

When the sisters of Lazarus asked Him to cure their sick brother, He allowed him to die that His benefit might be more signal, in raising their dead than in healing their sick. (Jo. xi. 14.) And so in this more grievous distress of all mankind, He willed not that men should be able to say, "our mighty hand, and not the Lord, hath done all these things" (Deut. xxxii. 27); and therefore having given them ample space to exhaust all their resources, He relieves us at once, in a manner as simple as it is wonderful, as mighty as it is divested of splendor. God had been offended and must be appeased; man had fallen and must be raised: such were the two objects to be attained. The required propitiation was for man; who but man could be called upon to perform it? The infinite distance between him and the offended Being, and the added infirmity and worthlessness of his fallen nature, disqualified him completely for attempting it: who but God could supply his deficiency? By this marvellous contrivance of Divine wisdom—by the union of God and man in one person—by the coalition of the guilty nature with the infinitely powerful, all was reconciled; the debtor in person discharged his obligations with the riches communicated by the creditor himself. No sacrifice was made of one just claim to another—no compromise required between the harmonious attributes of God; justice received its due, told in sordid value to its utmost tittle; mercy stretched, unrestricted and unembarrassed, its all-embracing arms; power exerted its might with unlimited magnificence; and graciousness and love triumphed in a new display of unexampled condescension.