

promises and threatenings of the bible are conditional, and depend upon the actions of men for their accomplishment, when the condition *is not expressed*, but merely implied. But previous to this, we lay down an important rule of interpretation, without which no man can shield the bible from numerous contradictions, and from an ignorance of which, have originated nearly all the false doctrines in christendom; and many, (especially among the Universalists) from an ignorance of this rule, have turned avowed infidels, and denied in toto the authenticity of the bible. The rule is this: *that a condition being expressed in any part of the bible respect to any promise or threat, that condition must be understood as implied, in all other places where that promise or threat is recorded, if not there expressed!* With this rule before us, we shall now examine some of the threats and promises of the bible.

“3. ‘And Jonah began to enter into the city a day’s journey, and he cried and said: yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.’ (Jonah iii. 4.) Here is no condition expressed. It is not said: ‘Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,’ *if* they do not repent. But did not the Ninevites so understand it? Read the next verse: ‘So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.’ Now if the people of Nineveh believed God, as it is here declared, why did they repent in sackcloth, unless they understood that there was a condition implied in this threat? and that they might by repentance escape the threatened judgment? Why did they not coolly submit to their fate,—await the forty days, and be destroyed, without exerting themselves in the manner they did? The response of all must be: it was because they understood that there was a condition *implied* in that threat. But was their understanding of that matter correct? Read on. ‘And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil *he said he would do* unto them, and he did it not.’ (verse 10.) Now Universalists have to take one of three grounds: either 1. That God told the Ninevites a positive falsehood: or 2. That the Ninevites were actually destroyed in forty days, and thus flatly contradict the bible: or 3. That there was a condition implied in that threat. The former two they dare not assert: hence the latter they are compelled to admit, which lays the axe at the very root of Universalism.

“4. ‘Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith: I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father should walk before me forever; [no condition expressed here] but now the Lord saith: be it far from me; [to perform this promise] for them that honor me, I will honor; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.’ (1 Sam. ii. 30.) Thus, notwithstanding God had promised, without expressing any condition, that the house of Eli, and the house of his father should walk before him forever; but because they refused to honor him, by the contempt with which they had treated his ordinances, and thus did not perform the condition *implied* in this promise;—therefore the Lord reversed the matter, and instead of continuing to confer upon them the honors of sacerdotal dignity, brought upon them shame and confusion of face.

“5. ‘Then said David: O Lord God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah to destroy the city for