

us down to the Feast of Tabernacles in chap. vii. ; but above all from this silence being half an hour, while the kings reign one hour with the beast (xvii. 12), and in one hour Babylon is judged (xviii. 10—17). But, taking the interval of ten days, between the Feast of Trumpets and Day of Atonement, as the one hour in which Babylon is destroyed ; five days, or half that period, half an hour, would bring us to the Feast of Tabernacles, the time at which we suppose the last seal will be opened and the mystery of God finished. Then, after the silence of half an hour in the Hallelujahs of heaven, the throne itself shall be transferred to this earth, the Son of God having already potentially redeemed it, by taking of its substance and in it bruising the serpent's head ; Christ shall mount his own throne ; his people shall reign with him kings and priests for ever ; and “ the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”



THOUGHTS, MORAL AND DIVINE, TOUCHING GOD'S METHOD
AND ORDER OF REVEALING HIMSELF.

(By the Rev. EDWARD IRVING.)

I. *Of God, The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

CONCERNING God, it is to be believed that He loveth all and hateth none of the creatures which he hath made ; being the Good One, who, out of very goodness, and to communicate of his goodness to the creatures, did create all things out of nothing by his Son, and for his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, through the Holy Ghost. Also, that He is the most Holy One, who cannot look upon iniquity but with detestation and abhorrence ; and that all which is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, are not of the Father, but of the world. Sin is the uncaused act of the creature's will, which, like all his other works, God created good, and endowed with the noblest faculty of freedom, which it abused by taking part against its Maker. In all this, whether it be the sin of angels or of men, God had no hand whatever, direct or indirect, but did all which, consistently with the freedom of the will, he could do to prevent it ; advertising man of the sure and certain penalty of death which would follow if he should transgress the commandment delivered unto him. When man had sinned, I believe that God's holiness, which continueth unchanged and unchangeable, shewed itself forth in the way of judgment, in-

flicting upon man death—that is, the loss of liberty in his will, of cleanness in his conscience, of incorruption in his body, and of obedience in all his members, drawing on and ending in the dissolution of his being by death; which would have been eternal, but for the operation of God's love; which also continueth, like every Divine attribute, unchanged and unchangeable, and shewed itself forth in the forms of mercy and grace. His holiness demanded satisfaction; and the satisfaction is nothing less than the penalty and wages of sin, which is death, in the large and full sense declared above: his love presented to the first, as to the last, and to all men, the fountain of a new life in Christ Jesus, and entreated us, without money and without price, to come and obtain, from the Lamb slain, liberty to the will, cleanness to the conscience, resurrection to the body, and a holy life to the whole man here, and hereafter for ever. And, being thus regenerated with new life through faith in Christ, he did require of us to use this regenerate life in crucifying the natural life; and so to vindicate his holiness, and execute the penalty of sin upon ourselves all our life long; the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus fighting against and making us free from the law of sin and death. Thus I believe the love of God did (upon the entering in of sin), fall asunder into two parts or poles; the one, holiness, visiting moral and natural and eternal death,—the other, grace in Christ, presenting regeneration, resurrection, and eternal life unto all men.

Concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, it is to be believed that he is the eternal Son of the Father; very God of very God; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; whom the Father loved as Himself, being indeed of his own substance, equal in power and glory; yet, for the much love with which together they loved the children of men, the Father did consent to yield him up from his own bosom to die the most cursed and cruel death of the cross; and He, the Son, did forego the dearest love of his Father, and was willing, for the great love with which he loved us, while we were yet sinners, to come into the world, and die, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God. This purpose of redemption was laid in Christ before the world began—from the foundation of the world he was the Lamb slain, and before the foundation of the world eternal life was promised to us in him;—wherefore he is called the First-born of every creature, the Beginning of the creation of God: not that he became a creature until he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, but that he was the Christ before the foundation of the world, and as the Christ did create all things for himself, in whom all things subsist. The Father was moved to give up his Son by nothing but his love: the Son was moved to give himself by nothing but his love. The Father had no desire that his Son should suffer and die; still less had he any gratification in seeing

him suffer and die. His anger was against man, and not against his Son; his claim was upon man, and not upon his Son; because the sin was man's, and not his Son's. His Son was sinned against; had no hand in the sin whatever; and the guilt can attach to him in no way whatever, being done against Him as much as against the Father: and whatever part he takes in the sinner's lot, and whatever he doth for the sinner's redemption, is of free will and sovereign grace, without obligation on his part, without desert on man's.

Concerning the Holy Ghost also, I believe that He is of the same substance with the Father and the Son, from whom he proceedeth as a Person from all eternity, forming the link of union between the Father and the Son, being the medium of their blessed communication; for ever pouring the fulness of the Father's love into the Son, so that the Father shall ever behold in him the completeness of his own being; and from the Son bearing back unto the Father his entire love, and willingness in all ways to do the Father's good pleasure. So that the Godhead in Itself not only possesseth all moral and spiritual perfections—such as love, and goodness, and bounty, and truth—but doth enjoy within Itself the exercise of the same anterior to all creation, which is but the utterance and expression of that which is already in God. Creation doth not add any thing to the affections and attributes of God, nor doth it make any change whatever in the relations of the Divine Persons to one another; it doth only bring their relations into outward and open manifestation, and make the creatures partakers, to the extent of their fulness, of that enjoyment which God hath within himself. A God in Unity, without diversity of Persons, were incapable of moral affections—as of love and goodness—for there were nothing to love and bless: such a God must wait for a creation to bring alive and give exercise to such affections: but to make God beholden to any one save Himself, is to subvert God: and therefore a God in Trinity subsisting, the God who is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is really the only God of whom it is possible to conceive, as the Creator of moral beings, and the moral Governor of the world.

II. *Of the Christ of God, and God's Purpose in the Christ.*

The Holy Scriptures teach us, that before the foundation of the world God set up Christ to be his image and his fulness; in whom, by whom, and for whom, all things should be created and consist (1 Pet. i. 20; Col. i. 16—18); and through whom alone God should manifest and communicate himself to the creatures which should be made (John i. 18). It was proper for the Son to be this mediator, intervener, or intercessor between God and creation (1 Tim. ii. 5); it was proper for the Father to purpose that he should be so, and to define the form in which he should

subsist, according to his own good pleasure (Heb. i. 1—4; ii. 6—11), which the Son dutifully and lovingly yieldeth himself to take, and for ever to sustain (Heb. x. 9—12); it was proper to the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and so comprehending the purpose of the one and the submission of the other, to bring the eternal Son of the Father into the form of the Christ of God, and to maintain for ever the intercourse between God and the Christ, between the Father and the Son, now conformed to the Father's purpose (John xiv. 16, xv. 26, xx. 22; Luke i. 35; Matt. iii. 16; John iii. 34; Isai. xi. 2, xlii. 1, lxi. 1). Thus God's purpose, desire, and good-will is realized in the form of the Christ before the world was: creation, redemption, and the eternal state of all things, are but the unfoldings of that which was not only purposed by the Father, but seen in the Son, as realized by the Holy Ghost in the Christ, who is at once the fulness of Godhead and the beginning of the creation of God (Eph. i. *passim*; Col. ii. 9; Rev. iii. 14). In him God saw his own image, and in him creation beholdeth its high original. And as the creatures came forth in their order by his workmanship, to represent, to enact, and to enjoy a part of his fulness (Col. i. 15—20); they were beloved by God, for his sake, with what love he loveth Christ his own Son: they were good and beautiful, because they were as God had foreseen and foreordained them in the Christ (Eph. i. 4, 5, ii. 10); and for them to rise up against Christ, is to rise up against their own life and beauty and stability, which have their being only in him, and to despise the love with which God loveth his own Son (John iii. 16—18, 35, 36). The love with which the elect are loved in Christ—"thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me" (John xvii.)—is not a new thing, but an old thing; is, in truth, no more than the record and the exemplification of that love with which God loved all his creatures, as they were seen in Christ, before the foundation of the world, and in him loved as the offspring of the Father's originating Word, and a part of the fulness contained in his dear Son. Now the end of God in all his working, is to bring this perfect image of himself and fulness of the Godhead into outward existence, that God may manifest toward the creatures, and the creatures towards God, the same affections which subsist between God and Christ (John xx. 17; Rom. viii. 14—17, 21, 29, 39; 2 Cor. v. 18 to end, vi. 18). It is not merely the realizing of a purpose which God hath in view in creation, but the revelation of that love which he hath to Christ (Matt. iii. 17; Luke ix. 35), because, though he was God, he did become the Christ; and likewise the receiving from the creatures, in their several places, the expression of the like dutifulness and submission which his own Son had shewn (Rom. vi. 11, 22). The infinite conde-

scension, dutifulness, and love of the Son, who, being very God of very God, doth receive a life not self-existent, but ever dependent upon the Father, a Christ-life—that is, an anointed life—poured into him from above, with which he delighteth to serve God. This the Son did of his own free will, and God looks for the same in every creature who hath a will; it is the form and end of a will in creation to do, and to be for ever doing, that same thing. The will is created free, as the Son was free; in order that, like the Son, it may out of pure love to God continue the Son's self-denying act of becoming submissive unto the Father for evermore, to the end of receiving from the Father supplies of his own blessed Spirit for evermore. Thus a creature becometh a Christian; it sealeth itself of Christ by doing the Christ-act of self-sacrifice, in order to make manifest and enjoy an all-informing, all-blessing God. For this reason the Son of God is called the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, because he consented, and ever consenteth, to come out of his self-existence as a person in the Godhead, in order to receive a dependent life with which to become the servant of God. He ever slayeth himself, in order to be made alive again. And this great thing he doth in order to teach the law of self-denial and God-pleasing to those creatures who were to be made in the image of God, with a will the cause of itself. And in consequence of this doing of the Father's will, he receiveth that plenitude of all existence and blessedness which is comprehended in the word Christ, the Lordship of heaven and earth, the Headship of the world; is constituted the Wisdom of God, "whom the Lord possessed in the beginning of his way before the works of old;" the Word of God, which was in the beginning with God, and which was God; the Word of Life; at once the Beginner and the beginning of the creation of God, at once the Creator of all things and the first-born of every creature: and all to teach and shew the free-born creatures that all honour and office in creation dependeth upon the voluntary submission of the will to the one absolute will of God. This setting up of the Christ by the persons of the Godhead is preliminary to creation, the first step and the last step of it; for, after all is perfected, all things shall stand together exactly according to that idea or form which before time they had in the Christ.

III. *Of the Creation and Constitution of Man.*

Man was created for two ends: the first, "to be an image and likeness of God;" the second, "to have dominion over the creatures." The former is descriptive of his reasonable soul, which is fashioned on very purpose to be an image of God, who is a Spirit; endowed with his affections of love and goodness, of truth and justice, of wisdom and understanding, &c.: so

that God without any accommodations should be able to speak his mind to man, and man without any conjecture should be able to understand it. In virtue of this conformity of human reason to the infinite Spirit of God, in virtue of man's soul being an image and likeness of God, God was able to converse and did converse with Adam in the garden of Eden, as afterwards he did with Abraham and Moses, and doth with us all in his word. For the word of God is not an accommodation, but a real utterance of God's mind to man's mind, created for the very purpose of understanding and responding to God. Reason is before revelation, a pre-requisite to revelation; and if revelation be God's account of himself, reason must find it to be the true account of herself. This conformity in all respects of human reason to God's infinite Spirit, makes it practicable for Christ, the fulness of Godhead, to be expressed in words which are the forms of reason, and to take a reasonable soul in which to contain the fulness of the Godhead, and by the powers of which to express the mind and will of God for ever to all the intelligent creation. To use the language of the schools, the Word of God is not a system of NOMINALISM—that is, a set of names chosen for the best out of man's vocabulary, so as to give a kind of notion of God—but a system of REALISM, telling out the very thing which God is to the consonant mind of man. Now because there is in God perfect freedom, and no necessity nor causation of any kind, but He is what he is because He ever wills to be so, and is not forestalled by himself or any thing he hath made, but is ever free with the same measure of freedom; therefore it is required that there should be in man, his image, a will which should be uncaused, the cause of itself; not overmastered by God, but left to act in its own liberty. Also, because the will of God, which continueth absolute in the Father, hath consented in the Son, and doth ever consent, to come into the limits of the Christ, who is the fulness of the Father's purpose; so should there be in man, God's image, not only a will uncaused, the fountain of its own procedure, but likewise a continual energy and disposition therein to express itself in conformity with the will and purpose of God, as the same is made known in the Christ, who hath therefore the name The Word of God. Finally, as there is in God the Holy Ghost a continual willingness to serve Christ, in bringing to pass the will of the Father; so ought there to be in man a continual willingness to obey and do the will of God, and to bring it to pass within the full compass of his power.

Besides the uncaused will, therefore, there is in man the bounded reason, in the forms of which the will is ever bringing itself; and this reason in man is the proper representative of the Logos, or Word of God, into which the absolute will of God evermore poureth the fulness of its expression: and, besides the

reason, there is a body which obeyeth the reason, and carrieth into continual effect the reasonable determination of the will: and to his body all the creatures, both living and lifeless, were made subject—the former receiving from his word their names, and the latter waiting for his hand to keep and dress them. Thus constituted in himself, and thus placed in the garden of Eden, he was the very image and likeness of the Christ of God, who, as the Second Person of the Godhead, hath Divine will; as the Word hath the bounds of the comprehensible, and containeth the names and orders of all created things within himself, and bringeth them into being by the word of his power, and by the same word sustaineth them there. This last office of the Christ, to bring forth from the womb of his fulness every creature of God, was represented by the creation of woman from man's substance, and their becoming the parents of infinite creatures, which was not an after-piece, but included in the very fiat of creation, or in the benediction passed upon his creation: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Such is the condition of man, which the unchangeable God hath given him, which Christ hath redeemed and for ever fixed, which the Holy Ghost doth renew "after the image of him that created us," and for which every man is responsible, and according to which every man shall be judged. Revelation doth thus contemplate and address man as the image of God, and reproves him for the want of it: redemption hath removed out of the way that which let and hindered; and the calling of man is now, as it ever hath been, to be God-like, and to have dominion.

IV. Of Man's Transgression, and of Death its Penalty.

Our most bountiful and blessed Creator, having thus constituted us to be the image of himself in the Christ, did, to prove our entire consonance with Himself, commune with us freely and openly, face to face; walking and talking with us, and enjoying our society. And to shew the absolute sovereignty of our will, he made every thing upon the earth subservient to our word and work. And, now that we were like God by the will of our Creator, he required of us to be like God by our own will: the head of creation is required to act in creation as God had acted in order to creation. God, in order to creation, had, in the Second Person, surrendered up His own will, in order "to receive commandment from the Father;" and man, if he would be His image, must ever do the same. Having a free will, he must, out of this, in love and preference and worship of God, bring it into the condition of receiving and observing com-

mandments from the Father. This did the Godhead unto creation ; and this creation must seal to and exemplify. Accordingly it was required of man, the sovereign lord over all things created, to bring that sovereignty into submission, and receive a commandment from God with respect to one thing. Lord of his body, he must forbid it to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil : lord of creation, he must be willing to acknowledge another Lord in respect to that. Having a will, he must do worship with it to the absolute will of God ; and, while so exemplifying and sealing to the one great Godhead-act of self-denial, the mother-law of creation, and creation's preliminary condition, he will be upheld in that estate which God himself pronounced very good ; but, if his will, of its own accord, or yielding to any suggestion whatever, do not use its liberty for declaring a higher will in God, which it loveth to worship and its commands ever to obey, then will he come into the estate of death—"dying, thou still die." This penalty of death, as the event hath proved, standeth not merely in the termination of life by the disunion of the body from the soul and its resolution into original dust, but in despoiling the soul of its love and likeness to God, in the bringing of it under a law, which is called in Scripture "the law of sin and death." And not only so, but the whole world, which was made dependent upon the will of man, cometh under the same law. Death is not an historical event, done and away with, but a new state of being ; which hath, indeed, an historical manifestation in the separation of body and soul, but a continuity also, in the deadness to the word and alienation to the will of God, in which man, as he is naturally, liveth and moveth and hath his being. When God said, "In the day thou eatest thereof, dying, thou still die," he meant that which came to pass upon creation, and hath been seen and felt in creation ever since that day ; namely, the state of moral death in which we are, drawing on to and concluding in, the state of moral death which we come to in the grave, together with that state in which the body and the soul are until the resurrection ; but beyond the resurrection I do not believe that the penalty pronounced against Adam extendeth. The resurrection, and its future consequences holdeth of another man than Adam : "As in Adam all die, so in Christ all are made alive." From Christ, therefore, and not from Adam, depend the issues of the resurrection. By making this revolution of the world's estate to turn upon one act of the will of one man, our Creator shewed, first, the supremacy of the will, which the body and all nature followeth, like a servile thing as it is ; secondly, the abiding, cleaving guilt and penalty of one act of sin, which rather than pass over, God will cancel the goodness and make away with the life of his creation ; and, finally, the entire

oneness of mankind, that death in the root should spread death through the whole tree: that poison introduced at one point of the system should equally affect the whole body. For though by the Law the mortal offence was made to abound, before the Law, and since the accomplishment of the Law by Christ, God would have us to understand that death, with all its forerunners and consequences, is the consequence of Adam's one transgression. Now if we consider the end and dignity of man's creation to be an image and likeness of God, and to act the part towards God and towards the lower creation which Christ had acted towards the Father, in ever sacrificing his own self-existence for a commanded existence, in order that there might be a creation both good and blessed; the wonder is rather that man should not have been at once annihilated, when he refused to conform unto Christ and to be the guardian of the world's well-being. But if annihilation had followed, how would God's original purpose in creating man have been attained? It would have been frustrated, but not attained. One word of God must not undo another; therefore there never can be such a thing as annihilation. God had further purposes than creation in reserve for man—purposes of grace and glory—of which we shall by and bye unfold both the beginning and the ending.

V. Of the Change which passed upon Man and the World.

The devil, or serpent, who is the head of the evil angels (Rev. xii.), had made himself a party in the evil transaction, thinking to gain his ends of man by bringing him under the curse of death; and, revealing his character of "a liar," he said, "Ye shall not surely die;" of "a murderer," by being the occasion, and in some measure the cause, of all death. Yet, as his manner is, he mingled truth with the lie, saying, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil;" which also God confirmeth, "Behold, the man is become as one of Us, knowing good and evil." This "one of Us," may mean the Second Person, who in the form of the Christ Adam knew well; by the greater glory of whose person and extent of whose knowledge he was therefore capable of being tempted. "To know good and evil" pertained to God alone, until it became the part and property of man by the fall. To the devil and his angels pertain the part and property of evil; "evil is their good." Man had the part and property of good only; a most excellent portion! But having eaten of the tree of "the knowledge of good and evil," a new world opened upon his view—"his eyes were opened"—and the consciousness of the evil made him cover his nakedness, which before he observed not, and hide himself from the sight of a pure and holy God. This, now, is the first difference between man as he is and man as he was created,—that his soul is now conscious

of good, and its opposite, evil; it discerneth differences; and in so far forth hath attained a new feature of likeness unto God. But in preferring the evil he is most unlike unto God, and like unto the devil; the servant of the devil, and not of God; and therefore God interdicted him from that perilous promotion, as well knowing that it would bring, along with the knowledge, the domination also of evil. Yet if man, knowing the evil, can be made to abhor it, he is only the more complete an image of God, who knoweth it and abhorreth it: but this he can only be through God informing him with his own Divine holiness. And so the way is opened up to the great work of Incarnation by means of the devil's wiles, who maketh the snare to his own feet; and forthwith God's purpose of having in man his full and perfect image, one knowing evil yet doing it not, one avenging evil though at the expense of his own life. On every hand now the will of man is solicited to evil: he cannot see good without seeing evil; and he hath ever the Godlike office of choosing the one and abhorring the other. That which appertained to the single act of eating or not eating the forbidden fruit, now appertaineth to the whole world of reason and sense. The temptations are infinite, in the invisible world of thought and the visible world of sense. This is the difference between the soul fallen and the soul unfallen. Upon the body of man, which originally knew neither infirmity nor pain of hunger or of cold, nor want of any kind, nor liability of death, nor capability of it; to which all creation ministered, the animals their various gifts, the vegetables their various nourishment; in which there was nothing holding of disease or indecency or corruption, nothing unsightly, nothing unsavoury, but, contrariwise, all radiant and blessed as the creative finger of God could make it; behold and see what hath ensued,—pinching hunger and starving cold or feverish heat, filthiness needing constant ablutions, disease and pains without number, life attended with continual affliction, and death at any and at every turn, from the hour of conception till the hour of dissolution! Upon the lower creatures the like misery, so far as they are capable of it; and upon the earth a continual running to waste and wildness, unless it be waited upon evermore with the sweat of man's brow. And besides this, upon woman was imposed a place of inferiority and subjection, in punishment of her forwardness in the transgression, as also of pains of conception and of child-birth: while upon the serpent lay the curse of having his head bruised by the Seed of the woman, whom he thought to have utterly destroyed, but who shall utterly destroy him, and cast him out both of heaven and of earth, into the deepest hell. The devil had succeeded in introducing his empire of evil into the knowledge and experience of mankind, and so placing man in the middle ground between

good and evil, looking upon, and with a nature holding of, both. But man still retained and is answerable for the exercise of his will. He is not brought into any necessity of choosing evil by all the natural conditions into which he is brought. *We will* to do evil; we are not by God constrained to do it. We seal to Adam's act of our own accord, and not of constraint. It is possible for man to stand girt around with all those natural evils and yet to be without sin. The man Christ Jesus hath so stood; and in so standing, he hath proved that it was no obligation of sinning bound by God upon our mortal nature—which were to make God the author of sin—but a new world of temptation introduced into the former world, which was of all temptation void. The world, by the first transgression, hath become the free stage for the controversy between good and evil; and man, who was made the ruler of the world, is the champion by whom the controversy is to be brought to rest for ever. If man can present to God what man was entrusted with,—His own spotless image, and the world free from sin—then man hath not only served his end of creation, but the higher end of defeating the powers of evil, which had thought to defeat and undo man. This, no doubt, was the ultimate end intended of God in the creation of man, for God doth not shift about or devise expedients. Our object must now be to trace out the development and attainment of that glorious purpose which God had in the creation of man.

VI. Of the Source of a New Life and Blessedness to Mankind in the Christ of God.

From the consummation of the first transgression until now, man hath been in a state of death, according to the word of God; and the question ariseth, Is he not then done for? will God revoke what with his mouth he hath once spoken? The answer is, God's wonderful ways with men are not exhausted in his creation: he made man for his image, and to be his lord: the devil hath interfered, and man hath yielded up the dominion to him, and is in bondage; he is a sinner, and is under guilt; he is a betrayer of God's trust, and is morally dead. But there is mercy with God, as well as goodness; forgiveness, as well as justice; and grace, as well as judgment; and there is life out of death. All these have already been realized in the one act of Godhead preliminary to creation, wherein the Son maketh free sacrifice of his self-existence, becometh the Lamb slain, and out of death ariseth the Christ, or Anointed One, who receiveth gifts from God. His life as the Christ is all a life out of death, and his possessions as the Head of creation are all possessions purchased by his willingness to take upon him a derived life. Adam was the son of God, and to shew the holy submission of the son of God was he created: this refusing to do of his

own will in one particular, he is now forced to do in all particulars, if he would see life and blessedness. For now, by his own guilt, he is concluded dead ; and in dying he manifests God's justice, in being willing to die he approves God's justice : but if he can be brought into the condition of putting himself to death, he doth then enact God's justice in the sublimest form ; and is holy in the very highest sense,—holy at the expense of his own life. Into this condition he is actually brought, and this is the standing of man as a sinner. The life of the Lamb slain, the fulness of the grace and mercy which is treasured up in Christ, is made known to him, and he is required to use it as a fountain-head of life welling out of death, and to use that new life in doing universally that which formerly he had refused to do particularly. Having now had his eyes opened to the guilt of sin, and being made acquainted with his own impotence, he is required to confess the guilt of sin, to feel the humility of a guilty creature, to cast himself upon the mercy of God, to receive life from the dead Lamb of God, and with that new life to make war upon himself and all his members, and upon the course of the world, and upon the devil ; and justify God, yea, serve God, in putting them all to death ; and to receive grace for grace, and fulfil the God-head act of self-sacrifice, and be a witness of the glorious and eternal blessedness which out of that act is to come forth to the whole world. Thus, being a son, and for his sin having become an enemy, he is, through the grace which is in Christ, made a destroyer of his own enmity, and an heir of the eternal life which is contained in the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Moreover, this world to come is the very world which God beholdeth in Christ from all eternity, and which was really the first in the Divine purpose. For every thing seen as existent in the Christ, is seen as coming into existence through death. What we behold is not a creation destroyed, an idea of God marred or defeated ; but it is a creation growing into that stable form in which it existed from the beginning in the Divine idea. Sin hath disclosed to man the guilt of a sinner, and taught him the dependence of a creature, and declared the mercy and grace of God ; but it hath not interfered with God's original design of bringing into being a creature which should come to its glory through the way of death, as Christ cometh to his glory through the same. He would have done, and could have done it without sin and suffering to man by the ordinance of the forbidden tree, which was in effect the same prostration of the creature ; but man would have the other way, of knowing good and evil, and he hath got it : but the end is plain, and the course of God is the same, and every defalcation in his creature only revealeth new funds of Divine excellency in the Creator ; and so we shall see it to be unto the end.