

That St. Paul came to this conclusion is an arbitrary inference. We are at liberty to believe that St. Paul intended to point out the compleat finish of the sinner's day of probation, which is his life, by the Roman soldier's single day, intimating thereby that as the soldier received his proper reward at the end of his day, which was the time limited for the settlement of his account, so the sinner would find his account completed at the end of the day of his probation. And to come to this conclusion would be in accordance with the scripture, and therefore a safe conclusion. For whatever varieties may shade the character, whether it be of sin, or of Christian attainments, or of backsliding, we are not informed of any final account being made up until the close of life, or the end of the day of our probation. St. Paul suffered nothing, that we know of, in the day of his transgression. While he was mad with persecution, he suffered nothing, that we know of, either of body or mind. It was after his conversion; after he became an apostle; after he became a pillar of the Church of God that he said—"I die daily;" and to read an account of his sufferings, we might suppose him to be the most guilty wretch on earth, that is, if we suppose he was suffering the "MERIT OF HIS CRIMES." We may, therefore, be sure that St. Paul would be the last person in the world to inculcate such a doctrine. Let us not then pervert his words by putting such an inference on them, but rather put it aside as a doctrine that has neither foundation nor superstructure, nor any existence but in the fanciful inventions of men.

Whatever St. Paul might mean to point to in comparing the day of probation to the actual day of a soldier's service, it could not be the final punishment of the wicked; because all his writings, as well as the other scriptures, are based upon anticipations of the future.

By way of illustration, we may enquire how the duelist, who murders his fellow, and is murdered by him at the same instant, suffers the punishment which his **CRIMES MERIT** in the day of his transgression. Is it by the loss of life? He cannot be conscious of it, for the instant the ball touches his heart, life is extinct; and the body is no more conscious of the life than the earth on which it has fallen. Is it the loss of property? All the world's property, condensed in a single gem, and placed before his glazed eye, would not have the effect of restoring its brilliancy. Is it the loss of friends? Perhaps there may be some bitterly lamenting beside the corpse, but it hears them not. Is it the loss of happiness? Alas, it could not be a happy state of mind that induced him to become at once a murderer and a suicide!

What then may be the punishment he suffers in the day of his transgression that is the merit of his crimes? Is it the horrors of a guilty conscience which he must feel on presenting himself before his Creator, with his head doubly clotted with blood. Ah! there may