

## THE UNDER-WORLD OF THE DEAD 27

The fire of Hades, as a symbol, is not therefore greater than the terrible reality set forth by it.

What is this reality? Fire in the Bible, as a figure, is essentially a symbol of Divine holiness. As such it expresses God, in His essential and transcendent holiness, in three ways: (1) In purification, 1 Cor. 3: 12-14; Matt. 3: 2, 3; (2) in the manifestation of Himself in that which He approves, Ex. 3: 2; 1 Peter 1: 7; (3) and in judgment upon that which His holiness utterly condemns, Mark 9: 43-48; Rev. 20: 15.

Remembering this, What does the fire of Hades look like? There is nothing in it about purification or the Divine sanction. It is God, the just God, expressing Himself in righteous wrath upon sin, even upon that which His infinite holiness utterly condemns.

In every human breast, pagan, Jew, infidel or Christian, developed to a greater or less degree there is resident this ethical principle of Divine nature, which we call conscience. "The wicked," said Calvin, "have the seeds of hell in their own hearts." Milton makes even Satan say, "Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell." Byron declares, "There is no power in holy