

Deuteronomy xi. 26 : " Behold I set before you this day a blessing and a curse."

Read the following two verses in order to understand the comment which is taken from Clarke.

" If God had not put it in the power of His people either to obey or disobey ; if they had not had a free will, over which they had complete authority—could God with any propriety have given such precepts as these sanctioned with such promises and threatenings ? If they were not free agents they could not be punished for disobedience, nor could they, in any sense of the word, be rewarded for obedience.

" A stone is not rewardable because in obedience to the laws of gravitation, it always tends to the centre ; nor is it punishable because in being removed from that centre, in its tending or falling towards it again it takes away the life of man.

" That God has given man a free, self-determining will, which cannot be forced by any power but that which is Omnipotent, and which God Himself never will force, is declared in the most formal manner through the whole of the sacred writings. No argument can affect this, while the Bible is considered a Divine revelation ; no sophistry can explain away its evidence as long as the accountableness of man for his conduct is admitted, and as long as the eternal bonds of moral good and evil remain, and the essential distinctions between vice and virtue exist. If ye will obey (for God is ever ready to assist), ye shall live ; if ye will disobey and refuse the help, ye shall die. So hath Jehovah spoken, and man cannot reverse it."