

and the fire continue. What necessity, then, of the fire being everlasting? There is nothing more alarming in being burned up in a fire that will burn for ever, than in one that only burns long enough to consume the sinner. The term is evidently employed to express the terribleness of the suffering of the ungodly. The doctrine of degrees of punishment is taught in the New Testament, which is entirely inconsistent with annihilation. "It shall be *more tolerable* for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city." "And that servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." "Therefore ye shall receive the greater condemnation." Here, degrees of severity, proportioned to the guilt, are taught. Of extinction there can be no degrees—no more nor less. Of the punishment that exists in conscious suffering there can be degrees. The duration of the suffering, and the terrible nature of the punishment, is so plainly taught in the word of God, that we tremble to think of men trifling with these momentous truths. The terms, "everlasting fire," "everlasting punishment," "everlasting destruction," "unquenchable fire," "tormented for ever and ever," "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever," "go into hell," "outer darkness," "salted with fire," "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," "furnace of fire," "lake of fire and brimstone," "bottomless pit," "the wrath of God," "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil," "they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation," "weeping and gnashing of teeth," and hundreds of others, distinctly teach the continued existence and perpetual suffering of the finally impenitent. The suffering of the wicked is described as co-existent and co-eternal with the bliss of the saints, and as going on simultaneously. Both classes at the judgment, will, at the same time, enter upon opposite destinies, one to "inherit the kingdom," the other "into everlasting fire."