

Hosea Ballou

Excerpts from "A Treatise on Atonement"

Including excerpts from Part III, "Consequences of Atonement to Mankind" (1805)
and Preface from 5th, 1832 edition

PART III.—THE CONSEQUENCES OF ATONEMENT TO MANKIND

CHAPTER I.

THEIR UNIVERSALITY.

IN this last inquiry, I must be a little more lengthy than in either of the former, but I hope not to be too tedious. What I shall contend for, as the consequence of atonement, is the universal holiness and happiness of mankind, in the final issue of the Redeemer's process.

Before I proceed to notice the direct proofs of the doctrine of the final holiness and happiness of all men, I shall notice some opposing doctrines and arguments, and endeavor to obviate them by scripture and reason.

The first that I notice is found in a proposition frequently stated by modern divines, thus, "God, in the great and infinite plan of moral government, consults the greatest possible good to the whole system; and in order for the greatest possible happiness to be produced, it was necessary that some of God's rational creatures should be eternally miserable. Agreeable to which all men cannot be saved." This is the only ground on which an ob-

142. Argument from the greatest good to the whole.

jection can be stated against universal holiness and happiness, while we admit the existence of an Infinite Supreme.

I cannot go into an examination of any authorities on which the above statement is supposed to stand; for I know of none. All I can do is to examine the statement itself. It is argued, agreeably to this proposition, that the infinite and inconceivable miseries of the wicked, in the world to come, will enhance the happiness of the glorified in heaven.

Against these statements I argue, if, in order for the greatest possible happiness to exist, the greatest possible misery must also exist, I wish to reverse the subject. Then the proposition would stand thus, in order for the greatest possible evil to exist the greatest possible good must exist. Then, if God, in his universal plan, has produced as much good as was possible, he has also produced as much evil as possible, which renders the statement, that he consulted the greatest possible evil, as just as that he consulted the greatest possible good. Of course, there is no more propriety in calling him good, than there is in calling him bad!

If it be said I carry this evil, or misery, too far, even beyond my opponent's meaning, I will endeavor to show him, according to his own statement, that I do not. He says, every degree of misery in hell will produce many degrees of happiness in heaven; if so, if the wretched be not made as miserable as possible, the blessed cannot be made as happy as possible; if they are not made as happy

143. The argument reversed and its weakness shown.

144. The contradiction it involves.

as possible, they must experience some want; and, of course, some misery themselves. On the other hand, if the wretched be not as miserable as possible, they must have in possession some remaining convenience. Then, neither the greatest possible happiness, nor the greatest possible misery is produced.

Almighty God, being put to the necessity of making some of his rational offspring eternally miserable in order to make the rest forever happy, may be represented by a parent who has ten children, but only provisions enough to preserve the lives of five until he could get more. In this awful dilemma he sits down to consult the greatest possible good; says to himself, if I divide my provisions equally among my children, all must surely starve to death; but by neglecting five, I can save the lives of the other five, which he finally concludes to do. But I ask the rational, I petition the reasonable, I request the impartial, to guess the feelings of a father on such an occasion! Before him are ten children, all in the image of himself; he sees his own eyes roll in their heads, hears his own voice on their tongues, while his own blood frolics through their veins; how could he make the division? how could he decide on one for a victim? Would he not rather give his own flesh to be their meat, and his own blood to be their drink, and fervently pray for plenty? But is the Almighty poor? Has he not enough and to spare? When the prodigal came home, did the father turn away his brother so that he might have a plenty for him? Is there not fullness enough in God to satisfy the wants of all his

145. This teaching illustrated.

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creatures? Why the necessity, then, of making some miserable eternally? My opponent will say, the blessed are happified in consequence of the misery of the wretched. But what reason can be given for such an idea? How do we look on a person in this world who manifests joy and happiness in the misery of one of his fellow-creatures? Do we say he manifests a godlike disposition? Surely no. From whence came charity; from heaven, or hell? If souls in heaven possess it, they cannot be happy in consequence of the misery of any rational being; and should the divine principle be found in hell, it would banish misery, and annihilate the place!

Again, if a soul in heaven derives happiness from seeing, say, one-half, or two-thirds, of the human race in misery, would he not yet enjoy more, providing the whole, except himself, were in the same torment? If it be granted that he would, then, in order for a soul to be made as happy as possible, the whole human race, except that one, must be endlessly as miserable as possible! If it be argued that it is not the number or multitudes of individuals who are made miserable that thus constitutes or enhances the happiness of the blessed, but that it is the nature, justice and intense-ness of this misery which is necessary for the above purpose, it makes it very plain that the eternal misery of one would produce as much good as of ten thousand, or more.

146. The good of the saved not secured by the misery of any.

We have now got so far, even on our opponent's ground, as to see that there is no need of more than one soul's being endlessly miserable; and it still further appears to me that the misery of one may

be dispensed with without departing from what my opponent has acknowledged; and that by letting each individual of the human race for a moment, or any limited time, experience the nature of the misery contended for; and then giving them a memory to retain it fresh in mind forever; this must of necessity produce the effect as well, and without the expense of a single soul. I do not think it would absolutely require omniscient wisdom to concert a better plan than the one I am opposing.

147. A temporary experience of evil sufficient.

Suppose we alter the circumstance of the father and his ten children: suppose the father has provisions enough for the whole, and his object in the bestowing of it upon them is to cause the greatest possible happiness among his children. Which way would good sense and parental affection choose, either to feed five to the full, and starve the rest to death, that their dying groans might give the others a better appetite and their food a good relish, or to let them all be hungry enough to relish their food well, and all alike partake of it?

148. The viciousness of the supposed case further shown.

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Another objection, which has often been stated against the salvation of all men, stands in a pretended axiom, namely, "A God all mercy is a God unjust." The force of this pretended axiom, as used against the salvation of all men, is, if God should do justly by all men, he would be an unmerciful being; or, if he should show mercy to all men, he would be an unjust being. There is nothing self-evident in this axiom that I can see but its own want of propriety; it represents justice and mercy at an eternal variance. According to this axiom, and the argument deducible from it, justice may be compared to a monstrous wolf in pursuit of a number of lambs, and mercy to a shepherd who is obliged to give up a large number of them, to gorge his omnivorous appetite, while he makes off with the rest.

I have already sufficiently refuted the idea of justice requiring the endless misery of the creature; and, until that notion can be supported by scripture or reason, an objection against the salvation of all men cannot be stated, from the nature of justice. I have also showed that in order for justice to require the endless misery of any moral being, it must of

necessity require the endless continuance of sin, than which nothing is more absurd. Again, it is objected, as many are going out of this world daily in a state of sinfulness and unreconciliation to God, and there being no alteration in the soul for the better after it leaves this natural life, millions must be miserable as long as God exists.

151. The objection that there can be no change for the better after death.

The force of this objection stands on the supposition that there is no alteration for the better after death. Could this supposition be proved, I grant it would substantiate a formidable and (I think) an unanswerable objection against the final holiness and happiness of all men. I have often heard the objection made, but never heard an evidence brought from scripture or reason to support the declaration. Divines being sensible of the want of scripture to support this (their) supposition, have, very liberally, been at the expense of making some; and the notable passage which they have coined and brought into very frequent use is not to be found in the scriptures of the Old or New Testament; but is frequently to be heard from the pulpit, read in many of their writings, and recited by many of their adherents. It is as follows: "As the tree falls, so it lies; as death leaves us, so judgment will find us." I shall not contend about a different explanation of this addition to the scriptures from the usual one; but will only say, if the thing which my opponents would prove by it be true, namely, that souls cannot be altered for the better after death, all our Christian people must remain eternally as unsanctified as they are in this world of infirmities.

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Again, many contend that God deals with mankind as moral agents; that he sets life and death before us, and leaves us to make our own choice, and to fare accordingly. That, as our

152. If one
can be saved
why not
all?

eternal state depends on what use we make of our agency, millions will prove rebellious, and, therefore, miss of salvation. But I query, if one soul can obtain salvation on the principle of moral agency, why another cannot as well? If it be granted he can, I ask, again, why all men cannot as well as any? If it be still granted, I say, as I have before said, that which can be done may be done; therefore the objection fails. But the objector will say it renders universal salvation uncertain; I answer, no more than it renders universal damnation certain. All may be lost forever as well as one; therefore my opponent's hopes are subject to the same shipwreck to which he would expose mine. I would further inquire, if God deals with man upon a system of moral agency, is it God's revealed will that all men should be saved agreeably to their agency? If it be granted that it is, I further inquire, whether God's will in the moral agency of man will be eternally frustrated? If not, no objection stands against Universalism; but the proposition on which my opponent endeavors to substantiate an objection favors the doctrine as far as it goes.

In my observations on the liberty of will, I have given some of my ideas concerning agency as it is generally understood; but moral agency may be very differently understood by different persons. If by moral agency be meant an ability to love an object or objects which appear agreeable, I have no

objections to make ; but if it mean ability to hate that which appears agreeable and to love that which appears disagreeable, I contend no such agency exists in any being within the compass of our knowledge. It is certainly reasonable to suppose that all the agency possessed by man was given him by his Maker ; and that when God gave him this agency it was for a certain purpose, which purpose must finally be every way answered, providing God be infinitely wise. I cannot but think it incorrect to suppose that God ever gave any creature agency to perform what he never intended should be done. Then, if any soul be made endlessly miserable by its agency, it follows that God gave that soul agency for that unhappy purpose ; and if any be thus saved by their agency, God gave them their agency for that blessed end. If any wish to make a different use of agency, let them state fairly that God gave man an agency intending man's eternal salvation thereby ; but man makes a different use of his agency from what God intended, whereby the gracious designs of Deity are forever lost !

153. Free will cannot mean irrational volition.

If my opponent will not fix his agency on some of the above-noted principles as it respects the issue of the argument, I am sure he can do nothing with it to any effect. If agency be stated on the principle of God's intending the creature's salvation by it, and it be granted that his will in the affair will be done, it is an acknowledgment of the doctrine for which I contend. But it may be stated that although God gave man his agency, for the glorious purpose of

154. Nor be able to defeat God's will.

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his endless felicity, yet his purpose may fail. Could this statement be proved true, it would not only refute universal salvation, but everything else as being a divine system on which we may, with any confidence, depend.

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CHAPTER III.

REASONS FOR BELIEVING IN UNIVERSAL
RECONCILIATION.

HAVING answered, as I hope to the reader's satisfaction, some of the most important objections against God's universal goodness to his creatures, I shall now turn on the other hand, and give the reader some of my evidences for believing in the so-much-despised doctrine of universal holiness and happiness. First, I reason from the nature of divine goodness, in which all pretend to believe, and none dare in a direct sense to deny, that God could not, consistently with himself, create a being that would experience more misery than happiness.

181. Inferences from God's infinite goodness.

Secondly, if God be infinitely good, his goodness is commensurate with his power and knowledge; then all beings whom his power produced are the objects of his goodness; and to prove that any being was destitute of it would prove that Deity's knowledge did not comprehend such being. Thirdly, there is as much propriety in saying that God is infinite in power, but that he did not create all things, as there is in saying, though God be infinite in goodness, yet part of his creatures will never be the partakers of it. It might as well be said that God is infinite in knowledge, and yet ignorant of the most

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part of events which are daily and hourly taking place, as to say that he is infinitely good, and yet only a few of his creatures were designed for happiness. Fourthly, if the Almighty, as we believe him to be, did not possess power sufficient to make all his creatures happy, it was not an act of goodness in him to create them. If he have that power, but possess no will for it, it makes a bad matter as much worse as is possible. I then reduce my opponent to the necessity of telling me if those whom he believes will be endlessly lost, be those whom God could save, but would not, or those whom he would save, but could not. If it be granted that God has both power and will to save all men, it is granting all I want for a foundation of my faith.

I would further argue that, as man is constituted to enjoy happiness, on moral principles (to the knowledge of which principles we come by degrees), it is as reasonable to believe that all men were intended to obtain a consummate knowledge of the moral principles of their nature as that any of Adam's race were. There is not an individual of the whole family of man who is perfectly satisfied with those enjoyments which earth and time afford him; the soul is constituted for nobler pleasures, which to me is an evidence that God has provided for all men some better things than can be found in earthly enjoyments, where we find but little except vanity and disappointment. There is an immortal desire in every soul for future existence and happiness. For the truth of this assertion I appeal to the consciences of my readers. Why

182. Inferences from the constitution of man.

should the Almighty implant this desire in us if he never intended to satisfy it? Supposing a mother has the power of modifying the desires and appetite of her child, would she cause it to want that which she could not get for it? Would she take pleasure in seeing her child pine for fruits which did not grow in the country where she lived, and which she could not get? Or would she prefer the anguish of the child to its happiness, when it was in her power to grant all it wanted? If such a mother were to be found, who would call her a godly woman? Could her child, thus tormented, rise up and call her blessed? No, surely it could not.

I further argue that all wise, good, and exemplary men wish for the truth of the doctrine for which I contend; they earnestly pray for the salvation of all men, and do all in their power, by the grace of God, to dissuade men from sin, to the obedience of the gospel; they enlist willingly into the service of virtue, to endeavor to win proselytes to holiness; their object is the destruction of sin, and the advancement of righteousness, and they believe, and I think justly, that God will bless their labors.

183. Inferences from the desire of good men.

None but wicked men would wish for the endless duration of sin. Were it left to the carnal mind, it would wish for nothing but the privilege of drinking in iniquity forever. But those who truly love God and holiness desire night and day to overcome the vile propensities of their own deceitful hearts, and pray for the reconciliation of others to holiness and happiness. Now, why should we suppose that God is more of the mind of the wicked than of the righteous? If it be

God's spirit in us which causes us to pray for the destruction of sin, is it reasonable to say that this same spirit has determined that sin shall always exist? Are we not right in judging of the nature and character of God from the dictates of his spirit in us? If so, does this spirit teach us the necessity of endless transgression and misery? I wish the reader to keep in mind that I hold sin and misery inseparably connected, and holiness and happiness so likewise.

I further argue, if any of the human race be endlessly miserable, the whole must be, providing they all know it; for, reasoning from that spirit of benevolence which is necessary to a conformity to the principles of holiness, I prove it impossible for a well-disposed man to see another in misery, without bearing a very sensible proportion of such misery. If it be argued that this idea is wrong, and that the spirit which dictates it is of the evil one; I say, in answer, all good men in the world feel it to be a truth; and no man ever exhibited more of it than the Saviour of the world. Man is constituted with powers of sympathy; and, while these principles last, he cannot enjoy complete happiness and see one of his fellow-creatures in torment. I mistrust some one will say, then Christ is not completely happy, nor the saints who have gone before us. I have no objection to the observation; but think I see a divine beauty in the idea. I will query a little on the subject. It is generally believed that Christ existed before he was born in Bethlehem; and it is evident from the scriptures that he did. But I would inquire, what was his situation? Was

184. If any
are endlessly
miserable,
all will be.

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it a state of complete happiness? I think likely this question will generally be answered in the affirmative. Then I further ask, had he no desire for the salvation of sinners before he came into our world? Here the question must be answered in the affirmative, let the other question be answered as it may; for, if that were not the case, why did he come for the express purpose of saving them? If he willed and intended the salvation of mankind, and also determined to encounter all the sufferings that were finally laid upon him in favor of so worthy an object, it is evident his happiness was not complete; neither do I believe it will be until he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

If any one should be so particular as to query, asking, if the Almighty himself be not desirous of the salvation of sinners; and if so, how can his happiness be complete? I answer, a being, to whom events do not take place in succession, nor time pass away, with whom an eternity is a present now, whose knowledge is intuitive, and who can neither hope nor anticipate, can neither increase nor decrease in happiness. But when we speak of God, abstractedly, our words ought to be few and chosen.

I have, I think, sufficiently proved in this work that Jesus Christ is a created, dependent being, and that he stands at the head of the creation of man, etc. If I be right in that idea, I think I may reasonably argue that he is a being to whom events take place in succession, who hopes and anticipates, and who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame. There-

185. The argument as it applies to Jesus Christ.

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fore, until the great work of his mission is completed, I cannot conceive that his happiness will be complete. If it be argued that Christ, when on the cross, said it was finished, and that, in a moral sense, he felt no more pain for sinners, I have a right to object, for I do not know what warrant the scripture gives for believing all this argument. That the sufferings of Christ, as to answer the type of a sin-offering, were then ended, is a reasonable idea; but to suppose that Christ was then dispossessed of that principle which caused him to feel for the woe of mankind, does not appear reasonable. I have no idea that the glorious Captain of our salvation now suffers as he did, when he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But I believe that he whose soul travailed for the redemption of man, now increases in joy as the work of reconciliation is going on, to the destruction of sin and the conversion of sinners. He has told us that there is more joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. I do not conceive that one part of human nature can be made perfectly happy while the rest are in misery. When St. Paul spake of those who died in faith, not having obtained the promise, he said, "God having provided some better things for us, that they, without us, could not be made perfect."

Those who are the most devout on earth are the most desirous for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the deliverance of themselves and their fellow-men from sin and misery. For the sake of a case, I will suppose a Christian, to-day, is ex-

186. The most devout most grieved by sin.

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exercised with fervent desires for the reconciliation of sinners ; at night, he dies. Do all those holy desires cease at death? If they do not, but do continue, though the happiness of the soul be great, yet it is, at least, capable of being enlarged, or increased, by the prosperity of the Redeemer's cause among men.

How the idea ever got place in the human mind, that even fathers and mothers, in the world to come, would rejoice to see their own offspring in endless flames and hopeless torments, I can hardly conceive; though the probability is, it was first invented to shun, in theory, those difficulties not otherwise to be avoided. I wish to use this error as prudently as possible ; but I wish to have it rightfully understood, and judged of impartially. Will perfect reconciliation to God have this effect? I know it is contended that it will ; but what evidence have we of it? Was not Christ reconciled, or in a state of conformity to God's law? Did he manifest joy at the sufferings of mankind? When he looked on Jerusalem, that abominable city, and knew that its chiefs would be his murderers, when he spake of the dreadful calamities just ready to burst on their devoted heads, how did he feel? Streams of sorrow broke from the eye of innocence ; in his grief, he spake of their destruction, but prophesies of seeing him again, when they should welcome him, saying, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

If perfect reconciliation to God will effect complete happiness at the sight of human misery, the more we are reconciled to God the more satisfaction we should take in seeing our fellow-creatures

miserable ! Then, those who can look on men in distress with the least sorrow are the most reconciled to divine goodness ; and those who feel the most sorrow at the afflictions of their fellow-men are the most perverse and wicked ! Some may say, heaven is entirely different from this world, and when we get there we shall be totally changed from what we now are ; therefore, it will not do to argue what we shall be there from what we ought to be here. Then the awful fact is, all we call goodness here will be called badness there ; and that which we call badness here will be goodness there !

If the effects of moral holiness in the world to come should be different from what they are here, I wish to be informed on what moral principle the change is made. If these things be so, the souls of the cruel need but little alteration to prepare them for heaven, and that little laid out in making them what we should call worse. Such a heaven as this does not, I hope, exist in the universe. My opponent will urge his argument still further on this subject, and say, it is not the misery of the wicked

that affords so much pleasure to those who are in heaven, but their joy is increased in consequence of the execution of justice. This, however, is giving up what is contended for, namely, that every degree of misery will create thousands of degrees of happiness, because, could divine justice be as well understood without this misery as with it, the misery itself would do no good. I am willing to grant that a good man will prefer the execution of justice to his own private ease, or the

187. The absurdity of the opposite view.

188. Happiness in heaven impossible if sin be endless.

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partial happiness of a criminal. But how would a judge appear who should manifest joy and gladness on pronouncing the sentence of death upon one of his fellow-men? Who would not turn from such a court with disgust and deep abhorrence? To call such a circumstance an instance in which men have an occasion to rejoice is a violation of our senses. I will say for myself, I neither expect nor desire perfect happiness while I see my fellow-men in misery; I had rather be possessed of that sympathy which causes me to feel for another than to enjoy an unsocial pleasure in a frosty heaven of misanthropy? Is it possible that we should be completely happy and see those in misery whom we love? No one will say we can. Are we not commanded to love our enemies? Can we be truly happy and not love them? Surely we cannot; then how can we be completely happy and see them miserable? A parent may be persuaded to attend his child while a surgeon performs an amputation; but with what acute feelings his heart is agitated! How eagerly would he inhale the pain and make it his own were it possible? But there is something in all this that is tolerable; he is in hopes of saving the life of his child: were it not for his hopes could he endure the sight? But what is all this compared with a parent viewing his child in endless flames! O parents, what a blessed circumstance it is that when we are called to part with our children on earth, we can mingle a little joy with the sorrow in hoping that they belong to the deathless family in heaven! If the good desires which are found in the Christian heart are ever to be satisfied universal subjection to the government of Christ will surely

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take place : if virtue ever gains an universal victory over sin and vice, universal holiness and happiness will be the consequence. Man exists on such a principle as renders him capable of improving in

189. Experience enlightens and reforms souls.

knowledge and happiness, which he obtains by experience ; and it is very evident that as the wheels of time move man is fast advancing, which favors the idea that at some period known to Deity the desired haven will be obtained in the acquisition of that wisdom which is from above.

When we send our children to school it is for the purpose of learning that of which they are ignorant ; and it is by degrees that those sciences are obtained which constitute them learned. When a child first takes a quill in hand to write, he blunders, but does not blunder so as to imitate the copy, neither will two out of a thousand imitate each other.

Men begin their moral existence in their separate capacity in the same way ; unacquainted with the skill of their divine preceptor, they err from sacred rules and differ from their fellow-pupils. Jars and broils ensue, and sorrow and woe are the consequences. But as they become taught they conform to the divine rules of their master, and learn that their happiness consists in being united. Happiness is the greatest object of all rational beings, and no one will follow any particular object any longer than he thinks it subservient to his main one. The reason why men sin is, they think, and think erroneously, that they shall obtain more happiness in so doing than in following the dictates of truth. But is it reasonable to suppose that the

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error will never be discovered? Will the sinner never find his mistake? O yes, says my opposer, to his eternal confusion and endless misery! But stop a moment; if he find his mistake he will abandon the object; and when he ceases to sin he begins to reform and approximate towards holiness and happiness. I have sufficiently argued that man cannot be miserable, in consequence of moral condemnation, any longer than he is, in a moral sense, a sinner. Then he must sin endlessly in order to be miserable so long; which if so, he will never find his mistake, he will never learn that righteousness and truth are more productive of happiness than sin. But I think it erroneous to suppose that a being who is capable of learning anything cannot learn some time short of eternity that it is better to do right than wrong. Should we argue, however, that that might in some cases be true, it would destroy the idea of complete and positive misery for which my opponent contends. Complete misery would not admit of a prospect which could administer the smallest hope; in which case, the soul would have no object which could possibly induce it to action; then would the soul become inert, and its existence would be destroyed, and become not a subject of happiness or misery.

I would argue again, from a reasonable idea, admitted by all, namely, that mankind, in their moral existence, originated in God.

Why, then, do we deny his final assimilation with the fountain from whence he sprang? The streams and rivulets which water the hill-country run in every direction, as the make of land occasions. They are

190. Inference from the soul's origin in God.

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stained with various mines and soils through which they pass; but at last they find their entrance into the ocean, where their different courses are at an end, and they are tempered like the fountain which receives them. Though man, at present, forms an aspect similar to the waters in their various courses, yet, in the end of his race, I hope he will enjoy an union with his God, and with his fellows.

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We now see clearly that it is God's will, according to his eternal purpose, purposed in himself, that all men should finally be holy and happy ; that it was the intention of the Saviour's mission ; that the prophets, by the spirit of prophecy, long foresaw this universal and godlike glorious plan of grace ; that every good principle in man stands up in testimony of so divine a system, that the happiness of all moral beings is wrapped up in the glorious issue of the ministration of reconciliation, and that it is, in reality, opposed by none, but by unreconciled beings, unholy principles, and unlawful desires. And shall we say that the eternal good will of him who dwelt in the bush must fail at last ? Must the testimony of the prophets fall to the ground ? Must the captain of our salvation, who warred in righteousness, who reddened his garments in his own blood, who bore the sins of the world, and suffered death in agony, to obtain his lawful inheritance, be robbed of them at last ? Were this believed in heaven the royal diadem would fall from the head of him whom all heaven adores, and the highest archangel would faint away ! But, blessed be the Lord, and blessed be his truth, its divine power shall cause the Leviathan of infidelity to bite the ground, shall rend the veil which is cast over all nations, and shall more and more manifest divine

213. The
argument
reviewed.

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righteousness and the name in which it is found, in which name alone is salvation. In the days of the apostles, the greatest object in preaching the gospel of Christ was to prove him to be the Saviour of the world, the true Messiah of the law, urging that he died for all, that he made no distinction between Jew and Gentile, but had broken down the partition-wall between them, for the glorious purpose of making of the twain one new man in everlasting fellowship and eternal peace. But how hath the gold changed, how hath the most fine gold become dim? The main apparent object, at the present day, is to prove the object of the Saviour's mission, as it respects the salvation of sinners, extremely limited, and that but few of the human race will finally be the redeemed of the Lord to the praise of his glory; that the great adversary of righteousness will obtain a much larger conquest of souls than Christ himself; and, oh, shocking to name, eternal justice is profaned by being called to assist the serpent's designs in the endless duration of sin and rebellion against God! Those whom the Lord hath blessed with a belief of universal holiness and happiness are proscribed as heretics, infidels, offscourings of the earth, friends to nothing but sin, and enemies to nothing but God and holiness; opening a door to licentiousness of every abominable species, destroyers of the pure religion of Christ, and nuisances to society. But is it, in reality, manifesting a love of sin to argue its total destruction by the power of divine righteousness? Is it manifesting enmity against God and the religion of Jesus to contend for the

214. The distortion of the gospel spirit in the belief in eternal punishment.

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propriety of all men serving him in holiness and happiness? And are we nuisances to society because we endeavor to persuade all men to love God and one another? Can these things be displeasing to him who was born in Bethlehem? Will he not rather greatly bless such labors, though performed by those as little esteemed in the world as were the poor fishermen who left their nets and followed the despised Nazarene?

Let us ask a few questions. Which reflects the most honor on the divine character, to contend it was necessary for him to create millions of rational creatures to hate him and every divine communication he makes to them to all eternity, to live in endless rebellion against him, and endure inconceivable torments as long as God exists, or to suppose him able and willing to make all his rational creatures love and adore him, yield obedience to his divine law, and exist in union and happiness with himself?

215. Universalism
most honors
the divine
name.

Which reflects most honor on the Saviour, to say that but few will obtain salvation by him, and though he died for all men, yet his death will benefit but few, or to say with the prophet, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, having reconciled all things to God, through the peace made by the blood of the cross?"

If there be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance, which would yield the most joy to the heavenly hosts, the repentance of one-fourth of mankind or the whole? If the servants of Christ here on earth desire the increase

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of holiness and the decrease of sin, which would be most agreeable to such a desire, the belief that the greatest part of mankind will grow more and more sinful to all eternity, or the belief that sin will continually decrease, and righteousness increase, until the former is wholly destroyed and the latter becomes universal?

To answer the above questions so as to favor my opponent's argument, is more than one would be willing to do; and this, if done, would involve an endless train of ideas too glaringly absurd to be supported. But to answer them agreeably to the nature of divine truth opens to infinite beauties, more serene than the morning and more glorious than the noonday. God, the fountain of living waters and the essence of eternal life, is seen by faith in Jesus the same to all rational beings, the author, supporter, and blesser of them. Christ Jesus, the head of every man, is beheld as the brightness of the Father's glory and express image of his person, through whom the Eternal hath manifested the riches of his grace, the eternal councils of his love to the world, brought life and immortality to light, and manifested our eternal sonship in the second Adam. Each holy desire, as the fruit of the Spirit in the souls of those who believe, feasts on the rich promises of Abraham's God, believing him faithful who hath promised. Heaven hath already received the heave offering of the first ripe fruits, and the fields are white, ready to harvest. O ye laborers in the vineyard of the Lord, be ye not idle. What an extensive field is here in which for the mind to expand and send

216. It offers an inspiring view of the gospel and its outcome.

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its desires abroad ! The transcendent beauties of salvation have visited the dark regions of mortality, as light and heat from the vernal sun visits the cold and dark north, turning frozen lands into fruitful fields, taking the icy fetters from limpid streams which bend their course to the fountain, bringing the time of the singing of birds, and causing the voice of the turtle to be heard.

"I am come," says Jesus, "to send a fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled?" All the passages which allude to a dispensation of fire which I have observed in this work are direct evidences to prove the destruction of sin and all sinful works, the purification of sinners, and their eternal reconciliation to holiness and happiness. This fire will either overcome sin or be overcome by it. But who will argue the latter?

217. The duty of loyalty to the light and truth.

If none, then let the former be acknowledged. If you say these things appear differently from what you expected they would before your inquiry, and you find something more interesting than tradition has taught you ; if you feel soft in your mind towards the so-much-despised doctrine of universal holiness and happiness ; if you can believe heaven large enough to contain mankind, and begin to breathe in the air of unbounded benevolence, and feel faith mingled with your desires for the destruction of sin and the increase of holiness, then come still further. The knowledge of these things is progressive, and obtained only by degrees. I give you my hand in token of love and friendship, and my heart in all faithfulness is yours. Let us still go on and view the heavenly beauties yet to be unfolded in the plan

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of the gospel. I well know there are many difficulties to be surmounted. To profess universal salvation will subject some to excommunication from regular churches; others to the pain of being neglected by their neighbors; others to be violently opposed by their companions; and in many instances, undoubtedly, the father will be against the son and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter and the daughter against the mother; and a man's enemies may be those of his own house. But can such difficulties excuse us for not owning him who for us bore the cross and despised the shame? All denominations since the world began have experienced some difficulties in their first establishment. Christ and his apostles wrestled hard and encountered great opposition, even to the loss of all earthly things, with life itself. Since the apostasy the denominations which arose out of popery have, in thousands of instances, suffered more than duty calls us to suffer in a land of liberty and toleration. But some will say there are none who profess the doctrine in my vicinity except some of the lower class of people, and if I rank myself with them my titles of honor will do me no good, and my road to the temple of fame will be forever intercepted. Some will say to themselves, I must believe the doctrine; I cannot argue against it, but I will say nothing about it lest I should be mistrusted. I would gladly embrace the opportunity which Nicodemus did, who went to Jesus by night, but to come out boldly to the knowledge of the world is too great a sacrifice. Says another, I am convinced of the truth of the doctrine, but I have preached so much against it, have warned my hearers

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so much to shun that heresy, I am now ashamed to tell them I believe it. Another feels so dependent on his neighbors he wishes to have them go forward first. All these circumstances, and many more, bear great weight with various persons, in various circumstances, causing great labor of mind, and those who are under such influences may be said to be heavy laden. I know of no better remedy for those cases than an attention to the exhortation of Christ, who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

The reader may judge from those circumstances whether this doctrine be pleasing to the carnal mind, as its enemies say. Was it pleasing to the Pharisees of old to be taught by Christ and his disciples that publicans and harlots should enter the kingdom of heaven before them? Yes, just as pleasing to their carnal minds as it is to a professed preacher of Christ, who can

218. The
hesitancy to
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charge that
it pleases
the carnal
mind.

thank God that he is better than other men, to tell him that those upon whom he looks as much viler than himself stand in no more need of pardon than he does. St. Paul, before his conversion to Christianity, undoubtedly looked on the doctrine of Christ to be exactly calculated to please wicked men, as the most part of those who were disciplined by it were publicans and sinners, and he well knew that the foundation of their hope was the forgiveness of sin. This he despised, as did many of his equals in the Jewish religion; feeling themselves whole, they

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felt no need of a physician. They supposed the gospel to be a doctrine every way calculated to vitiate and immoralize mankind. Undoubtedly the Pharisees often said of the disciples of Christ, their religion is perfectly suited to their characters; they are sinners and know not the law, and they have contrived a very easy way to get to heaven. But if we ask St. Paul, after his conversion, what he thought of these things, he would undoubtedly give a very different account. For when the Lord met him in the way, and gave him to understand his real character, and what he was doing, he was astonished, and fell to the earth. His sins were set in order before him, and his soul was greatly troubled. In this situation, he learned the necessity of the doctrine which he had despised, experienced the necessity of its pardoning mercy, and became as willing to endure persecution for its sake as he had been to persecute it before.

When it is understood that gospel salvation is salvation from carnal-mindedness and all its relative ills, to a reconciliation to the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, if all men were thus saved, it would not be argued that it is pleasing to the carnal mind. As the doctrine for which I contend is entirely the reverse of carnal-mindedness, so it is equally opposed to licentiousness; for what can be a stronger restraint on the passions than a belief in God's universal goodness, and that all men are the objects of his mercy? Such a belief, when it has its proper effects in the mind, raises a supreme affection for God, and kindles the sacred fire of love and unbounded benevolence to mankind. If

219. It is a persuasive to righteousness.

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any would dispute me on my statement of the consequences of this faith, I have greatly the advantage. As my opponent does not possess this faith, he cannot tell the effects of it so well as one can who does. However, I will not make use of that advantage, having argument in my power that is more than sufficient. Let my adversary state his argument, that we may see the strength of it. The fact is, he has no argument; he can only assert, "the doctrine is not productive of love to God or man, but the reverse, and if he believed it he would commit every sin that was in his power." Is it hard to see that my opponent has made a very fair and full profession of his love of sin in room of his love to God, and a strong desire to injure his fellow-men in room of serving them in love? What was the elder brother angry for? At what did he grumble? And why did he refuse to go into his father's house? Because the father had received the prodigal and treated him kindly. At what did the laborers grumble who bore the burden and heat of the day? Because those who had wrought but one hour received as much as they, and received their money first. At what did the Pharisees and scribes murmur when they saw all the publicans and sinners come to Jesus to hear him? Because he did not condemn them to hopeless despair, but kindly received them. At what do my opposers rage? With what are they dissatisfied? Not because I exclude them from any privilege or blessing of the gospel. What then? I am sorry to name it. It is because I extend those blessings further, and hope they will do more good than what suits them!

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As the doctrine of universal holiness and happiness opens an infinite field in which for the mind to expatiate, and learn the goodness of God in all his works and providence, it is the most animating to a benevolent soul of any that was ever believed in our world, and lays the broadest foundation for exhortation to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live sober, righteous, and godly lives. ^{220. And a potent motive to duty.} How strong are the inducements, from such glorious views of God and his mercy, to lead us to imitate such unbounded goodness in all our intentions and actions. And being fully convinced that our happiness is in union with our duty, those who fully believe in the consequences of atonement, as I have argued them, will see the propriety of my endeavoring to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, exhorting them to good works in all faithfulness, in whatever situation duty may call us, or whatever the part may be which our heavenly Father hath called us to act in his divine and delightful service. The duty enjoined on the believer of this doctrine is as much more extensive than the duty enjoined by any other faith as the faith itself is more extensive; and its delights are so likewise. If a poor man was offered a thousand pounds for a day's labor it would undoubtedly be a very strong inducement to him to labor. But, it is to be observed, in this case, that it is not the labor itself which is the object, but the large sum of money with which the laborer expects to be rewarded. It is not the labor in which the man delights; could he obtain his money without the work it would be his choice. But when the labor itself is all the enjoy-

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ment, and the whole object is obedience, the laborer will not wish the time short or the duty small; no, eternity is none too long for the soul to contemplate laboring in the endless delights of obedience to his God.

Those who believe a future state of happiness depends on certain duties performed by them undoubtedly intend to do those duties some time before they die; and it is often said that a procrastination of those duties on which so much depends is dangerous, as life is uncertain; yet they had rather let it alone until old age deprives them of the common comforts of life; at which time they may about as well be employed in the dull and disagreeable task of being good as anything else. But those who consider their duty as their meat and drink ought not to need much inviting to feed on dainties so rich. We should hardly believe a man to be in his right mind who, for eating a good meal of victuals, should charge the price of it. "In keeping thy commandments there is great reward." By these observations the reader will see how needful it is for us at all times to attend to our duty, because "now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation"; to every willing and obedient soul who feels the power of atoning grace salvation is present. Truly it is said of wisdom, "She hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." God, in infinite wisdom, has constituted all moral beings so that their duty is their happiness, and strict obedience fulness of joy. Why,

221. For
righteous-
ness is our
true life.

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then, my brethren, shall we starve? Why live poor? Why should we be so parsimonious of those heavenly stores that can never be exhausted? "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." God forbids none; "the Spirit and the bride say, come; and let him that heareth, say, come; and whoever will, let him take of the fountain of the water of life freely." Remember the salvation which God wills is a salvation from sin. Then, as much as you desire salvation, you will wish to avoid sin and wickedness. There are none who would say they did not want salvation; but how many are there who say they want it by their own conduct! No man understandingly wants salvation any further than he wants more holiness.

The Universalist, who is really so, prizes his duty as his heaven, as his peace, and his most sublime enjoyment. How, then, shall we be so lost, so blind, and so deceived as to wish to shun our duty and our happiness? If we really believe those things, and desire that others may be brought to see and believe the same, let us endeavor, in the first place, to prove to all men that such a belief is of real service in cultivating our morals and in regulating our behavior. And, secondly, by using our abilities as God hath given, in cool dispassionate reasoning, with those who do not believe; contending for nothing but the pure principles of love, in meekness and all gentleness. Never argue for will's sake, nor for mastery: and,

222. Our duty is to show men that Universalism is an incentive to godly living,

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shunning every appearance of sophistry, never suffer yourselves to be anxious about the issue of conversation; but speak the words of truth and soberness, and leave the event to be directed by the spirit of God. Falsehood is so apt to detect itself that an argument is generally best conducted when the disputant is refuted by consequences arising from his own statements: and if he cannot see and understand them for himself, it will do no good to see them for him. If we can see for ourselves we do well.

If the Lord of the harvest hath graciously been pleased to call you by his grace to preach the word of his gospel to his purchased possession; to sound abroad the trumpet of salvation, and to feed the sheep and lambs of the one true shepherd, then remember that it is required of stewards that they are found faithful. St. Paul declared himself a debtor both to the Greeks and Barbarians, to the wise and the unwise. He having received a dispensation of the gospel, the grace of which belonged to all men, he thereby became a debtor to all. And if we have received a dispensation of the same gospel, we are debtors to all whom this gospel concerns. How happy is a friend who has good news to communicate to his companions: and surely it is an office much to be desired to carry good news to the distressed. See the officer when he reads a pardon to one who expects immediate death: his soul bursts through his eyes in streams of joy while he pronounces the words which give life to the dead. But how much more excellent are the labors of those whose feet are beautiful on the mountains,

223. And to
publish the
good tidings.

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who publish peace in the Redeemer's name, even glad tidings unto all people. Much watchfulness is necessary, lest the law of the carnal or old man gets the government of the mind. I will venture to say, there never was a preacher more ready, on all occasions, than the old man which we are exhorted to put off; he is willing at all times to assist, never waiting to be called. He has no objections to preaching about Christ, if Christ be not preached. He is perfectly willing to say that salvation is all of God, and that Christ is a whole Saviour; but, then, it is indispensably necessary that he should do something, such as asking, seeking, knocking; or, if it be only accepting of offered mercy, is all he wants. It may be, the reader will wonder a little at what I here say, as I have just quoted the exhortation, to ask, to seek, to knock, etc.; but I wish to be understood that we must ask, seek, and knock, not in the name or nature of the earthly Adam, but in the name and nature of the heavenly man. The old serpent, the devil, is never better pleased than when he can do something which he thinks lays God under some obligation to him. If the carnal or old man get so baffled as to be reduced to give up his influence respecting our eternal life in Jesus, he will immediately propose, in his struggles, that all he can do is to insure a blessed state for some considerable time after we die, say, for a thousand years, or any given time; then all must depend on the Saviour. If the earthly Adam can get us up Jacob's ladder a few steps, he is willing that Christ should do something by and by. Now, the object of all those devices, of which we are not ignorant (as St. Paul says) is to keep us in the service of the

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flesh; but remember, he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. A Pharisee, who feels as if something was coming to him more than others receive, perhaps will not be scrupulous about the exact quantity. He only wishes to have proper attention paid him; if he can flatter himself with a higher seat in heaven than those are to have on whom he looks as worse than himself it satisfies his carnal pride. Perhaps a period of punishment for sinners, after death, in which they may be justly corrected for not being so good and holy as this Pharisee, would give him much satisfaction. He would then be willing to have the poor wretches delivered from absolute misery and enjoy some small conveniences. Oh, how hard it is to be a humble disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus! It is death to carnal mind. If I preach the gospel all my life long, spend all my time and strength for the good of mankind and the honor of my Saviour, shall I not have something more hereafter than one who has mocked and derided me? Answer, if I have, in truth and meekness, preached Christ, and have been faithful in his cause, ought I not to be thankful that he has enabled me so to do? Have I been the loser unless I am paid in the world to come, by having some privilege granted me which another may not enjoy? Oh, blush, my soul, if thy follies rise so high. No, every moment's faithfulness has been supplied with streams of divine consolation; and it ought to be remembered that the preacher never refreshes others unless he himself is refreshed. If I have professed to preach Christ, but have preached myself in room of him, undoubtedly I may think there is something coming,

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as my living has been very poor while I have thus labored ; but the truth is my reward has been equal to my service. I am willing to acknowledge that carnal mind often contends that I have done so well, I ought, in consequence, to expect high approbations ; and I begin to look down on those whom I fancy of less magnitude. But, oh, the viperous sting ! Well might an apostle say, " I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Says the same apostle, " Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Upon what high advantages did he calculate above those who were much less in labor than himself?

But, says the reader, will not St. Paul fare better than the worst of sinners in eternity ? Judge from what he says : " This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." The more humble we are the greater our enjoyments. But when all are completely humbled, and perfectly reconciled ; when all old things are done away, and all things become new ; when he who sitteth upon the throne maketh all things new in deed and in truth, I believe all strife concerning who shall be great in the kingdom of heaven will be at an end. Ye who preach righteousness in the great congregations of the people, forget not the exhortation of the Captain of our salvation, " Learn of me." What good will all our labors do unless we learn of Christ ? If we learn of him, he will be unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and

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redemption, and we shall preach, not ourselves, but Christ Jesus our Lord, and ourselves the servants of the people, for Jesus' sake. Remember, again the exhortation of him who is the leader and commander of the people, "Search the Scriptures." Make yourselves acquainted with, and have free recourse to, this great storehouse of divine riches, that you may be ready to "deal a portion to seven, and also to eight." "Ye are the salt of the earth." As salt preserves and seasons meats so that they are acceptable, so ought the ministers of righteousness to endeavor, as far as possible, to preserve mankind from sin, that they may be acceptable members of the church of Christ. "But if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men." We cannot be profitable to others unless we have the savor of the Spirit within us. This lost and we are good for nothing, and in room of having a mouth, and wisdom, to put gainsayers to silence, we shall be overcome by them, and they will tread us under their feet. "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," but be sure to remember that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God." Carnal mind frequently urges the necessity of contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, but then we must contend in a coat of mail, and with the weapons of him who sought the life of the Son of Jesse. Be prepared to meet every kind of opposition. We must be attacked on every side. The adversary will not leave one stone unturned, nor a weapon in his armor untried. Be cautious of

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any system of divinity. Remember "the path of the just is a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The moment we fancy ourselves infallible, every one must come to our peculiarities or we cast them away. Even the truth may be held in unrighteousness. Daniel's God was undoubtedly the true God, but I do not conceive Darius any more the real friend of that God when he made a decree that all people should worship him, than he was when he made the decree that no petition should be asked of any god or man for thirty days, save of himself. The cause of truth wants nothing in its service but the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. All the divisions and subdivisions which now exist among Christians, or ever have existed, were caused wholly by the want of those graces. Should we be tenacious about certain sentiments and peculiarities of faith, the time is not far distant when Universalists, who have suffered every kind of contemptuous treatment from the enemies of the doctrine, will be at war among themselves, and be trodden under foot of the Gentiles. Having begun in the Spirit, do not think to be made perfect by the flesh. In order to imitate our Saviour, let us, like him, have compassion on the ignorant, and those whom we view to be out of the way. Attend to the exhortation, "Let brotherly love continue." If we agree in brotherly love, there is no disagreement that can do us any injury, but if we do not, no other agreement can do us any good. Let us keep a strict guard against the enemy "that sows discord among

224. A plea
for unselfish-
ness and
love.

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brethren." Let us endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." May charity, that heaven-born companion of the human heart, never forsake us; and may the promise of the Saviour be fulfilled concerning us, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

You have now, kind reader, cast your eye over these pages; perhaps you feel to say, "The doctrine of universal holiness and happiness cannot be true, notwithstanding all the author has said in favor of it;" and if so, I condemn you not. The time has been when I believed as little of the doctrine as you now do; I never adopted the belief of universal holiness and happiness out of choice, but from the force of real or supposed evidence. And I know you cannot believe it on any other ground. I hope, however, you feel no enmity to so glorious a system of God's grace; I hope you have the spirit of Christ, and wish well to mankind. I have, be sure, great consolation in believing that my Redeemer has many faithful servants and loving disciples in the world who do not believe in the extensiveness of salvation as I do, and I often take great satisfaction in feasts of charity with such brethren. St. Peter was undoubtedly a lover of Christ and his gospel before he was taught by the sea of Joppa to call no man common or unclean. The rest of the disciples who were dissatisfied with his preaching the gospel to the uncircumcised, were doubtless possessed of the spirit of Christ, which caused them to glorify God when they had more extensive views of the gospel through Peter's communications. As far as I see men walk in the spirit of love to God and one another I feel an union with

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them, whether their particular sentiments are mine or not. Men cannot believe at will ; we believe as evidence appears to our mind. The times have been when each denomination has been proscribed and, in some measure, persecuted. Each as it rose has been censured by those who could not fall in with its doctrine ; and what does all this condemning one another prove, only the imperfections of all, and the badness of the human heart ? You will not think evil of me, kind reader, if I exhort you not to feel too hard against what you may find to be your duty to acknowledge. It grieved Peter when his Lord asked him the third time if he loved him, as he had denied him thrice. There are many Universalists now who have frequent occasion to confess how hard they have been against the doctrine, and how much they have spoken unadvisedly with their lips against what they now rejoice to believe is truth, and humbly adore the Saviour of sinners for opening their eyes to behold such unspeakable beauties. If you attend to the exhortation, to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, undoubtedly you may see more of the riches of his goodness than you now do. The prophet Ezekiel's knowledge of the holy waters was progressive, and obtained by degress. When he was first led into the waters they were only to his ankles ; but he went still further and they were to his knees ; he went still further and they were to his loins ; he went further and the waters were risen, waters for men to swim in, a river that no man could pass. Had the prophet refused to travel in these waters after he first entered them he would not have known nor

225. And for
charity and
fairness
of judg-
ment.

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believed them to be so multitudinous as they were. A soul, in the earliest moments of heavenly love, is first unspeakably charmed with the untold beauties and graces of his Redeemer; next, wife, children, father, mother, brothers, sisters, all friends, directly enemies, and finally all mankind are embraced in the extended arms of heavenly love and divine benevolence.

I close this work, humbly hoping and expecting the glorious increase and extensive growth of what I have (though feebly) contended for; namely, the holiness and happiness of mankind. I look with strong expectation for that period when all sin and every degree of unreconciliation will be destroyed by the divine power of that love which is stronger than death, which many waters cannot quench, nor the floods drown; in which alone I put my trust, and in which my hope is anchored for all mankind; earnestly praying that the desire of the righteous may not be cut off.

The fulness of times will come, and the times of the restitution of all things will be accomplished.

226. Con-
clusion.

Then shall truth be victorious, and all error flee to eternal night. Then shall universal songs of honor be sung to the praise of him who liveth forever and ever. All death, sorrow and crying, shall be done away; pains and disorders shall be no more felt, temptations no more trouble the lovers of God, nor sin poison the human heart. The blessed hand of the once Crucified shall wipe tears from off all faces. O transporting thought! Then shall the blessed Saviour see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, when, through his mediation, universal nature shall be

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brought in perfect union with truth and holiness, and the spirit of God fill all rational beings. Then shall the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which maketh free from the law of sin, become the governing principle of the whole man once made subject to vanity, once enthralled in darkness, sin and misery, but then delivered from the bondage of corruption, and restored to perfect reconciliation to God in the heavenly Adam. Then shall the great object of the Saviour's mission be accomplished. Then shall the question be asked, "O death, where is thy sting?" But death shall not be to give the answer. And, "O grave, where is thy victory?" But the boaster shall be silent. The Son shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father; the eternal radiance shall smile, and God shall be all in all.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION.

As this edition of the "Treatise on Atonement," in several respects, varies from former editions, the author feels that he owes it to the public to offer some reason for such variations.

It has pleased God to continue his life until this work has passed through four editions, with all the imperfections which it contained when first published, nearly thirty years ago. For a number of years he has seen reasons to doubt the correctness of some of the opinions which he entertained at the time he wrote the work; and also the propriety of the use he then made of certain passages of scripture. In his preface to the first edition, he says: "I have had, for some time, an intention to write a treatise on this subject but thought of deferring it until more experience might enable me to perform it better, and leisure give me opportunity to be more particular. But the consideration of the uncertainty of life was one great stimulus to my undertaking it at this time, added to a possibility of living to be informed with what success it meets in the world, and having an opportunity to correct whatever I might, in my future studies, find incorrect, were not the smallest causes of my undertaking it."

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Now as he has lived to know that the denomination of Christians, to which he belongs, has given to this humble work a much more favorable reception than he had any reason to anticipate, and bestowed on it an attention which far exceeds his most flattering hopes, and as he has, as he thinks, improved in his understanding, in certain particulars, so as to feel satisfied that the work needed correction, he felt bound, in duty to himself and the public, to make such corrections as his present views required.

But be it known, and fully considered, that in no particular have the author's views undergone any change unfavorable to the main doctrine, to the support of which the treatise was devoted.

The main points, in relation to which his views now differ from those he entertained when he first wrote the following work, relate to the pre-existence of Christ, of man's existence before his corporeal organization; and the application of some passages of scripture *solely* to the purifying operations of divine truth in man's understanding which passages he now believes embraced, in their true sense, all the temporal judgments with which a most perverse and wicked generation was visited.

Although he as fully believed in the dependence of Christ on his God and Father, as he now does, he entertained the opinion that he had a sentient existence before he was manifested in flesh; and he then thought that certain passages of scripture evidently supported that opinion. These passages, though they seem to favor such a sentiment, do not appear altogether sufficient, fully to warrant the belief of it. Could the opinion now be fully

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supported that Christ existed in a sentient state before he was manifested in the flesh, it would not be difficult to yield to a belief that Adam also had an existence before he was formed of the dust of the ground. However these things are, in fact, they now appear to the author as points of mere speculation, much too obscure to be laid down as matters of faith.

It is of importance here to remark, that the moral relation which the treatise originally represented man to hold to the Creator, from which relation momentous deductions were drawn, is still believed; and all those deductions are retained.

To the foregoing it may be proper to add, that the doctrine of a future disciplinary state, and the application of certain passages of scripture to that state of suffering which were left in suspense, undecided, in the treatise originally, were so left on account of the author's mind being then undecided in relation to these subjects. He was, however, as well convinced then as now, that the doctrine of a future retribution could be supported on no other hypothesis than that of the continuance of sin in a future state; but he was not then so fully satisfied, that all which the scriptures say about sin, and the punishment of it, relates solely to this mortal state as he now is.

The author entertains no doubt that many will regret, that, as an opportunity has offered, the treatise should not be more improved as to its style. As an apology for this defect, he offers two suggestions; first, He could not consent so entirely to alter the work as to endanger the loss of what has probably given its arguments an easy access to the

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understanding of common readers. And second, A consciousness that any effort or labor in his power to make or bestow, would, after all, leave many offences to the delicate nice reader.

The author is not willing to neglect this opportunity to tender his grateful acknowledgments to his numerous friends who have so indulgently regarded his different publications, and so extensively patronized his labors. That a growth in the knowledge of divine truth, and treasures laid up where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, may be their recompense, is the sincere prayer of their devoted servant.

THE AUTHOR.