

placed beyond the utmost range of his conjecture. He gloried therefore in the full conviction that he had marred the designs of God, in man's regard, and ruined the earthly creature forever.

Here, as nothing happens without a cause, we may naturally inquire what excited in the tempting fiend so fell a hatred to our race and why he so eagerly sought and seeks to involve us in his own destruction.

But that race was destined to inherit the bliss, from which he, and his guilty followers fell. It was envy then, a vice that ever seeks to accomplish the ruin of its object; it was envy, that urged, and still urges him on in all his mischievous ploddings against our kind. Besides his rage against that God, whose chastising might he ever feels, redounds upon the creature so favored by the Deity.

Is it not also probable that, when the angels first beheld man sprung from the forming hand of the Creator; at that time, when the material followed the spiritual creation; when they, "the morning stars praised him together; and all the Sons of God made a joyful melody—*Job xxxviii, 7.* Is it not probable that at the moment while they considered him by his nature so much their inferior, that Almighty God may have revealed to them his design of making this last of all his works the greatest; and, though he may have concealed from them the manner in which this wonder was to be performed, to wit, by so identifying himself with man, as to make him in his own person become their rightful Lord and Sovereign, that, in this anticipating sense, in order to try their humble and due submission to his Sovereign will, the Eternal Father may have said, alluding to the word incarnate, his Eternal Son: "Let all the angels of God adore him.—*Ps. xc, 7.*—Who knows but this very command, addressed to the whole host of heaven, who may have wondered that this last of God's rational creatures should be the least; who knows but this very command, may have formed the test and trial of their allegiance, and the occasion of Satan's fall, together with those, who, like him, from the proud sense of their natural superiority, may have disdained to worship, as man, the filial Deity? All we know for certain on the subject, is, that the sin of the fallen angels, was the sin of pride; and the vain thought of exalting themselves above the *Most High and Holy One*, at the same time that we observe in Scripture their opposition chiefly directed against the Eternal Son, in his capacity of man, the Redeemer and Saviour of the human race.

It would seem that God, who foresaw all that would happen; and had formed from all eternity his design in man's regard, intended, in creating him, not a simple, but a compound being, whose person consists in the closest union of two incompatible substances; of a rational and thinking soul, with an inert, unconscious, material clod of clay: to afford him in himself a striking proof of the possibility of that otherwise seemingly incredible mystery, the *incarnation*: a mystery designed for him alone, and intended to prove the great subject of his faith, and object of his hope, by which God, who made man to his own image and likeness, disdained not to make himself to man's image and likeness, in order to restore of that image and likeness what had been degraded in it, and disfigured by sin.

No wonder then that man should be the particular object of envy and hatred to Satan and his associates; whose forfeited bliss he was created to inherit; whose fall and reprobation may have originated in their opposition to his predicted Deification; and who view the easy doomed victim of their seduction not only rescued from their revengeful grasp; but placed in a more marvellous; and, consequently,

a more desirable condition than ever; nay, ennobled and exalted above them by that very nature, which they despised, as so inferior to theirs; and which now forms the precious and wonderful link, that inseparably unites him in the closest kindred with his Maker; the least with the greatest; the most abject with the most exalted; the finite even, and mortal doomed, with the infinite and eternal.

But how was this wonder of wonders to be wrought; and still the dread sentence of death, pronounced against guilty man to be verified? O, it is here that Revelation discloses to us a mystery, which no created intellect could ever have dreamed of.

Man had freely and deliberately sinned, and thereby, like the rebel angels had not only forfeited his title to that bliss, for which he was created; but had also incurred the dread penalty of *death*, in all the fearful extent of its meaning; "death spiritual," which deprives the soul of her true life, the grace of God: "Death temporal," which separates the soul from the body, and dooms this last for a time to return to its native dust; and, finally, "Death eternal," by which the whole man, body and soul, is condemned to an ever dying life; or rather an ever living death; for death eternal is but life continually prolonged in order but to feel the pangs and agony of death. Such was the woeful state to which man had made himself liable by guiltily yielding to the tempter's suggestion.

From this hopeless state did God resolve to deliver him. Man, however, must make the satisfaction due by him to divine justice for his offence. But neither man, nor all the creatures together, can make the adequate satisfaction required.—How then was this incompetency in the creature to be removed? Ah! could it ever have entered into the imagination of men or angels that God himself would become that man capable of atoning superabundantly for the guilt of man?

The cheering tidings of God's gracious purpose were announced to man in Paradise immediately after his fall. It was when he had all to fear from the justice of his Maker, that his Maker's mercy gave him all to hope. He dreaded now, his late delight, the Deity's wonted visit; and "hearing the voice of the Lord God walking in Paradise at the afternoon air, he, and his guilty partner, hid themselves from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called Adam, and said to him, where art thou?" *Gen. iii, 8, 9.* He, who might have appeared to them as their inexorable judge; clad in all the terrors of his incensed Majesty, and thundering in their ears the dreadful and irrevocable sentence of their condemnation; goes out after them, like the good shepherd after the sheep that was lost, and invites them back with that meek and gentle call; "Adam, where art thou?" He patiently hears their several excuses; and turning all his wrath against the serpent, who had been the author of all this mischief; he lays his curse upon him, and dooms the proud fiend to the most abject, vile and wicked pursuits; declares between him and the woman, whom he thought to have brought for ever under his controul; and between his brood, the wicked; and her offspring, the saints; an endless breach and a determined hostility. He foretells that she, the weaker sex, over whom his cunning had prevailed, should yet set all his might and malice at defiance. That she should crush his aspiring head, and trample him in the dust; while he should vainly "lay snares for her heel."—*Jb.*

Having thus allayed the fears of our first parents, shewing them still hope where no hope appeared; he then, and not till then, passes sentence upon them. But all the penalty imposed seems only a few temporal sufferings; the eternal, un-

less for renewed and persevering guilt, no entering into the views of his merciful dispensation towards them and their posterity. Thus, instead of appearing the dread avenger of their crimes, he shows himself their comforter and sure protector. He even deigns to make himself their servants; and before sending them from their blest abode of innocence, to be henceforth exposed to more inclement seasons; he, like a tender parent, pitying their helplessness, vouchsafes even himself to clothe them. Such is the affecting account given us in the earliest part of the inspired writings, concerning God's merciful treatment of our first parents after their fall.

Let us now mark in its development the stupendous scheme of man's redemption; and admire the ease with which Almighty God defeats all the machinations of his enemies; turning their own cunning, and mischievous efforts against themselves; and bringing the greatest good out of the greatest evil. Satan is seen completely foiled with his own very weapons turned against him; and the mischief he had done, repaired by a new order of things infinitely more calculated for our final bliss and dignity, than even the former happy one; for, when God is the restorer, the restoration far excels the loss sustained.

The fatal tree, which the devil had made the instrument of our ruin, is made the instrument of our salvation; and the fruit of that tree, eaten against the command of God, which gave death; now eaten in compliance with his command; gives life eternal, and a glorious immortality; for the mystic fruit which hung upon that saving tree, was the flesh of our divine expiatory victim, who has said, "He who eats my flesh, shall live for ever."

The woman, in whose disobedience all our woe originated, is now the one from whose obedience all our bliss is derived. "Behold," said she, "the handmaid of the Lord! Be it done unto me according to thy word!" She the weakest creature by nature, is made the strongest of creatures by grace, and the first to triumph fully over her original deceiver.

Her divine son, "the seed of the woman," has conquered as man, our mortal enemy: has trampled his haughty head in the dust and avenged on him our common wrongs; giving, besides, to each of his followers the power, by his grace, of doing the same.

He took our nature, without a human father, of her the woman, originally formed without a mother, from the side of him, who had neither father nor mother. His divinity sprung from the Eternal Father, assumed our frail humanity of her the frailest; the incarnation of the spiritual Adam resembling the creation of the carnal one, whose soul proceeding immediately from its Creator, took possession of its terrestrial organ, the body; forming with it, though a different substance, one identical and individual person. In this too the second Adam resembled the first, that in his two-fold generation, he was *fatherless* and *motherless*; *fatherless* in his *human*, and *motherless* in his *divine*. Hence, as in his sacrifice, so also in his generation, is he likened to his great regal and sacerdotal prototype, *Melchisedech*; whose father and mother are unknown; and therefore whose genealogy can never be traced; "Generationem jus quis enarrabit?" "Who shall declare his generation?"

In this new order of things, even death, our threatened bane, is become but our desirable entry into never ending bliss.

The temporal sufferings also, to which we are condemned are made but the precious occasion of augmenting our future happiness. They are but the labours of virtue, which win for us eternal and infinite rewards; for, as the great Apostle

Saint Paul testifies, "the present tribulation, which is momentary and short, worketh for us exceedingly grand above measure, an eternal weight of glory; *1. Cor. iv, 17.* Thus a sovereign remedy is applied to all our woes; which, if properly borne, are changed into so many sources of the purest joy; a joy secured to us by the promise of him, who said, "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

In this wonderful dispensation we see God's justice superabundantly satisfied by man, of whom satisfaction was indisputably required; the truth of his threat rendered perfectly consistent with the display of his mercy; and his justice now appeared welcoming our peace and perfect reconciliation with his offended Majesty; thus as the Psalmist sings, "Mercy and truth have met each other, justice and peace have kissed."

Here then we perceive why Providence permits for a time the moral disorder in our world. It is allowed only for the free trial of man's merit and fidelity, and to give him, as we observed, a constant opportunity by his struggle against the allurements of vice and immorality, of augmenting his bliss & glory in the world to come. This is that enmity which he told the serpent "he would put between him and the woman; and between his seed and her seed." This that strife alluded to by the Saviour, when he said, "I came not to send peace on earth, but the sword.—*Matt. x, 34:* "and the life of man," says Job, "is a constant warfare upon earth:" while only they who conquer, shall be crowned.

But this state, though a trying and critical one, is yet, as we affirmed, by the rewards it procures us, a far more advantageous, and therefore a more desirable one, than even that from which we fell. For who can say to what a height of glory we may raise ourselves in the kingdom of our Heavenly Father, by our never-failing exertions in his service. Our time here is that precious talent, which he says he has committed to our faithful management; and if we lay it out properly to interest, it will, in the end, produce to us infinitely more than the whole capital and original amount.

It is true our best actions considered in themselves, are nothing that can justly claim from God the slightest remuneration; much less a remuneration so exalted and everlasting. But, while we remain in this probationary state, we are assured by the Saviour himself that the very least and most ordinary of our actions, when performed with the proper intention; that is, for his sake, or in obedience to his command; and with a view to please him, are counted, and rendered precious in his sight, through the merits imparted to them by the Saviour, who, as our head, our High Priest and Mediator, offers them up to his Heavenly Father, as those of his living members. We are thus enabled by an upright intention to do all that we do to the glory of God, "whether you eat or drink," says St. Paul, "or whatever else you do; do all to the glory of God; *1. Cor. x, 31.* Now whatever is done to the glory of God, deserves as our Saviour assures us, an adequate reward. "Even a cup of cold water," says he, "given in my name, shall not want its reward."

What an opportunity there is hereby afforded us of "laying up to ourselves," as he exhorts us, "treasures in Heaven, *Matt. vi, 26,* and of adding every moment of our life here to our glory and happiness in the world to come. In this a one consists the secret of the saints, whom the grace of God enables to turn to their everlasting advantage his wondrous scheme of man's redemption; and all the sufferings of this short life to the enhancement of their bliss for eternity.