

tion to the Messiah? Every reader may answer this question for himself. He may then reverse the supposition, and inquire what should be thought of the candour of a writer who will still affirm that such must be the meaning of the words when used in reference to the Messiah, although they have no such meaning in any other case as used in the Bible?

Should any one be disposed to make the inquiry, whether one's bearing the iniquity of another, ever means what has been supposed when the language is used in reference to the Messiah, let him keep in mind that the prevalent hypothesis implies three ideas: 1. That Christ suffered displays of divine anger or avenging justice; 2. That these he suffered as the substitute for sinners; 3. That it was the purpose of these sufferings to exempt those from punishment for whom they were endured. With these ideas in view, I think no impartial inquirer will ever be able to satisfy himself that the words in question were ever used in such a sense by any inspired writer.

There are, however, other passages of Scripture which may afford light on this subject; some of which I shall now exhibit.

1. It is said of Christ, "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." It could only be in a metaphorical sense that he bore our griefs, our sicknesses, or our sins. Matthew, after recording the many miracles which Jesus performed on a certain occasion, tells us, that these things were done "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." If then Christ might bear our sicknesses by exercising a benevolent sympathy and his power of healing, why not bear our sins by benevolent labours and suffering to redeem us from all iniquity? I see no more evidence that, in bearing our sins, he bore our punishment; than that, in bearing our sicknesses, he suffered all the pains and distresses of which he relieved others.

2. Not only did Christ bear our infirmities, but Christians are required to bear the infirmities and burdens of each other:—

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak," Rom. xv. 1. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ," Gal. vi. 2.

It surely is not by having the infirmities and burdens of others transferred to me, that I am to comply with these exhortations. I am not to become their substitute, but I am to exercise towards them a Christ-like sympathy, and do what I can for their relief and comfort.

3. "For consider him that endured," or bore, "such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds," Heb. xii. 3.

How did Christ bear or "endure the contradiction of sinners against himself?" In other words, How did he bear the opposition, mockings, revilings, and insults of his persecutors, before and at the time of his crucifixion? Was it by suffering the punishment due to his persecutors? Or did he bear all this by the display of a meek and forgiving temper towards his enemies, and by prayers, labours, and sufferings for their benefit? If the latter was the way in which he bore the contradiction, insults, and cruelties of his persecutors, why not thus "bear the sins of many"?

4. "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach," Heb. xiii. 13.

How are Christians to bear the reproach of their Lord? Is it by having his reproach transferred to them, that he may be relieved from it? Can we bear his reproach in no other way, than by suffering, as he did, the death of a malefactor? If we may truly bear his reproach, by being so affected with it as to be willing to do and to suffer whatever may be necessary to advance the cause for which he suffered; then he might bear our sins, by being so affected with our condition as sinners, as freely to lay down his life for our sakes.

5. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," 2 Cor. iv. 10.

This Paul spoke of himself and his fellow-sufferers in the cause of Christ. By "the dying of the Lord Jesus," is unquestionably meant the sufferings of Christ as "the Captain of our Salvation." How then did Paul and his companions "always bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus"? Was it by having the sufferings of Christ transferred to them; so that they were continually enduring the death of the cross? This will hardly be said. By this form of speech some suppose Paul expressed his constant suffering, or exposedness to suffering, and his willingness to suffer in the cause for which the Saviour died. This may not be all that the words were meant to imply. They might mean, that the apostles constantly kept in mind the event of their Lord's death; the objects for which he died, and the temper he displayed under suffering; and that by a

consideration of these things they were animated in their work, and excited to patience, fortitude, and perseverance, notwithstanding all the trials and persecutions which they were called to endure.

"Of Jesus, it is said, 'Who bare our sins in his own body on the tree.'"

"Of Paul it is said, 'Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.'"

Here let it be remarked, that Christ bore our sins, and Paul bore Christ's sufferings or dying. If then it be the correct mode of interpretation to say, that, in bearing our sins, Christ bore the punishment due to us; why must we not say, that in "always bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus," the sufferings of the cross were transferred from Christ to Paul?

Christ suffered for our sake, and Paul suffered for Christ's sake; but in neither case do I perceive anything like substituted penal suffering. If, however, in bearing our sins, Christ bore our punishment, why is it not just to infer, that in bearing the dying of our Lord, Paul bore over again the "punishment due to us all"?

As there are many cases in which one is represented as bearing or having borne the sins of others, is it not remarkable, that a meaning has been given to the words when applied to Christ, which is essentially different from their meaning in every other case in which they are used in the Bible?

The Bible Christian.

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FAMINE IN IRELAND.

This topic now occupies a large share of public attention. We cannot take up a newspaper,—British or American, religious or secular, but we perceive it occupying a prominent place. The visitation is so rare in the experience of the world—the distress so extensive and excruciating—the details so sickening and awful—that it has attracted universal notice and sympathy.

Whilst Ireland is in this sad condition, a scarcity of food prevails over the most important portions of Continental Europe, so that she can expect little assistance from that quarter. In many parts of France and Belgium we are told that the people are in a state bordering on starvation. And in the Highlands of Scotland, so dear to story and to song, we know that the inhabitants are suffering extreme distress. We are assured on trustworthy authority that there are 350,000 persons in the districts of the Highlands and islands of Scotland, who are suffering extreme destitution, 100,000 of whom are stricken with the direst famine and visited with ravaging disease, and who require the daily aid of the benevolent to preserve them from the jaws of that cruellest of all deaths—death by starvation.

But Ireland is the scene of the heaviest calamity. There, out of a population of somewhat more than 8,000,000, there are between 3 and 4,000,000 suffering from famine and pestilence. Entire districts of people are on the verge of death from these causes, and thousands have already sunk into the grave. The most fertile imagination could not depict any scenes more heart-rending and horrifying than those which the Irish people have really witnessed in this sore calamity.

It is lamentable to perceive in connection with this distressing event, the ebullitions of fanaticism and bigotry from a certain class of religionists. An English clergyman named Bickersteth has proposed a subscription of £20,000 to be employed in sending missionaries to Ireland at this crisis for the purpose of converting the people from the Roman Catholic to the Protestant religion. Whoever understands the character and circumstances of the Irish population will at once perceive the heartlessness and impropriety of this proceeding. None could desire more strongly than we, to see the Irish, and all other people, Mr. Bickersteth himself among the number, possessed of truer and purer, more elevated and more expansive views of religion, but at the same time we feel bound to pronounce emphati-

cally against the blind, misguided zeal which would raise the sectarian shibboleth amid the groans of the dying and the dead. A fanatic may be sincere but his actual mischief is not the less, notwithstanding. We trust that the people to whom the proposition has been made will have more good sense and good feeling than to give it an affirmative response.

It has also been said by another and similar class of religionists, that the present calamity is a judgment from heaven upon Ireland for the sins of her people. It may be so, or it may not. On this point we offer no opinion. But we have a remark to make on the conduct of those who do offer an opinion. We ask—how do they know that it is a special judgment?—And we answer that they can know nothing about it. Consequently their opinion is rash and unfounded, and their conduct, in its bearing, irreverent towards God. We believe that a true wisdom, and a proper reverence for Deity would caution us against such rashness. The Divine Providence is at once universal and particular. It is universal, inasmuch as it embraces all things. It is particular inasmuch as it reaches and regulates the minutest matters in the universe. It operates by laws fixed in their nature, wise in their direction, and benevolent in their end. Every thing, therefore, which takes place, occurs under the Providence of God. If this be so, we can render him no additional honor by ascribing special Providences to him. On the contrary, we say that we may bring his name and wisdom into disrepute. For such special judgments we have no satisfactory evidence. The connection between the event so regarded, and the particular matter to which it is alleged to have reference is altogether arbitrary. To illustrate this we need not go from the event under consideration. For of those who have spoken of the famine in Ireland as a special judgment, some have taken views directly at variance with others concerning the offence which called it down. Some have spoken of it as a judgment against Ireland for her Popery; while one of the Roman Catholic prelates has pronounced it a judgment against the country for its alleged increasing disrespect for that very same faith. Some, again, have connected the alleged judgment more especially with the lately increased grant to Maynooth. But these seem to have forgotten that Scotland who opposed that grant has been similarly visited, whilst the gentlemen of the British parliament who were the promoters of the measure, and who, therefore, if sin there be in the case, must have been the sinners, have escaped entirely free. Thus blindly and audaciously does fanaticism discourse on the ways of God. Thus it is that men are unwittingly led to interpret such dispensations according to their own sectarian partialities. This is surely folly—the lamentable folly of weak-minded and bigoted men. They would call the Eternal from his throne and press him into their own petty quarrels. But God is not honored in this way. No, verily, but sorely dishonored.

The immediate cause of the distress in Ireland and Scotland is, as is generally known, the failure of the potato crop. What the proximate cause of the destruction of this vegetable has been it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to ascertain. Some have alleged it was a fungus upon the bulb, others an insect upon the leaf, and others again have attributed the disastrous results to electricity. Whether any of these opinions be correct or not, the terrible fact remains the same, that in the Providence of God the staple article of a nation's food has been summarily cut off, and the people are in a state of starvation. We are of those who believe that the present trials of Ireland will result in her benefit. It is true, the ordeal may be sore and distressing. But we think we can see in it a means of healing many of the social wounds of the nation. The late meeting of the landowners and political leaders at Cork seems to promise this. And the efforts everywhere made throughout the country by persons of all parties to relieve the sufferers, will assist towards the same result. It must lead likewise to the political melioration of the country. A crisis has come upon it—no sham crisis, but one of terrible reality, and the government must act, on behalf of Ireland, decisively and effectively. By the loss of the potato, we hope that both the owners of the soil and its cultivators, will have their attention turned to the production of something more substantial and nutritious as the food of the people. This would be an additional advantage of vast importance.

It is gratifying to perceive how extensively the sympathies of the world have been aroused by this calamity. In the less distressed portions of Ireland, great exertions have been made for the relief of the sufferers. In England likewise large subscriptions have been

entered into. The Queen's name appears for £2000 sterling. The Society of Friends in England have raised, within the limits of their own connection, £22,000 sterling, which makes an average of £5 for every family therein. We do not know what has been done in the British Colonies generally, but in this Province something has been effected for the relief of both Ireland and Scotland. Exertions have been made in the principal cities in Canada and in some of the remoter parts of the country; and remittances have been sent to the distressed districts by the last mail. Throughout the United States also the sympathies of the people have been aroused, and substantial tokens thereof have already been transmitted to the famine-stricken land. It has been ascertained that during the past year there have been sent to Ireland, from three cities of the States, upwards of a million of dollars. This large amount has been sent in small sums by the hardworking Irish population resident there. But the efforts made in the United States to relieve the distresses are no longer confined to the Irish. Meetings have been held in Washington, New York, Boston, New Orleans, &c. at which several of the most distinguished American citizens have been present to plead the cause of suffering humanity. These meetings have already produced substantial results, and will produce more. Still the calamity is so great that the attempt to relieve it seems almost hopeless. Yet we are not without hope. The granaries and storehouses of Western America are full to overflowing. Whilst we write, fleets of ships laden with food are on their way across the Atlantic. Every addition made to the supply which reaches the ports of Ireland will lower the price. Let the benevolent every where open their purses, and contribute, some from their competence, and some from their abundance, and food may be placed within reach of the starving people.

DR. PRIESTLEY.

[CONCLUDED FROM OUR LAST.]

After a happy residence of six years at Leeds, Dr. Priestley quitted it for one as different as could easily be imagined. The Earl of Shelburne (afterwards Marquis of Lansdowne) invited him to reside with him in the nominal capacity of librarian, but rather as his literary companion, upon terms which regard to the future provision of an increasing family would not permit him to decline. He therefore fixed his family in a house near his Lordship's seat in Wiltshire, and during seven years he attended upon the Earl in his winter's residences in London, and occasionally in his excursions, one of which was a tour of the continent. In this situation he was free from all restraint with respect to his pursuits, and this was the period of some of those exertions which raised his reputation as a philosopher to the highest point, and made the name of Priestley familiar in all the enlightened countries of Europe. It may well be supposed, however, that the manners and society of a nobleman's house were not perfectly congenial to one whose tastes were plain, and his manners simple and unaffected.

The obliquity which his theological writings brought down upon him did not deter Dr. Priestley from pursuing the subject, for it was ever his principle to follow whatever he was convinced to be truth, whithersoever it would lead him, regardless of consequences; and it is probable that the odium which these works brought upon him was the cause of a coolness in the behaviour of his noble patron, which about this time he began to remark, and which terminated in a separation, but upon amicable terms, and without any alleged cause of complaint. His next removal was to Birmingham, a situation which he preferred on account of the advantage it afforded of able workmen in every branch requisite in his experimental enquiries, and of some men distinguished for their chemical and mechanical knowledge. Several generous friends to science, sensible that the defalcation of his income would render the expenses of his pursuits too burthensome for him to support, joined in raising an annual subscription for defraying them. This assistance he willingly accepted, as more truly honourable to him than a pension from the crown, which might have been obtained for him, if he had desired it, in the Administration of the Marquis of Rockingham, and the early part of that of Mr. Pitt. He had not been long settled in this place before a vacancy happening in the principal dissenting congregation, in consequence of the resignation of one of the pastors, he was unanimously chosen to supply it. Without interrupting his philosophical and literary pursuits, he entered with great zeal into the duties of his office, especially that important part of it, which consists in catechising,