

LECTURE XLIV.

SYLLABUS.

1. What results flow from Christ's sacrifice, as to God's glory, and other Worlds?

Turretin, Loc. xiv, Qu. 3, and 4. Symington on the Atonement, § 4. Hill, bk. iv, ch. 6. Hodge on Atonement, pt. ii.

2. Is Christ's Satisfaction for Believers so complete as to leave no room for Penance and Purgatory? State the Romish doctrines, with their Arguments and Replies. Turretin, Loc. xiv, Qu. 12. Calvin, Inst. bk. iii, ch. 5. Council of Trent, Session xxv. Bellarmine, Controversia, Vol. ii, p. 285. &c. Peter Dens, Moral Theo., Berg's Abridg., p. 502. Dick, Lect. 81. "Essays on Romanism," Presbyn. Bd., Phila. 19. Mosheim, Com. de Reb. Chr. ante Constantinum, Vol. ii, p. 38. Neander, Cb. Hist. Vol. i, p. 217, &c., ii, p. 675, Torrey.

BEFORE I proceed to that which is to be the chief topic of this lecture, the exclusion of the whole doctrine of penance and purgatory by the completeness of Christ's satisfaction, let us advert for a moment to the point raised at the close of the last lecture. This was concerning the effects of the atonement on the glory of God, and creatures other than the elect.

The Scriptures tell us that Christ "took not on Him the nature of angels." This, with kindred declarations, assures us that He is not the Mediator of angels; as they need no express mediation. Yet many passages show that they have a certain interest in the work of Christ. Examine 1 Pet. i: 12; Eph. i: 10; Col. i: 20; Eph. iii: 10; Phil. ii: 10; Heb. i: 6. Now, we should greatly err, if, for instance, we understood such a passage as Col. i: 20, as teaching that the Messiah has "reconciled" any angels to God, by suffering penal satisfaction and making intercession for them. For the elect angels never had any sins to suffer for; and we are assured that Satan and his angels will never be reconciled to God. What, then, is the concern of the heavenly orders, with Christ's mediatorial work?

First, the Scriptures abundantly teach us that this work enhances the declarative glory of God. The Mediator is proposed to us and to all creatures likewise, as "the image of the invisible God," "the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person." But Christ's mission and character are those of ineffable benevolence, pity, love, and tenderness; as well as of purity, devotion, magnanimity, and righteousness. Hence, all creatures receive, in His incarnation and work, a revelation of God's character peculiarly dear to them; to the holy, as truly as the unholy. The holy angels now know, love, trust, and serve their Jehovah, as they would not have done, had they

1. God's Condescension Seen and Felt by Angels.

not learned better these lovely perfections, in the person and work of Christ. God, in taking on Him the nature of one creature, man, has come nearer to all creatures, and opened up new channels of communion with them. All the creatures had important things in common, a dependent nature, intellect, conscience and will, responsibility, and an immortal destiny to win or lose. God, in uniting Himself to one nature, has, in a certain sense, united Himself to the whole class; the condescension does not avail man alone, but brings God nearer to all orders. Thus, humanity appears to be a kind of *nexus*, or point of contact between God and all the holy creatures. And thus, it appears that the extent and grandeur of the beneficent results of the incarnation are not to be measured by the comparative smallness of the earth and man amidst the other parts of creation. It appears how it may be most worthy of God, to have selected the most insignificant of His rational creatures, as well as the ones who were guilty, for this hypostatic union with Himself; because thereby the designed condescension to, and unification of all creatures, in heavenly communion and love, would be more complete and glorious. The lowest nature best answered the purposes. When Mrs. Elizabeth Fry was moved by God's grace to manifest the beauty of Christian philanthropy, she went to the female felons in Newgate. By going to the very bottom of the scale of moral degradation she displayed a love marked by perfect and entire beauty and condescension. Her love was shown to be the highest, because its objects were the lowest. This view of our Redeemer's choice of objects also gives the best answer to the cavil discussed in Dr. Chalmers' "Astronomical Discourses." It had been objected, that the Christian scheme could only seem probable in connection with the old Ptolemaic astronomy, which made the earth the centre of the whole heavens. For, when once it was found that this earth was a very small planet in our system, it would appear very absurd, that the Lord of all this host of worlds should die for a little speck among them. The point of Dr. Chalmers' reply was to show, that to God's immensity, no world is really great, and all are infinitesimally small. The more complete answer is that which I have suggested above.

It is also the doctrine of Christ's sacrifice, coupled with His proper divinity, which enables us to complete our "theodicy" of the permission of evil. In the end of Lect. v: the dimensions of this fearful question: Why a holy, sovereign, omnipotent and benevolent God should permit the natural and moral evil, repugnant to His pure and good nature, to enter His dominions, were intimated, and also the insufficiency of the Pelagian, and the optimistic replies. It is the sacrifice of Christ which gives the humble believer, not a solution, but a satisfying reply. There must have been a reason, and a good one, and it must have been one implying no stint or defect of God's holi-

ness or benevolence. For had there been in God the least defect of either, he certainly would never have found it in His heart to send His infinite Son, more great and important than all worlds, to redeem any one. Note, that the Unitarian, who makes Christ a creature, cannot use this theodicy! The same argument shows, that the secret reason for Esau's preterition must have been both right and benevolent: because Christ's sacrifice for sinful Jacob alone demonstrates a nature of infinite goodness.

But God not only enhances the manifestation of His attribute of benevolence, by the incarnation of the Son. All His other moral perfections and His wisdom are equally exalted. His justice, impartiality, holiness, and determination to punish guilt, appear far more in Christ's penal sufferings, than in the damnation of Satan and of wicked men. For they being His mere creatures, easily replaced by His creative power, insignificant to His well being, and personally injurious to His rights and character, it was easy and natural to punish them as they deserve. Cavilling spirits might say, with a show of plausibility, that resentment alone, rather than pure justice and holiness, may have prompted Him to their doom. But when the Father proceeds, with equal inflexibility, to exact the penalty of His own Son, a being infinitely glorious, united by identity of nature and eternal love to the Judge, characterized personally by infinite moral loveliness, only the more lovely by this act of splendid devotion, and only concerned by voluntary substitution with the guilt of sinners; there is an exhibition of unquestionable and pure justice, impossible to be carried further. So the faithfulness of God to His covenants is displayed in the most wondrous and exalted degree. When God's truth finds such a manifestation in His threats, it appears as the equally infallible ground of our trust in His promises. Now, as these qualities are the basis of the hope of the ransomed sinners, so they are the source of the trust and confidence of all the heavenly orders. Their bliss is not purchased by the Cross; but it reposes on the divine perfections which are displayed on the Cross.

The general idea of a Purgatory, that is, of temporary penal and purging pains beyond the grave, to be followed by eternal blessedness, is the common characteristic of all false religions. It seems to be adopted in some form, by all minds not corrected by revelation; by Pythagoreans, Platonists, the Jewish Mishnical doctors, (ii Mac. ii: 12; Josephus and Philo), by the Latins from the Greeks, (Virgil, *Æneid* 6th. *Ergo exercentur penis veterumque malorum supplicia expendunt*) by the Mohammedans, the Brahmins, &c. There are two very strong and natural sources for this tendency: first the prompting of our

God Glorified in all His Attributes.

2. Purgatorial Ideas Common to all False Religions.

affections to follow our dead friends with labours for their benefit and hope; and second, the obstinate reluctance of a heart at once guilty and in love with sin, to be shut up between the sharp alternatives of present repentance, or final damnation. The idea of a purgatory offers a third alternative by which the deceitful heart may for a time solace itself in sin.

The idea came early into the Christian Church, through two channels; a Jewish, through their perversion of the doctrine of Hades, and a Platonic, through Origen's restorationism. How Introduced Into the Early Church. The extension of a final restoration to all the wicked, and even to Satan, was, however, regarded by the bulk of the Church as an extravagance of Origen. Thus, we are told, prayers for the dead appear in the earliest liturgies, as Basil's, and in the current of the Fathers, from the "Apostolic constitutions," so called, and the Pseudo Dyonisius, downward. When the priestly conception of the Christian ministry was intruded (which may be traced as early as A. D. 200), the sacrament of the mass began to be regarded as a sacrifice, which is evinced by their giving it to infants; and soon the idea was borrowed, that it availed for the dead. Thus, says Calvin, in his Institutes, the custom of praying for the dead had prevailed almost universally in the Latin Church for 1300 years before his time. Augustine, even, tolerated it. Aerius, the so-called heretic, seems to have been the only noted dissentient in the early ages. But prayers for the dead imply that their state is not yet fixed, nor yet perfectly blessed, and that it may be amended. The fully developed doctrine was embodied in the Romish creed, by the Councils of Florence and Lyons 2nd.

The student may find a very express and full statement of the Roman doctrine, in the 25th Session of the Council of Trent. To understand it, and the distinction of the *Reatus pænæ*, and *Reatus Culpæ*, on which it is founded, its development out of the simple usages of the primitive Church about penitents must be explained. When a Church-member had scandalized the Church, especially if it was by idolatry, he was required, after his repentance, to undergo a strict penance. This was considered as satisfaction made to the wounded credit of the Brotherhood. Out of this simple idea grew the distinction between penitential, and theological, temporal, and spiritual guilt. The latter, they suppose, is expiated by Christ's divine blood. For the former, the believer must make satisfaction himself, partly in the sacrament of penance and self-mortifications, the remainder in purgatory. The two classes of punishment are, therefore, complementary to each other: the more of one is paid, the less of the other remains to be demanded. Venial sins incur only the *reatum pænæ*; mortal sins carry both forms of guilt. Baptism, the Church holds, removes all

Doctrine Stated, Purgatory the Complement of Penance.

previous guilt—original and actual; so that were the infant to die immediately after its baptism, it would incur neither hell nor purgatory. All other believers, including even the highest clergy, even Popes, except the Christian martyrs, must go to purgatory, for a time longer or shorter, to pay the *reatum pænæ* of their sins after baptism. The baptism of fire, which the martyr receives is, in his case, a sufficient purgation, and substitutes the purgatorial sufferings.

The arguments of Rome on this subject may be found so fully and learnedly stated by Cardinal Bellarmine, (*Controversia* vol. ii, bk. i, *de Purgatorio* p. 285, &c.,) that nothing can be added after him. He ranks his arguments under three heads—
 from Scriptures, from the Fathers, from Reason.

From the Apocrypha is quoted 2 Mac. 12th, which states that Judas Mac. sent to Jerusalem 12,000 drachmae, to be expended in sacrifices for the dead, and adds the sentiment: "Therefore it is holy and wholesome to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins." The answer is: the book is not canonical; nor is the rendering clear. The same answer may be made to the citation from Tobit iv, which recommends the giving of a sepulchral feast to the pious poor, in order that they may pray for the souls of the departed. From the Scriptures, Malachi iii: 2, 3, is also quoted, and applied to Christ's second coming instead of His first. At the final day, they say, a purgatorial influence will be very briefly exerted by the final conflagration, on the souls of those then living. There, they claim, the principle of a purgatory is granted. The answer is, that the New Testament proves that this and similar passages relate to Christ's first coming. (John i: 23; Luke i: 17; iii: 4, or iii: 16). And the trying fire is the searching and judgment of God's convincing Spirit, then peculiarly poured out. To see how hardly bested they are for Scriptural proof, you may note how they quote 1 Sam. xxxi: 13; 2 Sam. i: 12; iii: 35; Gen. i: 25; Ps. lxvi: 12; Isa. iv: 4; ix: 18; Micah. vii: 8; Zech. ix: 11. It is only by some preposterous application of the Fathers, or mistranslation of the Vulgate, that these passages seem to have any reference to purgatory.

From the New Testament are quoted the following: Matt. xii: 31, 32, where, it is claimed, there is a plain implication that some sins are forgiven in the other world. But first, the assertion of a proposition does not prove its converse. Second, if the passage implies that any sins are pardonable after death, it implies that they are such as blasphemy against the Father and the Son. But Rome herself makes these mortal sins. Third, our Saviour's words are simply an amplification of the idea that such sin "hath never forgiveness;" as in fact He expresses it in

Bellarmino's Arguments.

From Apocrypha and Old Testament.

Texts From the Gospels.

Mark iii : 12, the parallel passage. Last, the phrase *αιών μζλλων*, never means anything else than either the Christian dispensation as contrasted with the Mosaic or else the time after the judgment.

Bellarmino also cites I Cor. iii : 10-15, saying, "the foundation is Christ, the founders are the apostles, the good builders are Catholic clergy, their successors; the 'gold, silver, and precious stones, are true Catholic doctrine; the 'wood, hay, and stubble,' are erroneous, but not damnably heretical doctrines: and the inference is, that these heedless Catholic teachers shall be punished in purgatory for their careless teaching." But if clergymen need a purgatory, the principle is established. Others reach the same conclusion more directly. Now, the true exposition of this passage, very strangely overlooked by the most of the Protestants, makes the 'gold, silver, and precious stones,' true converts or genuine Christians united to the Church, which Christ has founded; while the 'wood, hay, and stubble,' are spurious professors. The proof is in the coherency of this sense with the whole passage; in the context, v. 16, and in Is. xxviii : 16; I Pet. ii : 4-6. Next, "the day" which shall try every man's work, what sort it is, is evidently the judgment day. Compare I Cor. iv : 3, where man's judgment is, literally, "man's day." But the judgment day is subsequent to all purgatory, according to Rome herself. The fire which is to try each man's work is figurative, the divine judgment and Spirit. Compare Heb. xii : 29. And to suppose that the fire in v. 15 is purgatorial fire implies a change of sense; for the trial is not by literal fire, as the Romanists make purgatory to be, but figuratively; *οδτωζ ωζ*.

From Matt. v : 25, 26, it is inferred that the debtor may pay divine justice the last farthing, and "come out." This is not implied: if the debt is 10,000 talents, and he has nothing to pay, he will never come out. See Matt. xviii : 24, 25. Matt. v : 22, is also quoted, as implying different degrees of punishment; but if all are sent together to an eternal hell, no difference can be made. We reply, this does not follow, for all infinities are not equal. Their citations of I Cor. xv : 29, and Phil. ii : 10, need scarcely be argued.

The opinions of the Fathers we easily set aside by denying the Church's infallibility.

Bellarmino's arguments from reason are four. First: Some sins are venial, and since they do not deserve infinite punishment, a just God must punish them temporally. The answer is, that the Bible knows no venial sins. Some are, undoubtedly, less guilty than others. But God will know how to apportion their just penalties, without a purgatory.

Argument from Venial Sins.

Second: This acute polemic argues, that the satisfaction of Christ does not take off believers all forms of the guilt and consequences of sin: for God chastises all of them by bodily death, and by more or less of affliction. Nor is it worth while for the Protestants to endeavor to evade this, by saying that these chastisements are merely disciplinary. For they are of the nature of other penal evils; they are a part of the curse; they are notoriously the consequences of sins; the paternal love of God would never lead Him to use such means for promoting the glorification of sinless creatures. And that they are actually penal is proved by two cases—that of David, 2 Sam. xii : 14, where God thus explains David's bereavement of his child by Bathsheba; and that of the baptized, elect infant, suffering and dying in "infancy." For there is an heir of redemption; yet it suffers the curse; and the Protestant cannot explain it as merely disciplinary, because the infantile sufferer cannot understand, and, therefore, cannot profit by its own pangs. And indeed, suggests Bellarmine, here is seen the folly of Protestants, in dragging those texts into this question, which they say, teach that Christ's atonement is an absolute satisfaction for all guilt, such as Rom. x : 4 : viii : 1; Ps. ciii : 12-14; Heb. vii : 25; x : 14. For if these texts be taken in the Protestant sense, then they are incompatible with the chastisements and deaths of justified persons, which are such stubborn facts. How does the Protestant reconcile them? Why, he has to resort to that definition of vicarious satisfaction, which all sound Christians advance; (as, for instance, to solve Socinian objections,) that satisfaction is not a legal tender, but an optional, moral equivalent for the sinner's own punishment. Hence, as the Protestant himself teaches, the offering of even an adequate equivalent by Christ does not compel the Father to release the debtor, the condemned sinner, absolutely; as in pecuniary debts, the offer of the legal tender compels the creditor to accept it and release his debtor, or else lose his whole claim forever. The Father's sovereign option is still necessary to make the transaction valid; He might withhold it if He chose. Hence, Protestants themselves infer the extent to which, and the terms on which, the vicarious satisfaction shall avail for the sinner, depend on the actual option which God the Father sees fit to exercise. Therefore, it is all folly for Protestants to argue, that because Christ gives us a perfect vicarious righteousness, therefore, God cannot exact from the believing sinner any penal debt whatever; it is not theoretically true; it is not true in fact. How much of the penal debt God remits, and how much He still requires of the believing sinner, must be a question of revealed testimony purely. And farther: Suppose a true believer, dying before he has gotten his fair share of penance and chastisements. He cannot go to hell; he

Argument from
Nature of Christ's
Satisfaction, and Chris-
tians' Afflictions.

is justified. Must there not be a purgatory, where his unpaid debt of penitential guilt can be paid? Else, when his case is compared with that of the aged and ripened saint, who, with fewer venial sins, has paid a larger amount of penances and afflictions, there is flagrant partiality.

In refuting this adroit argument, I would expressly admit that view of vicarious satisfaction advanced, as the true one. I would expressly accept the appeal to the revealed testimony. And now, setting aside the apocrypha, and the Fathers, as of no authority, I plant myself on this fact: that the Scriptures are absolutely silent, as to any penitential guilt remaining after the *reatus culpæ* is removed, and as to any purgatorial punishment. Search and see. This is the view which decided Luther, against all the prejudices of his education. Next, the chastisements of the justified are represented by God as only disciplinary, and not punitive. Heb. xii : 6-10. "Whom the Lord loveth" * * * "But He for our profit." Nor can the case of David, or of the dying elect infant, rebut this blessed truth. All that is said by Nathan is, that one reason of God in sending the chastisement of the infant's death was, that its manner of birth had given the wicked great occasion to blaspheme. Well, this end of the bereavement is after all, disciplinary, and not vindicatory! The case of the dying infant, plausible at the first blush, is a complete sophism. Its whole plausibility is in the false dogma of baptismal regeneration. To make Bellarmine's argument hold, he must be able to say that this suffering infant is not only elect, but already justified. This, he supposes, is effected in baptismal regeneration. Now, we know that this is a figment. It is not a baptism previous, which redeems this infant, but the blood and Spirit of Christ applied only when he dies. So that during the time of his infantile sufferings, he is yet unjustified, is still under wrath, and is suffering for his birth-guilt.

Again, I say: let the statement of vicarious satisfaction as not a legal tender, be accepted. Let us to the law and the testimony, to learn whether perfect Satisfaction of Believers at Death. God, in His sovereign acceptance of Christ's equivalent righteousness, reserved any form of guilt to be exacted of the justified. Let it be a question of fact. Now, I argue, that no cleansing sufferings can be exacted of believers after death, because God says that they are then pure, and have no taint of sin to purge away. See Shorter Catechism, que. 37. If God teaches that "the souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness," then, according to the Papist's own showing, there is no room for purgatorial cleansing. This, then, is the cardinal question. 1 John iii : 2. We are like Christ when we see Him as He is. Eph. v : 27. See also 2 Cor. v : 1-8, and Phil. i : 21-23, compared with Rev. xxi : 27, or Heb. xii : 14. See also Rev. xiv : 13; Is. lvii : 1, 2; 2 Kings

xxii : 20. And now, I return, and from this point of view claim all those precious texts which declare the completeness of Christ's justifying righteousness, as applicable. When God, after teaching us this fact of perfect sanctification of the believer at death, adds that there is no condemnation to the man in Christ, (Rom. viii : 1), that His blood cleanseth from all sin, (1 John i : 7), that "by one offering He hath perfected (them) forever," (Heb. x : 14), that "He will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea, (Micah vii : 19), the testimony is applicable, and conclusive.

Before proceeding, however, with this affirmative argument, let us notice Bellarmine's 3d and 4th points. One is to argue the principle of a purgatory, as we do the existence of God, from the *consensus populorum*. The answer is, that the universal testimony for the existence of a God is given against the leanings of a guilty conscience and self-interest ; and is, therefore, valuable, because disinterested. But the popularity of a purgatory among sinners is no argument in its favour, because the invention is prompted by the leanings of a guilty heart. The Romanist's fourth argument is, that there certainly is a purgatory, because several Popish Ghosts have come thence, and stated the fact ! This, of course, is unanswerable !

In pursuance of the argument, I cite the case of the penitent thief, (Luke xxiii : 43), so well argued by Turretin. I only add, that surely, if there ever was a justified believer who needed purgatory, this man, just plucked, at his dying hour, out of the foulest sins, was the one. The Romish evasion is to say, Martyrs are exempt from purgatory. Now, first, the thief was no martyr ; he did not die for the truth ; but died for a robbery. Second, the exemption of martyrs is unreasonable and unscriptural. Their dying pangs are often fewer and shorter than of many saints who have died in their beds ; and their devotion less meritorious. Here, also, we may quote the act of Stephen, who, speaking by immediate revelation, commended his soul to Christ in glory. So St. Paul, who, according to the Romish doctrine, had every reason at the time of his speaking to suppose himself a candidate for purgatory, evidently believed the opposite ; for he held that being absent from the body was to be present with the Lord.

Next: the whole idea of "satisfaction" to divine justice by temporary sufferings is unscriptural. So, the idea that penal sufferings have in themselves any sanctifying virtue, is equally unreasonable.

Once more: the soul in purgatory being, according to the Popish theory, still imperfect, would be still sinning ; and thus, new guilt would be accruing, while it was paying for the old. It could

Romish Argument
from Popular Consent,
&c.

Refutation from
Bible Instances.

The Soul Would
Contract Debt in Pur-
gatory.

never get out; purgatory would be merged into an endless hell. To avoid this conclusion, which Bellarmine expressly admits would otherwise follow, the Papists lay it down as a principle, that souls after death can neither merit reward nor penalty. The only show of proof for this is the perversion of such passages of Scriptures as say that, at death, man's probationary state ends; as, e. g., Eccles. ix : 10; Jno. ix : 4, &c. But the statement that probation ends at death, is better satisfied by our theory, that there is no purgatory. Hence, this reasoning is a vicious circle. The idea that souls after death cease to merit, is, moreover, absurd and unscriptural. Angels can, and did, and do merit while disembodied spirits. Responsibility is directly founded on the natural relation of Creator and rational creature; it cannot end, save by the change of the creature's nature, or of God's. Hence, the passage of the creature under a penal, or rewarding dispensation, has no effect to suspend his responsibility. It is not true, that obligation rests on covenant alone, as Papists and Arminians say; so that when covenant is broken by sin, obligation is suspended. It rests on God's intrinsic rights and the creature's nature. The opposite view leads to the absurdity of letting the sinner gain by his sin.

The cunning of Rome is illustrated by this dogma. She may well say, "By this craft we have our wealth." It prolongs the hold of priestcraft over the guilty fears and hopes of men, which otherwise must have terminated at death, indefinitely. Men would not pay money to evade a misery which was admitted to be inevitable; the expenditure would appear useless. The cruelty of priestcraft, in thus making traffic of the remorse of immortal souls, and the dearest affections of the bereaved for their departed friends, is as impious as unfeeling.

On the other hand, how blessed is the creed of the Bible touching the believer's death? With the end of that struggle, all our trials end, and our everlasting rest begins. With the grave, and all its horrid adjuncts, the Christian really has no concern; for when the senseless body is consigned to its darkness, the soul, the true *Ego*, the only being which fears, and hopes, and rejoices and suffers, has already soared away to the bosom of its Redeemer, and the general assembly of the glorified.