

Now, if it be so, that the consent of the will is essential to constitute an act virtuous or vicious, then it follows as a necessary consequence that every one assumes the responsibility of the act or acts to which he gives his consent. Whether they be his own personal deeds or those of others—whether they be the deeds of persons still living or those long since dead—whether they be the deeds of men individually and personally, or in their official capacity—whatsoever they be, or by whomsoever committed, he is responsible for them. By his consent he endorses them and so makes them his own deeds, and is answerable for the consequences. The great Teacher mentions a case strikingly illustrative of this principle. In the eleventh chapter of Luke's Gospel He thus addresses the Jews: "Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers; * * * that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily, I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation." The Jews in the Saviour's time had not actually shed the blood of the prophets; and yet on them lay the guilt of all the prophets' blood that had been shed from the beginning of the world. On what principle? The Saviour answers the question. "Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers." Here there was a case of persons involved in the guilt of sins committed thousands of years before they had an existence in the world.

In God's dealings with the Jewish people there is furnished another illustration of the same principle. That once highly favoured people, whom God took into covenant with Himself, and whom He chose to be the recipients of peculiar privileges, are now a people "scattered and peeled," rejected of God, and trampled upon by man. What is the cause? Nearly nineteen centuries ago, on Calvary, there was a bloody tragedy enacted. The Son of God in human nature was there, by wicked hands, crucified and slain. The actual perpetrators of that tragedy have long since gone to their account, but yet the guilt of the deed still remains. The proud defiance of the fathers, eighteen hundred years ago, is still taking effect: "His blood be on us and on our children." In the present anti-Jewish agitation in various countries, the descendants of Abraham are reaping the fruits of their fathers' deeds. And why is it that the guilt of Calvary still rests upon the Jewish people? The reason is just the same as that assigned by the Saviour in the case previously mentioned—"Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers." The present generation of the seed of Abraham give hearty consent to their fathers' deed in crucifying "the Lord of glory." They, as a people, reject the same Saviour whom their fathers rejected. They demonstrate that, if it were possible to do so, they would re-enact the tragic scene of the cross. Thus giving their consent to their fathers' deed, they are partakers of their fathers' sins. The curse of Calvary still rests upon them, and not until they, as a people, shall enter their protest against their fathers' deed, and "look unto Him whom they have pierced," will the curse be removed, and they will be made glad according to the days wherein they have been afflicted, and the years wherein they have seen evil."