

With the Publishers Receipt
THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE

REGARDING THE

EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT

VINDICATED.

BY

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With a Recommendatory Preface,

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THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT.

RECOMMENDATORY PREFACE.

THE Doctrine of the Atonement stands invested with a character of stupendous interest. Circumstances have tended to direct particular attention of late years to this subject, more especially to the question of the *extent* of the atonement,—meaning by this, its extent, not in respect of intrinsic worth, but of relative destination. The sentiment that the atonement of Christ is, in this latter aspect, universal, which was long regarded as a branch of Arminianism, has found favour in the eyes of some who profess a Calvinistic creed, in consequence, it is alleged, of its being understood to furnish a better basis on which to rest the unlimited offer of the gospel to sinners. This conclusion, we are fully persuaded, is without any solid foundation. The matter has given rise to much discussion. In spite, however, of the keenness with which the controversy has been carried on, attempts have been made to represent the point in dispute as a matter of comparative insignificance,—as one, indeed, of those nice speculative questions on which it may be well enough for professed theologians to sharpen their dialectical powers, but which have no practical bearing, and are consequently of no sort of interest to the great body of private Christians.

We are persuaded that the *nature* and the *extent* of the atonement are so intimately related, that whatever affects the latter affects the former; and surely it will not be contended that the *nature* of the atonement is a matter of small moment. The truth is, that the two things are inseparable. So much is this the case, that the idea attached to the atonement by those who regard it as indefinite, is different altogether from that which is attached to it by those who regard it as definite. This is not a difference in *degree* merely, but of *kind*. According to the one, Christ, by his death, rendered salvation *possible*; according to the other, Christ, by his death, rendered salvation *certain*. It follows, that what is proclaimed or offered in the preaching of the gospel, is, in the one case, *not the same* as in the other, and if so, it follows also that the indefinite view, instead of providing a *better basis for the gospel offer*, has rather the effect of changing the character of the *thing offered*,—that is to say, of introducing virtually ANOTHER GOSPEL. This is what gives to the point at issue a feature of overwhelming moment; and, for this reason, men ought to beware of tampering with a subject of such delicacy and sacredness. The consequences of their doing so reach farther than they may at first perceive, or than themselves would approve.

The question of the extent of the atonement appears to us to be treated with singular clearness and power in the following article. It is taken from the Biblical Repertory, or Princeton Review, for January 1845, in which it appeared as a review of a work by Dr Beman of

Troy, whose theory of the atonement is substantially the same with what has recently been put forth amongst ourselves. It is not possible to peruse Dr Beman's book without being struck with the resemblance it bears, in point of sentiment and reasoning, to certain productions on the same subject, which have been published on this side of the Atlantic. The review is known to be from the pen of one of the soundest and most talented of the American divines of the present day—Dr Hodge, Professor of Theology in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. It is written in a calm, masterly, vigorous style, and is altogether a beautiful specimen of dignified criticism and cogent reasoning. We look upon his general principles as correct, and the arguments by which he supports and defends them as at once luminous and profound.

The paper, therefore, appears to us to be eminently calculated to instruct inquirers, to settle the wavering, to reclaim such as may have been led into error, to convince the candid, and to edify and delight the friends of orthodox truth. As such, we recommend it to the attention of all who feel an interest in the great doctrinal controversy of our day, more especially to students of Divinity and young ministers, to whom it is particularly adapted, and who cannot fail to find in it, a rich intellectual and spiritual treat. We do so the more readily, that, from its being written by a foreigner, it can have no tendency to awaken feelings of a personal nature, and is all the more likely, for this very reason, to have full justice done to its real merits. It may be added that, as the evil which it is designed

to counteract has come to us immediately from America, there would seem to be a peculiar fitness in the antidote coming from the same quarter.

May the blessing of God rest on this and every other attempt to propagate his own truth, and to guard the minds of men from the pernicious influence of error!



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January 1846.

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THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE,
REGARDING
THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT,
VINDICATED,

IN A REVIEW OF DR BEMAN ON THE ATONEMENT.*

THE doctrine of which this little book treats, has always been regarded as the cardinal doctrine of the gospel. It was the burden of apostolical preaching; the rock of offence to Jews and Greeks, the corner stone of that temple in which God dwells by his Spirit. The cross is the symbol of Christianity; that in which every believer glories, as the only ground of his confidence toward God. The rejection of this doctrine, therefore, has always been regarded, and is in fact, a rejection of the gospel. It is the repudiation of the way of salvation revealed by God, and the adoption of some method not only different but irreconcilable. Whatever, therefore, affects the integrity of this doctrine, affects the whole system of religion. It lies in such immediate contact with the source of all spiritual life, that the very nature of religion depends on the manner in which it is apprehended. Though all moral and religious truths are in their

* Christ, the only Sacrifice: or the Atonement in its Relations to God and Man. By Nathan S. S. Beman, D.D.

nature sources of power, and never fail to influence more or less the character of those who embrace them, yet some truths are more powerful, and hence more important than others. We may speculate with comparative impunity on the nature of angels, on the origin of evil, on the purposes of God, on his relation to the world, and even on the grounds and nature of human responsibility; but when we come to the question; how am I to gain access to God? how can I secure the pardon of my sins and acceptance with him? what is the true ground of hope, and what must I do to place myself on that ground so as to secure the assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost? then the less we speculate the better. The nearer we keep to the simple, authoritative statements of God's word, the firmer will be our faith, the more full and free our access to God, and the more harmonious and healthful our whole religious experience. Such is the informing influence of such experience, when it is genuine, that is, when really guided by the Spirit and conformed to the revelation of God, that it effects a far nearer coincidence of views in all the children of God, than the multiplicity of sects, and conflicting systems of theology would lead us to imagine. The mass of true Christians, in all denominations, get their religion directly from the Bible, and are but little affected by the peculiarities of their creeds. And even among those who make theology a study, there is often one form of doctrine for speculation, and another simpler and truer, for the closet. Metaphysical distinctions are forgot in prayer, or under the pressure of real conviction of sin, and need of pardon and of Divine assistance. Hence it is that the devotional writings of Christians agree far nearer than their creeds. It may be taken for granted that that mode of stating Divine truth, which is most in accordance with the devotional language of true Christians; which best expresses those views which

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the soul takes when it appropriates the doctrines of the gospel for its own spiritual emergencies, is the truest and the best.

How then does the believer regard the person and work of Christ, in his own exercises of faith, gratitude, or love? What is the language in which those exercises are expressed? If we look to the devotional writings of the church, in all ages and countries, and of all sects and names, we shall get one clear, consistent answer. What David wrote three thousand years ago, expresses with precision the emotions of God's people now. The hymns of the early Christians, of the Lutherans, the Reformed, of Moravians, of British and American Christians, all express the common consciousness of God's people; they all echo the words and accents in which the truth came clothed from the mouth of God, and in which, in spite of the obstructions of theological theories, it finds its way to every believing heart. Now one thing is very plain, Dr Beman's theory of the atonement never could be learnt from the devotional language of the church,—our's can. Everything we believe on the subject is inwrought, not only in the language of the Bible, but in the language of God's people, whether they pray or praise, whether they mourn or rejoice. We have therefore the heart of the church on our side at least.

It lies on the very surface of the Scriptures: 1. That all men are sinners. 2. That sin for its own sake, and not merely to prevent others from sinning, deserves punishment. 3. That God is just, that is disposed from the very excellence of his nature, to treat his creatures as they deserve, to manifest his favour to the good, and his disapprobation towards the wicked. 4. That to propitiate God, to satisfy his righteous justice, the Son of God assumed our nature, was made under the Law, fulfilled all righteousness

bore our sins, the chastisement or punishment of which was laid on him. 5. That by his righteousness, those that believe, are constituted righteous; that his merit is so given, reckoned or imputed to them, that they are regarded and treated as righteous in the sight of God. These truths, which lie on the surface of the Scripture, are wrought into the very soul of the church, and are in fact its life. Yet every one of them, except the first, Dr Beman either expressly or virtually denies.

I. *He denies that sin for its own sake deserves punishment.* He everywhere represents the prevention of crime as the great end to be answered by punishment, even in the government of God. If that end can be otherwise answered, then justice is satisfied; the necessity and propriety of punishment ceases. This is the fundamental principle of the whole system, and is avowed or implied upon almost every page. His argument in proof that repentance is not a sufficient ground for pardon, is that it has no tendency to prevent crime in others. In human governments, he says, punishment is designed to prevent a repetition of crime by the criminal, and to prevent its commission by others. The former of these ends might be answered by repentance, but not the latter. So in the case of the Divine government, repentance on the part of the sinner might, "so far as his moral feelings are concerned," render it consistent in God to forgive, but then "where is the honour of the law? Where is the good of the universe?" p. 57. The design of "penalty is to operate as a powerful motive to obedience." p. 127. There is, he says, the same necessity for atonement, as for the penalty of the moral law, and that necessity he uniformly represents as a necessity "to secure the order and prosperity of the universe," p. 128.

It is of course admitted that the prevention of crime is one of the effects, and consequently one of the ends

of punishment. But to say that it is *the* end, that it is so the ground of its infliction, that all necessity for punishment ceases when that end is answered, is to deny the very nature of sin. The ideas of right and wrong are simple ideas, derived immediately from our moral nature. And it is included in those ideas that what is right deserves approbation, and what is wrong deserves disapprobation, for their own sake, and entirely irrespective of the consequences which are to flow from the expression of this moral judgment concerning them. When a man sins, he feels that he deserves to suffer, or as the apostle expresses it, that he is "worthy of death." But what is this feeling? Is it that he ought to be punished to prevent others from sinning? So far from this being the whole of the feeling, it is no part of it. If the sinner were alone in the universe, if there was no possibility of others being affected by his example, or by his impunity, the sense of ill-desert would exist in all its force. For sin is that which in itself, and for itself, irrespective of all consequences, deserves ill. This is the very nature of it, and to deny this is to deny that there is really any such thing as sin. There may be acts which tend to promote happiness, and others which tend to destroy it; but there is no morality in such tendency merely, any more than there is health and sickness. The nature of moral acts may be evinced by their tendency, but that tendency does not constitute their nature. To love God, to reverence excellence, to forgive injuries, all tend to promote happiness; but no man, who has a moral sense in exercise, can say that they are right only because of such tendency. They are right, because they are right, in virtue of their own inherent nature. And the opposite dispositions or acts are in their nature evil, irrespective of their tendency to produce misery.

The theory, that the end of punishment, even in the Divine government, is to prevent crime, is only one expression of the more general theory, that happi-

ness is the end of creation, and that all holiness is resolvable into benevolence. This theory is a product of the mere understanding, and does violence to the instinctive moral judgment of men. We know that holiness is something more than a means; that to be happy is not the end and reason for being holy; that enjoyment is not the highest end of being. Our moral nature cannot be thus obliterated, and right and wrong made matters of profit and loss. The command not to do evil that good may come, would, on this theory, be a contradiction, since that ceases to be evil which produces good. All virtue is thus resolved into expediency, and the doctrine, that the end sanctifies the means, becomes the fundamental principle of virtue. It is strange that even when the moral feelings are in abeyance, and men are engaged in spinning from the intellect a theory that will reduce to unity the conflicting facts of the moral world, they could adopt a view which reduces all intelligent beings to mere recipients of happiness, and degrades the higher attributes of their nature into mere instruments of enjoyment; a theory which meets its refutation in every moral emotion, and which has proved itself false by its practical effects. We may safely appeal to the convictions of every man's breast, against this whole theory, and against the doctrine that sin is punished and deserves punishment only as a warning to others. No man, when humbled under the sense of his guilt in the sight of God, can resist the conviction of the inherent ill-desert of sin. He feels that it would be right that he should be made to suffer, nay, that rectitude, justice, or moral excellence, demands his suffering; and the hardest thing for the sinner to believe is, often, that it can be consistent with the moral excellence of God, to grant him forgiveness. Into this feeling the idea of counteracting the progress of sin, or promoting the good of the universe, does not in any measure enter. The feeling would be the same, though

there were no universe. It is ill-desert, and not the general good, which every man feels in his own case, is the ground of his just liability to punishment. And without this feeling, there can be no conviction of sin. We may also appeal against this metaphysical theory to the universal consciousness of men. Though it is admitted that governmental reasons properly enter into the considerations which determine the nature and measure of punishment, yet it is the universal and intuitive judgment of men, that the criminal could not be rightly punished merely for the public good, if he did not deserve to be punished irrespective of that good. His suffering benefits the public because it is deserved; it is not deserved because it benefits the public. That this is the universal judgment of men is proved by every exhibition of their feelings on this subject. When any atrocious crime is committed, the public indignation is aroused. And when the nature of that indignation is examined, it becomes manifest that it arises from a sense of the inherent ill-desert of crime; that it is a sense of justice, and not a regard to the good of society which produces the demand for punishment. To allow such a criminal to escape with impunity, is felt to be an outrage against justice, and not against benevolence. If the public good was the grand end of punishment, then if the punishment of the innocent would promote that object most effectually, the innocent should suffer instead of the guilty; consequently, if murders would be most restrained by the execution of the wives and children of the assassins, it would be right and obligatory to execute them, and not the perpetrators of the crime. If this would shock every man, let him ask himself, why? what is the reason that the execution of an innocent woman for the public good would be an atrocity, when the execution of the guilty husband is regarded as a duty? It is simply because the guilty deserve punishment irrespective of the good of society. And if so, then the public

good is not the ground of punishment in the government of God, but the inherent ill-desert of sin. Men in all ages have evinced this deep-seated sense of justice. Every sacrifice ever offered to God, to propitiate his favour, was an expression of the conviction that the sin for its own sake deserved punishment. To tell a man who brought his victim to the altar, that the real philosophy of his conduct was to express a desire for his own reformation, or for the good of society, would be a mockery. Such an idea never entered any human heart, when in the presence of God, and seeking his forgiveness.

It is not pretended that this theory is taught in the Bible. It purports to be a philosophy. The Bible contradicts it on every page, because every page contains some expression of genuine human feeling, of the conviction of the real difference between right and wrong, of a true sense of sin, or of the great truth that our responsibility is to God, and not to the universe. The doctrine therefore that sin is punished merely to preserve the order and prosperity of the universe, is an utterly false and revolting theory; inconsistent with the intuitive moral judgments of men subversive of all moral distinctions, irreconcilable with the experience of every man when really convinced of sin, and contradicted by everything the Bible teaches on the subject.

II. Dr Beman again *denies, and it is essential to his system that he should deny, the justice of God.* He admits that God has a disposition to promote the welfare of his creatures, and so to order his moral government as to make it produce the greatest amount of happiness. This however is benevolence, and not justice. The two sentiments are perfectly distinct. This our own consciousness teaches. We know that pity is not reverence, that gratitude is not compassion, and we know just as well that justice is not

benevolence. The two are perfectly harmonious, and are but different exhibitions of moral excellence. The Judge of all the earth must do right. It is right to promote happiness, and it is right to punish sin; but to refer the punishment of sin to the desire to promote happiness, is to attribute but one form of moral excellence to God, and to make his excellence less comprehensive than our own. Dr Beman speaks of commutative, distributive, and general justice. The former has relation only to the regulation of property, and has nothing to do with this subject. Distributive justice consists in the distribution of rewards and punishments, according to merit or demerit. General justice, he says, embraces the general principles of virtue or benevolence by which God governs the universe. The second kind, he correctly says, is justice in the common and appropriate sense of the word, p. 131. When we say that he denies the justice of God, we mean; that he denies that justice in its common and appropriate sense, is an essential attribute of the Divine nature. There is nothing in his nature that leads to the punishment of sin, but benevolence, or a regard to the happiness of the universe. If that is secured, sin and all sin may go unpunished for ever. This we say is a denial of Divine justice.

It is a principle of our nature, and a command of God, that we should regard him as absolutely perfect; that every moral excellence which we find in ourselves we should refer to him in an infinite degree. Why do we believe that God is merciful, but because he has so made us that we approve of mercy, and because he has in his word declared himself to be full of compassion. Our moral nature is as much a revelation of God's perfections, as the heavens are of his wisdom and power. If therefore he has implanted in us a sentiment of justice, distinct from that of benevolence, we are constrained by the very constitution of our nature to refer that perfection of God. All men

in fact do it. It enters into the sense of responsibility, into the nature of remorse, and into that fearful looking for of judgment which manifest themselves in every human breast. Men know that God is just, for they in their measure are just; and they instinctively fear the punishment of their sins. To be told that God is only benevolent, and that he punishes only when the happiness of his government requires it, is to destroy our whole allegiance to God, and to do violence to the constitution of our nature. This is a doctrine that can only be held as a theory. It is in conflict with the most intimate moral convictions of men. This, as already remarked, is evinced by the sacrificial rites of all ages and nations, which derive their whole character and import from the assumption that God is just. If justice is merged into benevolence, they cease to have any significance as propitiatory offerings. If then distributive justice, justice "in its common and appropriate sense," is by the common consciousness of men declared to be a virtue, is it thereby revealed to belong to God; and he can no more cease to be just, than he can cease to be benevolent or holy. This is only saying that if moral excellence leads us to judge that sin in itself deserves punishment, then the infinite moral excellence of God cannot but lead him to treat it as it deserves.

Again, it is included in our conception of God as absolutely independent and self-sufficient, that the reasons of his acts should be in himself. He is absolutely perfect, he acts with undeviating rectitude, and by so acting he promotes the highest good of his creatures. But the good of his creatures is not the end of his actions, for of him and through him and to him are all things. It is to subordinate God to the creature, to make the creature the end of his actions. He rewards one man and punishes another, not because he will thus make others happy, but because it is right, and by doing right the greatest good to others is the

result. This is the view which both reason and Scripture presents of God as infinite and self-sufficient, who is the beginning and the end of all things. It is hence plain how the justice of God necessarily flows from his holiness. He is so holy that he delights in all that is good, and hates all that is evil; and if he acts agreeably to his nature, he constantly manifests this love of excellence and hatred of sin. But what is reward and punishment but the manifestation of the approbation or disapprobation of God? If holiness is communion with him, sin is alienation from him; if his favour goes out towards the one, his displeasure goes out towards the other; if the one is attracted, the other is repelled. 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. The justice of God is therefore nothing but the holiness of God in relation to sin. So long as he is holy, he must be just; he must repel sin, which is the highest idea we can form of punishment. To say then that God punishes only for governmental reasons, is to destroy our very conception of his nature.

That distributive justice is an essential attribute of God, is therefore revealed to us in the very constitution of our nature, in which we find a sense of justice, which is no more a form of benevolence than it is of reverence. It is revealed in all the operations of conscience; in the common consciousness of men, as expressed in all their prayers, confessions, and sacrificial rites. It is revealed in the Scriptures in every possible way; in all they teach of the nature of God, of his holiness, of his hatred of sin, of his determination to punish it; in the institution of sacrifices, and in the law. If the precepts of the law are an expression of the Divine perfection, so is the penalty. If the one declare what it is right for God to require, the other declares what it is right for him to inflict. If

God does not command us to love him, merely to make his dominions happy, neither does he punish merely for the public good. . The law is a revelation of what is right, and God will require and do right for its own sake, and not for another and a lower end. God then is just, and Dr Beman and his theory, by denying that there is any such attribute in God as justice distinct from benevolence, do equal violence to conscience, reason, and the Bible.

III. Dr Beman, again, *denies that Christ made a true and proper satisfaction to Divine justice*, and thus departs from the common faith of Christendom, and seriously vitiates the whole doctrine of redemption. It is well known that at the time of the Reformation there was no controversy between Protestants and Romanists either as to the necessity or nature of the atonement. All classes of Protestants and the Church of Rome itself, united in teaching, 1. That the Son of God having assumed our nature, obeyed and suffered in our stead, thereby making a true, proper, and complete satisfaction for our sins. And, 2. That his righteousness was given or imputed unto us as to constitute us righteous in the sight of God. The Romanists even reproached Protestants for not coming up to their doctrine on this subject, insisting that the satisfaction of Christ was not only full and equivalent, but superabundant. "Pretium," says the Cat. Rom. i. 5, 15, "quod Christus pro nobis persolvit, debitis nostris non par solum et æquale fuit, verum et longe superavit."* It is one of the standing heads of theology in the Romish systems, "Satisfactio Christi fuit de rigore justitiæ," † which they prove; and answer the common Socinian objections, viz. that such a satisfaction de-

* "The price which Christ fully paid for us was not only sufficient for and equal to our debts, but even far superior."

† "The satisfaction of Christ met the full demands of justice."

stroys the grace of salvation, that it is impossible that the temporal sufferings of Christ should have such efficacy, &c. As to their views of the second point above mentioned, it is enough to quote the following passage from Turretin, vol. ii. p. 709. "It is not questioned," he says, "whether the righteousness and merit of Christ are imputed to us; for this the papists dare not deny. The Council of Trent, Sess. vi. c. 8, says, 'Christ by his most holy passion on the cross merited justification for us, and satisfied God the Father in our behalf, and no one can be righteous to whom the merits of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ are not communicated.' Hence Vasques in l. 2. q. 114, disp. 222, chap. 1, says, 'We concede that not only what is within us, as sin, faith, righteousness, may be imputed to us, but also what is without us, as the merits and obedience of Christ; because not only what is within, but also what is without, on account of which something is given to us, is said to belong to us, (ad aliquem effectum,) as though they were really our own.' Bellarmin, Lib. 2, de Justif., cap. 7, acknowledges the same thing, when he says, 'If Protestants meant only that the merits of Christ are imputed to us, because God gives them to us, so that we can present them to God for our sins, he having assumed the burden of making satisfaction for us, and of reconciling us to the Father, the doctrine would be true.' This is in fact precisely what we do mean. For when he adds, 'we hold that the righteousness of Christ is so imputed to us, as by it we become formally or inherently just, he asserts what is gratuitous and false, on account of his own perverse and preposterous theory of moral justification.'"

The Lutheran Church held the strictest form of doc-

* It is characteristic of the Church of Rome that while she holds the truth, she contrives to make it of no effect by her traditions. Thus while she teaches that the merit of Christ is the ground of our justification, she makes those merits

trine as to the nature of Christ's satisfaction, and as to justification. That Church teaches that the sufferings of Christ were strictly penal, that his obedience and death made a full and proper satisfaction to the law and justice of God, and are imputed to believers the sole ground of their justification. We cannot swell our article with numerous citations in proof of a well known fact. In the Apology for the Augsburg Confession, p. 93, it is said, "Christus, quia sine peccato subiit pœnam peccati, et victima pro nobis factus est, sustulit illud jus legis, ne accuset, ne damnet hos qui credunt in ipsum, quia ipse est propitiatio pro eis, propter quam iusti reputantur."* In the Form of Concord, it is said, "Justitia illa, quae coram Deo fidei aut credentibus et mera gratia imputatur, est obedientia, passio, et resurrectio Christi, quibus ille legi nostra causa satisfacit et peccata nostra expiavit,"† p. 684. Again, p. 696, "Humana natura sola, sine divinitate, æterno omnipotenti Deo neque obedientia, neque passione pro totius mundi peccatis satisfacere valuisset. Divinitas vero sola sine humanitate inter Deum et nos mediatoris partes implere non potuisset. Cum autem . . . obedientia illa Christi non sit

accessible only through her ministrations, and confounds justification and sanctification. And while she holds the truth as to the nature of Christ's satisfaction, she chooses to confine it to original and mortal sins, that she may make room for her own doctrine of satisfaction by good works and penances. The infinite value of the Saviour's merit, she perverts as a source, whence to derive the power to grant indulgences, &c.

* "Christ, inasmuch as without sin himself he endured the punishment of sin, and became a sacrifice in our room, cancelled in this respect the obligation of the law, that it could not accuse or condemn those who trust in him, because he himself is the propitiation for them, on account of which they are accounted righteous."

† "That righteousness, which of God is imputed to faith or believers, and through grace alone, consists of the obedience, sufferings, and resurrection of Christ, by which he for our sakes satisfied the law, and expiated our transgressions."

unius duntaxat naturæ, sed totius personæ; ideo, ea est perfectissima pro humano genere satisfactio et expiatio; qua æternæ et immutabili justitiæ divinæ satis est factum.*

It will not be necessary to prove that the reformed churches held precisely the same doctrine. There was no controversy between them and the Lutherans either as to the nature of the satisfaction of Christ, or as to justification. They differed only as to the design of Christ's death, whether it had respect equally to all men, or had a special reference to his own people, a point which we hope to have room to discuss in the sequel of this article. We are now concerned only about the nature of the atonement. Bretschneider states, in a few words, the common doctrine on this subject of the two great divisions of the Protestant world. After saying that God, according to that doctrine, is immutably just, and therefore must punish sin, and yet being immutably benevolent, he determined to provide redemption, he proceeds, "For this it was necessary, 1. That some one in the place of men, should fulfil the law which they ought to have kept; and 2. That some one should endure the punishment (Strafen) which they had incurred. This no mere man could do, for no man, (since all are subject to original sin,) could perfectly keep the law, and every man must suffer for his own sin. Neither could any divine person accomplish the task, since he could

* "The human nature alone, without the Divine, would have been of no avail, either by obedience or suffering, as a satisfaction for the sins of the whole world to the eternal and omnipotent God; on the other hand, the Divine alone, without the human nature, could not have sustained the office of Mediator between God and us. Seeing, however, the obedience of Christ is not the obedience of our nature only, but of his whole person, it is accordingly a perfect satisfaction and expiation for mankind, by which the eternal and immutable justice of God has been satisfied."

not sustain suffering and punishment. He alone who is at once God and man, with a human nature free from sin, could accomplish the work." This righteousness, he adds, "God imputes to men as though they had wrought it out themselves."*

Against this doctrine of satisfaction to the Divine justice, the Socinians were the first to object.† Under the pressure of their objections the Remonstrants in Holland gave way, and Grotius in his work, *De Satisfactione Christi*, though defending in the main the catholic or common doctrine, introduced the principle; that the satisfaction of Christ was rendered to the governmental justice of God. Very far below the doctrine of Grotius, in many important respects, is the theory of Dr Beman. In some cases he falls even below Socinus. "God as the supreme governor," he says, "must so conduct all his movements, whether of justice or mercy, as to leave on the minds of dependent creatures, a deep and just impression, that the penalty of the law will be executed, and that the sinner must perish. *To fix this impression indelibly in the breast of the sinner, is the object of the atonement,*" p. 41.‡ This however is probably a lapsus, such an one however, as few men could make. He generally includes other intelligent creatures. Still, with him, the atonement is a mere method of instruction; a means to exhibit a certain truth for the moral re-

* Bretschneider's *Handbuch der Dogmatik*, vol. ii. p. 266.

† In the Racovian Catechism, it is asked, "Did Christ die that he might, properly speaking, merit our salvation, or, in like manner, properly speaking, discharge the debt due for our sins? An. Although Christians generally now hold that opinion, yet the sentiment is false, erroneous, and exceedingly pernicious."

‡ Socinus taught that the atonement was designed—1. To confirm the new covenant and all its promises, especially those of the pardon of sin, and of eternal life. 2. To assure us of the love of God. 3. To induce us to embrace the gospel. 4. To encourage us by his example to trust in God. 5. To abrogate the old dispensation, &c.

straint or improvement of those to whom it is made known. The gratuitous forgiveness of sin, it is said, would tend to produce the impression that God was indifferent to his law, and that sin might be committed with impunity. To counteract that impression, to teach, or declare that sin was, in the sight of God, an evil, and would be punished, and thus to open a way to exercise mercy, without weakening the motive to obedience, is the design of the death of Christ. Justice in its "common appropriate sense," he says, "was not satisfied by the atonement of Jesus Christ," P. 131. "The law, or justice, that is, distributive justice, as expressed in the law, has received no satisfaction at all." P. 133. So far as the atonement secured the government of God from the evils of gratuitous forgiveness, it was a satisfaction to his benevolence, but not to justice in any other sense. P. 182. It was designed to teach a certain truth; it is "a symbolical and substantive expression of God's regard to the moral law." P. 35. "It furnishes an expression of his regard for the moral law," and "evinces his determination to punish sin." P. 91. "To fix indelibly this impression on the heart of the sinner is the object of the atonement." P. 42.

Our first remark on this subject, after showing, as we think we have done, that the whole basis of this theory is false, is that it is destitute of any semblance of support from Scripture. It hardly purports to be any thing more than a hypothesis on which to reconcile what the Bible teaches with our views of moral government. It is a device to make the atonement rational, to explain away the mystery which hangs over it, and makes the whole august transaction perfectly intelligible. Dr Beman says that the doctrine of the atonement enters "into the very texture of revelation, warp and woof." It is, he says, "the vital principle, in the very heart of the gospel." P. 62. Surely then we have a right to have it treated as "a

purely biblical question," as he affirms it to be. Yet in his chapter on the nature of the atonement, as far as we can find, he refers but to one solitary text in the whole Bible! It is a theory woven warp and woof out of the understanding, not even out of the conscience. The solitary passage which Dr Beman cites as teaching his doctrine, is Rom. iii. 25, where it is said that God set forth Christ as a propitiation of our sins, to declare his righteousness. "The object of the atonement," he says, "is here stated in explicit terms. It was required and made in order to open a consistent way for the publication of pardon, or for the exercise of grace to sinners. Its purpose was to declare the righteousness or moral rectitude and perfection of God in dispensing, in this instance, with the literal execution of the penalty of the law, and in bestowing eternal life upon those who deserved to die." P. 124. He afterwards, p. 132, says, the words just and righteousness as here used have "no direct reference to law," but express "those principles of virtue or benevolence by which we are bound to regulate our conduct, and by which God governs the universe." Then of course the passage might be rendered, "Christ was set forth as a propitiation to declare the benevolence of God, that he might be benevolent even in remitting the sins of those that believe;" an interpretation which needs no refutation. The first remark then to be made on this passage is, that it teaches the very reverse of what it is cited to prove. Dr Beman himself says that, in their "common and appropriate sense," the words just and justice have reference to law, and express what he calls distributive justice. Then if the language of the apostle is to be taken in "common and appropriate sense," it teaches that the propitiation of Christ was designed as an exhibition of justice in its proper sense; in order to make it apparent that God was just even in remitting sin; that the demands of justice had not been sacrificed, but on

the contrary fully satisfied. It is only by taking the words in a sense that is inappropriate and unusual, that any other doctrine can be got out of the passage. Besides, Dr Beman's interpretation is not only in direct opposition to the common meaning of the words, but to the necessary sense of the context. Satisfaction to justice is the formal idea of a propitiation, and saying that Christ was a propitiation, is only saying in other words, that our sins were laid on him, that he bore the chastisement or punishment of our sins, in order that God might be just, in justifying those that believe. Again, this interpretation is agreeable to the sense in which the words just, righteous, righteousness, &c., are familiarly used by the apostle. Is God unrighteous, he asks, who taketh vengeance? Rom. iii. 5. He denounces the Divine judgment, by saying, God will cut short the work in righteousness. Rom. ix. 28. See also 2 Thess. i. 5, 6. The obvious sense then of the passage in Rom. iii. 25, is the opposite to that which Dr Beman gives it.*

But if we admit that the passage in question does teach that the atonement was designed to set forth God's regard for the good of the universe, what then? would it establish Dr Beman's theory? Far from it.

* "We see ourselves obliged," says Tholuck, "to admit, in this place, the idea of distributive justice (*vergeltende Gerechtigkeit*.)" He afterwards says that the loss of that idea in theology has occasioned "unspeakable evil," and that the doctrine of atonement "must remain sealed up until it is acknowledged." See his *Römerbrief* ed. 1842. He refers with approbation to Usteri's exposition of this passage in his *Paulinischer Lehrbegriff*. On turning to that author we find he says, his object is to prove "that the representation contained in Rom. iii. 24, 25, viz. that God, to declare his righteousness, laid on Christ the punishment of the sins of men, is the doctrine of Paul." And he accordingly goes on to prove it, particularly from Rom. viii. 3. Usteri is one of those writers, who do not feel called upon to believe what the Scriptures teach, though they make it a point of honour to state its meaning fairly.

It is one of the most common fallacies of theological writers, to seize upon some one passage, and shutting their eyes on all others, assume that it teaches the whole truth on a given subject. The death of Christ was designed to answer manifold ends, more perhaps than it has yet entered into the heart of man to imagine. It would be the extreme of folly to take one of those ends, and infer that its attainment was its whole design, or let us into the full knowledge of its nature. Is it not said a hundred times that the death of Christ was designed to exhibit the love of God? does this prove that it does not display his righteousness? It is said to declare his wisdom; does that prove that it does not display his love? It was designed to bring us unto God; but does that prove that it was not also an atonement? It is not by taking any one view, or any one text, that we can arrive at the truth. We must have a theory which will embrace all the facts—a doctrine which includes all the revelations God has made on this subject. The objection to Dr Beman's view of the design of Christ's death, is not that it is false, but that it is defective. It states only a part, and a subordinate part of the truth. The atonement is an exhibition of God's purpose to maintain his law, and to inflict its penalty, and thus to operate as a restraint and a motive on all intelligent beings, because it involves the execution of that penalty. It is this that gives it all its power. It would be no exhibition of justice, if it were not an exercise of justice; it would not teach that the penalty of law must be inflicted, unless it was inflicted. We hold all the little truth there is in Dr Beman's doctrine, but we hold unspeakably more.

Our immediate object, however, is to call attention to the entire absence of all Scriptural support for this theory. We have already shown that the only passage directly referred to does not teach what it is cited to prove, and that if it did, it would give no

support to the theory built upon it. The surprising fact, however, should be more distinctly noticed, that while the Bible is said to be full of the doctrine of atonement, scarcely an attempt is made to prove its nature from the Bible. Christ is said to be a sacrifice, to bear our sins, to be a propitiation, a ransom, &c. &c., but no attempt is made to tell us what all this means. There is no examination of the terms, no elucidation of the meaning they bore in the age of the apostles. The writer does not even pretend to found his theory upon them. In the chapter in which he gives his own view of the nature of the atonement, they are scarcely even mentioned. The whole affair is a piece of pure rationalistic speculation, formed on certain principles of moral philosophy which have nothing to do with the Bible. It is assumed that happiness is the end of all things; that to promote happiness is the essence of virtue; that the prevention of crime, which causes misery, is the end of punishment; that the death of Christ, as it tends to prevent crime, supersedes the necessity of punishment. There is the theory. And we can hardly avoid saying that it has more affinity with Jeremy Bentham, and "the greatest happiness" system, than it has with the Bible, or with the sympathies of Christians.

Our next remark on this theory is, that it is perfectly arbitrary. The Bible teaches that Christ was a sacrifice, that he bore our sins, that the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him; that he propitiated God; was a ransom; was made sin, that he might be made righteous. These and similar statements set forth the nature of the atonement. There are many others describing some of its manifold effects. It declared the justice of God, exhibited his wisdom, set us an example, purifies his people, and, in short, glorifies God, and promotes the best interest of his kingdom. If you take in the former statements, there is perfect

unity in all these representations. The work of Christ is a display of the justice and love of God; it leads men to repentance, and exerts this moral influence on the universe, because it is a satisfaction to Divine justice, and answers the demands of his law. But if the Scriptural account of its nature be rejected, then it is a matter to be arbitrarily decided, which of its effects shall be selected as determining its character. If Dr Beman says it is an atonement, because it expresses God's regard to the order and welfare of his government, Socinus may say it is an atonement, because it assures us of the love of God. The one is just as much right as the other; for both are right as far as they go; but both are arbitrary in selecting what suits their taste, or their philosophy, and rejecting all the rest. Dr Beman does not pretend that his doctrine is taught in those passages of Scripture which really describe the nature of the atonement, neither does Socinus. Both say all that is figurative. The one says its nature is to be inferred from one of its effects, the other from another; the one considers it as designed mainly to teach God's rectoral justice, the other his love. It is perfectly plain, that on this plan, the citadel is surrendered. Dr Beman can have nothing to say to the Socinian, which the Socinian cannot retort on Dr Beman. Both admit that we are saved by the death of Christ; the one affirming that it is because it brings us to repentance, and thus makes our forgiveness consistent with the character of God and the interests of his kingdom; the other, that it is because it reconciles forgiveness with the good of the universe in a different way.

It may also, on this ground, be made a fair subject of debate, which view really assigns most importance to the death of Christ. Is it clear that fear is more conservative than love? that the exhibition of God's regard to law would have a greater effect in promoting holiness than the exhibition of his mercy? We very

much doubt it. And we confess ourselves very much at a loss to see why the Socinian view of the design of the Redeemer's death should be regarded as a rejection of the doctrine of atonement, if his death was merely designed to exert a conservative influence on the moral government of God. Certain it is that this is not the doctrine against which the early Socinians contended.

It is further plain, that the principles of interpretation, which Dr Beman is obliged to adopt, to reconcile his theory with the Bible, are all that is wanted to serve the purpose of Socinians. They both deny that we are to take the language of Scripture according to its "common and appropriate sense," and agreeable to the mode of thinking prevalent in the age in which it was uttered. The vastly different views entertained by Dr Beman and Socinus as to the person of Christ, make of course a corresponding difference in their whole religious system. But as to the nature of the atonement, we have always considered the ground advocated by Dr Beman as utterly untenable against the arguments of Socinians. It is a rejection of the Scriptural account, and, after that is done, one theory has as much authority as another.

Our third remark is, that this theory, besides being independent of Scripture, and perfectly arbitrary, is directly opposed to the explicit teaching of the word of God. Be it remembered that the Bible is admitted to be full of the doctrine of the atonement; that it is the great central point in the religion of the redeemed man. It is also admitted that God has revealed not only the fact that we are saved by the obedience and death of Christ, but also the way in which his work is efficacious to that end. The Socinian says, it is by its moral effect upon men; Dr Beman says, it is from its tendency to prevent crime and preserve the order of the universe; the common faith of Christendom is, that Christ saves us by satisfying the demands of law

and justice in our stead. As the Bible is full of this doctrine, it must enable us to decide which of these views is right, for the Bible was intended to teach us the way of salvation. We are taught, then, first, that *Christ bore our sins*, Heb. ix. 28; 1 Pet. ii. 24; Is. liii. 12, &c. It cannot be disputed that the usual Scriptural meaning of the expression, *to bear sin*, is to bear the punishment due to sin. Lev. xxii. 9. If they keep not my ordinance, "they shall bear sin for it." Num. xviii. 22, xiv. 33; Lev. v. 1, 17. "He is guilty, and shall bear his iniquity." Ez. xviii. 20. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son." No one doubts that this means the son shall not be punished for the sins of the father, nor the father for the sins of the son. When, therefore, the Scriptures say that Christ bore our sins, they say in express terms, that he bore the punishment of our sins. This is rendered the more certain, because he bore them by suffering, or by dying; and because the Scriptures express this same idea in so many other ways. This account of the nature of the atonement is found not only in poetical descriptions of Christ's sufferings, but in the most didactic portions of the Bible. The language used had an established sense in the minds of those to whom it was addressed, who could not fail to understand it according to its obvious meaning. That meaning, therefore, we are bound, by all sound rules of interpretation, to believe the sacred writers intended to convey. How does Dr Beman answer this? Does he attempt to show that the phrase "to bear sin," does commonly mean to bear the punishment of sin? or that it has not that meaning when used in reference to Christ? As far as we have been able to find, he contents himself with some general remarks against taking figurative language in its literal sense. He subjects the passages, in which the phrase in question occurs, to

no critical examination. He makes no attempt to show that figurative language may not convey a definite meaning, or that that meaning is not to be learnt from usage and the known opinions of those to whom it is addressed. It is enough for him that he does not like the truth, which the passages in question would then teach; that he cannot see how the innocent could so take the place of the guilty as to bear their punishment; that he cannot reconcile this doctrine with the justice of God, nor with his views of other portions of Scripture. In the mean time, the plain meaning of the Scriptures stands, and those who find all other Scriptural representations consistent with that meaning, and to whom it is in fact the very ground of their hope towards God, will receive it gladly, and in all its simplicity. The theory of Dr Beman, then, which denies that Christ suffered the penalty due to our sins, must be admitted to be in direct conflict with these express declarations of the word of God. *

Secondly, the Scriptures, in order to teach us the nature of atonement, say, that Christ offered himself as a sacrifice unto God. What then is, according to the Scriptures, a sacrifice for sins? "The essence of a propitiatory sacrifice," says Storr, "is the forgive-

* Professor Stuart, in his Commentary and Excursus on Heb. ix. 28, says, "*To bear the sins of others*, is to bear or endure the penalty due to them." Having proved this, he adds, "The sentiment of the clause then clearly is, that Jesus by his death, (which could take place but once,) endured the penalty that our sins deserved, or bore the sorrows due to us." What he further says, that the sufferings of Christ were not in *all respects*, and considered in every point of view, an exact and specific *quid pro quo*, as it regards the penalty threatened against sin, that the Saviour did not suffer a guilty conscience, or despair, would be pertinent, had he first proved that any respectable body of Christians held any such doctrine, or that a guilty conscience or despair is an essential part of the penalty of the law.

ness, through the transfer of punishment from the actual offender to another.* The moderate Bishop Burnet says, "The notion of an expiatory sacrifice, which was then, when the New Testament was writ, well understood all the world over, both by Jews and Gentiles, was this, that the sin of one person was conferred on a man or beast, who upon that was devoted or offered to God, and suffered in the room of the offending person; and by this oblation, the punishment of the sin being laid on the sacrifice, an expiation was made for sin, and the sinner was believed to be reconciled to God."† That this is the correct view of the Scriptural doctrine concerning sacrifices, may be inferred, 1. From its being confessedly the light in which they were generally regarded by the Jews and by the whole ancient world, and from its being a simple and natural explanation of the service. On this hypothesis, every thing is significant and intelligible. 2. From the express didactic statements of the Bible. The life is said to be in the blood, and "I have given it to you as an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul" (life). Lev. xvii. 11. The very nature of the service then was the substitution of life for life. The life forfeited was redeemed by the life paid. 3. From all the rites connected with the service, and all the expressions employed concerning it. There was to be confession of sin, imposition of hands (as expressing the idea of transfer and substitution,) the sins were said to be laid on the head of the victim, which was then put to death, or, as in the case of the scape-goat, dismissed into the wilderness, and another goat sacrificed in its place. All these directions plainly teach that the nature of expiatory offerings consisted in the substitution of the victim for the offender, and in the infliction of the penalty of death incurred by the one,

* Zweck des Todes Jesu, § 8.

† Burnet on the Thirty-nine Articles. Article 2.

upon the other. 4. That this is the Scriptural doctrine on this subject, is made still plainer by the fact, that all that is taught by saying, that the Messiah bore our sins, that our iniquities were laid upon him, that he bore our sorrows, that the chastisement of our peace was laid on him, is expressed by the prophet by saying, He made "his soul an offering for sin." Then an offering for sin, is one on whom sin is laid, who bears sins, *i. e.*, as has been shown, the penalty due to sin. 5. This view of the subject is further confirmed by a consideration of the effects ascribed to these sacrifices. They made atonement; they propitiated God; they secured the remission of the penalty incurred. When an Israelite had committed any offence by which he forfeited his standing in the theocracy, (that is, the favour of God as his theocratical ruler,) he brought to the priest the appointed sacrifice, made confession of his sin, the victim was slain in his place, and he was restored to his standing, and saved from being cut off from his people. These sacrifices always produced these effects; they always secured the remission of the theocratical penalty for which they were offered and accepted. Whether they secured the forgiveness of the soul before God, depended on the state of mind of the offerer. Of themselves they had no such efficacy, since it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin. But nothing is plainer from Scripture, than that the way in which the Israelites obtained the remission of the civil or theocratical penalties which they had incurred, was intended to teach us how sin is pardoned in the sight of God through Jesus Christ.

If, then, the Bible, according to the almost unanimous judgment of Christians, teach that the idea of an expiatory sacrifice is, that by vicarious punishment justice is satisfied and sin forgiven; if this was the view taken of them by Jews and Gentiles, then does the Bible, in so constantly representing Christ as

a propitiation, as a lamb, as a sacrifice for sin, expressly teach that he bore the penalty due to our sins, that he satisfied Divine justice, and secured for all in whose behalf that sacrifice is accepted, the pardon of sin, and restoration to the Divine favour. To talk of figure here is out of the question. Admit that the language is figurative, the question is, what idea was it intended to convey? Beyond doubt, that which the sacred writers knew with certainty would be attached to it, by their immediate readers, and which in fact has been attached to it in all ages of the church.* To tell a conscience-stricken Israelite that a sacrifice was designed either to impress his own mind or the mind of others with the truth that God is just or benevolent, would have been a mockery. It was to him an atonement, a propitiation, a vicarious punishment, or it was nothing. And it is no less a mockery to tell a convinced sinner, that the death of Christ was designed to lead him to repentance, or to preserve the good order of the universe. Unless the Redeemer was a sacrifice, on whom our sins were laid, who bore the penalty we had incurred, it is, to such a sinner, no atonement, and no adequate ground of confidence toward God.†

* "It is not possible for us to preserve," says Bishop Burnet, "any reverence for the New Testament, or the writers of it, so far as to think them even honest men, not to say inspired men, if we can imagine, that in so sacred and important a matter they could exceed so much as to represent that a sacrifice which is not truly so. This is a subject which will not bear figures and amplifications; it must be treated strictly, and with a just exactness of expression." Burnet on the Thirty-Nine Articles, the same page quoted above.

† "The innate sense of Divine justice which all men possess, demands that the sinner should receive his due, that the stroke he has given to the law, should recoil upon himself. The deeper his sense of guilt, the less can he be satisfied with mere pardon, and the more does he demand punishment, for by punishment he is JUSTIFIED. Whence do we derive this

Again, it is a part of the common faith of the church, that Jesus Christ is a true and proper priest; that what was symbolical and figurative, with regard to other priests, is real as regards him. He is called a priest; it is proved that he has all the qualifications for the office, that he was Divinely appointed, that he performed all its duties, secures all its benefits, and that his priesthood supersedes all others. We are accordingly commanded to come to him in the character of a priest, to commit our souls into his hands, that he may reconcile us to God, and make intercession for us. This is the Scriptural method of representing the manner in which Christ saves us, and the nature of his work. Dr Beman in his chapter on the "Fact of the Atonement," which is directed against Socinians, avails himself of all the usual sources of Scriptural proof, and in the course of the chapter is forced to speak of Christ as a sacrifice and a priest. But when he comes to the exposition of his views of the nature

intimate persuasion of God's justice? Not from without; because men, as empirically guided, regard freedom from suffering as the highest good; it must therefore be implanted in our nature by God himself. The holiness of God, which reveals itself to the sinner by the connexion between suffering and transgression, has therefore a witness for itself in every human breast. Hence, on the one hand, the proclamation of pardon and reconciliation could not satisfy the conscience of the sinner, unless his guilt had been atoned for by punishment; and on the other hand, Divine love could not offer its blessings to the sinner, unless holiness was revealed together with love. It was therefore necessary that suffering commensurate with the apostacy of man should be endured, which men would impute to themselves as their own. Such was the suffering, inward and outward, of the Redeemer. Two things were necessary: 1. That those sufferings should correspond to (entsprechen) the greatness of the sin of mankind; 2. That the sinner could rightfully impute them to himself." THOLUCK, *Beilage II. zum Hebraerbrief*, p. 104. There is more real and precious truth, according to our judgment, in that short paragraph, than in all Dr Beman's book.

of the atonement, he finds it expedient and even necessary, to leave that mode of representation entirely out of view. We hear no more of propitiating God, of Christ as a sacrifice, of his character as a priest. It is now all moral government, the order and interest of the universe, symbolical teaching, exhibition of truth and motives. Why is all this? Why does not Dr Beman's doctrine admit of being thrown into the Scriptural form? Why must the terms sacrifice, priest, propitiation, be discarded, when teaching the nature of the atonement? For the very obvious reason that there is an entire incongruity between his views and the word of God. What has a sacrifice and priest to do with governmental display? This fact alone works the condemnation of Dr Beman's whole theory. His plan of salvation, his method of access to God, is irreconcilable with that presented in the Scriptures. There we are taught that as the Israelite who had offended, came to the priest, who made an atonement for him in the appointed way, and thus reconciled him to God; so the penitent sinner must come to Christ as his High Priest, who satisfies the Divine justice by presenting his own merits before God, and who ever lives to make intercession for him. Would this representation ever lead a human being to imagine, that Christ *merely makes pardon possible*, that his death was a symbolical lesson to the universe? According to Dr Beman's theory, Christ, is not a priest. We are under no necessity of recognising him as such, nor of committing ourselves into his hands, nor of relying on his merits and intercession. A mere possibility of salvation for all men is all that Christ has accomplished.

- But does this make him a High Priest, in the Scriptural and universally received sense of the term?

A third method by which the Scriptures teach us the nature of the atonement, is by express declarations concerning the nature of his sufferings, or the immediate design of his death. It is expressly taught that

his sufferings were penal, that he endured the penalty of the law, and that he thus suffered not for himself but for us. This is a point about which there is so much strange misconception, that it is necessary to explain the meaning of the terms here used. The sufferings of rational beings are either calamities, having no reference to sin; or chastisement designed for the improvement of the sufferer; or penal when designed for the satisfaction of justice. Now, what is meant by the language above used is, that the sufferings of Christ were not mere calamities; neither were they chastisements (in the sense just stated), nor were they simply exemplary, nor merely symbolical, designed to teach this or that truth, but that they were penal, *i. e.* designed to satisfy Divine justice. This is the distinctive character assigned to them in Scripture. Again, by the penalty of law is meant, that suffering which the law demands as a satisfaction to justice. It is not any specific kind or degree of suffering, for it varies both as to degree and kind, in every supposable case of its infliction. The sufferings of no two men that ever lived, are precisely alike, in this world or the next, unless their constitution, temperament, sins, feelings, and circumstances were precisely alike, which is absolutely incredible. The objection therefore started by Socinians, that Christ did not suffer the penalty of the law, because he did not suffer remorse, despair, or eternal banishment from God, was answered, by cotemporary theologians, by denying that those things entered essentially into the penalty of the law. That penalty is in Scripture called death, which includes every kind of evil inflicted by Divine justice in punishment of sin; and inasmuch as Christ suffered such evil, and to such a degree as fully satisfied Divine justice, he suffered what the Scriptures call the penalty of the law. It is not the nature, but the relation of sufferings to the law, which give them their distinctive character. What degree of suffering the law de-

mands, as it varies in every specific case, God only can determine. The sufferings of Christ were unutterably great; still with one voice, Papists, Lutherans, and Reformed, rebutted the objection of Socinus, that the transient sufferings of one man could not be equivalent to the sufferings due to the sins of men, by referring, not to the degree of the Saviour's anguish, as equal to the misery due to all for whom he died, but to the infinite dignity of his person. It was the Lord of glory who was crucified. As the bodily sufferings of a man are referred to his whole person, so the Scriptures refer the sufferings of Christ's human nature to his whole person. And he was a Divine, and not a human person; but a Divine person with a human nature. This is an awful subject, on which all irreverent speculation must be very offensive to God. Let it be enough to say with the Scriptures, that Christ suffered the penalty of the law in our stead, and that the penalty of the law was that kind and amount of suffering, which from such a person, was a full satisfaction to the Divine justice. All that our standards say on this point, they say wisely, viz., that the Saviour endured the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, the accursed death of the cross, and continued under the power of death for a time. This was the penalty of the law; for the wrath of God, however expressed, constitutes that penalty, in its strictest and highest sense.

That the Scriptures do teach that Christ's sufferings were penal, has already been proved from those passages in which he is said to bear our sins, that our iniquities were laid upon him, that he suffered the chastisement of our peace, and that as a sacrifice he endured the death which we had incurred. The same truth is expressed still more explicitly in Gal. iii. 13. The apostle thus argues. The law pronounces accursed all who do not obey every command; no man has ever rendered this perfect obedience, therefore all men are

under the curse; but Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us. There can be no doubt what the apostle means, when he says, that all men are under the curse; nor when he says, cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the law to do them, neither can it be doubted what he means when he says, Christ was made a curse. The three expressions, under the curse, accursed, and made a curse, cannot mean essentially different things. If the former mean that we were exposed to the penalty, the latter must mean that Christ endured the penalty. He hath redeemed us from the curse by bearing it in our stead. *

To the same effect the apostle speaks in Rom. viii.

3. What the law could not do (i. e. effect the justification of men) in that it was weak through the flesh, that God did, having sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, or as a sin-offering, he condemned, i. e. punished sin, in the flesh, i. e. in him, who was clothed in our nature. This passage agrees, as to the principal point, with the one cited from Galatians. The sentence which we had incurred was carried into effect upon the Redeemer, in order that we might be delivered from the law under which we were justly condemned. In 2 Cor. v. 21, the apostle in urging men to be reconciled to God, presents the nature and mode of the atonement, as the ground of his exhortation. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might become the

* In this interpretation every modern commentator of whom we have any knowledge concurs, as for example Koppe, Flatt, Winer, Usteri, Matthies, Rucket, de Wette. What the apostle adds in the next verse, "For it is written, cursed is every one that is hung upon a tree," is evidently intended to justify from Scripture the use of the word *curse*. Those publicly exposed as suffering the sentence of the law, are called *cursed*; hence since Christ, though perfectly holy, did bear the sentence of the law, the word may be properly applied to him.

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righteousness of God in him." The only sense in which Christ, who was free from all sin, could be made sin, was, by having our sins laid upon him; and the only way in which our sins could be laid upon him, was by his so assuming our place as to endure, in our stead, the penalty we had incurred. "God made him to be sin," says De Wette, "in that he laid on him the punishment of sin." Here again we have precisely the same doctrine, taught under all the other forms of expression already considered. Christ was made sin, as we in him are made righteousness; we are justified, he was condemned; we are freed from the penalty, he endured it; he was treated as justice required the sinner to be treated; we are treated according to his merits and not our own deserts.

Fourthly, There are various other forms under which the Scriptures set forth the nature of Christ's death which the limits of a review forbid our considering. He has redeemed us; he has purchased us; he gave himself as a ransom, &c. It is readily admitted that all these terms are often used in a wide sense, to express the general idea of deliverance without reference to the mode by which that deliverance is effected. It cannot however be denied that they properly express deliverance by purchase, i. e. by the payment of what is considered equivalent to the person or thing redeemed. In the Bible it is not simply said that Christ has delivered us; nor is it said he delivered us by power, nor by teaching, but by his death, by his own precious blood, by giving himself, by being made a curse for us. Such representations cannot fail to convey the idea of a redemption in the proper sense of the term, and therefore teach the true nature of the atonement. We are redeemed; that which was given for us was of infinite value.

If the Scriptures thus teach that Christ saves us by bearing our sins, or being made a sin-offering in our place, then the more general expressions, such as he

died for us, he gave himself for us, we are saved by his death, his blood, his cross, and others of a similar kind, are all to be understood in accordance with those more explicit statements. To the pious reader of the New Testament, therefore, the precious truth that Christ died as a substitute, enduring in his own person, the death which we had incurred, redeeming us from the curse by being made a curse for us, meets him upon almost every page, and confirms his confidence in the truth, and exalts his estimate of its value, by this frequency of repetition and variety of statement.

Fifth, There is still another consideration in proof of the unscriptural character of Dr Beman's theory, which is too important to be overlooked. The apostle, in unfolding the plan of redemption, proceeds on the assumption, that men are under a law or covenant which demands perfect obedience, and which threatens death in case of transgression. He then shows that no man, whether Jew or Gentile, can fulfil the conditions of that covenant, or so obey the law as to claim justification on the ground of his own righteousness. Still, as this law is perfectly righteous, it cannot be arbitrarily set aside. What then was to be done? What hope can there be for the salvation of sinners? The apostle answers by saying, that what the law could not do, (that is, save men,) God has accomplished by the mission of his Son. But how does the Son save us? This is the very question before us. It relates to the nature of the work of Christ, which Dr Beman has undertaken to discuss. Paul's answer to that question is, that Christ saves us by being made under the law and fulfilling all its demands. He fulfilled all righteousness, he knew no sin, he was holy, harmless, and separate of sinners. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and thus endured the death which the law threatened against sin. He has thus redeemed us from the law; that is, we are no

longer under obligation to satisfy, in our own person, its demands, in order to our justification. The perfect righteousness of Christ is offered as the ground of justification; and all who accept of that righteousness by faith, have it so imputed to them, that they can plead it as their own, and God has promised to accept it to their salvation. We can hardly persuade ourselves that any ordinary reader of the Bible can deny that this is a correct representation of the manner in which Paul preached the gospel. It is the burden of all his writings, it is the gospel itself as it lay in his mind, and as he presented it to others. It is the whole subject of the first eight chapters of his Epistle to the Romans, and of all the doctrinal part of his Epistle to the Galatians. In the former of these epistles, he shows that there are but two methods of justification, the one by our own righteousness, and the other by the righteousness of God. Having shown that no man has or can have an adequate righteousness of his own, he shows that the gospel reveals the righteousness of God, that is, the righteousness which is by faith in Jesus Christ, and which is upon all them that believe. This righteousness is so complete, that God is just in justifying those who have the faith by which it is received and appropriated. He afterwards illustrates this great doctrine of imputed righteousness by a reference to the case of Adam, and shows, that, as on the account of the offence of one man, a sentence of condemnation passed on all men, so on account of the righteousness of one man, the free gift of justification has come upon all. As by the disobedience of one the many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one the many are made righteous. It is involved in all this, that we are no longer under the law, no longer subject to its demand of a perfect personal righteousness, but justified by a righteousness, which satisfies its widest claims. Hence the apostle so frequently asserts, Ye are not under the law; ye are free from the law. But how? not by ab-

rogating the law, or by dispensing with its righteous claims, but legally, as a woman is free from her husband, not by deserting him, not by repudiating his authority, but by his ceasing to have any claim to her, which continues only so long as he lives. So we are freed from the law by the body of Christ, *i. e.*, by his death. He was made under the law that he might redeem them who were under the law; he hath redeemed us from its curse by being made a curse for us; he has taken away the hand-writing which was against us, nailing it to the cross. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, because we are by this gospel freed from the law and its condemnation. Hence Paul teaches that if righteousness (that is, what satisfies the demands of the law), could have come in any other way, Christ is dead in vain. How exclusively this righteousness of Christ was the ground of the apostle's personal confidence, is plain from his pregnant declaration to the Philippians, that he counted all things but dung, that he might win Christ, and be found in him, not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

With this representation of the plan of salvation, Dr Beman's theory is utterly irreconcilable. According to his theory, the demands of the law have not been satisfied. "The relation of the sinner to the curse which this law pronounces against the aggressor, is legally—not evangelically—just the same that it was without an atonement." "The law has the same demand upon him, and utters the same denunciation of wrath against him. The law, or justice, that is distributive justice, as expressed in the law, has received no satisfaction at all." P. 133. What, then, has Christ's atonement done for us? He has simply opened the way for pardon. "All that the atonement has done for the sinner," says Dr Beman, "is to place him within the reach of pardon." P. 137. "The way is now open. Mercy can

now operate. The door is open." P. 106. The atonement "was required and made in order to open a consistent way for the publication of pardon, or for the exercise of grace to sinners." P. 124.

This theory directly contradicts the apostle's doctrine, 1. Because he teaches that Christ was made under the law for the purpose of redeeming them that are under the law, and that he was made a curse for us. We are, therefore, delivered from the law, as a covenant of works, and are not subject to its demands and its curse when united to him. 2. Because it virtually denies that Christ wrought out any righteousness which is the ground of our justification. He merely makes pardon possible, whereas Paul says, that by his obedience we are made righteous, that we become the righteousness of God in him. On this new theory, the language of the apostle, when he speaks of not having his own righteousness, but the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ, is unintelligible. 3. It destroys the very nature of justification, which is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed unto us, and received by faith alone." But, according to this theory, there is no such thing as justification; we are merely pardoned. In Scripture, however, and in all languages, the ideas of pardon and justification are distinct, and in a measure opposite.* If we are justified, we are declared righteous; that is, it is declared that, as concerns us, on some ground or for some reason, the law is satisfied; and that reason, Paul says, must either be our own righteousness, or the righteousness of Christ. Dr Beman's theory admits of no such idea of justification. The sinner is merely forgiven, because the death of Christ prevents such forgiveness doing any harm.

* "The word δικαιῶν" says De Wette, means not merely negatively to pardon, but also affirmatively to declare righteous."

This is not what the Bible teaches, when it speaks of our being made the righteousness of God in Christ, or of his imputing righteousness to us, or of our receiving the gift of righteousness. This is not what the convinced sinner needs, to whom not mere pardon, but justification on the ground of a righteousness, which, though not his own, is his, as wrought out for him and bestowed by the free gift of God, is necessary to peace with God, Rom. v. 1.

4. It destroys the nature of justifying faith, and deranges the whole plan of salvation. In accordance with the Scriptures, faith in Jesus Christ is, in our standards, declared to be a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel. This is perfectly natural and intelligible, if Christ is our righteousness. If his work of obedience and death is the sole ground of justification before God, then we understand what the Bible means by believing upon Christ, putting our trust in him, being found in him; then the phrase, faith of Christ, which so often occurs as expressing the idea of a faith of which he is the object, has its appropriate meaning. Then, too, we understand what is meant by coming to Christ, receiving Christ, putting on Christ, being in Christ. Upon Dr Beman's theory, however, all this is well nigh unintelligible. We admit that a vague sense may be put on these expressions on any theory of the atonement, even that of the Socinians. If the death of Christ is necessary to salvation, either, as they say, by revealing the love of God, or, as Dr Beman says, by revealing his regard for law, then to believe in Christ, or to receive Christ, might be said to mean, to believe the truth that without the revelation made by his death, God would not forgive sin. But how far is this from being the full and natural import of the terms! Who would ever express mere acquiescence in the fact that Christ has made salvation possible, by saying, "I would be found

in him, not having mine own righteousness, but the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ?" The fact is, the Socinian view is in some respects much easier reconciled with Scripture than that of Dr Beman. The passage just quoted, for example, might have this meaning, viz., we must have, not the moral excellence which the law can give, but that inward righteousness of which faith in Christ is the source. This would have some plausibility, but what "the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ," can mean, as opposed to our own righteousness, on Dr Beman's ground, it is hard to conceive.

Again, according to the Bible and the common doctrine of the church, when a sinner is convinced of his sin and misery, of his entire unworthiness in the sight of God, he is to be directed to renounce all dependence upon himself, and to believe in Christ, that is, to place all his confidence in him. But if Christ has only made salvation possible, if he has merely brought the sinner within the reach of mercy, that is a most unnatural direction. What has the sinner to come to Christ for? Why should he be directed to receive or submit to the righteousness of God? Christ has nothing to do for him. He has made salvation possible, and his work is done; what the sinner has to do is to submit to God. The way is open, let him lay aside his rebellion, and begin to love and serve his Maker. Such are the directions which this theory would lead its advocates to give to those who are convinced of their sin and danger. This is not a mere imagination, such are the directions commonly and characteristically given by those who adopt Dr Beman's view of the atonement. Christ disappears in a great measure from his own gospel. You may take up volume after volume of their sermons, and you will find excellent discourses upon sin, obligation, moral government, regeneration, divine sovereignty, &c., but the cross is comparatively kept out of view. Christ has no immediate work in the sinner's

salvation; and accordingly the common directions to those who ask what they must do to be saved, is, submit to God, choose him and his service, or something of similar import. To such an extreme has this been carried by some whose logical consistency has overcome the influence of scriptural language and traditionary instruction, that they have not hesitated to say that the command, Believe in Christ, is obsolete. It was the proper test of submission in the apostolic age, but in our day when all men recognise Christ as the Messiah, it is altogether inappropriate. We doubt not that thousands who agree substantially with Dr Beman, would be shocked at this language; nevertheless, it is the legitimate consequence of his theory. If the atonement is a mere governmental display, a mere symbolical method of instruction, then the command to believe in Christ, to come to him, to trust in him and his righteousness, is not the language in which sinners should be addressed. It does not inform them of the specific thing which they must do in order to be saved. Christ has opened the door, their business is now immediately with God.

Again, can any reader of the Bible, can any Christian at least, doubt that union with Christ was to the apostles one of the most important and dearest of all the doctrines of the gospel,—a doctrine which lay at the root of all the other doctrines of redemption, the foundation of their hopes, the source of their spiritual life. But according to the theory, that Christ's death is a mere symbolical method of instruction, an expression of a great truth, that it merely opens the way for mercy, what can union with Christ mean? In what sense are we in him? how are we his members? How is it that we die, that we live, that we are to rise from the dead in virtue of that union? What is meant by living by faith of which he is the object? The fact is, this theory changes the whole nature of the gospel;

every thing is altered; the nature of faith, the nature of justification, the mode of access to God, our relation to Christ, the inward exercises of communion with him, so that the Christian feels disposed to say with Mary, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

We do not believe there is truth enough in this theory to sustain the life of religion in any man's heart. We have no idea that Dr Beman, Dr Cox, or any good man really lives by it. The truth, as it is practically embraced and appropriated by the soul under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is the truth in the form in which it is presented in the Bible, and not as expressed in abstract propositions. It is therefore very possible for a man, to adopt theoretically such an abstract statement of a Scriptural doctrine, as really denies its nature and destroys its power, and yet that same man may receive the truth for his own salvation as it is revealed in the Bible. We see daily instances of this in the case of Arminians, who professedly reject doctrines which are really included in every prayer they utter. In like manner we believe that many who profess to adopt the theory, that the death of Christ merely opens the way for mercy, that it is only the symbolical expression of a moral truth, deny that theory in every act of faith they exercise in Jesus Christ. Still the theory is none the less false and dangerous. It has its effect, and just so far as it operates, it tends to destroy all true religion. Its tendency, especially in private Christians, is counteracted by reading the Scriptures, and by the teaching of the Spirit. But the evil of the constant inculcation of error and misrepresentation of truth, cannot easily be exaggerated. The particular error concerning the nature of the atonement inculcated in this book has, we believe, done more to corrupt religion, and to promote Socinianism, than any other of the vaunted improvements of American theo-

logy, which, after all, are but feeble reproductions of the rejected errors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The doctrine of atonement for which we contend as the distinguishing and essential doctrine of the gospel is, 1. That sin, for its own sake, deserves the wrath and curse of God. 2. That God is just, immutably determined, from the excellence of his nature, to punish sin. 3. That out of his sovereign and infinite love, in order to redeem us from the law, that is, from its demands and curse, he sent his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, who, in his own person, fulfilled those demands, and endured that curse in our stead. That his righteousness, or merit, thus wrought out, is imputed to every one that believes to his justification before God. This is the doctrine of the Church Catholic, overlaid, corrupted, and made of none effect, in the church of Rome; disembarrassed, reproduced, and exhibited as *the* doctrine of the Reformation; in manifold forms since opposed or rejected, but ever virtually embraced and trusted in by every sincere child of God.

What then are the objections to this great doctrine? The first objection urged by Dr Beman is, that it involves "a transfer of moral character between Christ and those for whom he died. Christ could not be punished on legal principles, until he was guilty in the eye of the law; and his people could not be justified, on legal principles, till its penalty was literally inflicted. This transfer of character, so as to render Jesus Christ the sinner, and the soul for whom he died, innocent, appears to us without foundation in reason and Scripture." The objection then is, that the doctrine that Christ endured the punishment of our sins, and that we are justified by the imputation of his righteousness, involves such a transfer of moral character as to render Jesus Christ a sinner, and those for whom he died innocent. This objection is directed not against this or that individual writer, but against

whole bodies and classes of men; for Dr Beman over and over asserts that there are but two views of the atonement, the one against which he brings this and other objections, and his own governmental theory. We have already shown that the former is the common doctrine of all the churches of the Reformation. It is against them, therefore, this objection is brought. Our first remark on it is, that it is the old, often repeated, and often refuted slander of Socinians and Papists, the latter corrupting and denying the doctrine of their own church. Our second remark is, that it is a gross, shocking, and, we are constrained in conscience to add, wicked misrepresentation. Dr Beman betrays his want of faith in the truth of the accusation, though he makes it against hundreds and thousands of his brethren, by saying that a doctrine which represents Jesus Christ as a sinner, "appears to us without foundation in reason and Scripture"! Shocking blasphemy! *appears to us without foundation!* What man who believed what he said could utter such language? Is this the way in which a doctrine which represents the Son of God a sinner, is to be spoken of? No, Dr Beman knew full well, that the doctrine he writes against, includes no such blasphemy. He cannot be so grossly ignorant as not to know that the distinction between the imputation and the infusion of sin and righteousness, is one for which the churches of the Reformation contended as for their life; and that the distinction is plain, intelligible, Scriptural, and unavoidable,—one which he and all other men do make, and must make. When the prophet says, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," does Dr Beman pretend to believe, that he means that the moral character of the father shall not be transferred to the son? that the sin of the one shall not be infused into the other? why then does he pretend to believe (for we hope it is mere pretence) that when we say, our sins were laid on Christ, we teach that our moral cha-

racter was so transferred to him as to render him a sinner? Our third remark is, that the objection is glaringly unjust. We say in the very language of Scriptures, that Christ bore our sins. We tell in what sense we understand that language, viz. that it means, not that Christ was rendered in moral character a sinner, which is blasphemy, but that he bore the punishment of our sins, which is the universally admitted meaning of the Scriptural phrase. We say farther, that by punishment we mean sufferings judicially inflicted as a satisfaction to justice. These things are so plain, they have been so often repeated, they so evidently do not involve the shocking doctrine charged on those who use this language, that we can have little respect for the man who can gravely and tamely repeat the charge, to the prejudice of the truth, and to the wounding of his brethren.

Dr Beman's second objection is, that the system he opposes destroys "all mercy in God the Father, in the salvation of sinners, because it represents God as totally disinclined to the exercise of compassion, till every jot and tittle of the legal curse was inflicted. On the same principle, grace or pardon in the release of the sinner from future punishment, would be out of the question; for what grace, or pardon, or favour, can there be in the discharge of debtor, whose demand (debt?) has been cancelled to the uttermost farthing?" p. 122. This objection is the staple of his book. On p. 100, he represents us as teaching that "the Son of God endured the exact amount of suffering due on legal principles, to sinners." On p. 107, he says, "The amount of Christ's sufferings must consequently be the same as the aggregate sufferings included in the eternal condemnation of all those who are saved by his merit. . . . The agonies which he suffered were equal to the endless misery of all those who will be saved by his interposition in their behalf." On p. 146, he says, "If *one* soul were to be saved by the atone-

ment, Christ must sustain an amount of suffering equal to that involved in the eternal condemnation of that one soul; and if a *thousand* were to be saved a thousand times that amount, and in the same proportion for any greater number who are to be rescued from perdition and exalted to glory. To this scheme there are insurmountable objections." True enough, but who hold that scheme? Dr Beman attributes it to all who believe in the atonement, and do not adopt his scheme; for he says there are but two. This doctrine, that the sufferings of Christ amounted to the aggregate sufferings of those who are to be saved, that he endured just so much for so many, is not found in any confession of the Protestant churches, nor in the writings of any standard theologian, nor in the recognised authorities of any church of which we have any knowledge. The whole objection is a gross and inexcusable misrepresentation.* In a more moderate form it was brought forward by the Socinians, and repelled by the writers of that and subsequent ages. De Moor is generally recognised as the theologian of most authority among the churches of Holland, and Turretin is admitted to be one of the strictest of the Geneva school, and they both answer this calumny, by denying that, according to their doctrine, there is any necessity for the assumption that Christ's sufferings were equal to the sufferings of all his people. Thus Turretin, after quoting at length the objection from Socinus, answers it, first, by showing that the Scriptures teach that the one death of Christ was a satisfaction or all; that as by the one sin of Adam, many were made sinners, so by the righteousness of Christ, many are made righteous. 2. By insisting on the distinc-

* There was a little anonymous work called Gethsemane, republished some years ago in this country, which taught this *quid pro quo* system of the atonement. But we do not know a single man, now of our church, who adopted the sentiments of that work.

tion between pecuniary and penal satisfaction. A piece of money in the hand of a king is of no more value than in the hands of a peasant, but the life of a king is of more value than that of a peasant, and one commander is often exchanged for many soldiers. 3. He says the adversaries forget that Christ is God, and therefore, though his sufferings could not be infinite as they were endured by his finite nature, they were of infinite value in virtue of the infinite dignity of his person. Sin, he says, is an infinite evil, because committed against an infinite God, through the act of a finite nature. So the sufferings of Christ, though endured in his human nature, are of infinite value from the dignity of his person.*

Dr Bemam, under this head, frequently objects that we degrade the atonement into a mere commercial transaction, a payment of a debt, which, from the nature of the case, excludes the idea of free remission. Our first remark on this objection is, that the Scriptures use this same figure, and therefore it is right it should be used. When it is said, Christ purchased the church with his own blood, that we are redeemed not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, such language means something. In every metaphor there is a point of comparison; the essential idea involved in the figure, must be found in subject to be illustrated. To purchase is to acquire, and to acquire, by giving or doing something which secures a title to the thing acquired. When it is said that Christ purchased the church, it is certainly meant that he acquired it, that it is his, and that by his death he has secured a title to it, founded in the justice and promise of God. This does not make redemption a commercial transaction, nor imply that there are not essential points of diver-

* See in the fourth vol. of his works, the treatise *De Satisfactione Christi*, p. 289. The same answer to the same objection may be seen in *De Moer*, vol iii p. 1030.

sity between acquiring by money and acquiring by blood. Hence our second remark is, that if Dr Beman will take up any elementary work on theology, he will find the distinction between pecuniary and penal satisfaction clearly pointed out, and the satisfaction of Christ shown to be of the latter, and not of the former kind. 1. In the one, the demand is upon the thing due; in the other case, it is upon the person of the criminal. Hence, 2. The creditor is bound to accept the payment of the debt, no matter when or by whom offered; whereas in the case of a crime or sin, the sovereign is bound neither to provide a substitute, nor to accept of one when offered. If he does either, it is a matter of grace. 3. Hence penal satisfaction does not *ipso facto* liberate; the acceptance is a matter of arrangement or covenant, and the terms of that covenant must depend on the will of the parties. Dr Beman lapsed into an important truth when he said, "Christ suffered by covenant," p. 98. What that covenant is, we learn from Scripture, and from the manner in which it is executed. The Bible teaches that, agreeably to that covenant, the merits of Christ do not avail to the benefit of his people immediately; his children remain under condemnation as well as others until they believe; and when they do believe, they receive but the first fruits of their inheritance, they are but imperfectly sanctified, and are still subject to many evils; but being in a justified state, their sufferings are chastisements and not punishments, that is, they are designed for their own improvement, and not to satisfy justice.

The satisfaction of Christ, therefore, being for sin and by suffering, is expressly and formally declared not to be of the nature of pecuniary satisfaction. The grace of the gospel is thereby not obscured, but rendered the more conspicuous. God is not rendered merciful by the atonement, (as we be slanderously reported, as some affirm that we say); on the contrary,

the atonement flows from his infinite love. Dr Beman writes as a Tritheist, or as against Tritheists, when he speaks of the work of the Son rendering the Father gracious, and attributes that representation to us. The Lord our God is one God. It was his infinite love devised the plan of redemption, and it was so devised, that the exercise of love should be perfectly consistent with holiness, in order that God might be just in justifying sinners. Surely then our doctrine does not obscure the grace of the gospel, at least as to the origin of the plan of mercy. But it is further objected, that if Christ rendered a complete satisfaction to Divine justice, then pardon becomes a matter of justice, and not of grace. Justice to whom? certainly not to the ungodly, the unrighteous, the utterly undeserving, and hell-deserving sinner. If Christ suffered by covenant, and fulfilled all the conditions of that covenant, then he acquired a right to its promises. If he purchased his church, he has a right to it. If it was promised that for his obedience to death, he should see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, then he, having done all that was required of him, has a right to the promised reward. But what right have we? None in the world; we are poor, and blind, and miserable, having nothing, meriting nothing; our only hope is that we shall be treated, not according to our deserts, but according to the merits of another.

The objection sounds strange to our ears, coming from such a quarter, that we destroy the grace of the gospel. What is salvation by grace, if it is not that God of his mere good pleasure provided redemption—that he determines of his own will who shall be partakers of its benefits—that those who are brought to repentance and faith, are not only justified avowedly on the ground of a righteousness which is not their own, but who are made to feel and acknowledge, as the very condition of their acceptance, their own ill-desert and misery, and who not only owe every thing

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to Christ, but possess every thing simply in virtue of their union with him, which union is kept up only by a self-renouncing, self-emptying faith. The feeblest infant resting on its mother's bosom, a new-born lamb carried in the shepherd's arms, might with as much plausibility be suspected of doubting the love that sustains them, as the believer in Christ's having purchased the church with his own blood, of doubting the entire gratuitousness of his own salvation.

It would be easy to retort, and show that it is Dr Beman's doctrine that destroys the grace of salvation. If Christ only makes pardon possible, if the possibility of forgiveness is all we owe to him, to whom or what do we owe heaven? Is it to ourselves, as some of the advocates of his doctrine teach? This is the natural answer. Christ having made pardon possible, then God deals with men according to their works. Whatever answer Dr Beman himself would give to the above question, it must, from the nature of his system, be tame, compared with the answer, which flows from the doctrine that we owe the blessed Redeemer, not the possibility of pardon merely, but justification, adoption, sanctification, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. These things, and all the blessedness they include or suppose, are not merely rendered possible, but actually secured and given for Christ's sake alone; and hence the spirits of the just made perfect, whose robes have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, would drown in their thanksgiving to Him that has cleansed them from all sin, the whispered acknowledgments of those who have nothing for which to give thanks but the possibility of pardon.

These objections, which Dr Beman urges in various forms throughout his book, are all old, and have been answered a hundred times. There is indeed one objection, which is certainly American. It seems there was no economy in the atonement. It saved nothing, and gained nothing. The atonement, it is said, is

“the grand device of heaven, for preventing misery and promoting happiness,” p. 108. And it is triumphantly urged, (through some eight pages), that if Christ suffered as much as the redeemed would have endured, there is no gain of happiness. It is “a mere *quid-pro-quo* transaction,” p. 111. We have already shown, that no church, or class of men, hold that the blessed Redeemer endured as much suffering as the redeemed would have endured. It is a mere misrepresentation. But dismissing that point, the objection itself is unworthy of a being gifted with a moral sense. Would it be nothing that unnumbered millions are saved from sin, and made perfect in holiness? Supposing there was no absolute gain as to the amount of misery prevented, that Christ had in a few years suffered all that finite beings through eternity could endure, still would the vast accession to the holy inhabitants of heaven be nothing? Does not the Bible say, that he gave himself for his church, to purify and cleanse it? that the promotion of the holiness was the design of his death? Has it come to this, that the theory which makes happiness the end of the creation, must represent holiness as nothing, not worth giving thanks for, if gained at the least expense of happiness? This gross epicurean view of the sublime and awful mystery of redemption is a disgrace to the age and country that gave it birth.

We have thus endeavoured to show, that the theory of atonement advocated by Dr Beman, is founded on the false assumption, that the punishment of sin is for the prevention of crime, and not on account of its own intrinsic ill-desert; that it of necessity involves a denial of the justice of God, and makes mere happiness the end of creation; that it is destitute of any semblance or pretence of support from the Scriptures; that it is just as arbitrary, and as much a philosophical speculation as the Socinian theory, the latter asserting that the design of Christ's death was to display the

love of God, and thus lead men to repentance; and the former, that it was intended to express his regard for his law, and thus act as a motive to obedience. We further endeavoured to prove, that the theory is in direct conflict with the Bible. The Scriptures teach in every possible way, that as man was under a law or covenant which requires perfect obedience, and threatens death in case of transgression, the Son of God was born of a woman and made under that law, fulfilling its conditions of perfect obedience, and sustaining its curse for man's redemption. And that his righteousness is freely imputed to all those who receive and rest upon it by faith. In denying this doctrine, which is the common faith of Christendom, Dr Beman's theory involves the denial of justification, reducing it to mere pardon; destroys the true doctrine of justifying faith; overlooks the union between Christ and his people; tends to banish Christ from view, and to vitiate the very source of all evangelical religion.

We showed that his objections to this doctrine, with one melancholy exception, were the oft-repeated and oft-refuted calumnies of Socinians; that the common doctrine does not involve the transfer of moral character, or represent Christ as a sinner; that so far from obscuring the grace of the Gospel, or teaching that the atonement is the cause of the love of God, it represents it as flowing from that love, and presents in the clearest possible light the gratuitous nature of salvation. It is of grace that a Saviour was provided; of grace that the benefits of his death are conferred on one rather than another. And though we rejoice to know that he has acquired a right to his church, having bought it with his own blood, yet his people know, feel, and acknowledge that to them every thing is of grace, their vocation, justification, and final salvation. This is Christianity, a religion, of which Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the author

and the finisher, not the mere cause of the possibility of pardon.

Our discussion of the all-important question respecting the nature of the atonement, has run out to so great a length, that we cannot claim much room for the consideration of its extent. Dr Beman writes on this whole subject, very much as a man might be expected to write against Calvinism, who got his views of that system, from the furious harangues of itinerant Methodist preachers. He quotes no authorities, establishes no assertions, but coolly goes on attributing just what opinions come into his head to those against whom he writes. Had he taken up any one author, or class of authors, cited from their writings their own exhibitions of doctrine, and proceeded to examine them, his readers would know what credit to give to his statements. He however has preferred to state in general terms that there are but two views of the atonement, his own and another. That other he then most grievously misrepresents. He attributes to all who reject his doctrine, opinions which not one in a million of them ever entertained. As far as relates to the nature of the atonement, these misrepresentations have already been pointed out. He commences and continues his discussion concerning its extent on the same plan. He assumes that the question relates to the limitation in the very nature of the work of Christ. "If," he says, "the atonement is to be considered as a literal payment of a debt, or, in other words, if it consisted in suffering the exact penalty of the law, in the room of those who will be saved, it is manifest, that it must be limited in its extent. In this case it would be a provision which must be regulated according to the principles of commutative justice. If *one* soul were to be saved, 'then Christ must suffer so much; if a thousand, then a thousand times as much,' &c. p. 145. The opposite doctrine, which he adopts, necessarily leads to the conclusion, "that an atone-

ment sufficient for one, is sufficient for all," of course those who reject his view, are made to hold an insufficient atonement, p. 147. So Dr Cox, in his introductory chapter, speaks of "the limitation of the nature" of the atonement, and represents those whom he opposes as holding that it is as "limited in its nature as in its application," pp. 16, 17. If these gentlemen would take the trouble to read a little on this subject, they would find that this is all a mistake. They are merely beating the air. Those who deny that Christ died for Judas as much as for Paul, for the non-elect as much as for the elect, and who maintain that he died strictly and properly only for his own people, do not hold that there is any limitation in the nature of the atonement. They teach as fully as any men, that "an atonement sufficient for one is sufficient for all." It is a simple question relating to the design, and not to the nature of Christ's work. That work, as far as we know or believe, would have been the same, had God purposed to save but one soul, or the souls of all mankind. We hold that the atonement, as to its value, is infinite, and as to its nature as much adapted to one man as to another, to all as to one. The whole question is, for what purpose did he die? What was the design which God intended to accomplish by his mission and death? That this is the true state of the question, is obvious from the fact, that the Reformed and Lutherans do not differ at all as to the nature of Christ's satisfaction, though they do differ as to its design. Lutherans, as they deny the doctrine of election, deny that the satisfaction of Christ had special reference to the elect, though they are even more strict than the Reformed, in their views of the vicarious nature of the atonement, *i.e.*, of the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of his obedience to us. Accordingly, in all the early defences of Calvinists, their arguments on the necessity, and on the truth or nature of the atonement, are directed against Socinians, and not against either Romanists or Lutherans.

But when the question is discussed, "For whom did Christ die?" they address their arguments against the latter. Turretin, for example, in the statement of this question, says, "It is not a question concerning the value and sufficiency of Christ's death, whether it is not, in itself, sufficient for the salvation of all men. That is on both sides admitted. His death being of infinite value, would have been most amply sufficient for the redemption of all men, if God had seen fit to extend it to all. Hence the common distinction made by the fathers, and retained by many theologians, *Christ died sufficiently for all, efficaciously for the elect*, is perfectly true if understood of the worth of Christ's death, but not so accurate if understood of his purpose and design in dying. The question, therefore, properly relates to the purpose of the Father in giving his Son, and the intention of the Son in laying down his life. Did the Father destine his Son for all and every man, and did the Son deliver himself to death with the intention of substituting himself in the place of all and every one, in order to make satisfaction and procure salvation for them? Or, did Christ give himself for the elect alone, who were given to him by the Father, and whose head he was to be? The heart of the question, therefore, comes to this, not what is *the nature or efficacy* of the death of Christ, but what was the design of the Father in giving him up, and the intention of Christ in dying."*

The simple statement of our doctrine, therefore, answers two-thirds of Dr Beman's objections against it. This is not a statement got up for the occasion, but made a century and a half before he was born. There is one view in which the question concerning the extent of the atonement, is indeed intimately connected with its nature. If any man holds the doctrine that the atonement was nothing more than a symbolical

* Turretin, vol. ii. p. 498.

expression of a truth, and "merely opened the door of mercy," there is of course an end to all question as to its design. If that be its nature, it can have no more reference to the saved than to the lost. And it is probably in order to get rid of all difficulty as to the extent of the atonement, that many have been led to adopt the above-mentioned most unscriptural and dangerous view of its nature. But if the true doctrine concerning the nature of the satisfaction is retained, as it was by the Lutherans, and even in a great measure by the early Remonstrants, at least by Grotius, the question as to its extent resolves itself into a question concerning the purposes of God. It might seem as if this were an entirely useless question. The purposes of God are not the rule of our duty, and whatever God may design to do, we are to act in accordance with his preceptive will. Still there is a right and a wrong in every question, and what is wrong in relation to one point, must tend to produce erroneous views with regard to others.

Dr Cox intimates with some truth that the difference of opinion on this point has its origin, or, at least, implies a difference of view as to the order of the Divine purposes. P. 18. As in fact, however, there is no order of succession in the purposes of God, but simply in our mode of conceiving them, all his decrees being comprehended in one eternal purpose, any question about the order of those decrees must be a question relating to our own thoughts. Those thoughts, however, may be confused, contradictory, or lead to conclusions in conflict with revealed facts. Even this question, therefore, is not without its importance. If the purposes of God are all one, any mode of conceiving them which prevents their being reduced to unity, which supposes either a change or uncertainty in the Divine plan, must be erroneous. As it is involved in our idea of God as the intelligent ruler of the universe, that he had a design in the creation and redemption

of man, all classes of theologians form some theory (if that word may be used,) of the plan adopted for the accomplishment of that design. According to one system, God purposed to create man, to permit the fall, to provide salvation for all, to give all-sufficient grace, to elect to life those who improve this grace. This is the scheme of the Remonstrants, and of those generally who reject the doctrines of election and efficacious grace. According to another system, God purposed to create man, to permit the fall, to provide for the salvation of all, but foreseeing that none would accept of that salvation, he chose some to everlasting life, and determined, by his effectual grace, to give them faith and repentance. This is the scheme proposed by Amyraud, Testard, Camero, and other French theologians of the seventeenth century. According to others, God purposed to create man, to permit the fall, to choose from the mass of fallen men an innumerable multitude as vessels of mercy, to send his Son for their redemption, and with him to give them every thing necessary for their salvation. This was the common doctrine of all the Reformed Churches, from which the two former systems were departures. The common New School system adopted in this country, lies between the Arminian and the French scheme, containing more truth than the former, and less than the latter.

The question which of these views of the whole plan of God's dealings with men is the most correct, must be determined, 1. By ascertaining which is most consistent with itself—which best admits of being reduced to one simple purpose. It would not be difficult to show that the two former include contradictions, and involve the ascription of conflicting purposes to God. 2. By ascertaining which is most in harmony with the admitted character of God, as infinite, independent, and self-sufficient, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things. 3. By ascertaining which is most consistent with revealed facts. The first, or Ar-

minian scheme, breaks down entirely by coming in conflict with the clearly revealed truth of God's sovereignty in election, and of conversion by his mighty power, and not by an influence common to all men. Our present business, however, is with the two latter schemes, so far as they relate to the design of Christ's death. Was the Son of God sent into the world, as Dr Beman says, merely to make the salvation of all men possible, or actually to save all whom God had given him ?

Before attempting to answer this question, it is proper to remark that Dr Beman, and those who adopt his theory, seem constantly disposed to forget that SALVATION IS BY GRACE. If it is of grace, then it is a matter of grace that God provided salvation at all for guilty men. If this is not so, the gift of Christ, the influences of the Holy Spirit, and every other gift requisite for our salvation, are mere matters of justice, which it would have been unrighteous to withhold. No man can believe that, however, without contradicting every page of the Bible, and the testimony of every true Christian. 2. But if God was not bound to save any, he is at liberty to save whom he pleases. If he need not provide salvation for any, there could be no injustice in providing it for some and not for others. If salvation is of grace, it is of grace that one and not another is saved. And to complain that the mission of Christ was not designed to save all, or even that it did not open the door of mercy for all, if such were actually the case, would be to complain of the gratuitous nature of salvation. And, 3. If salvation is by grace, then those who are saved, are freely called, justified, and glorified. The ground of their acceptance, is not to be found in them, but in the good pleasure of God. This is the plain doctrine of the Bible, to which we must submit; and it is so clearly revealed, and so essential to the very nature of the gospel, that those who are not willing to be saved by grace, cannot be saved at all.

There is, therefore, no preliminary presumption against the doctrine that the death of Christ had not an equal reference to all men, but had a special relation to his own people. The presumption is all the other way. As the whole plan of salvation is, according to the apostle, arranged with a view "to show the exceeding riches of the grace of God, by his kindness towards us," that view of the economy of redemption, which renders the grace of God the most conspicuous, is the most in harmony with its grand design. What God's actual purpose was in the mission of his Son, we can only learn from his own declarations. He reveals his designs to us, partly by their execution, and partly by the annunciation of them in his word. What God does, is the clearest revelation of what he intended to do. Hence, if the satisfaction of Christ actually saves all men, it was certainly designed to save all men; but if it saves only a part of the human race, it was certainly designed only for a part. It cannot be questioned that Christ came to save men from their sins, and if we ask, Whom he intended to save? we can get no better answer than by learning whom he does in fact save. If the end of Christ's mission was salvation, it is not conceivable that he died equally for all, unless he purposed to save all. Dr Beman, however, denies that the design of his mission was salvation, it was merely to make salvation possible.

In assuming this ground, he is guilty of the same onesidedness, the same contracted view, which he exhibits in his doctrine concerning the nature of the atonement. It is conceded that the work of Christ does lay the foundation for the offer of salvation to all men. Dr Beman hence concludes that this was its only end; that it merely opens the way for the general offer of pardon. His theory is designed to account for one fact, and leaves all the other revealed facts out of view, and unexplained. The Bible teaches, however, a great deal more in relation to this subject,

than that one fact. It teaches, 1. That Christ came in execution of a purpose; that he suffered, as Dr Beman expresses it, by covenant, and ratified that covenant with his own blood. 2. That his mission was the result and expression of the highest conceivable love. 3. That it not merely removes obstacles out of the way, but actually secures the salvation of his people. 4. That it lays the foundation for a free, full, and unrestrained offer of salvation to all men. 5. That it renders just the condemnation of those who reject him as their Saviour; that rejection being righteously the special ground of their condemnation.

Dr Beman's theory accords only with the last two facts just mentioned. It will account for the general offer of the gospel, and for the condemnation of those who reject it; but it is inconsistent with all the other facts above stated, which are not less clearly revealed, and not less important. It overlooks in the first place, the fact that Christ came into the world and accomplished the work of redemption, in execution of the covenant of grace. The use of such words as *covenant*, is often convenient, and sometimes unavoidable, as a concise method of expressing several related truths. Wherever there is a promise by one person to another, suspended upon the performance of a condition, there is a covenant. As, therefore, the Scriptures expressly speak of a promise made to the Son, suspended upon the condition of his incarnation, obedience, and death, they teach that there was a covenant of grace. The promise made to the Redeemer, was that he should see the travail of his soul; that he should have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; that those whom the Father had given him should come unto him; that they should all be taught of God, receive the Spirit, and be raised up the last day; that He should be the first-born among many brethren, and be highly exalted as the head of his people, and far above

all principalities and powers. It is further expressly taught, that he secured all these inestimable blessings by his obedience unto death. Because he thus humbled himself, God has highly exalted him; on account of the suffering of death, he was crowned with glory and honour; because he made his soul an offering for sin, therefore God hath divided to him his portion. If these things are so, if Christ had the attainment of these blessings, which involve the salvation of his people, in view, in coming into the world; if the accomplishment of this work was the object of his mission, then it is a contradiction in terms to say, that as far as the purpose of God and his own intention are concerned, he had not a special reference to his own people and to their salvation in his death. Their salvation was the reward promised when it was said, "He shall see his seed," and it was for that recompense he died. Dr Beman's theory denies all this. It assumes that his death, his whole work, had no reference to one class of men more than to another—to the saved more than to the lost. It simply made the pardon of all men possible. This is, of course, a denial of what Dr Beman himself, in an unguarded hour, admitted, viz. that Christ suffered by covenant. What covenant? The Scriptures make mention of no other covenant, in connection with the Redeemer's death, than that which included the promise of his people to him as a reward, and which was ratified in his blood. Here, then, is one plain, important, revealed fact, which Dr Beman's theory overlooks and contradicts. If Christ, in his death, had regard to the recompense of reward, and if that reward included the holiness and salvation of his people, then, beyond contradiction, his satisfaction had a special reference to them.

In the second place, his theory contradicts the plainly revealed fact, that the mission and death of Christ are the expressions of the highest conceivable love. According to Dr Beman, they are the expression

of mere general benevolence. It is admitted that love was the motive which led to the gift of the Son of God. If that love was general benevolence to all men, then he died for all; if it was special love to his own people, then he died for them. That there is such special love in God, is involved in the doctrine of election. According to that doctrine, God of his own mere good pleasure, before the foundation of the world, chose some to everlasting life, and for infinitely wise and holy reasons, left others to perish in their sins. To say that the infinite love which led to the mission of Christ, was a benevolence which had equal regard to these two classes, is to deny the doctrine of election. That doctrine, in its very nature, supposes a difference in the regard had for the vessels of mercy and the vessels of wrath; for those in whom God purposed to display the riches of his grace, and those on whom he designed to show his wrath, and make his power known. In teaching this doctrine, therefore, the Scriptures teach, that besides the benevolence with which God regards all men, there is a higher, special, mysterious, unspeakable love which he has to his own children. And to this love they refer the incarnation and death of the Son of God. The Scriptures are too explicit and too full on this latter point to allow of its being questioned. "Greater love," said Christ himself, "hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Paul prays that the Ephesians might be strengthened by the Holy Spirit, to be able to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." "In this we perceive the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things." In

these, and in various similar passages, it is distinctly asserted, that the love which led to the gift of Christ, was not general benevolence, consistent with the eternal reprobation of its objects, but the highest conceivable love, that would spare nothing to secure the salvation of those on whom it rested.

Again, it is with equal explicitness and frequency asserted, love to his people was the motive of the Son of God in laying down his life. "For their sakes," said the Redeemer, "I sanctify myself." "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep." "I lay down my life for my sheep." "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." Do not these passages assert, that love for his church, his friends, his sheep, was the motive of Christ in dying? When the Scriptures divide men into classes, the sheep and the goats, the church and those who are not the church, and say, that love to his sheep, love to his church, led the Saviour to lay down his life, they expressly assert that it was a peculiar love for them, and not a general benevolence, including them and all others alike, that was the motive of Christ in laying down his life. Let it be remembered that this whole question relates, not to the incidental effects of Christ's death, but to his intention in dying. The passages above quoted, and the Scriptures generally, do then teach, that, besides his general benevolence for men, God has a special love for his own people; and that that special love, for his own, for his friends, for his sheep, led the Saviour to give himself up to death. If this is so, it overturns Dr Beman's theory, which is in direct conflict with this plain and precious truth. It is not that benevolence which consists with eternal reprobation, *i. e.* with the eternal purpose to leave men to suffer the just recompense of their sins, that led the Father to give up the Son, and the Son to assume our nature, and die upon the cross, Those who admit this, admit all the limitation of the

atonement for which we contend; a limitation not as to its nature or value, but as to the purpose of God and intention of Christ. Besides, does it not involve a contradiction to say, that love to those whom God purposed, for wise reasons, not to save, was his motive in providing salvation? Our Saviour teaches, that the knowledge of the Gospel aggravates the guilt, and, consequently, the misery of those who reject it; then, certainly, love to them was not the motive which led either to the adoption or the proclamation of the scheme of redemption. The fact is, this doctrine, that Christ died as much for Judas as for Paul, is inconsistent with the doctrine of election; and the two have never for any length of time been held together. Those theologians in the Church of Rome who remained faithful to the doctrine of election also held, that the death of Christ had special reference to his own people. The Lutherans, when they rejected the one doctrine, rejected also the other. So did the Arminians. A few French divines endeavoured, by reversing the natural order of the decrees, for a time to unite the two; but the attempt failed. Both doctrines were soon rejected. The sovereignty of God, election, special love as the motive of redemption, and consequently, a special reference to the elect, in the death of Christ, are joined together in the Scriptures, and they cannot long be separated in the faith of God's people.

Another revealed fact which Dr Beman's theory overlooks and contradicts is, that Christ's death not only removes obstacles out of the way of the exercise of mercy, but actually secures the salvation of his people. It has been repeatedly shown, that Dr Beman constantly asserts, that the only effect of the atonement is to bring the sinner within the reach of mercy: it merely makes pardon possible. This is the only effect claimed for it, and all that can be attributed to it on his theory. This, however, is in direct conflict

with the Scriptures, because they teach that the death of Christ renders the salvation of his own people certain. This follows from what has already been said. If Christ suffered by covenant; if that covenant promised to him his people as his reward and inheritance, on condition of his obedience and death, then assuredly when he performed that condition, the salvation of all whom the Father had given to him, was rendered absolutely certain. Hence, it is said, that he purchased his church, that is, acquired a right to it. He gave himself for his church, that he might purify and cleanse it. He came into the world to save his people from their sins. He gave himself for our sins, that he might redeem us from this present evil world; or, as elsewhere said, to purify a peculiar people unto himself. These and similar declarations teach, that the design of Christ's death was actually to save his people. They are, therefore, so many direct contradictions of the doctrine, that he merely opened the door of mercy. To make salvation possible, is not to save; to make holiness possible, is not to purify; to open the door, is not to bring us near to God.

The Scriptures also ascribe effects to the death of Christ irreconcilable with the idea, that it is a mere governmental display. We are justified by his blood, we thereby obtain remission of sins, we have peace with God, we are delivered from the wrath to come, and obtain eternal redemption. It is contrary to all Scriptural usage to bring down all these, and similar declarations, to mean nothing more than that these blessings are rendered attainable by the work of Christ. This is not what the words mean. To say that we are justified, or reconciled, or cleansed, is not to say that the obstacles in the way of obtaining the blessings mentioned are merely removed. It is to say, that his blood secures those blessings; and secures them in the time and way that God has appointed. No instance can be produced in which a sacrifice, offered and ac-

cepted, is said to propitiate God, and be the ground of pardon, when nothing more is meant than that the sacrifice renders pardon possible. The meaning uniformly is, that it secures and renders it certain. The very acceptance of it is the established way of promising forgiveness to those in whose behalf the sacrifice was offered. Dr Beman's theory, therefore, in attributing so little to the death of Christ, contradicts the established meaning of Scriptural phrases; and is inconsistent with the clearly revealed fact, that His death makes salvation not only possible, but certain.

It is further revealed, that there is an intimate connection between the death of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was promised to Christ, to be given to his people. The Apostle Peter says, "~~He~~ having received the promise of the Holy Ghost, hath shed forth this, which ye both see and hear." Acts ii. 33. In Tit. iii. 5, 6, God is said to shed on us abundantly the Holy Ghost, through Jesus Christ our Lord. All spiritual blessings are said to be given to us in Christ Jesus, Eph. i. 3; that is, on account of our union with him, a union eternal in the purpose of God, and actual when we believe. This union existing in the Divine purpose, this covenant union, is represented as the ground of the gift of regeneration. In Eph. ii. 5, 6, we are said to be quickened with Christ, to be raised up in him. This can only mean that there is a union between Christ and his people, which secures to them influence by which they are raised from spiritual death. If so, then in the covenant, to ratify which Christ died, it was promised that the Holy Spirit should be given to his people, and to secure that promise was one design of his death. And, consequently, all for whom he died must receive that Spirit, whose influences were secured by his death. He is, therefore, said to have redeemed us from the curse of the law, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit, Gal. iii. 13, 14. It obviously

contradicts this important truth to teach, that Christ's death had as much reference to one man as another, or that it merely renders mercy possible. If Christ suffered by covenant, and if that covenant included the promise of the Holy Spirit, to teach, renew, and sanctify his people, then it cannot be denied that those thus taught, renewed, and sanctified, are those for whom he died.

Dr Beman's theory, therefore, which denies that the death of Christ had a special reference to his own people, is inconsistent with the plainly revealed facts, 1. That he died in execution of a covenant in which his people were promised to him as his reward, to secure which reward is declared to be his specific and immediate design in laying down his life. 2. That the motive which led to the gift of the Son, and of the Son in dying, was not general benevolence, but the highest conceivable love, love for his sheep and for his friends. 3. That the design of his death was not simply to remove obstacles out of the way of mercy, but actually to secure the salvation of those given to him by the Father; and that it does in fact secure for them the gift of the Holy Ghost, and consequently justification and eternal life. In other words, God, having out of his mere good pleasure, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation, by a Redeemer. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, was made under the law, satisfied, by his obedience and death, all its demands, and thus fulfilled the conditions of that covenant on which the salvation of his people was suspended, and thereby acquired a right to them as his stipulated reward. Such was the specific design and certain effect of his death. This is the plain doctrine of our standards, and, as we fully believe, of the Word of God.

It will, however, doubtless be asked, admitting that our doctrine of the atonement does accord with the facts above mentioned, can it be reconciled with the no less certain facts that the gospel is to be freely offered to all men, and that those who reject it, are justly condemned for their unbelief? If it cannot, it must be defective. On this score, however, we feel no difficulty.

Our doctrine is, that the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to secure the salvation of his people, and with a specific view to that end, fulfilled the conditions of the law or covenant under which they and all mankind were placed. Those conditions were, perfect obedience, and satisfaction to Divine justice, by bearing the penalty threatened against sin. Christ's righteousness, therefore, consists in his obedience and death. That righteousness is precisely what the law demands of every sinner, in order to his justification before God. It is, therefore, in its nature, adapted to all sinners who are under that law. Its nature is not altered by the fact that it was wrought out for a portion only of such sinners, or that it is secured to them by the covenant between the Father and the Son. What is necessary for the salvation of one man, is necessary for the salvation of another, and of all. The righteousness of Christ, therefore, consisting in the obedience and death demanded by the law under which all men are placed, is adapted to all men. It is also of infinite value, being the righteousness of the eternal Son of God, and therefore sufficient for all. On these two grounds, its adaptation to all and its sufficiency for all, rests the offer made in the gospel to all. With this its design has nothing to do; who are to be saved by it we do not know. It is of such a nature and value, that whosoever accepts of it, shall be saved. If one of the non-elect should believe (though the hypothesis is on various accounts unreasonable) to him that righteousness would be imputed to his salvation. And if one

of the elect should not believe, or having believed, should apostatize, he would certainly perish. These suppositions are made simply to show, that according to our doctrine, the reason why any man perishes, is not that there is no righteousness provided suitable and adequate to his case, or that it is not freely offered to all that hear the gospel, but simply because he wilfully rejects the proffered salvation. Our doctrine, therefore, provides for the universal offer of the gospel and for the righteous condemnation of unbelievers, as thoroughly as Dr Beman's. It opens the door for mercy, as far as legal obstructions are concerned, as fully as his; while it meets all the other revealed facts of the case. It is not a theory for one fact. It includes them all; the fact that Christ died by covenant for his own people; that love for his own sheep led him to lay down his life; that his death renders their salvation absolutely certain; that it opens the way for the offer of salvation to all men, and shows the justice of the condemnation of unbelief. **NO MAN PERISHES FOR THE WANT OF AN ATONEMENT**, is the doctrine of the Synod of Dort; it is also our doctrine.

Dr Cox is pleased to call us "restrictionists"—a most inappropriate designation. There is more saving truth in the parings of our doctrine, than in his whole theory. Our doctrine contains all the modicum of truth there is in his, and it contains unspeakably more. His own theory is the most restricted, jejune, meagre, and lifeless, that has ever been propounded. It provides for but one fact; it teaches a possible salvation, while it leaves out the very soul of the doctrine. It vitiates the essential nature of the atonement, makes it a mere governmental display, a symbolical method of instruction, in order to do what was better done without any such corruption. While we teach that Christ, by really obeying the law, and really bearing its penalty, in the place of his people, and according to the stipulations of the covenant of grace,

secured the salvation of all whom the Father had given him; and at the same time throws open the door of mercy to all who choose to enter it, we retain the life-giving doctrine of Christ's union with his own people, his obeying and dying in their stead, of his bearing our sins, and of our becoming the righteousness of God in him; of the necessity of entire self-renunciation, and of simple reliance on his righteousness, on the indwelling of his Spirit, and on his strength for our salvation; while we impose no restriction on the glorious gospel of the grace of God.

Long as this discussion has become, we have touched only what appeared to us, the most important points of the controversy, and must leave others unnoticed. We trust we have said enough, to show that there is no necessity for surrendering the common faith of Christendom, as to the nature of the atonement, for the miserable theory propounded by Dr Beman. We cannot close this article without a single remark concerning his book itself. It is a small volume, sold at a moderate price, and intended for general circulation. It is written in a calm and confident spirit, but without force, discrimination, or learning. It is the very book to do harm. It presents its readers the choice between two doctrines: the one no man can adopt, the other is hardly worth accepting. So far as this book is concerned, the atonement must be rejected either as incredible or as worthless. He represents the one doctrine, as teaching that Christ became personally and morally a sinner, that he suffered just what in kind and degree, all his people throughout eternity would have endured, and that they by his righteousness became morally innocent. This view of the atonement, no man can believe and be a Christian. His own doctrine makes the atonement a mere symbolical method of instruction, and reduces the whole work of Christ in this matter, to making pardon possible. This, again, is a doctrine which we see not

how any man can practically believe, and be a Christian. The book in itself is of little consequence. But from its gross and yet confident misrepresentation of the truth, it has more of the power due to falsehood, than any book of the kind we know. As to the author, we have no disposition to sit in judgment on his motives. He has most grievously misrepresented the truth, whether ignorantly or otherwise, it is not for us to say.

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