

of fear are those told through dread of injury, either in person, estate, or character. This lie was told by Cain, when God asked him for his brother, saying, Where is he? and he said, I know not. By the Gibeonites, when they came to Joshua in disguise: by Peter, when he denied his Master, and afterwards dissembled. Lies of interest are told to acquire or retain property, favor or employment. This lie was told by Gehazi, when he went after Naaman; by Ananias and Sapphira, when they kept back part of the price of the land they had sold. Lies of convenience are those told to promote trouble or imagined difficulty. This lie was told by the Jews, when Christ asked them, Whence was the baptism of John? Under this head come all those false excuses masters and mistresses give their visitors through their servants, and their acquaintances, personally, when they meet them. Lies of malignity are those which are told with bitterness of heart, with design to injure in character, person, or estate, those against whom they are uttered. Those of this description were committed by the Jews, when they maliciously accused Christ of being a Samaritan, having a demon, being insane, a violator of God's laws, and an enemy of Cæsar. Lies of this sort are promulgated when attempts are made to blast reputation in any form, or by whatever means. Lies of wantonness are told to gratify a depraved taste, a wicked heart, and with perfect disregard to the feelings of the party aggrieved. Lies of this class were uttered by the Jews, when they gratuitously charged the people with ignorance of the law, and with being cursed, and when they charged Christ with guilt because he slighted their traditions. Another class of convenient lies is found in the conduct of those parents and teachers who endeavor to subordinate their children and pupils by false threats and hollow promises. This is most detestable in any rational creature, as the heaven-appointed guardians and teachers of the tender and inexperienced youth become the panders of their destruction. Yet, awful and ruinous as this crime is, little notice is taken of it, and many are daily committing it without appearing to know that it is a crime. By it, however, the foundation is laid deeply in youth for unblushing falsehood, and those who are thus taught will not fail to try their accomplishments on their teachers, and it is a righteous retribution of heaven they should. When the fountain of private and public morals is thus poisoned by those who set to watch it what may we expect from those whose set purpose is the prostration of all morals, that nothing may contrast with the blackness of their character! Lies of benevolence are the concealment of truth, or the utterance of falsehood through fear of giving pain to the heart, or doing injury to the system of the afflicted. This is often done in losses, old age, sickness, death.—Friends and consolers endeavor to cheer bleeding heart, crushed with many griefs, by telling lies of benevolence, as they can find no truth that will answer their purpose, and feel unwilling to see them suffer without an effort for their alleviation. The motive is laudable in the highest degree, but the means execrable, God having forbidden evil to be done that good may be enjoyed, or sin to be committed that grace may

abound. Were falsehood to be uttered on any occasion, or could lying be justified under any circumstances God would be able to lie, for he is capable of doing all good.—But as it is impossible for God to lie, falsehood is certainly an evil. And if none are warranted in lying to save their property, character, or life, they are not at liberty to falsify for the imagined good of others.—But should lies of benevolence be expected, and man left free to speak truth or falsehood, as he may deem best or most prudent, there would be an end of all law and all confidence, each would do what was right in his own partial judgment, and prudential in his own interested survey.—Physicians, friends, nurses, and watchers should volunteer no unwelcome or painful truth on the attention of the sick, unless more good probably will be done than evil; and then no false delicacy, no pretension to good breeding, should prevent its utterance. It distressed Christ even to weeping to foresee and predict the misery of his people; yet the prophecy was delivered with amazing exactness, notwithstanding numberless motives to hinder.—In like manner the ancient prophets took no pleasure in the awful calamities they foretold, nor in the consternation their announcement produced; yet, faithful to the direction of God, the truth was unfolded in all its naked terribleness. But, it is replied in these cases there were hope the predictions might benefit, and the prophecy of Jonah did the Ninevites; but in sickness and misfortune no expectation of this kind can be indulged. Though Christ's disciples, and others, who should believe on him, might be warned by this promission, those on whom the destruction was to fall, would not, nor receive any good from the disregarded prophecy, but heavier condemnation from slighting it. Yet impenitent ruin was predicted to all, that each might act with understanding, and not hazard conjecture in the dark. None consequently, could murmur that they had not been forewarned, and entreated to fly from danger. When Hezekiah was sick, Isaiah told him from the Lord, Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live. But after his prayer and tears, God added fifteen years to his life. Concealing the truth from Jacob concerning Joseph was of no advantage to him. When Ben-haddad, king of Syria, was sick, and sent to Elisha the prophet, inquiring, Shalt I recover of this disease? he said, thou mayest certainly recover; howbeit the Lord hath showed me that he shall surely die. When Abijah was sick, and his mother went to the prophet Abijah to know whether he would live, the prophet said, I am sent to thee with heavy tidings; and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die.—Ahaziah, having fallen through a lattice in his upper chamber, and being sick, sent to inquire of Baalzebub because there was no God in Israel, and declared, Thus saith the Lord, thou shalt not come down from the bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. From all this reasoning and all these examples from sacred history, it appears truth is to be spoken to all persons, on all occasions, and under all circumstances, when anything is to be spoken, and that neither sickness, losses, nor death warrant its concealment. None should be arrogant enough to question the wisdom of God, and practically say, Thou

hast required us to utter truth unexceptionably, without foreseeing or considering this peculiar case, or making proper allowance. When the law is treated with this levity, and its Author virtually charged with indiscretion or unkindness, the fact that there is a moral Governor of the universe is actually denied, and human judgment is seated on the throne of worlds. By withholding truth, death, loss, calamity, as well as great blessings, may have a salutary influence on the minds and hearts of those most affected; and if the first consequences be overwhelming, the result may be most serviceable. Yet, should all the effects, to human discernment be agonizingly distressing, we are not thence to infer the imprudence of God in demanding truth, unless we consider him unwise on all occasions. And if the heart-rending facts be hidden by friends, they may be revealed by foes, or come to light in a time and in circumstances when the mind is far less able to bear the shock. Let us, then, put away all lies, of every description, however strongly the temptation to falsehood, and invariably speak truth to God and man with carefulness.

Judgment without Mercy.

BY REV. O. A. SKINNER.

"For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy, and mercy rejoiceth against judgment."—JAMES II. 13.

JUDGMENT without mercy! Mercy rejoiceth against judgment! These are remarkable expressions. How are they to be understood? According to the Bible, God is infinitely just. Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.—He is a just God and a Saviour. He is also a God of mercy. His tender mercies are over all his works. His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. And yet the text speaks of judgment without mercy, and mercy against judgment! What does this mean? Does it mean, as many suppose, that God is just to a part, and merciful to a part? That he cannot be both just and merciful to the same persons? If this be the case, justice and mercy have no agreement; they have opposing natures and opposing claims. This view of justice and mercy is objectionable for many reasons.

1. It conflicts with the Bible. David says, "God renders to every man according to his work." John says, "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." The idea here conveyed is, not that God will punish some men according to their work, and that he is just in some of his ways; but that every man shall be thus punished, and that all his ways are thus just. God is not like those men who are partial in their justice. We often see this partiality in our courts of justice. Accuse before them a poor, friendless man, and he will be convicted without hesitation, and doomed to endure the extreme penalty of the law. But let a man of wealth and strong friends be accused of the same crime, and he will either not be carried to court, or if carried there be sure of an acquittal. There is a great disposition to judge of men as the watchman judged of the celebrated Dr. Chalmers, who was arrested as a rogue because shabbily attired. It was in vain the doctor resisted; the watch said, "No, no, yure by no means Dr. Chalmers; he's nae such a man as you; and he'd not be

strolling about at such an hour;" and the poor minister had to go to the lock-up.—Now is God's justice dependent upon adventitious circumstances? Is he partial? Does he look entirely at character? Or do circumstances, like those which have such great influence in human courts, control his decisions? If he is partial, he is wholly unfit for a judge; and men, instead of seeking not to deserve punishment would do well to seek the favor of their capricious judge. Their safety is not in right, but in favor; and it would be wiser to study the weaknesses and caprices of their judge for influence at court, than learn the eternal principles of justice.—How prone are men to make God like themselves, and to suppose that the affairs of his kingdom are conducted upon the principles of policy, partiality, and wrong, than govern so many kings, rulers, and courts.

2. I object to the idea that justice and mercy are antagonistic attributes, because it gives a false view of the nature of justice. It teaches that justice demands that which is evil, positively destructive? This is the general idea of justice. It is supposed that the sinner deserves all the misery that can be inflicted upon him. The sinner's good is not associated with justice. It is thought that he has no claim to have his good regarded; that when he became a sinner, he stepped out of the boundaries which gave him any claim upon divine protection; and that now it is just that ways should be studied to torture him, and make his condition as wretched as possible! We often see this kind of justice among men. It is sometimes embodied in the form of lynch law, and is called lynch justice. It says to an obnoxious person, "You have forfeited all claims to protection,—you have become an outlaw, and you ought to be dealt with on principles entirely different from those which should be regarded in dealing with others, you have ceased to be of the number who should be treated as human beings!" Mark this idea. It is vastly more prevalent in the world than is generally supposed. It has for ages been with legislators, and exerted over them a far greater power than any true ideas of justice.—Hence the unequal laws of the world, and the cruel penalties that disgrace the statute books of all nations. The opinion is prevalent that some offenders should not be treated as human; that they may be destroyed, tortured, butchered, and their bodies thrown in contempt to the beasts of prey! Such is, to a great degree, the justice of the world. Instead of being represented by scales equally balanced, it ought to be represented as a great fierce monster, armed with terrible weapons, and exulting with fiendish delight whenever a victim is thrown to his charge! Were I a painter, I could draw a figure that would give a vivid conception of this idea of justice. He should be a large, dark, fiery being, with a brow knit with rage, an eye flashing with vengeance, and a giant hand clasp ing horrid weapons of cruelty. Beneath him should be groaning in chains the wretched victims on whom his wrath was executing its awful work! Such a picture would represent not only the justice of men, but also that which men have ascribed to God. Are we not told that the chief office of divine justice is to torment;