

But White and Constable support their views of the threatening by an assumption, which they probably mistake for reasoning, viz : that Adam must have understood the threatening to mean the extinction of his being for ever, or death in its primary meaning, as he had learned it from the animal system around him, otherwise it would have been unjust in God to inflict the penalty. This is begging the question, and something worse. What requires to be proved is, that death in the primary and ordinary sense of the word is the cessation of existence. This we have seen could not have been learned from observation. And if a revelation was necessary to make Adam know that the penalty threatened is "the entire deprivation of being," what but a tacit assumption of what requires to be proved, prevents these writers from perceiving that the same method of instruction was equally suited to inform him that death is to be understood in the pregnant sense, required in many parts of Scripture, and even by the narrative in Genesis.

But we deny absolutely that a penalty must be known, or understood, before it can be justly inflicted. The justice of the punishment depends on the law being known, and on the penalty being proportioned to the offence, but not on the penalty being known. Constable, replying to Professor Bartlett on this point, says : "If this Professor of Theology had consulted a Professor of Jurisprudence, he would have been informed, that when a man is incapable of knowing the nature of a penalty, he cannot be subjected to it." —Nat. and Dur. of Future Punishment, page 30. This is an artful representation, by which one thing is adroitly substituted for another, in a way not very worthy of an honest man. Human law views a man, who from mental imbecility or disease, is incapable of understanding the law or its penalty, as not responsible for his actions. But this has nothing to do with the case on hand, where the law was known and understood, and only the penalty is supposed to have been not fully comprehended.