

scheme of human redemption,—that He might satisfy divine justice by enduring punishment in place of the sinner for violating the law of God,—that He might fulfil that law and make it honourable,—that he might procure the salvation of all who shall believe in His name, and serve Him in His Gospel.

His peculiar history is faithfully narrated on its sacred page,—the particular method that He took to convince the world that He is the true Messiah,—and the design of His mission here as the adorable God-man. The pure waters cast out from this eternal Fountain flowed through the various channels of the different writers of the Holy Scriptures,—the divine light shining from this heavenly sun was reflected faithfully by them for long,—whose rays, while they were meant to enlighten the world in true religion, also exposed and described Him from whom these doctrines originally emanated. Truth pervades their every lesson,—its zeal is stamped on every sentiment,—and although it may be misunderstood and misconstrued by some, yet there it stands, intact and entire—demanding to be interpreted, in order to its being best understood—by itself. God is his own best interpreter, and if His exposition be attended to, He will make everything plain. The darkness of comprehension which leads to error is in man, debased by sin—and not in the sacred description, which has perfection exhibited on its every part.

The information and wisdom on holy subjects which, for so many ages, occupied the time and engaged the attention of the master-minds of antiquity, but which baffled their greatest endeavors to find out—are so clearly and simply stated in our inspired Gospel, that he who runneth may read—or a child may understand them. Being intended by its great Author for the benefit of the whole human race, while there are depths in the revealed Word which have never yet been sounded by mere man—that which is adapted to supply our greatest spiritual wants is expressed in such a plain way that no error can be made on the subject unless by those who are willingly ignorant—or who entertain a prejudiced opinion. No philosophical reasoning is therefore required in order that we may know our duty to God—to our neighbor—and to ourselves,—and also how our souls may be safe in the great day of the Lord, if we only read with understanding, and believe the plain statements of Scripture—which are our unerring guide to all that is great and good.

If the seed of the Word be also received into the honest and good heart, it will produce fruit there after its own kind—without the aid of human invention to make it, as some may think, more attractive by any vain ornaments which may be hung upon it. Our Gospel needs not to be so gaudily decorated, unless to meet the approbation of carnal and

sickly minds—which prefer postures, if not impostures, to the pure and living Word of God to lead them to salvation,—for “majestic in its own simplicity it stands”—the wonder and admiration of the whole redeemed world. It disdains to wear any flimsy adornment whatever, which man can put upon it,—or permit its own innate beauty and inherent lustre to be obscured and defaced by the trappings of parade and ostentation. Plainly and purely it notifies the designs,—it exhibits the wisdom,—it breathes the Spirit of the Living God—and points to the blood of Christ—the fountain opened by divine grace for sin and all uncleanness, as all that is necessary to procure us salvation. To the peculiar case of every sinner it applies the doctrine of the Cross,—and tells in whom consolation and safety are only to be found. It is the only safe guide to which the soul can trust, that desires to rise from earth to heaven,—and for this it both encourages and assists.

Redemption and salvation by the sacrifice of Christ is its key-note,—the grand disclosure at which the ransomed of the Lord on earth rejoice,—and the subject which now affords hymns of praise to the blessed angels in heaven—and will do so forever. “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”—are words to which the innumerable multitude of the redeemed will constantly refer with the greatest delight,—and will point to themselves as the perpetual witnesses of their truth. These washed their robes by faith in the blood of the Lamb,—they accepted him as he is freely offered in the Gospel,—they lived in conformity to its injunctions,—their Saviour’s righteousness was imputed to them by God,—by Him they were justified, adopted, and sanctified in this world,—and at last they reign triumphant with Him in glory.

The merciful intentions of God toward His lost and ruined human creatures are very plainly stated in our Gospel,—the ample provision He has made for the faithful—and the help He is affording them to progress in the ways of righteousness, are truths so evident, that while they meet with an honest response from every unprejudiced mind, they also afford matter for the deepest gratitude—the purest affection—and the strongest encouragement to follow the Lord. Upon the same condition does our Gospel offer salvation to all alike,—it holds not out different terms to the different classes of society—but to the prince and the peasant its calls are the same,—for all being alike by nature, it addresses* all alike—but it is only upon the individual who attends to its call that it works any salutary influence. Its teaching both convinces the judgment, and warms the feelings,—and for these purposes it is as well adapted at the present day, and will continue so to the end of time, as it was