

affords a significant indication of the principles upon which the Divine government proceeds. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under one or two witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, and counted it an unholy thing; and hath done despite to the Spirit of His grace." But observe, it is only upon the impenitent that God inflicts the "sorer punishment." He who yields to God's mercy finds forgiveness, present, full, and free; but he who passes unsaved beyond the boundary of this life's probation, shall find "no place of repentance though he seek it carefully with tears." When a sinner has suffered for ages he is no more worthy of Divine favour than before, because the evil nature remains unchanged. "The Lord knoweth how to . . . reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished;" but no hint is given that he reserves them to be restored to favour when the punishment is over.

3. *Punishment has not the power which some claim for it, of even deterring men from sin in the future.*—Wicked men are often punished in this life, and yet run greedily after sin again. Behold the libertine, who has already received in himself the recompense that is meet! His substance wasted; his body rotting in the foul disease engendered of his lust; does he forsake his beastly wickedness because of the punishment? No! he only curses the law that entails the misery. Behold the drunkard! How often he has been stricken and punished. Wealth squandered—health impaired—home destroyed—friends all gone. Does he stop? Does he even pause? Very seldom. Down he goes to lower and still lower deeps, till the untold horrors of *delirium tremens* seize upon him, and he suffers, before the time, all the agonies of the lost. How all the forms and forces of the infernal regions seem to gather around him! Loathsome insects "weave their soft webs about his face;" slimy serpents with forked tongues and burning eyes crawl upon his couch, and hiss with fetid breath in his maddened ears; horrible demons sit upon his labouring chest, and choke back his stifled cry for help. With piercing shriek he turns to fly, but suddenly, at his very feet, yawns a terrific chasm, through the blackness of whose darkness surge waves of tempestuous fire; and as he