to his regeneration, and they attribute the result solely to the grace of God given for Christ's sake. If any man does not repent and believe, they deny that Christ has done any less for him, and attribute the result solely to his own sin. But the question must be answered, Who makes the difference? If both have from Adam the same absolute inability, and if both have as the purchase of Christ the same grace, what is the differentiating factor in the case? What determines the infidelity of the one and the faith of the other? The Arminian grants to all men sufficient ability to co-operate with grace, and hence consistently makes the free self-determination of the sinner's own will the seat of difference between the believer and non-believer. The Calvinist, denying the ability to co-operate with grace alike to all men, consistently makes a sovereign discriminating grace the seat of the difference between them. The Lutheran holds that all men are alike impotent; that all men have alike the same grace; that the cause of faith, wherever it exists, is wholly to be attributed to grace, and the cause of unbelief to sin; yet, while there is such difference between faith and unbelief, there is no difference among men either as to sin or grace. But we answer, If it be grace alone that makes one believe, then the other has not the same grace or he also would believe. And if Christ purchased spiritual graces for all those for whom he died, he could not have died for those who fail to receive the grace.

5. The doctrine of the Reformed Church is that there is no limit whatsoever in the Redemption of the Lord Jesus except that which resides in the eternal purpose of God to save thereby the elect and none others. A divine person suffered the penalty due to human sin, and obeyed that law obedience to which was made the condition of man's well-being. He did this because of his divinity exhaustively and without limit as to intrinsic sin-expiating and Justice-satisfying sufficiency. If the work itself, therefore, be viewed separately from the intention with which it was undertaken, it plainly stands indifferently related to the case of each and every man that ever lived and sinned. It is not a pecuniary solution of debt, which, ipso facto, liberates upon the mere payment of the money. It is a vicarious penal satisfaction, which can be admitted in any case only at the arbitrary discretion of the sovereign; and which may have a redemptive bearing upon the case of none, of few, of many, or of all; and upon the case of one and not of another, and upon that elect case at whatsoever time and upon whatsoever conditions are predetermined by the mutual understanding of the Sovereign and of the voluntary substitute. The relations of the Atonement as impersonal and general or as personal and definite do not spring from considerations of the degree, duration or kind of suffering or acts of vicarious obedience which Christ rendered, but solely from the purpose he had in rendering them.

The Arminian holds consistently that the purpose of Christ was to satisfy divine justice in behalf of all men for the violation of the rule of righteousness embodied in the old Covenant of Works, and so enable God to introduce a new covenant, offering salvation upon the lowered terms of faith and evangelical obedience—conditions to be provided by men themselves with the assistance of that common grace furnished indifferently unto all. This is a perfectly self-consistent scheme. Christ designed to secure the salvation of all men indifferently. It is the free will of each man alone that makes the difference.

Calvinists, on the other hand, believe that an absolute Sovereign, in that eternity which is without beginning, end or succession, foreordains whatsoever comes to pass. They acknowledge that if the decrees of God are eternal, they must be one, single, changeless, all-comprehending intention. They profess to believe that as of his mere good pleasure God has chosen out of the great mass of men, equally guilty, some men to eternal salvation, "so hath he foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed in Christ, &c."\* Redemption must be in order to accomplish the purpose of predestination, because, as a matter of fact, it does precisely accomplish that purpose. On the contrary, a sovereign election of some cannot be in order to accomplish the purpose of the general redemption of all, because, as a matter of fact, it does not at all accomplish it. If, then, redemption be in order to accomplish the purpose of the sovereign election of some, then it is certain that Christ died in order to secure the salvation of the elect, and not in order to make the salvation of all men possible. St. Augustine and all consistent Augustinians, Calvin and all the Reformed Churches, held that REDEMPTION IS IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH THE PURPOSE OF ELECTION.

## **CHAPTER IV:**

# **HISTORY OF OPINION AMONG CALVINISTS UPON THE QUESTION AS TO THE DESIGN OF THE ATONEMENT**

I PROPOSE now to give a very brief and general sketch of the history of opinion upon this subject, preparatory to a more particular inquiry as to the opinions of Calvin, and the general consensus and authoritative standard of doctrine among the Reformed Churches.

Let the fact, already carefully noticed, be remembered that all parties agree—(1.) That the Scriptures use general and indefinite terms when speaking of the design of Christ's death, as well as personal and definite ones. John said "that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world," 1 John 4:14; and Christ said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." John 10:15. (2.) That Christ died with the design as well as effect of securing many benefits, short of salvation, for the non-elect as well as for the elect. (3.) That since his work is sufficient for all, exactly adapted to the needs of each, and offered indiscriminately to all, it follows—(a.) That all the legal obstacles in God's way of saving any are removed, and hence the salvation of all is now legally possible, a parte Dei. (b.) That in a strictly objective sense the Atonement is as freely available, on the condition of faith, to the gospel-hearing non-elect as it is to the elect. (4.) Hence it follows that if we look down the line of purpose and causation from God toward mankind, it is plain that Christ could have had no other purpose in dying than to save those whom he actually does save. But if we look upwards from the position of the sinner, to whom the universal offer of a personal interest in the Atonement of Christ is brought, it is evident that Christ did so die for the sins of the whole world that if any man hears the offer and is willing to accept it, a free and perfect Atonement is his for the taking. Hence it follows, that in all ages many of the most rigid predestinarians have said, in the words of Calvin himself, "Passus est Christus pro peccatis totius mundi," while it has been only very superficial critics who have inferred therefrom that these men intended to decide against the doctrine of the Reformed Churches, which is that Christ designed in his death to secure the salvation of his elect, and of none others. The phrase that Christ died for the whole world may be taken in three senses: (a.) That he died for Jews as well as Gentiles, for a people elect out of all nations and generations. (b.) That he died to secure many



advantages for all men from Adam to the last generation, especially for all citizens in Christian lands. (c.) That he died to secure the salvation of each and every man that ever lived; that is, that he died in the same sense for the non-elect as for the elect. The first two we affirm; the latter we deny. And we maintain that the meaning intended by men in the use of general expressions, like that above quoted from Calvin, can be determined only by means of a comparison of all their expressed opinions on the subject.

All Arians, Pelagians, semi-Pelagians, Socinians and Arminians, have in perfect consistency with their several systems, maintained the general and indefinite reference of the Atonement, while, on the other hand, as was to be expected, all true Augustinians and Calvinists have necessarily held that Christ died definitely and personally for the elect. Jenkyn claims that Bishop Davenant has triumphantly proved that the great Augustine himself, "the masterly champion of predestination against Pelagius," was an advocate of an indefinite Atonement. But Wiggers, one of the most capable and impartial witnesses that even Germany has produced in this century, in his "Historical Presentation of Augustinianism and Pelagianism,"\* says: "As by the predestination theory, only a definite number of elect would obtain salvation, Christ's redemption could extend only to those whom God had destined to salvation... According to Augustine, therefore, redemption was not universal. God sent his Son into the world, not to redeem the whole sinful race of men, but only the elect. Augustine says: "By this Mediator God showed that those whom he redeemed by his blood he makes from being evil to be eternally good." "Every one that has been redeemed by the blood of Christ is a man, though not every one that is a man has been redeemed by the blood of Christ." † "No one perishes of those for whom Christ died." Sometimes Augustine uses indefinite language after the familiar example of Scripture, but no inference, drawn from that fact, can for one moment withstand the force of such clear and precise statements of his opinion as those given above by Wiggers.

Those of the Schoolmen who followed Augustine were in the habit of saying that Christ died for all men, but in a sense very different from that in which he died for his elect. Their formula was "Christus passus est sufficienter pro omnibus, efficienter pro electis." This we regard as a statement inaccurate in terms, and more likely to confuse than to clear the question, yet as very near the truth, and very different from the positively false position of those who hold that Christ died indifferently for each and every man.

At the time of the Reformation the attention of the great Reformers was absorbed by questions fundamental to the very life of the Church, and they were thence precluded from the deliberate consideration of secondary matters involved rather in the symmetry and perfection than in the integrity of the evangelical system. Zwingle and Calvin, the founders of the Reformed Churches, while they never made the question as to the design of the Atonement a subject of special study, nevertheless habitually taught, through the spirit and form of their entire system, that redemption was subordinate as a means to an end to the eternal decree of election, and therefore, of course, had the same objects and the same end. The same characteristics mark also the earlier Reformed Confessions—redemption is habitually subordinated to election; but no explicit deliverance is given as to the design of the Atonement. In all the later Reformed Confessions, however—viz., in the Gallic (A. D. 1576) and Belgic (A. D. 1571) Confessions, the Canons of the Synod of Dort (A. D. 1618, 1619), the Canons of the French Synods of Ales (A. D. 1620) and of Charenton (A. D. 1623), the Westminster Confession (A. D. 1648), the Formula Consensus Helvetica (A. D. 1675), the Savoy Confession (A. D. 1658), and the Boston Confession (A. D. 1680)—all explicitly taught the definite and personal design of the vicarious work of Christ.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there appeared two prominent attempts to engraft the notion of a general redemption upon the Calvinistic system by those who retained nevertheless orthodox views as to the nature of the Atonement.

1. The first of these was the product of the speculations of Cameron and of his pupils Amyraldus and Testardus, in connection with the theological school of Saumur, France, during the first half of the seventeenth century. The two latter, in whose writings this peculiarity was specially developed and made public, over and over again professed their cordial acquiescence with the rigidly Calvinistic deliverances of the Synod of Dort, and their irreconcilable opposition to Arminianism. Their own system was generally styled Universalismus Hypotheticus, an hypothetic or conditional universalism. They taught that there were two wills or purposes in God in respect to man's salvation. The one will is a purpose to provide, at the cost of the sacrifice of his own Son, salvation for each and every human being without exception if they believe—a condition foreknowned to be universally and certainly impossible. The other will is an absolute purpose, depending only upon his own sovereign good pleasure, to secure the certain salvation of a definite number, and to grant them all the gifts and graces necessary to that end. "This synthesis of a real particularism with a merely ideal universalism (not really saving a single individual), that is, the addition of a merely ideal universalism to the orthodox acknowledged Calvinistic Dordrecht system of doctrine, is the peculiarity of Amyraldism."\*

In the controversies consequent upon the appearance of these views it was customary to contrast the different conceptions entertained by the two parties as to the divine purpose in the following manner: The great body of the Reformed theologians conceived that the eternal purpose of God as to man's salvation might be represented thus: He purposed to create man; then to permit him to fall; then out of the great mass of fallen and equally guilty and helpless men, he, moved by an unparalleled personal love, out of the mere good pleasure of his will, elected some to eternal life and to all the means thereof; and then, in order to accomplish this purpose of electing love, he gave his Son to redeem his people by his death. Here all is consistent. There are no two inconsistent purposes; no inefficacious will; no love making infinite sacrifices for its objects, yet suspending their

participation in the benefits thereof upon conditions known to be impossible; and no conditional decrees in the infinite God; but one single, consistent sovereign purpose logically pursued from beginning to end.

Amyraldus, on the other hand, unfolded his conception of the divine purposes in this manner: God purposed to create man, then to permit him to fall, then out of a general love for all men he gave his Son to die for all, and to secure their salvation on the condition of their believing on him; but foreseeing that, if left to themselves, not one of the whole race would believe, and thus the redemption of Christ utterly fail of its end, and moved by a special personal love for the elect, sovereignly determined to give them special grace to lead them to faith, and hence certainly to secure their salvation.\* According to this view, there are two distinct purposes respecting salvation in the divine mind from eternity—the general purpose, which concerns the human race as a whole without making any discrimination of persons; the special purpose, selecting out of the mass certain persons and appointing them to salvation. The general purpose has respect to objective grace, which it gives to all alike. The special purpose has respect to subjective grace, which it gives alone to the elect. The general purpose respects the removing that external impediment to salvation out of the way of all which results from their inability to satisfy divine justice. The special purpose respects the removing out of the way of the elect that internal impediment which results from their inability to believe.

This view represents God as loving the non-elect sufficiently to give them his Son to die for them, but not loving them enough to give them faith and repentance. It represents him as purposing that all men should be saved on condition of faith—a condition known to be impossible; and at the same time purposing that a large proportion of the race redeemed at such cost should remain in ignorance of the gospel, and of the conditions upon which participation in its benefits are suspended. It represents the all-perfect sacrifice as saving no one, and as depending upon a subsequent decree of election for its very

partial success. It represents God as willing at the same time that all men be saved and that only the elect be saved. It denies, in opposition to the Arminian, that any of God's decrees are conditioned upon the self-determined will of the creature, and yet puts into the mouths of professed Calvinists the very catch-words of the Arminian system, such as universal grace, the conditional will of God, universal redemption, &c., &c. Although this scheme has been held by some men of talent, who have been at the same time honest professors of the Calvinistic system and of the true doctrine as to the nature of the Atonement in particular—as, for instance, Amyraldus, Bishop Davenant and Richard Baxter, &c.—yet the judgment of the Methodist theologian, Richard Watson, is unquestionably true, that "it is the most inconsistent theory to which the attempts to modify Calvinism have given rise."\* In the case of men otherwise candid and intelligent professors of orthodoxy, these distinctions amount to nothing but words; and therefore do not indicate a state of faith to which the predicate heretical properly applies. When Amyraldus and Testardus were brought before the Synod of Alençon (A. D. 1637) to answer for the "Novelties" wherewith they had greatly disturbed the peace of the Reformed Churches, they explained away their distinctions in terms which satisfied the most orthodox. "They declared that Jesus Christ died for all men sufficiently, but for the elect only effectually; and that consequently his intention was to die for all men in respect to the sufficiency of his satisfaction, but for the elect only with respect to its quickening and saving virtue and efficacy.... And as for the conditional decree, they declared that they never did understand anything than God's will revealed in his word to give grace and life unto believers."\* This declaration reduces the whole matter to the old Calvinistic commonplace that the work of Christ is sufficient for all, adapted to all, and honestly offered to all, but not intended for all, nor provided for the sake of all. When used by men otherwise orthodox this "Novelty" is, therefore, not heresy, but an evidence of absurdly confused thought and disordered language upon the subject. The serious objection to it is that it necessarily involves the use of language which properly and by common usage is significant of Arminian error. Its use generally

marks a state of transition from comparative orthodoxy to more serious error. It often covers a secret sympathy with heresies not distinctly avowed. In latter years it has been generally associated with radically defective views as to the nature of the Atonement. It is of no use, for if it means no heresy, it relieves the hardness of no truth. Every competent thinker knows that the whole difficulty as well as strength of Calvinism lies in the conception of an eternal, all-comprehensive, absolute purpose, determining all things, alike physical and moral. The gloss we are considering fails to conciliate Socinians or Arminians, while it alienates true Calvinists. The experienced shun it, because they know how often it conceals serious error. In France the national development of this error was cut short by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (A. D. 1685), while in England, Scotland and America, the same language and the same arguments are used to mark the boundary-lines of a system of error which explorers have discovered to transect all the zones of modified Calvinism, Arminianism and radical Pelagianism.

2. The famous work entitled "Marrow of Modern Divinity" was published in England in 1646. In 1718 it was republished in Scotland with a recommendatory preface by the Rev. James Hogg, of Carnock, and again in 1726 with copious explanatory notes by the Rev. Thomas Boston, of Ettrick; which last edition was reproduced a few years ago by our Board of Publication. This excellent and orthodox book became the occasion of a protracted controversy, styled the "Marrow Controversy," which conspired with other and deeper causes to effect that alienation which issued in the formation of the Secession Church. There were good and sound men on both sides, but the most eminent Christians and theologians of that age were ranked among the "Marrow men," such as the Rev. James Hogg, Thomas Boston, Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, &c. We have at present nothing to do with the general course or merits of this controversy. I refer to it only for the purpose of noticing the peculiar language which these men used with respect to what they called the "double reference" of the Atonement—a peculiarity which consequently for a long time unhappily distinguished the theology of

the Secession Churches from that of the great current of the Reformed Churches. The language of the "Marrow men" was far less philosophical and profound than that used for very much the same purpose by Amyraldus and Baxter in the preceding century, while, perhaps, for the same cause their speculations were far more innocent. The characteristic interest of the professors of Saumur was speculative, while that of the "Marrow men" was practical and moral. The one party was composed of professors of theology, the other of preachers of the gospel. The one sought to define the order of the Divine Decrees, the other sought to establish firmly the Warrant of Faith.

The statement in the Marrow from which they took their departure is as follows: "I beseech you to consider that God the Father, as he is in his Son Jesus Christ, moved by nothing but his free love to mankind lost, hath made a deed of gift and grant unto all men, that whosoever shall believe in his Son shall not perish, but have eternal life."\* The "Marrow men" were all sound as to the nature of the Atonement, and as to the great Calvinistic principle that Christ died in pursuance of an eternal covenant with the Father in order to secure the salvation of his elect. As far as the bearing of the Atonement upon the elect was concerned, their writings were marked by no peculiarity. Their distinction was that they insisted that the Atonement had ALSO a designed general reference to all sinners of mankind as such. The early "Marrow men" were accustomed to say that although Christ did not die for all—that is, to save all—yet that he is dead for all, that is, available for all if they will receive him. That God, out of his general philanthropy, or love for human sinners as such, has made a Deed of Gift of Christ and of the benefits of his redemption to all indifferently, to be claimed upon the condition of faith. This general love of God is styled his "giving love," and is distinguished from his "electing love," of which only the elect, and his "complacent love," of which only the sanctified are the objects. This Deed of Gift or Grant of Christ to all sinners as such, they held, is not to be merely resolved into the general offer of the gospel, but is to be regarded as the foundation upon which that general offer rests. It is a real grant;

universal; an expression of love; conditioned on faith; the foundation upon which the ministerial offer of salvation rests; and it is the "warrant" upon which the faith of every believer rests, and by which that faith is justified.

As late as 1843, Dr. Balmer and the late learned and excellent Dr. John Brown, professors in the United Secession Church, were examined as to their doctrinal views under suspicion of heresy. After Balmer's death Brown was libelled for heresy before the Synod in 1845. The statement then made by Brown of his views as to the extent of the Atonement was in substance as follows: "The proposition 'that Christ died for men,' had been held in three senses. In the sense of the Universalist, that Christ died so as to secure salvation, I hold that he died only for the elect. In the sense of the Arminian, that Christ died so as to purchase easier terms of salvation and common grace to enable men to comply with those terms, I hold that he died for no man. In the sense of the great body of Calvinists, that Christ died to remove legal obstacles in the way of human salvation, by making perfect satisfaction for sin, I hold that he died for all men."\*

Now, doubtless, as held by these men, all this was consistent with strict orthodoxy. They meant no more than that incidentally to his great design of saving the elect, and in order to that end, God had made certain provisions which were sufficient for all, adapted to each, and freely offered them to all. But all their forms of expression were confused and their laborious distinctions utterly profitless. What is the significancy of making a special head of that "giving love" which makes an actual grant of salvation upon conditions known to be absolutely impossible, and which makes no provision for its application, and which never intended the salvation of its objects? What real idea is signalized by the verbal distinction between the bona fide offer of the gospel to all, and the "Deed of Gift" of Christ upon which it is said to rest? What is the virtue of a "Deed of Gift or Grant" which actually conveys nothing, and which was eternally intended to convey nothing? Besides this, this language is injurious,



because it leads to the perversion of scriptural language upon this subject, and to the great emptying of its proper force. We have proved that the Scriptures teach that the designed effect of Christ's death was to "save his people from their sins," and not simply, as Brown intimates, to remove legal obstacles out of the way of all sinners indifferently. In Scripture language the purpose of Christ in his death cannot fail. According to the implications of Brown's language, that designed effect is left, as respects the vast majority of its objects, suspended upon the contingency of second causes. In Scripture language God's "giving love" is that highest and most wonderful form of love, which "spared not his own Son," and therefore, *à fortiori*, will infallibly secure with him the gift of "all things" necessary for salvation. John 3:16; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:4; 5:25; Rom. 8:32; 1 John 3:16; 4:9. In the language of the "Marrow men" God's "giving love" signifies a general benevolence towards all human sinners as such, consistent with his purpose that a large portion of them shall be left to the inevitable consequences of their own sin.

In this century a few, like Wardlaw and James Richards, have held the doctrine of the general reference of the Atonement in connection with strict orthodoxy as to other points. The great majority, however, of the Calvinistic advocates of a general redemption have been the professors of the New England or Edwardean Theology generally, such as Emmons, Taylor, Park, Fiske and others. The language of Amyraldus, the "Marrow men," Baxter, Wardlaw, Richards, Brown and others is now used to cover much more serious departures from the truth. All really consistent Calvinists ought to have learned by this time that the original positions of the great writers and confessions of the Reformed Churches have only been confused, and neither improved, strengthened nor illustrated, by all the talk with which the Church has, in the mean time, been distracted as to the "double will" of God, or the "double reference" of the Atonement. If men will be consistent in their adherence to these "Novelties," they must become Arminians. If they would hold consistently to the essential principles of Calvinism, they must discard the "Novelties."

It has always been a marked characteristic of the Arminians, in their controversies with Calvinists, that they insist upon the importance of the distinction between the Impetration and the Application of Redemption. The former, they insist, is general; the latter, they admit to be limited to believers. Professed Calvinists of a certain school insist upon the same distinction. The Atonement, they maintain, is general, while they admit that Redemption, including the actual application of grace, is confined to the elect. They urge us to consider "the Atonement in itself," apart from all thought of its application. But if you separate all thought of purpose and design from the sufferings of Christ, you would have of course nothing more than calamities devoid of all moral significance. He died for a purpose. The question is, What did he aim to accomplish in his death? I challenge any one to show (1) how the intended application of the Atonement could have been any more general than its actual application? And (2) if the intended application is admitted to have been limited to the elect, what remains to the general reference of the Atonement except (a) the intrinsic sufficiency; (b) the exact adaptation; and (c) the bona fide offer—all which, it is agreed on all hands, is without any limit at all?

The question we debate, and which the Reformed Church has decided, is as to the intended application of the Atonement. If any man insists upon our abstracting that intended application, and considering apart from it the sufferings of Christ by themselves, we have no objection to acknowledge that when considered apart from all design or intention whatsoever, the mere literal suffering which remains is indifferently as well adapted to the case of one man as to that of another.

## CHAPTER V:

# THE QUESTIONS, WHAT WAS THE OPINION OF CALVIN AS TO THE DESIGN OF THE ATONEMENT?—WHAT IS THE STANDARD OF CALVINISM?— AND WHAT IS THE DOCTRINE ON THIS SUBJECT OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION AND CATECHISM? CONSIDERED AND ANSWERED

WE come now to consider the questions, What was the opinion of Calvin as to the design of Christ in dying?—What is the standard of that system of faith held, by common consent, by the Reformed Churches?—and especially, What doctrine on this subject is solemnly professed by all those who adopt the Westminster Confession as the confession of their faith?

Many, in our day, who hold very imperfect views as to the nature of the Atonement, and as to the design of God in it, fall back upon some of the vague statements as to the latter point which they are able to glean out of Calvin's voluminous works, and under cover of his great name claim that their various specialties come legitimately under the category of genuine Calvinism. Jenkyn, in words borrowed from Bishop Horsley, challenges the advocates of definite and personal redemption to remember that "those who boast in the name of CALVIN should know what CALVINISM is." What I have to say as to Calvin and the standard of Calvinism will be presented under the following heads.

1. It has been a very old, and is still a very common trick of errorists to seek to cover themselves with the authority of the general and

unscientific statements of eminent theologians, written before any particular doctrine in question has been consciously considered and clearly discriminated and defined by the responsible representatives and organs of the Church. Thus Arians, Socinians and Pelagians have of old, for their own justification, paraded fragments torn out of the unsystematic writings of the Fathers, who wrote before the times of the Council of Nice or of the controversies of Augustine with Pelagius. Papists find a large measure of material apparently justifying their distinguishing positions in the writings of the best theologians preceding the era of the Reformation, even in the writings of Augustine himself. Arminians quote much that they find to their mind in the books of all the Fathers, especially those of the early Church. In like manner the advocates of self-styled "improvements in theology," on occasion, find it to their interest to quote the general and indefinite language of Reformers, who wrote without ever consciously entertaining the precise points in question, such as those developed by means of the "Novelties" subsequently introduced by the school of Saumur—special questions, for instance, involved in the nature of justification, the method and grounds of imputation, and the design of the Atonement. Let the fact be well noted, therefore, that Calvin does not appear to have given the question we are at present discussing a deliberate consideration, and has certainly not left behind him a clear and consistent statement of his views.

2. I have already sufficiently proved that Calvin held the Satisfaction Theory of the Atonement in its strictest sense, and all the world knows that as a predestinarian he went to the length of Supralapsarianism, from which such theologians as Turretin, Witsius and Owen, and the Synod of Dort, and the Assembly of Westminster, recoiled. When the advocates of a general atonement claim to stand by Calvin, they ought to be well prepared for the arduous undertaking. The entire analogy and spirit of Calvin's system was as a whole broadly characterized by the subjection of Redemption to Election as a means to an end. The able, learned and impartial F. Christian Baur, in his *History of the Atonement* (A. D. 1838), says:

"Zwingle and Calvin did indeed adhere to the dogma of Satisfaction in its traditional form; but from their point of view the Satisfaction itself was subsumed under the idea of the absolute decree, in relation to which the satisfaction of Christ was not the *causa meritoria* of salvation, but only the *causa instrumentalis* carrying out the purpose of redemption." That this is true, so far as it represents Calvin subordinating the purpose of redemption to the purpose of election, every student of his Institutes and of his Consensus Genevensis knows, and that this conclusively settles the present debate every competent theologian will confess. He declares the gift of Christ is the result of his infinite love to the persons for whom he is given;\* that Christ really merits eternal life and all spiritual graces for those for whom he died;† that Christ is to us both the clear mirror and the pledge and security of the eternal and secret election of God,\* that God, eternally anterior to their creation and irrespective of their character, loved the elect, and hated the non-elect, predestinating the first to holiness and happiness, and the other to sin and misery for ever. It is true that at times Calvin uses general terms with respect to the design of Christ's death in a more unguarded manner than would now be done by one of his consistent disciples. See Rom. 5:18. But at other times he explicitly denies that he believes in an indiscriminate Atonement in the sense of Barnes and the great majority of the modern advocates of General Redemption. And let it be remembered that one deliberate statement limiting the design of Christ's death is sufficient to define the sense of any finite number of vague and indefinite expressions, such as that referred to above in his comment on Rom. 5:18. Thus in his comment on 1 John 2:2, he declared his adhesion to the Scholastic formula that "Christ died sufficiently for all, but efficiently only for the elect," which is very different from the opinion of those who hold that Christ died for the purpose of removing legal obstacles out of the way of all men indifferently. And at the same time he denies utterly that the apostle, in saying that Christ is the "propitiation for the sins of the whole world" (*totius mundi*) could have meant to include the reprobate. "Such a monstrous thing deserves no refutation. The design of John was no other than to make this benefit common to the whole Church. Then

under the word all or whole, he does not include the reprobate, but designates those who should believe, as well as those who were then scattered through various parts of the world." Commentaries 1 John 2:2.\*

3. But whatever the personal opinions of Calvin may have been, the second question as to what is Calvinism? is entirely independent of them. The title Calvinism has—whether with propriety or not, nevertheless as a fixed fact—been given to a definite system, which possesses an identity of character and of history independent of any single man that ever lived. It is doubtless convenient, but it is eminently unscholarly, to attempt to settle the theology of the Reformed Churches by reference to the writings of a single man. There are two ways of determining what several elements legitimately belong to this system: (1.) By an analysis and comparison of all the elements of the system, trying each proposed element by the fundamental principles, the general spirit, logical relations and analogy of the whole. This has been, I suppose, sufficiently done in the preceding analysis and statement of the question. (2.) The second method is an historical appeal to the common consent of that great family of Churches who agree in professing the fundamental principles of that system, as this consent is expressed by their great representative Confessions and classical theological writings, prepared after the topics in question have been consciously and specifically discussed and defined.

All the world knows that the seventeenth century, including the latter part of the sixteenth, was the era when all the elements of all the great systems of theology were subjected, by means of controversies, to a thorough analysis and adjustment, when each system was elaborated with a distinctness, and defined with an accuracy, and discussed with a power, and received each by its entire circle of adherents with a unanimity which surpasses all the subsequent as much as all the precedent achievements of the Church. This was the age which, taken in its wide limits, produced the Roman Catholic, Robert Bellarmine; the Unitarian, Crellius, and the other authors of

the Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum; the Lutheran, Gerhard, Calovius, Quenstedt; the Arminian, Arminius, Episcopus Limborch and Grotius; the Calvinistic Universalists, Cameron, Placeus, Amyraldus, Daillé; the Reformed Synods of Dort, Alez and Charenton, the Westminster Assembly, the Formula Consensus Helvetica, the Savoy Confession, &c., &c., &c. We lay it down, therefore, as a canon, which no student of historical theology will care to deny, that the COMMON CONSENT OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES, DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, AS WITNESSED IN THEIR CREEDS AND IN THE WRITINGS OF THEIR REPRESENTATIVE THEOLOGIANs, IS THE STANDARD OF CALVINISM.

The only other point which our argument requires us to establish is that the decisions of the Reformed Churches, during the seventeenth century, were universally and explicitly in confirmation of our view of the Atonement as definite and personal. Both of the learned and impartial critics, Wener and Hagenbach, agree that the deliverances of the Belgic\* and Gallic† Confessions (A. D. 1571), and of the Synod of Dort (A. D. 1619), expressly teach a definite Atonement. "For this was the most free council, and gracious will and intention of God the Father, that the life-giving and saving efficacy of the most precious death of his own Son, should exert itself in all the elect, in order to give them alone justifying faith, and thereby to lead them to eternal life; that is, that God willed that Christ, through the blood of the cross (by which he confirmeth the new covenant), should out of every people, tribe, nation and language, efficaciously redeem all those, and those only, who were from eternity chosen to salvation, and given to him by the Father." Under the head of the rejection of errors concerning redemption, "The Synod rejects the errors of those who teach 'that God the Father destined his own Son unto the death of the cross, without a certain and definite counsel of saving any one by name.' ... For this assertion is contumelious to the wisdom of God and the merit of Jesus Christ, and is contrary to Scripture, as the Saviour says, 'I lay down my life for the sheep, and I know them.' John 10:15, 27."\* "Who teach that 'Christ, by his satisfaction, did not

with certainty merit that very salvation and faith by which this satisfaction of Christ may be effectually applied unto salvation.' "† Here the doctrine of definite Atonement is taught with singular fulness and variety of statement. Thus (a) it is stated that Christ died to secure the salvation of the elect, and the elect only. (b.) That Christ died in pursuance of a definite covenant arrangement between the Father and the Son. (c.) That Christ, by his death, actually merited and secured faith and spiritual grace for those for whom he died. Hence. those who never received the gift of faith are proved not to be those for whom he died.

The Westminster Confession was prepared in 1648. There has been in this generation a very uncandid attempt made by some who profess to receive this Confession, *ex animo*, as the fit expression of their faith, to show that it does not explicitly affirm a specific and personal redemption of the elect to the exclusion of a general redemption of all. These parties admit that the Confession may be chargeable with the sin of omission in respect to the failure to affirm that redemption is general and indefinite. But they deny that it affirms the contrary. It is said that the Confession is very careful to trace out the relation of Christ's work to the elect, while it leaves the way open to all to indulge what opinions they please as to its relations to the non-elect. This is obviously a mistake. Our Confession explicitly—and precisely in those forms of statement most significant and emphatic, when viewed in connection with the state of the controversy on this question at that time—affirms, that the redemptive work of Christ was personal and definite, and therefore not impersonal and indefinite. "They who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved, but the elect only."\* Here it is explicitly declared that the elect are redeemed, and that only the elect are redeemed by Christ. "The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he, through the eternal



Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of the Father; and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given him." Here it is explicitly said that the atoning work of Christ secures for those in whose behalf it was offered reconciliation—not reconciliability—and that it purchases for them an everlasting inheritance in heaven. They, therefore, who never receive the reconciliation nor the inheritance cannot be those for whom they were purchased. "TO ALL FOR WHOM Christ hath purchased redemption he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same, making intercession for them, and revealing unto them, in and by the word, the mysteries of salvation, effectually persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey."\* Here it is expressly said that Christ actually saves all those for whom he died, and it follows, of course, that he shed his blood for none whom he does not actually save. "This statement contains, and was intended to contain, the true status quæstionis in the controversy about the extent of the Atonement. It is to be explained by a reference to the mode of conducting this controversy, between the Calvinists and the Arminians about the time of the Synod of Dort, and also to the mode of conducting the controversy excited in France by Cameron, and afterwards carried on by Amyraldus in France and Holland, and by Baxter in England."

The Formula Consensus Helvetica was prepared in 1675 by Heidegger and Turretin for the express purpose of opposing the "Novelties" of the school of Saumur, and it received the suffrages of all the Swiss Churches of that age. "Accordingly in the death of Christ, only the elect, who in time are made new creatures (2 Cor. 5:17), and for whom Christ in his death was substituted as an expiatory sacrifice, are regarded as having died with him and as being justified from sin; and thus, with the counsel of the Father, who gave to Christ none but the elect to be redeemed, and also with the working of the Holy Spirit, who sanctifies and seals unto a living hope of eternal life none but the elect, the will of Christ who died so agrees and amicably conspires in perfect harmony, that the sphere of

the Father's election, the Son's redemption, and the Spirit's sanctification is one and the same."\*

The decrees of the Synod of Dort were accepted with unparalleled unanimity by all the Reformed Churches. They were adopted again and again by the National Synod of the Reformed Church of France, at Ales, in 1620; at Charenton, in 1623; and at every subsequent session until they ceased to meet. Again and again the French Synod examined this very question, and decided, as I showed above from the minutes of the Synod of Alençon (A. D. 1637), that Christ died with the intention of saving only the elect, while his work is freely offered to all. The theological faculty of Geneva, the successors of Calvin, only eighty years after his death, unite with the theological faculties of Leyden, Sedan, Franeker and Groningen, in writing earnestly to the Synod, protesting against the doctrines of Amyraldus, calling them "novelties," "upstarted opinions," "new doctrines," &c., and recommending the work written to refute them by that "famous divine Andrew Rivet," pastor and professor at Leyden.

The Savoy Confession (A. D. 1658) adopted by the English Independents agrees with the Westminster as to the design of redemption. The Boston Confession (A. D. 1680) explicitly teaches the same doctrine. The Cambridge Synod (A. D. 1648), when they formed the Cambridge Platform, solemnly adopted the Westminster Confession as their doctrinal symbol. The Synod of the Connecticut Churches, which formed the Saybrook Platform in 1703, adopted the Boston Confession of 1680 for their doctrinal symbol. The Westminster Confession has been subsequently adopted as the doctrinal Confession of all the Presbyterians and Independents of British descent in the world. This much, at least in common honesty, ought to be held as settled, that whatever may be the case as to the teachings of Scripture, it is not an open question what is the doctrine of the Reformed Churches as to the design of the Atonement. There is no question whether the International Synod of Dort; the National Synods of France and Westminster; the Formula Consensus

Helvetica; the theological schools of Geneva, Sedan, Leyden, Franeker and Groningen; the theologians Beza, Voetius, Diodati, Gomarus, Rivet, Du Moulin, Spanheim, Heidegger, Turretin, Cocceius, Witsius, Vitranga, Van Mastricht, Marckius, De Moor, Pictet and Owen,—there is no question whether these represent truly and fully the theology of the Reformed Churches. The consensus of these is the standard of Calvinism.

## **CHAPTER VI:**

### **THE ARGUMENTS STATED UPON WHICH THE REFORMED DOCTRINE AS TO THE DESIGN OF THE ATONEMENT RESTS**

WE are, under this fifth head, to consider the evidence relied upon by Calvinists as establishing the truth of their view of the Atonement as personal and definite. I believe that the general principles of Calvinism, and the Satisfaction Theory of the Atonement in particular, being assumed as true, the only question as to the design of Christ's work that remains possible is fully disposed of by a discriminating and exhaustive statement of the points at issue. Having spent so much time in rendering such a statement, I propose now to present the positive arguments establishing our view of the question in a very cursory manner.

1. That the design of the Atonement was the salvation of the elect personally and definitely, we think, certainly follows from the very

nature of the Atonement itself, which has been fully demonstrated in the former part of this volume.

(1.) We then proved that Christ wrought our salvation as our **SUBSTITUTE** in the strict sense of that term, and that his suffering and obedience was strictly vicarious. He occupied our law-place, and the sentence due to the principals was executed on him. Now this fact, we do not believe, involves any calculation as to the kind or amount of suffering. Whether a Substitute for few or for many, a divine Person might surely, by the same actions and in the same time, discharge all the obligations. of all indifferently. But a strict substitution of person for persons, and the infliction on the one part, and the voluntary suffering on the other, of vicarious punishment surely implies a definite recognition, on the part of the Sovereign, and of the Substitute of the persons for whom the Substitute acts, whose sins he bears and whose penal obligation he discharges. The very conception of substitution necessarily involves definite, personal relations.

(2.) We have also clearly proved that the work of Christ as our Substitute was a complete **SATISFACTION**, fully discharging all the demands of the law as a broken covenant of works. The demands of the law terminate upon persons. Its demands can be satisfied only with respect to certain definite persons, and not with respect to a mass indefinitely. The law, moreover, has no further demands upon those persons with respect to whom all its conditions have been once fully satisfied. It hence follows, that all of those for whom Christ has in this sense made a perfect satisfaction must be saved. This does not imply at all that the sinner himself has any claim upon the grace whereby he is saved, nor that God is any the less an absolute Sovereign in giving it to, and in withholding it from, whomsoever he will. The whole matter lies in the intention of the Father in giving the Son, and the intention of the Son in dying. The demands of the government with relation to an individual are satisfied when the services of another as his substitute are credited to his account. It depends simply upon the will of the substitute and upon the pleasure

of the government whether these services shall be credited to one or to another. For whomsoever they are designed, they avail to cancel their obligations. If God's will in the matter should change, the persons to whom the law-satisfying righteousness would be credited would change also. Yet, even in that case, the changed destination would make no difference as to the personal and definite reference of the satisfaction. But since God cannot change, the same persons whom God in the beginning chose to eternal life are the persons for whom Christ made satisfaction, and the persons for whom he made satisfaction are the persons whom he now justifies, and will hereafter glorify.

(3.) Every form which it is possible for the General Atonement Theory to assume necessarily involves the hypothesis that in its essential nature the Atonement effects only the removal of legal obstacles out of the way of the salvation of men, making God reconcilable, not actually reconciling him; making the salvation of all men possible, not actually saving any. But the Scriptures teach that Christ actually came to save those for whom he died—"The Son of God came to save that which was lost." Matt. 18:11; Luke 19:10. 2 Cor. 5:21: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Gal. 1:4: "He gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God." Gal. 4:5: "He was made under the law, that he might (ἵνα) redeem them that are under the law, that we might (ἵνα) receive the adoption of sons. 1 Tim. 1:15: "This is a faithful saying, ... that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Again the Scriptures declare that the effect of Christ's death is reconciliation and justification. Rom. 5:10: "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Eph. 2:16: "Christ died that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross." The design of Christ, moreover, was to secure for those for whom he died the direct effect of remission of sins, peace with God, and deliverance from the curse of the law, from wrath, from death, from sin, &c. In whom we have redemption through his blood,

the forgiveness of sins. Eph. 2:14: "For he is our peace who hath made both one." 1 Thess. 1:10: "Even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." Heb. 2:14: "That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them, who through fear of death," &c. Gal. 3:13: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." 1 Pet. 1:18: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, ... but with the precious blood of Christ." But to make salvation possible, to make possible purification, deliverance, reconciliation, is something very different indeed from actually saving, purifying, delivering or reconciling. No man has a right to empty the glorious terms in which the gospel is revealed of all their saving power. It is not we who teach a limited atonement, but our opponents. That must be a limited redemption indeed which leaves the majority of those for whom it was designed in hell for ever; which only makes salvation possible to all men in such a sense that it continues absolutely impossible to all until, by a sovereign grace which is antecedent to and independent of all redemption, it is made subjectively possible to a few.

2. None of the advocates of a general and indefinite Atonement can believe that Christ purchased repentance, faith or obedience for those for whom he died, for in that case all for whom he died must repent, believe and obey. But the Scriptures teach that Christ did purchase those blessings for those for whom he died. This is plain (1) because men have no natural power to furnish those conditions themselves. The Scriptures everywhere ascribe the whole ground and cause of our salvation to Christ. But if the differentiating grace which distinguishes the believer from the unbeliever is to be attributed to any cause exterior to Christ's redemption, then that cause, and not his redemption, is the cause of salvation. (2.) Faith and redemption are expressly said to be gifts of God. Eph. 2:8: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Acts 5:31: "Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." (3.) They are given to us for Christ's sake as the purchase of his blood. In Phil. 1:29 it is said to be given us in behalf of Christ to believe on him. Eph. 1:3, 4:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessing in heavenly things in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Titus 3:5, 6: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Gal. 3:13, 14: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law ... that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Acts 2:33: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." Emmons, the logical advocate of a general Atonement, asserts that the only benefit we receive from Christ is forgiveness of sins on condition of faith.\* But the Scriptures over and over again declare that Christ died with the design and effect of procuring for those for whom he died the subjective grace of sanctification, including faith, as well as the objective grace of forgiveness conditioned on faith. "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Titus 2:14. "Christ also loved the 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." Eph. 5:26, 27. "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (4.) All whom the Father gave to the Son believe, and none others. "All that the Father giveth to me shall come to me, ... and this is the Father's will, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." John 6:37, 39. "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me, and I give to them eternal life.... My Father which gave them me is greater than all." John 10:27, 28. Christ said, in the tenth chapter of John, "I lay down my life for the sheep," and then said to the Jews, "Ye believe not because ye are not my sheep." John 10:26. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48. Christ said to

his disciples, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Matt. 13:12.

If, then, as the Scriptures teach, Christ purchased all spiritual graces for those for whom he died, all those for whom he died must believe. If the object for which he died was to sanctify and cleanse those for whom he died, then that great mass of men who live and die, eaten to the core with every form of corruption, cannot be those for whom Christ died.

3. All the advocates of general redemption believe that Christ, moved by an impersonal and indiscriminate philanthropy or love of men as such, died in order to make the salvation of all men possible to them on the condition of faith. But the facts of the case are—(a) that Christ died after generations of men had been going to perdition during four thousand years. With regard to that half of the race who perished before his advent it is hard to see the bearings of a general redemption. And if it had no bearing upon their case, it is hard to see in what sense the redemption is general. (b.) That the condition upon which it is said Christ died to save them he has, for two thousand years since his work of atonement was finished, withheld from the knowledge of three-fourths of the race. It is hard to see in what sense the death of Christ made the salvation of the heathen possible, or how he died on purpose to save them on the condition of faith, when he has never revealed to them his purpose of salvation, nor the conditions upon which it is suspended. And if the Atonement has no reference to the salvation of the untaught heathen, it is very hard indeed to see in what sense it is general.

4. Christ died in execution of the terms of an eternal Covenant of Redemption formed between the Father and the Son. The conditions assumed by Christ on his part were that he should, in living and dying, by action and suffering, fulfil all the legal obligations of his people. The conditions promised by the Father were that Christ should "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."



That there was such a covenant formed in eternity is plain. (1.) God always acts on a plan, and there must therefore have been a mutual counsel and design on the part of the several persons of the Godhead distributing their several functions in the economy of redemption. (2.) The Scriptures explicitly state all the elements of a true covenant in this relation, giving the mutual promises and conditions of the two parties. "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes," &c. Isa. 42:6, 7. "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn to David my servant ... thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." Ps. 89:3, 4. "When his soul shall make an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, ... and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. THEREFORE will I divide him a portion with the great," &c. Isa. 53:10, 11. (3.) Christ, while accomplishing his work on earth, makes constant reference to a previous commission he had received of the Father whose will he has come to execute. "I came to do the will of him that sent me." "This commandment I have received of my Father." "As my Father hath appointed unto me." (4.) Christ claims the reward which had been conditioned upon the fulfilment of that commission. "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name to those whom thou hast given me out of the world. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me." John 17:4–9. (5.) Christ constantly speaks of those that believe as having been previously given him by the Father. His Father had given them—"He laid down his life for the sheep." John 10:15. They were given him by the Father. He knows them. They hear his voice. They shall never perish. The reason that the reprobate do not believe is because they are not his sheep. John 10:26. He prays not for the world; he prays only for those the Father had given him out of the world.

If he died in pursuance of a mutual understanding between himself and the Father, if he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, and if every one that the Father gave him in that covenant shall be saved, then surely those who are not saved are not those for whom he died.

5. The Scriptures habitually affirm that the MOTIVE which led the Father to give his Son, and the Son to die, was not a mere general philanthropy, but the highest, most peculiar and personal love. Christ's true purpose in dying can certainly have no more exact and complete expression than his outpourings of soul in the ear of his Father on the terrible night preceding his sacrifice, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John. If ever the real design of his death was uppermost in his heart and speech, it must have been then. If ever the motives which led to his dying were in strong action, it must have been then. But all that he says of the world is that he does not pray for it. All the unutterable treasures of his love are poured forth upon those whom the Father gave him out of the world. "For their sakes." he said, "I sanctify myself"—that is, devote myself to this awful service. John 17:13: "That they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8. "That ye may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God." Eph. 3:18, 19. "Hereby perceive we the love of God." "In this was manifested the love of God, because he sent his only-begotten Son into the world," &c. 1 John 3:16; 4:9, 10. This love of Christ for his Church has for its type the personal and exclusive love of the husband for the wife. Eph. 5:25–27.

It is inconceivable that this highest and most peculiar love, which moved God to give his only-begotten and well-beloved Son to undergo a painful and shameful death, could have had for its objects the myriads from whom, both before and after Christ, he had

withheld all knowledge of the gospel; or those to whom, while he gives them the outward call of the word, he refuses to give the inward call of his Spirit. Can such love as the death of Christ expresses, welling up and pouring forth from the heart of the omnipotent God, fail to secure the certain blessedness of its objects? Paul expresses his opinion upon this precise point: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32. Surely it is a profane defamation of this love to say that its effects may be measured in God's providing a salvation for all men to accrue to them upon conditions known and intended in the case of most to be impossible. It is surely an abuse of Scripture to say that the elect and the reprobate, "those appointed to honour" and "those appointed to dishonour," those who "before were of old ordained to this condemnation" and those who were "ordained unto eternal life," those whom God "hardeneth" and those upon whom he "hath mercy," the "world" and those "chosen out of the world," are all indiscriminately the objects of this amazing, this heaven-moving, this soul-redeeming love.

6. The Scriptures habitually represent the definite design of the death of Christ to be the saving of "many," the redemption of "his sheep," "his Church," "his people," "his children," the "elect." "And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "I lay down my life for the sheep." John 10:11, 15. "The Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28. "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it; ... 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." Eph. 5:25, 26, 27. Christ is said (John 11:51, 52) to have died to gather together in one the children of God who are scattered abroad. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's ELECT? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen

again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Rom. 8:32–35.

Now, many plausible reasons may be assigned why, on the supposition of a personal and definite Atonement, general terms should be used on some occasions to illustrate the fact that the redemption is suited for all, sufficient for all, offered to all; that the elect are chosen out of every family, tribe and nation under heaven, and from every successive generation; and that finally the whole earth shall be redeemed from the curse, the gospel triumph among all nations, and the saints inherit the regenerated world. But we affirm that, on the contrary hypothesis of a general and indefinite Atonement, no plausible pretext can be given for the use of the definite language above quoted. If Christ loved the whole world so as to die for it, why say that the motive for his dying was that his sheep should be saved?

7. Christ's work as High Priest is one work, accomplished in all its parts with one design and with one effect, and having respect to the same persons. The work of the high priest, as I showed in Chapter ix., Part I., included sacrifice or oblation and intercession. I proved also (a) that the work of the ancient priest secured the actual and certain remission of the sins of all for whom he acted, and that it bore a definite reference to the persons of all those whom he represented, and to none others. (b.) That the ancient priest offered intercession for precisely the same persons—for all of them, and for none others—for whom he had previously made expiation. This argument I will not here repeat. It will answer our purpose to notice —

(1.) That the Scriptures declare that the ancient priest was in all these respects a type of Christ. Our Lord, having made expiation in the outer court, went within the veil to make intercession. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Where he ever liveth to make intercession for us." Heb. 7:25; 9:12, 24.

(2.) But Christ interceded only for his "sheep." This is certain, (a) because it is always effectual. He intercedes as "a priest upon his throne." He says his "Father heareth him always." His form of intercession is, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me," &c. John 17:24. (b.) He expressly declares the fact that he intercedes only for the elect—"I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." John 17:9. "Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." John 17:20. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." John 10:16.

(3.) But if Christ makes intercession for the elect only, he can of course have died for them alone. As proved before, the ancient priest made intercession for all for whom he made expiation. The priestly work was one in design and effect in all its parts. It is simply absurd to suppose that the priest acted as a mediator for one party when he made the oblation, and for another when he made the intercession. This is the view certainly that Paul took of the matter—"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is also at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" &c. Here it is plain that the argument establishes the security of the "elect." The ground upon which that security rests is, that Christ died for them and intercedes for them. Plainly the dying and the intercession have one and the same personal object.

(4.) This is rendered more certain by the very nature of that perpetual intercession which Christ offers in behalf of his elect. "For us it is now perfected in heaven; it is not an humble dejection of

himself, with cries, tears and supplications; nay it cannot be considered as vocal by the way of entreaty, but merely real, by the presentation of himself, sprinkled with the blood of the covenant, before the throne of grace in our behalf. With his own blood—to appear in the presence of God for us. Heb. 9:12, 24. So presenting himself that his former oblation might have its perpetual efficacy, until the many sons given him are brought to glory. And herein his intercession consisteth, being nothing as it were but his oblation continued. He was the 'Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.' Rev. 13:8. Now his intercession before his actual oblation in the fulness of time being nothing but a presenting of the engagement that was upon him for the work in due time to be accomplished, certainly that which follows it is nothing but a presenting of what, according to that engagement, is fulfilled; so that it is nothing but a continuation of his oblation in postulating, by remembrance and declaration of it, those things which by it were procured. How, then, is it possible that the one of these should be of larger compass and extent than the other? Can he be said to offer for them for whom he doth not intercede, when his intercession is nothing but a presenting of his oblation in the behalf of them for whom he suffered, and for the bestowing of those good things which by that were purchased."\*

8. The relation which this question sustains to the doctrine of Election is self-evident. The Calvinistic doctrine that God of his mere good pleasure has from eternity infallibly predestinated certain persons out of the mass of fallen humanity to salvation and to all the means thereof, and that in so doing he has sovereignly passed over the rest of mankind and left them to the natural consequences of their sin, necessarily settles the question as to the design of God in giving his Son to die. It is purely unthinkable that the same mind that sovereignly predestinated the elect to salvation, and the rest of mankind to the punishment of their sins, should, at the same time, make a great sacrifice for the sake of removing legal obstacles out of the way of those from whose path it is decreed other obstacles shall not be removed. Schweitzer, in his article in Herzog's Encyclopædia, says that Amyraldus, towards the close of his life, came to see that

there was nothing real in all the new distinctions with which he had been attempting to smooth the harshness of Calvinism, and to obviate some of the more specious objections to it. Unquestionably there is no compromise between Arminianism and Calvinism. Those who attempt to stand between must content themselves with treading the air while they receive the fire of both sides. We do not object to Calvinistic Universalism (that is, universal particularism, or particular universalism) because of any danger with which—when considered as a final position—it threatens orthodoxy. We distrust it rather because it is not a final position, but is the first step in the easy descent of error.

9. Our view has the capital advantage of agreeing with and harmonizing all the facts of the case, and of representing Christ as having designed to accomplish by his death precisely what in the event is accomplished, and nothing else. We believe that he designed to accomplish by his death the following ends: (1.) Evidently as the end to which all other ends stand related as means, the only end which affords any adequate reason for what he did, he purposed to secure certainly the salvation of his own people, those whom the Father had given unto him. (2.) To secure that end he designed to purchase for them, and then efficaciously to communicate to them, faith and repentance and all the fruits of the Spirit. (3.) In order to the great end above stated he purposed to purchase many temporal and other blessings short of salvation for all mankind, and in various degrees for individual men, just as they are actually experienced under the dispensations of Providence. (4.) In order also, as a further means to the same end, to lay, in the perfect sufficiency of the Atonement for all and its exact adaptation to each, a real foundation for the bona fide offer of salvation to all men indiscriminately on the condition of faith. The design has the elect for its sole, ultimate end, and it in any way respects the non-elect only as the method which God has chosen for the application of redemption to the elect necessarily involves the bringing to bear upon the non-elect, among whom they live, influences, moral and otherwise, which in various degrees involves their characters and destinies.

The hypothesis of a general and indefinite Atonement admits but of two distinct positions, that of the Arminian and that of the Calvinistic Universalist. According to the Arminian view, the Father and the Son did all that properly belonged to either of them to do to secure the salvation of all men. The Holy Spirit also impartially gives common grace to all men. Each of the divine Persons, therefore, is baffled in the mutual design as far as the multitude of the lost is concerned. As far as the intrinsic efficacy of the Atonement is concerned, it might have failed in every case, as it has failed in a majority of the cases for which it was designed. Indeed, the Atonement has, properly speaking, secured the salvation of no one—has been, on the contrary, dependent in every case upon the self-determined choice of sinful men for whatever measure of success it has attained. There is, moreover, upon this view, a mysterious want of conformity between God's dispensation of redemption and his dispensation of providence. In his dispensation of redemption and grace he has done all he could to accomplish his design of saving all men indifferently; while in his dispensation of providence he has withheld those essential conditions of knowledge, without which salvation is simply impossible, from three-fourths of the people living on the face of the earth.

According to the view of the Calvinistic Universalist, God loved all enough to give his Son to die for them, and yet loved only the elect enough to give them his Spirit. He designed in the sacrifice of his Son to make the salvation of all men possible, while at the same time he sovereignly intended that only the elect should be saved. His decree of redemption is conditional, but the conditions were intended to be impossible. His decree of election is unconditional. God went to work at great cost to make the salvation of all men objectively possible, while he at the very same time intended that the salvation of the majority should continue subjectively impossible. God the Redeemer died that all men might be saved if they would believe after half of them were already in perdition, while God the providential Ruler left two-thirds of the other half permanently ignorant of the fact that any



salvation was provided, or of the terms upon which it might be secured. At present this is the view of "advanced thinkers."

## **CHAPTER VII:**

### **THE OBJECTIONS BROUGHT AGAINST THE REFORMED VIEW OF THE DESIGN OF THE ATONEMENT STATED, AND THE ANSWER TO THEM INDICATED**

WE have now come in conclusion to consider the principal arguments which the advocates of a general and indefinite Atonement rely upon as refuting our doctrine and as establishing their own. By far the most considerable of these arguments are those founded (1) on the admitted fact of the indiscriminate offer of the gospel to all men. (2.) On those passages of Scripture which say in general terms that Christ "bore the sins of the world," and "suffered for all." (3.) And on those passages which speak of the possibility of those dying for whom Christ died.

1. It is claimed that if Christ did not die for the purpose of providing salvation for all men indifferently, then the indiscriminate offer of salvation made in the gospel to all men is an empty form, offering the non-elect an atonement, when, as far as he is concerned, no atonement has been made. There is unquestionably a difficulty in this neighborhood, but it will require some discrimination to determine exactly the point upon which the difficulty presses. There are three distinct respects in which a personal and definite

Atonement appears to be inconsistent with the indiscriminate offer of salvation, which are sometimes distinctly stated, but are generally jumbled together in a confused charge of inconsistency. These are, (a) that if the Atonement was designed only for the elect, it is not consistent with truth that God should offer salvation to all men. (b.) That in such a case there is no solid warrant for the ministerial offer of salvation to all men. (c.) That in such a case there is no solid warrant for any man, who is not privately and infallibly assured of his own election, to rest his trust upon that Atonement, which, although offered to all, was intended only for the benefit of the elect.

As to the warrant for the ministerial offer of salvation to all, it must be found alone in the great commission with which every minister is sent out by the authority of the Master himself. No matter what may be the nature or the design of the Atonement, no servant has any right to go back of his commission, and insist upon understanding his Master's secret purposes or aims. No matter what else is true or not true, the command to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" is the entire and all-sufficient warrant for the ministerial offer. Even if the Atonement can be demonstrated to be universal, our right to offer it to all men cannot rest upon that demonstration, but, as said before, upon the plain terms of that commission which we already have.

As to the warrant of personal faith upon the part of men who can know nothing as to their election, the case is precisely similar. The warrant rests sufficiently and exclusively in the indiscriminate invitations, commands and promises of the gospel. If we were all assured of the absolute universality of redemption, or if we could read plainly every name recorded in the Lamb's book of life, the case would be no plainer and no more certain than it now is. The absolutely righteous, the infinitely wise and powerful God solemnly declares that "whosoever will may take of the water of life freely," and that "whosoever comes he will in no wise cast out." Any other warrant than this is inconsistent with the nature of faith. To demand any other warrant is sheer rationalism and rebellion.

With respect to the warrant for God's acting as he does in the case, we might surely content ourselves with referring to the infinite perfections and absolute sovereignty of God upon the one hand, and to the entire ignorance of man upon the other. But in order that we may locate the difficulty, which every one vaguely feels, at the precise point to which it belongs, observe that the definite and personal design of the Atonement, and the unconditional and personal election of some men to eternal life, are identically one and the same in their bearing upon the indiscriminate offers of the gospel. Viewing the matter from the Arminian stand-point, we challenge our opponents to show why the sovereign election of some men, and the sovereign leaving of others to the natural consequences of their own sins, are any more inconsistent with the good faith of God in the indiscriminate offers of salvation to all than is that divine infallible foreknowledge which the Arminians admit. If God certainly foreknows that to the vast mass of those to whom the offer of salvation is brought it will be only a savour of death unto death, awfully aggravating their doom, how is it consistent with his supposed desire and labour to save all men alike that he should thus knowingly aggravate the condemnation of the majority of those he professes to desire to save.

Besides this, the declaration of purpose which God makes in the universal offers of the gospel is all literally true, election or no election. It is every man's duty and interest to repent and believe whether he will or not. It is God's purpose to receive and save all that believe on his Son, elect or not. It is every word true. Neither does the salvation of the elect make the case of the non-elect any worse. Nor is the indiscriminate offer of salvation to all, including the non-elect, a wanton or improper mockery of their case, because (a) the offer is real and sincere; (b) the only reason they do not benefit by it is their own wilful rejection of it; (c) it is, therefore, an admirable test of their character, displaying the inveteracy of their sin, and justifying the righteous judgments of God (Ps. 51:4; John 3:19); (d) it is an essential and admirably efficient part of God's plan to gather his elect into the fold.

Viewing the matter from the stand-point of the Calvinistic Universalists, we challenge our opponents to show us wherein there is any more inconsistency with the good faith of the indiscriminate offer of an interest in the redemption of Christ upon our view that it was designed only for the elect, than there is upon their view that God foreknew and intended that the conditions upon which it is offered to all men should be impossible. Remember that the question between them and us respects the single point as to the design of the Atonement. We believe as fully as they do (a) that the Atonement is sufficient for all, (b) exactly adapted to each; and hence, (c) that all legal obstacles are removed out of the way of God's saving whomsoever he pleases; and (d) that it is sincerely offered to all to whom the gospel is preached; and hence, (e) in a purely objective sense, salvation is available to all if they believe. What, then, is the objection if God, having prepared a feast for his friends, should—there being enough and to spare—if it pleased him, invite his foes to come, whether they will or not God can save whomsoever he pleases now; but since his mind changes not, he pleases to save now precisely those whom he designed to save when he sacrificed his Son.

An indiscriminate offer of an interest in the Atonement has been made for two thousand years since Christ died. But remember that the same indiscriminate offer was made for four thousand years before he died. The offer then was that if men would believe upon a Christ to be sacrificed hereafter they should be saved. Now, is it sense or nonsense to believe that at the end of those four thousand years Christ died for the purpose of saving those who had already rejected him, and who had consequently gone to their own place? Would it not have met the precise case of all who lived on earth before his advent if he had promised them that at the end of time he would die to save all those who had previously believed? Would there have been any propriety in his promising to die also for those who had previously rejected his kind offers and been lost? As far as the design of the Atonement, the purpose to be attained by his death, is concerned, what conceivable difference does it make whether the sacrifice of Christ be offered at the beginning, the middle or the end

of human history? If he had died at the end, he certainly could not die for those who had previously rejected his offers and perished therefor. And since he did die in the middle, why may not the gospel be offered on the same terms to all men, as well after as before his death? The only difficulty lies in the fact that finite creatures are utterly unable to comprehend the sovereign will and the unchangeable all-knowledge of God, which absolutely shuts out all contingency in relation to the hopes, the fears, the doubts, the responsibilities, the struggles of human beings. Events are contingent in themselves. But there is no contingency in relation to the divine purpose. One event is conditioned upon another, but there are no conditions in the divine decree. God's purpose, his design of redemption, like every other divine purpose, is timeless. What has been and what will be, who have believed and who will believe, are all the same to him. To him the believers and the elect are identical. His design in the Atonement may with absolute indifference be stated either as a design to save the elect, or as a design to save all who had believed or who would believe on his Son.\*

2. It is claimed that that large class of Scripture passages in which in general terms it is said that Christ "suffered for all," and gave his life for the "world," expressly teach that the design of the Atonement was general and impersonal. These passages are such as the following: "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. 2:5, 6. "And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:1, 2. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2:3, 4. "That he might taste death for every man." It is confessed on all sides that these phrases "all" and "world" do not of themselves necessarily settle the question. When it is said that "a decree went out from

Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed" (Luke 2:1), no man understands that the term "all the world" is to be taken absolutely. It is evident that the only way in which this controversy can be settled is to take up the phrases severally in which these general terms are used, and subject them, in connection with their context, to a thorough critical examination, in order to determine the intent of the inspired writer in each passage taken as a whole; then to do the same thing with each of those passages in which it is asserted, as shown above, that Christ died for the elect; and then, by an impartial comparison of the two classes of passages thus examined, to determine which class is to be taken absolutely, and which is to yield to the other. For a work of this kind I have neither the space nor the taste, nor is it proper, since—as Prof. Moses Stuart says in a passage to be quoted below—such is the state of the question as to the usage of the words "all" and "world" in such passages that it cannot be decided by any appeal to grammar or lexicons, and belongs rather to the field of the theologian than of the commentator. Believing that I have settled the question on the former ground, in the discussion just closed above, I will now content myself with referring the reader to the triumphant proof afforded by Candlish in the third chapter of the first part of his admirable work on the Atonement, that these passages, when rightly interpreted, do not in the least contradict our doctrine of a definite Atonement, and with making the following remarks.

(1.) I would recall a remark made above, that every man familiar with the usage common to all human languages with respect to general terms, will acknowledge that particular and definite expressions must limit the interpretation of the general ones, rather than the reverse. It is plainly far easier to assign plausible reasons why, if Christ died particularly for his elect, they being as yet scattered among all nations and generations, and undistinguishable by us from the mass of fallen humanity to whom the gospel is indiscriminately offered, he should be said in certain connections to have died for the world or for all, than it can be to assign any plausible reason why, if he died to make the salvation of all possible, he should nevertheless

be said in any connection to have died for the purpose of certainly saving his elect.

(2.) Moses Stuart—who, as a theologian, believed in a general and indefinite Atonement—was too well informed as an exegete, and too candid as a man, to build his faith on the class of scriptural passages to which I am referring. In his comments on Heb. 2:9, he says: "Ὑπὲρ παντὸς means, all men without distinction, that is, both Jew and Gentile. The same view is often given of the death of Christ. See John 3:14–17; 4:42; 12:32; 1 John 2:2; 4:14; 1 Tim. 2:3, 4; Titus 2:11; 2 Pet. 3:7. Compare Rom. 3:29, 30; 10:11–13. In all these and the like cases the words all and all men evidently mean Jew and Gentile. They are opposed to the Jewish idea that the Messiah was connected appropriately and exclusively with the Jews, and that the blessings of the kingdom were appropriately, if not exclusively, theirs. The sacred writers mean to declare by such expressions that Christ died really and truly as well and as much for the Gentiles as for the Jews; that there is no difference at all in regard to the privileges of any one who may belong to his kingdom; and that all men without exception have equal and free access to it. But the considerate interpreter, who understands the nature of this idiom, will never think of seeking, in expressions of this kind, proof of the final salvation of every individual of the human race. Nor do they, when strictly scanned by the *usus loquendi* of the New Testament, decide directly against the views of those who advocate what is called a particular redemption. The question in all these phrases evidently respects the offer of salvation, the opportunity to acquire it through a Redeemer; not the actual application of promises; the fulfilment is connected only with repentance and faith. But whether such an offer can be made with sincerity to those who are reprobates (and whom the Saviour knows are and will be such), consistently with the grounds which the advocates for particular redemption maintain, is a question for the theologian rather than the commentator to discuss."

(3.) Their own canon of interpretation goes too far for evangelical Arminians and Calvinistic advocates of a general Atonement. It is

certain that the principle of interpretation which make the Scriptures teach universal atonement infallibly brings out in company with it absolutely universal salvation. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:22; Col. 1:20; 2 Cor. 5:14; John 12:32; Eph. 1:10; Rom. 5:18, &c. The Arminians say all believers. But the instant they do so they abandon their high ground that the language of Scripture in such cases is to be taken absolutely and literally.

(4.) Remember what we have over and over again affirmed, (a) Christ did literally and absolutely die for all men, in the sense of securing for all a lengthened respite and many temporal benefits, moral as well as physical; (b) his Atonement was sufficient for all; (c) exactly adapted to the needs of each; (d) it is offered indiscriminately to all; hence, as far as God's preceptive will is concerned, the Atonement is universal. It is to be preached to all, and to be accepted by all. It is for all as far as determining the duty of all and laying obligations upon all. And practically it makes salvation objectively available to all upon the condition of faith. God's decretive will or design in making the Atonement is a very different matter.

3. It is claimed by our opponents that those passages which speak of the possibility of those dying for whom Christ died are inconsistent with our doctrine that the design of his death was to secure the salvation of his elect. The passages in question are such as—"There shall be false teachers among you, who shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them." 2 Pet. 2:1. "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." Rom. 14:15. "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" 1 Cor. 8:11.

These passages are just like those constant warnings which are addressed in Scripture to the elect, which are designed as means to carry out and secure that perseverance in grace which is the end of election, and therefore are in no sense inconsistent with its certainty.



"If those passages are consistent with the certainty of the salvation of all the elect, then this passage is consistent with the certainty of the salvation of those for whom Christ specifically died. It was absolutely certain that no one of Paul's companions in shipwreck was, on that occasion, to lose his life, because the salvation of the whole company had been predicted and promised; and yet the apostle said that if the sailors were allowed to take away their boats, those left on board could not be saved. This appeal secured the accomplishment of the promise. So God's telling the elect that if they apostatize they shall perish prevents their apostasy. And in like manner the Bible teaching that those for whom Christ died shall perish if they violate their conscience prevents their transgressing or brings them to repentance. God's purposes embrace the means as well as the end. If the means fail, the end will fail. He secures the end by securing the means. It is just as certain that those for whom Christ died shall be saved as that the elect shall be saved. Yet in both cases the event is spoken of as conditional. There is not only a possibility, but an absolute certainty, that they will perish if they fall away. But this is precisely what God has promised to prevent."\* Falling away (a) is the natural tendency of the human heart, and (b) the natural result of those sins from which the Scriptures warn us. God has left his blood-bought elect for the present mixed indistinguishably to human eye with the mass of humanity. To all men the presumption is that Christ died for himself and for each other man until final reprobation proves the reverse. Therefore we are all under obligation to carry ourselves, and to regard and treat all other men as those for whom Christ died until the contrary is proved. And God prevents the natural tendency of his elect to apostatize, in part at least, by means of the passages in question, warning them truly of the natural and certain effect of sin. Children ought to know that God's sovereign and eternal decrees carry the means as well as the end. If the non-elect believes, he will be none the less saved because of his non-election. If the elect does not believe and persevere to the end, he will none the more be saved because of his election.

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