

2. The atonement has fixed an eternal stigma on *sin*. The destruction of fallen angels, the expulsion of our first parents from Eden, the devastations of the flood, &c., were but hints of God's aversion to sin. The notice which God took of sin in the death of his Son is the most marked and the most signal. For the offended to call in the mediation of a third party—that third party to be a person of high worth and dignity—and that exalted person to transact the affair of the reconciliation publicly before a whole community—is a demonstration that the offence is regarded as of high criminality and demerit. This is, indeed, the secret of men's opposition to the atonement—it makes too much of what they call human frailties and foibles—but what God calls crime and treason. Every thing in the atonement is against sin; there is nothing in it to extenuate sin. They who see most evil in sin, see most worth and grandeur in the atonement; and they who most love and admire the atonement, most hate and abhor sin.

3. The atonement is the most splendid and magnificent vindication of the honour of divine government. All the judgments with which God has visited this world are vindications of his government; they have shewn on what side God is—they have proved that sin cannot be traced to him—they have signified that God will at all hazards defend his law; but the atonement of his Son is the most amazing of all his measures. The annals of his empire present nothing like it. It is so magnificent that angels look to it with admiration. When the Mediator finished this vindication, the physical universe did it homage, and, mantled in sackcloth, bowed to the greater miracle of moral government, an *atonement for sin*.

4. The atonement brings a greater revenue of glory to God than any

other measure. This dispensation eclipses the renown of all the others. In other measures we see but portions of the ways of God. Here we behold *all* the perfections of God in transcendent lustre, and beautiful harmony. There is a greater display of *public justice* in the death of the cross, than in all judicial inflictions. There is more *goodness* in the salvation of *one* fallen sinner, than in the confirmation of thousands of holy angels. The equity of the divine government shines with brighter honors in the scheme of sovereign grace, than in the dispensation of Paradise. Besides, here, and *here* alone, is a standing for *mercy*; here alone she unfurls her ensigns of peace, and sways her sceptre at once to vindicate the throne and save the sinner. The attributes whose honour seemed to require the destruction of sinners are glorified in his salvation, yea, more glorified in his salvation than they would have been in his perdition.

5. The atonement brings an immense accession of good to the universe. What a universe of death would this have been, if all the evils due to sinners actually took place! But God has thoughts of peace, and not of evil towards us. For if God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us *all* things. He gave his Son as the magazine and repository of all fulness of blessings. Here are all sorts of good that man is capable of, or can possibly need—good to the highest degree, “far above all that we are able to ask or think”—good distributed with the freest bounty and copiousness for wants in all conditions—good for eternity for an immortal spirit. All this good comes through the atonement of Jesus Christ. The cross received the thunder from the threatening cloud, and gave sunshine to the universe.