

I am at a loss to discover what this regeneration is of which the reverend Preacher is speaking. If punishment produces regeneration, then must the devils be very regenerate.—But Mr. K. will tell us there are no devils.—We will invite him to the penitentiary, and see if the scourge and the iron ever imbued the soul with the love and fear of God. If punishment be regeneration it is a doctrine which I do not understand, but the doctrine that “*the sinner receives from day to day the punishment which his CRIMES MERIT*,” I can easily understand to be untrue. If it were true, what tribunal, earthly or heavenly, could bring him to account. Bring the murderer before an earthly court, and what is his plea? I have already *suffered the punishment which my crime merits*. But at what tribunal in the whole world would this plea be admitted?

The answer would be,—You have taken the life of a fellow being—your death is required as the punishment—that is the punishment as far as we are able to inflict it; but as we know not the remote consequences of your crimes, nor have we power to inflict adequate punishment, we refer you to a higher tribunal. You cannot, however, bring as a plea there, that you have suffered death for death, for you bring as your plea at this tribunal, that you have already suffered the punishment that your *crime merits*. We then shall be doing wrong in taking your life. In fact, we shall at that rate be shedding innocent blood, and you will have your action against us for murder. But, nevertheless, we sentence you to be hung by the neck until you are dead, and the Lord have mercy on your soul.

We may next enquire what proof the reverend writer brings that *the sinner receives the punishment which his CRIMES MERIT in the day of his transgression*.

The only proof that stands on his page, is that the word wages did in the original, signify the daily pay of a Roman soldier. Well, then, the slight qualms of conscience which some sinners feel, and the slight punishment which others receive, which is sometimes very near nothing at all, is yet the *punishment which their CRIMES MERIT*—because the word “wages” did signify the daily pay of a Roman soldier!

A school-boy might be found blockhead enough to come to such a conclusion, but Dr. Clarke, whose words the reverend gentleman perverts for the purpose, never arrived at that conclusion; and I may defy him to find a similar conclusion in Judge Blackstone’s Commentaries on the Laws of England; and I think I might defy him to find any person but himself having come to a similar conclusion, only we are aware that to support a creed, absurdities are taken for oracles!