

an evil to such persons under such circumstances. If the argument were, that the righteous are to be annihilated, then it might be admitted that in their annihilation loss would be experienced. But in the case of the wretched wicked it would be a blessing rather than a curse. Annihilation then cannot possibly be the penalty of God's law. Some of these teachers say, the penalty consists partly in the suffering that precedes extinction, and partly in the extinction itself: they admit there must be suffering in or connected with punishment, and say that, as the extinction is to be eternal and the sinner must suffer before he will be extinguished, that, consequently, he will suffer everlasting punishment. To this unreasonable attempt at reasoning, we only say that, if everlasting is to be applied to either part of this penalty, we claim that it be applied to the suffering. If these two things—suffering and cessation of being—are meant by the term punishment, then the word everlasting, as associated with that term, is quite as applicable to the former as the latter; and we have as good reasons for asserting that it teaches that the suffering is to be endless, as any other can have to claim that it teaches that the non-existence will be eternal. But we deny that the penalty of God's law teaches or implies extinction of being. If this theory be true, all the dead must now be in the same condition that the wicked will be in after they receive their punishment. They had nothing but material bodies, and these have gone to the dust, so that according to this dogma, they do not exist: this is all they claim for the wicked,—that they will be put out of existence. Who believes that Moses, Paul, and Stephen, have been suffering the penalty of the law of God since the time of their deaths, just as the wicked will experience it for the same length of time during their punishment? That the wicked will be punished in the future for the sins of this life, the Scriptures distinctly teach. "Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." But