

portions of the Word of God, but the clear and decisive statements by which the controversy is to be settled, must necessarily be sought for in the book of the new dispensation. By adopting this course, we shall be spared the trouble of correcting the numerous misapprehensions that prevail respecting the meaning of certain passages in the Psalms and the Prophets, which are commonly adduced by the advocates of error. Let us place ourselves at the feet of the Lord Jesus and listen to his words, and to the words of His servants who wrote under the inspiration of the promised Spirit.

Suppose, now, that some individual, unacquainted with the disputes that have arisen among christians, were to take up the New Testament with a view to ascertain the purposes of God with regard to the final destiny of mankind. To what conclusion would he come? Would he not infer, naturally and necessarily, that there is no hope for those who die in a state of ungodliness? However unwilling he might be to entertain the thought, and however repugnant it might be to his benevolent feelings, would he not be compelled to confess that it is the obvious teaching of our Lord and His apostles? Would such a reader dream of anything else? Could he imagine that the awful words of the holy volume can bear any interpretation, differing materially from that which is found to prevail among the vast majority of christians? Would it occur to him even to guess that "everlasting punishment" means either the infliction of pain for a short period, or the annihilation of the criminal, whereby he would escape punishment altogether? Surely, thoughts of this kind would be far from him. He would see no escape for an impenitent transgressor. He might wish it were not so, but stern impartiality would forbid any different conclusion. In fact, nobody thinks at first, of explaining the New Testament otherwise than in agreement with the generally received doctrine.

And here let me offer a remark to which, in my opinion, considerable importance is to be attached. It is to be carefully noted that God's book is a plain book. It is indeed "high as