

the wants of man, as a sinner. The facts and fears of the human conscience here present a grand difficulty. It is a law of conscience that a sense of guilt alarms it with a dread of punishment, and it can regain peace only by an assurance of honourable pardon. We say, an *honourable* pardon. It is a great mistake to suppose, as some have done, that if man only obtain pardon, it matters not to him, how it comes, whether honourably to his Maker or not. On the contrary, the human conscience is so constituted that it must see, that the forgiveness comes in righteousness, or its convictions are not satisfied, nor its fears allayed. The heart of man, fallen though it be, still retains this much of God's image impressed on it, that it cannot enter into peace, over the trampled justice and honour of its injured Maker. But the Bible plan of mercy, here meets the highest demands of the human conscience. It reveals a satisfaction in Jesus' blood, with which the Judge of all declared himself well pleased; and He being seen to be just in justifying the believing, conscience is pacified, and the penitent soul enjoys an honourable rest. The gospel plan of salvation meets man too with a power of love that touches his heart, and draws it back to God. "It was," says Brainerd, "when I discoursed to the multitude on that sacred passage, 'yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him,' that the word was attended with a resistless power; many hundreds in that great assembly, consisting of three or four thousand, were so much affected that there was a very great mourning, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon." And it is just the love of the cross every where, that touches sinners' hearts and causes them to flee for refuge to the hope set before them. "How was that," said the first convert in Greenland, as he heard a missionary read in John's Gospel, of the love of God, in giving his Son, "How was that? Tell me that once more, for I would fain be saved too." Where shall we find evidence of divine wisdom and power if it is not here? Who knows not, how difficult it is to pacify a troubled conscience, and yet millions of sinners have found peace from all their fears, in believing the truth as it is in Jesus. Who knows not, the deadly enmity of the human heart to God, and yet in myriads of instances, in all lands, the words of gospel mercy, have slain this enmity, and brought men in undying affection to "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." To assert that the word which achieves these wonders is not divine, is to affirm the works of God, while his presence is denied. It is to unsettle all the foundations of our belief, in an Almighty agent, by confusing our perceptions and convictions of the effect of omnipotent power.

IV. The proof is augmented in force when we consider that the plan of salvation through Christ is the *subject* of the Bible, the great central truth, around which all others revolve. It is to develop this grand idea that scripture histories are recorded, devotional expressions preserved, prophecies penned, and epistles written. Just as redemption through the blood of Jesus, is the great event that adorns the annals of time, giving its true light to all history; so the revelation of this plan of salvation for man, is the grand theme of scripture, throwing the voice of redeeming love into all the words of this Book of life. As Gaussen has eloquently said, "it matters not who holds the pen,—it may be Moses in the wilderness of Midian when time itself was young—or David, the sweet singer of Israel, in his own city of Zion—or Ezekiel, the youthful prophet on the banks of the river Chebar—or Daniel, the seed royal in great Babylon—or Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ at Rome—or John, the beloved in the Isle that is called Patmos." Still the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of their prophecy. With one heart and one mouth they all show to man the way of salvation. Now, why this perfect harmony of thought and sentiment among the sacred penmen through full thirty centuries? Does it not prove beyond controversy the presence, with them all, of the one presiding Spirit of God. In a piece of music composed by one of the masters in the science, a prevailing sentiment may be discerned running throughout, and the one producing mind may be attested in every chord touched by the