

said, suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered *such things*” (*these things*). John iv. 23, “For the Father seeketh *such* to worship him.” John viii. 5, “And Moses in the law commanded us that *such* should be stoned.” John ix. 16, “How can a man that is a sinner do *such* (these) miracles.” Acts xxii. 22, “They that commit *such things* are worthy of death.” Romans ii. 2-3, “Away with *such* a fellow from the earth” (*this fellow*). Romans ii. 2-3, “But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them that commit *such things* (*these things*). And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest those which do *such things*” &c. (*these things*). I. Cor. v. 1, 2, 11, “*Such* fornication.” “With *such* an one we are not to eat” (*with this one or one of this sort*). I. Cor. xvi. 16, “That ye submit yourselves unto *such*” (*unto these*). II. Cor. iii. 12, “Seeing that we have *such* hope” (*this hope*). II. Cor. x. 11, “Let *such* an one think” (*this one or one of this sort*). II Cor. xii. 1-5, “And I knew *such* a man” (*this man*). “*Such* a one” (*this one*). “Of *such* a one will I glory” (*Of this one will I glory*). Galatians v. 2, 3, “Against *such* there is no law” (*against these*). SECONDLY, it does not naturally point to persons who were merely like children. The word is only once translated “like” in the New Testament, and then freely, inexactly and imperfectly, see Acts xix. 25, “Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation” (*of this or the same occupation*). THIRDLY, it is not the case that little children are incapable of belonging to the kingdom of God. In all earthly kingdoms there are little children; and why should there be none in the heavenly? Little children must be under some spiritual sceptre or other as soon as they exist. Some one must reign over them and have a right to them. They must be either in the kingdom of darkness or in the kingdom of light, and of heaven. In which of the two shall we say, if they should die while little children they must go some whither; either upwardly or downwardly, whither some king or other must claim them and accord to them the rights and privileges of incipient citizenship. There can be no doubt that they belong to God and his Christ. And indeed it is this fact that they do belong to God’s heavenly kingdom which constitutes one of the distinctions of the kingdom of heaven properly so called, from the church properly so called. It is true indeed as is indicated by Mayer that the developed traits of moral character which distinguish a full-grown subject of the kingdom of heaven, are not present in little children. But then it is equally true that there is the absence of the character of those who are rebels and enemies. And assuredly the favour of their natural sovereign, the King of Kings will not be denied them till it be morally forfeited. FOURTHLY, it is altogether unnatural to suppose that our Saviour had no interest in the little children themselves, but was exclusively interested in older persons of child-like character. Can we suppose that his state of mind if fully unfolded might have been thus expressed?—“Hinder not these little ones from coming to me. True, I have no interest in them whatsoever. I am interested only in adults; I have to do as a Saviour only with adults. My kingdom has no real little children in it. I am not their king. I have no claim on them, no crown for them, and no favours to confer on them. I have no place for them in my kingdom, but yet they are living and lively pictures, as it were, of the persons in whom I am interested. They seem as mirrors to reflect that character of my subjects which is pleasing in my sight; and by this association of ideas I feel so far interested in them.” It is impossible to suppose that our Saviour thought and felt in this manner. His interest in little children was real and for their own sakes. It was primary and not merely secondary, and because of the child-likeness of his subjects. If they who are like little children belong to the kingdom of heaven, why should we for a moment doubt that the little children themselves belong to the kingdom? Doubtless they all do, and if that change which men call death happens to them while they are still little children, we may rest assured that to the little ones it will be life everlasting. They will not be shut out from the higher province of the kingdom of heaven when they are snatched away from the lower.