

one term or another. You both agree, (and no man in his senses can deny,) that, in all ages, God has, on account of pious ancestors, given many blessings to their offspring. But he thinks these blessings should be termed rewards; (and so do all the world;) you say they should not. The fact is plain either way: God does continually, and did in all ages, give numberless blessings to the children, on account of the piety of their fathers; and, it is certain, blessings given on account of virtue have been hitherto termed *rewards*, both by God and man.

You conclude this section: "Thus, it appears, the distinction between personal sin and imputed guilt is without any ground in Scripture." (Page 22.) Just the contrary appears, namely, that guilt was imputed to the scape-goat, to the children of wicked parents, and to our blessed Lord himself, without any personal sin. The distinction, therefore, is sound and scriptural.

SECTION II.

OF THE NATURE AND DESIGN OF OUR AFFLICTIONS AND MORTALITY.

THAT God designs to bring good out of these is certain. But does this prove, they have not the nature of punishments? Did Adam himself suffer any affliction, any toil or pain? Doubtless he did, long before he returned to dust. And can we doubt but he received spiritual good from that pain? Yet it was a punishment still; as really such, as if it had consigned him over to everlasting punishment. This argument, therefore, is of no weight: "God draws good out of punishments; therefore they are no punishments at all." However, then, the sufferings wherein Adam's sin has involved his own posterity may "try and purify us, in order to future and everlasting happiness," (page 23,) this circumstance does not alter their nature; they are punishments still.

Let "afflictions, calamities, and death itself, be means of improving in virtue," (page 24,) of healing or preventing sin, this is no manner of proof that they are not punishments. Was not God able to heal or prevent sin, without either pain or death? Could not the Almighty have done this as easily, as

speedily, and as effectually, without these, as with them? Why, then, did he not? Why did Adam's sin bring these on his whole posterity? Why should one man suffer for another man's fault? If you say, "To cure his own;" I ask, 1. What necessity was there of any suffering at all for this? If God intended only to cure his sin, he could have done that without any suffering. I ask, 2. Why do infants suffer? What sin have they to be cured thereby? If you say, "It is to heal the sin of their parents, who sympathize and suffer with them;" in a thousand instances this has no place; the parents are not the better, nor anyway likely to be the better, for all the sufferings of their children. Their sufferings, therefore, yea, and those of all mankind, which are entailed upon them by the sin of Adam, are not the result of mere mercy, but of justice also. In other words, they have in them the nature of punishments, even on us and on our children. Therefore, children themselves are not innocent before God. They suffer; therefore, they deserve to suffer.

And here another question arises, What benefit accrues to the brute creation from the sufferings wherein their whole race is involved through the sin of the first man? The fact cannot be denied; daily experience attests what we read in the oracles of God, that "the whole creation groaneth together, and travaileth in pain to this day;" a considerable part of it groans to God, under the wantonness or cruelty of man. Their sufferings are caused, or at least greatly increased, by our luxury or inhumanity; nay, and by our diversions! We draw entertainment from the pain, the death, of other creatures;—not to mention several entire species, which at present have such natural qualities, that we are obliged to inflict pain, nay, perhaps death, upon them, purely in our own defence. And even those species which are out of the reach of men, are not out of the reach of suffering. "The lions do lack and suffer hunger," though they are, as it were, sovereigns of the plain. Do they not acknowledge this when, "roaring for their prey," they "seek their meat from God?" And what shall we say of their helpless prey? Is not their lot more miserable still? Now, what benefits, I say, have these from their sufferings? Are they also "tried and purified thereby?" Do sufferings "correct their inordinate passions, and dispose their minds to sober reflections?" Do they "give them opportunity of exercising kindness and compassion in

relieving each other's distresses?" That I know not; but I know by this and a thousand proofs, that when man, the lord of the visible creation, rebelled against God, every part of the creation began to suffer on account of his sin. And to suffering on account of sin, I can give no properer name than that of punishment.

"It was to reclaim offenders that an extraordinary power was exercised, either immediately by our Lord himself, or by his Apostles, of inflicting bodily distempers, and, in some cases, death itself." (Page 25.) I do not remember any more than one single case, wherein one of the Apostles "inflicted death." I remember no instance recorded in Scripture, of their "inflicting bodily distempers;" (the blindness inflicted on Elymas cannot be so termed, without great impropriety;) and certain I am, that our Lord himself inflicted neither one nor the other.

The citations in the next page prove no more than that we may reap benefit from the punishments of others. (Page 26.) But though either we or they reap benefit from them, yet they are punishments still.

"We do not here consider death and suffering as they stand in the threatening of the law." (Page 27.) You are sensible, if we did, all mankind must acknowledge them to be punishments. And this is the very light wherein we do and must consider them in the present question. We consider death and suffering as they stand in that threatening, "Thou shalt surely die." That this was denounced to all mankind, we know, because it is executed on all. Therefore, considering suffering and death as so threatened and executed, we cannot deny that they are punishments,—punishments not on Adam only, but on all that in fact do either die or suffer.

To sum up this point: Although the wisdom and mercy of God do "bring good out of evil;" although God designs to extract blessings from punishments, and does it in numberless instances; yet this does not alter the nature of things, but punishments are punishments still: Still this name properly belongs to all sufferings which are inflicted on account of sin; and, consequently, it is an evident truth, that the whole animate creation is punished for Adam's sin.