

the Almighty in this life, punishes iniquity, or checks its progress; and also gives support to virtue. One is the interposition of his providence, of which more hereafter; the other is that wise order or constitution which he hath established in the moral system, and which inseparably connects our duty and happiness together; and the breach of that duty with our misery. The consequence of this unalterable constitution is, that no man ever did, or ever can violate his duty, and persist in that violation, with impunity. And whilst it manifests the Almighty's displeasure against sin, and his watchful care over the interests of virtue; it also luminously displays his wisdom and beneficence, in thus blending our duty, our interest, and happiness together, and making them run in one common channel.

II. But my subject leads me to consider these principles as applied to nations, collective bodies of men, rather than to individuals. To such, my text refers, and to them the present occasion confines me. The righteous government of heaven indeed extends equally to nations, and to individuals that compose them. The only difference between them lies in this—that national transgressions must meet their punishment in this world; whereas the punishment of individuals is generally referred to a future retribution; when the ways of God will be fully justified, and the perplexities of his providence, however dark at present, will be intirely removed. Not that individuals always escape till the day