

not endure the tossings of one stormy night, when it carries us to the shore that we long for? What cause have we to dread the messenger who brings us to our Father's house? Should not our fears about futurity abate, when we hear God addressing us with respect to death, as He did the patriarch of old, upon going to Egypt, "Fear not to go down to the grave; I will go down with thee, and will bring thee up again?"

Secondly, Our victory over death consists in our being delivered from the apprehensions of wrath and the forebodings of punishment, which arise in the mind from the consciousness of sin.

That there is a God who governs the world, the patron of righteousness and the avenger sin, is so manifest from the light of nature, that the belief of it has obtained among all nations. That it shall be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked; that God will reward those who diligently seek Him, and punish those who transgress His laws, is the principle upon which all religion is founded. But whether mercy be an attribute in the Divine nature to such an extent that God may be rendered propitious to those who rebel against His authority and disobey His commandments, is an enquiry to which no satisfactory answer can be made. Many of the Divine attributes are conspicuous from the works of creation; the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of God, appear in creating the world; in superintending that that world which he has made; in diffusing life wide over the system of things, and providing the means of happiness to all His creatures. But from no appearances in nature does it clearly follow, that the exercise of mercy to offenders is part of the plan by which the universe is governed. From anything that we know from the light of nature, repentance alone may not be sufficient to procure the remission of sins; the tears of contrition may be unavailable to wash away the sins of a guilty life, and the Divine favor may be implored in vain by those who have become obnoxious to the Divine displeasure. If in the calm and serene hour of inquiry, man could find no consolation in such thoughts, how would he be overwhelmed with horror, when his mind was disordered with a sense of guilt? When remembrance brought his former life to view, when reflection pierced him to the heart, darkness would spread itself over his mind, Deity would appear an object of terror, and the spirit, wounded by remorse, would discern nothing but an offended Judge, armed with thunders to punish the guilty. If, in the day of health and prosperity, these reflections were so powerful to embitter life, they would be a source of agony and despair when the last hour approached. When life flows according to our wishes, we may endeavor to conceal our sins, and shut our ears against the voice of conscience. But these artifices will

avail little at the hour of death. Then things appear in their true colors. Then conscience tells the truth, and the mask is taken off from the man, when our sins at that moment pass before us in review. Guilty and polluted as we are, covered with confusion, how shall we appear at the judgment-seat of God, and answer at the bar of eternal justice? How shall dust and ashes stand in the presence of that uncreated glory, before which principalities bow down, tremble, and adore? How shall guilty and self-condemned creatures appear before Him, in whose sight the heavens are not clean, and who chargeth the angels with folly? This is the sting of death. It is guilt that sharpens the spear of the king of terrors. But even in this way we have victory over death, through Jesus Christ our Lord. By His death upon the cross, an atonement was made for the sins of men. The wrath of God was averted from the world. A great plan of reconciliation is now unfolded in the Gospel. Under the banner of the cross, pardon is proclaimed to returning penitents. They who accept the offers of mercy, and who fly for refuge to the hope set before them, are taken into favor; their sins are forgiven, and their names are written in the book of life. Over them death has no power. The king of terrors is transformed into an angel of peace, to waft them to their native country, where they long to be.

This, O Christian! the death of thy Redeemer, is thy strong consolation; thy effectual remedy against the fear of death. What evil can come nigh to him for whom Jesus died? Does the law which thou hast broken denounce vengeance against thee? Behold that law fulfilled in the meritorious life of thy Redeemer. Does the sentence of wrath pronounced against the posterity of Adam sound in thine ears? Behold that sentence blotted out, that *handwriting*, as the Apostle calls it, cancelled, nailed to thy Saviour's cross, and left there as a trophy of His victory. Art thou afraid that the cry of thy offences hath may rise to heaven, and reach the ears of justice? There is no place for it there; in room of it ascends the voice of that blood which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. Does the enemy of mankind accuse thee at the judgment seat? He is put to silence by thy Advocate and Intercessor at the right hand of thy Father. Does death appear to thee in a form of terror, and hold out his sting to alarm thy mind? His terror is removed, and his sting was pulled out by that hand, which, on Mount Calvary, was fixed to the accursed tree. Art thou afraid that the arrows of Divine wrath which smite the guilty, are aimed at thy head? Before they can touch thee, they must pierce that body, which, in the symbols of Divine imputation, was this day held forth crucified among you, and which at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, is forever presented in behalf of the redeemed. Well then