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ARTICLE VI.

FUTURE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED AS REVEALED
IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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THIS Article will assume that future punishment is taught clearly in the New Testament. It proposes to inquire whether it be taught also in the Old; and if so, how.

If taught by Christ and his apostles in the New Testament, it is certainly true, and therefore does not need the endorsement of the Old Testament to establish its truth. Yet our question has real interest and importance, notwithstanding. The opinion is somewhat current that future punishment is not taught in the Old Testament; and it is proposed to infer from this silence that the doctrine is not in any wise fundamental; that religion can be maintained without its aid; and perhaps that gospel ministers may do good work for truth and righteousness without preaching or even believing it. Hence one reason among many for our inquiry into the Old Testament teaching (or silence) as to future punishment.

Our question carries us back to the beginnings and the earlier stages of divine revelation. We may fitly suppose that the problem of making a written revelation to man lay before the divine mind in thought and plan before it became an act. In this problem the special point now before us — the future doom of the wicked — was included, and the question how to reveal it to any good moral purpose, must have involved two main points, viz. (1) How to make men understand it; (2) How to make them believe it.

A moment's thought will show that both these points are thoroughly vital; for unless it be understood, it could be no revelation at all, and could have no moral force. Moreover,

if understood intellectually, yet if it were not so revealed as to enforce belief, it would be even worse than worthless, serving only to harden human hearts in their sin and madness. We shall need to hold these points well in mind throughout this discussion.

It may require some little reflection to suggest the real difficulties of this problem in both these aspects. Let it be considered that the doom to be revealed lies in another world, not in this; a world that none of the race has ever seen, and none are expected to see till the time of needing a written revelation of it shall have passed forever. The problem, then, is to get into the human mind some ideas pertaining to an unknown world — a world with which our present life may not be rich in helpful analogies. In so far as the revealing of this truth depends on written words, single terms — e.g. death, hell, Gehenna — it will be entirely essential that these words have an intelligible meaning. But any just apprehension of their meaning must start from and be built upon things known, not things unknown. That is to say, the case requires the framing of what may be called a new language, in the sense of old words with new meanings. It were of no use to import a language from the other world, i.e. to bring down to man the terms and phrases which the holy angels may use of the doom of the lost, or which Satan and his fellows may use in speaking of their prison-home and its torments. What could we learn from their vocabulary, supposing them to convey their thought in words of their own? The case is somewhat like giving the people of the great Sahara the ideas which the Laplanders readily express under the words *snow*, *ice*. The men of Sahara would need more help than these words. To comprehend and convey these ideas they must learn a new language; and this language must be built (as best it might be) upon analogies with things within their knowledge and experience.

A little attention to this will show the necessity (in a revelation of things in the other world) of taking up some word or words which have a meaning in our earthly experience,

and applying them in a corresponding yet special sense, to the things God would teach men of the world to come.

Thus the necessary conditions of the great problem before the revealing mind will show why the progress of this revelation in the earlier stages was of necessity slow; and also why it was in many points imperfect. In the light of them we can appreciate the wisdom of the course God has in fact taken, both to make men *understand* and to make them *believe* the future doom of the wicked.

If that doom is exceedingly dreadful the only sensible way of revealing it in single words is to seize upon some one word or more, well known in human experience, expressing some fact or event most appalling and terrible, and make it the basis of the revelation. No word fills these conditions so well as the word "death." Before this experience all human hearts recoil as before no other. This word is therefore wisely put in the foreground of this revelation. Applied to the next world it must have a modified sense; but it will be a sense analogous. We need not look under it for *dissolution*; we must find under it pain, suffering; elements appalling and terrible. Other ideas may be brought in from other analogies; banishment, darkness, despair; the central word and idea still being *death*. "The soul that sinneth shall surely *die*."

This bears on the first point of the problem, viz. to make men *understand* proximately the real sense of the sinner's future doom. To make them *believe* this doom to be certain, we can think of nothing so pertinent and forcible as *analogous visitations of judgment on the wicked in this world*. Such great facts as the flood, the fire on Sodom, the swallowing up of Korah and his company, had a wonderfully startling and impressive power. They proclaimed to a sinful world: It is a fearful thing for the wicked to be in the hands of a holy God! To his incorrigible enemies, he is a consuming fire, even a jealous God! These visitations terribly justified the inference made by Peter: "If God spared not the angels that sinned. . . . if he spared not the old world,

but saved Noah, bringing in a flood upon the world of the ungodly, . . . if he turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, making them an example to those who should after live ungodly, . . . then the *Lord knoweth how* to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pet. ii. 4-9). Ah, indeed, "*he knoweth how*"; there can be no lack of agencies and powers; and what is not less vital, there can be nothing in his pitying love which will forbid such inflictions of righteous judgment as the case may in his view require.

This, then, in general, meets the second great condition of a successful revelation of the sinner's future doom, viz. to make men *believe* it; to impress them with its absolute certainty. It will be noticed, moreover, that these foregoing examples of retributive judgment on the guilty, in time, answered to some extent a double purpose — not only compelling belief, but illustrating the nature of the doom. They helped to *explain*, as well as to *impress* and enforce conviction.

THE OLD TESTAMENT DOCTRINE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

We study the Old Testament doctrine of future punishment at great disadvantage to ourselves unless we first settle the question, *Did the writers and first readers of the New Testament believe in a future existence?* If not, there could have been to their thought, no future punishment for the wicked, and, indeed, no future retribution at all.

On the other hand, if they did believe in a future existence, their minds would be fully open to that tremendous inference,—A God who cuts down the outrageously wicked before their time in this world will have judgments for them far more terrible in the world to come! In the minds of both good men and bad, this inference would be simply inevitable, provided they thought of both good men and bad as still living on after death, and as having to do with the same great and holy God there as here.

We shall have occasion to notice how strongly this inference lay upon their souls; how manifestly it colors their language; how surely therefore it indicates their belief.

One word on the general question before we open the Scriptures. Let it not be deemed a begging of the question to say — thinking men believe in a future existence *naturally*. It is one of their early, not to say instinctive, beliefs. This is, perhaps, partly due to a love of existence and dread of annihilation; partly to a natural sense of fitness that a being of such powers as man should be presumed to have been created to live on beyond this very short life, and to do more of the work he is so manifestly fitted for and to fill out the legitimate results of living far more perfectly; and more than all the rest, that the just rewards of living well or ill may have other and larger scope for their realization than this world affords. It *will* seem to thoughtful minds that better justice ought to be done to both the good and the bad than this earth provides for and awards. Therefore, men will say, and will feel it with almost resistless force,— There *ought* to be, there *must* be, a future life where retribution for the deeds of earth will level up the strange inequalities of this earthly state, and not leave our sense of justice outraged and bleeding over the otherwise never righted wrongs of earth. Whatever scepticism appears on this point may be put to the account of a personal dread of future retribution, often taking this peculiar form; Everybody else ought to have a future retribution, though for myself I greatly choose annihilation rather than the consequences of an after life, and shall hope for it.

Hence the history of the race shows that the masses have always believed in some sort of future existence. Their mythologies and superstitions show this, for heathen gods by thousands and myriads have been deified men. The worship and reverence paid to ancestors (as in China) bears the same testimony. Necromancy, almost if not quite universal through all the earlier ages (to say nothing of more recent times), rests on the nearly universal belief in future existence. It would be supreme folly to pretend to evoke the spirits of the dead if the dead had no spirits, if the universal belief were that "*death ends all.*" All these superstitions

whose prevalence has been almost universal to our race, and whose power over the popular mind has been immense, are half-truths — else their power had been trifling instead of terrible. Half-truths, I say; the true part being the real existence of human souls after death; the false part, the mistaken assumption that those living souls can send back influences to plague or to bless the living here. A universal and very sensible belief in the true half has laid the human mind dangerously open to the mischiefs of the false half; and thus necromancy and its kindred superstitions have had prodigious power over peoples unblessed with divine revelation.

Moreover, ancient Egypt in the age of Moses represents the highest culture of the ancient world. It is now proved beyond question that Egypt held the doctrine of man's future existence. We are not left to infer this from her mausoleums for the dead, nor from her unparalleled art of embalming, to preserve the body for the soul's future use. These outgrowths of her doctrine of the soul's immortality are not our only proofs. Her "Book of the Dead,"¹ an elaborate treatise on this subject, brought to light within the present generation, furnishes proofs against which there is no rebutting evidence, proofs that suffice to settle the historic fact beyond rational doubt.

What Egypt held, the great East (Arabia and Mesopotamia) must be presumed to have held also. The ablest philosophers of ancient Greece sat at the feet of Egyptian wisdom. This line of proofs might be extended indefinitely; so much must suffice.

Next, we notice briefly the salient points of the proof from the Scriptures that the writers and first readers of the Old Testament believed in a future existence.

Following in general the order of time, we meet first the

¹ "This contains the important doctrines of the immortality of the soul, the rehabilitation of the body, the judgment of both good and bad, the punishment of the wicked, the justification of the righteous, and their admission to the blessed state of the gods." — Rev. J. P. Thompson, in Smith's Bible Dict Art. "Egypt."

record of Enoch (Gen. v. 24); "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." The writer to the Hebrews (xi. 5) paraphrases these very brief words: "was translated that he should not see death, and was not found because God had translated him." We are not told whether any Elisha was present to see him taken up from earth in God's chariot of fire; but the testimony is that "God *took him*." Somebody knew the fact. Yet, be it noticed, the thing peculiar in his case was *not* that he and he only of all the race *lived* in another world after this, but only that he reached it without dying. He missed that dissolution of soul from body which we call death. The writer to the Hebrews does not make his case special in the point of *living* after he had passed away from earth, for in his view this was true of all those heroes of faith. "These all died in faith," their lives declaring plainly "that they seek a better country" beyond this.

Next, we meet the current phrase as to the patriarchs "gathered to their people," promised to Abraham by the Lord (Gen. xv. 15), affirmed of him (Gen. xxv. 8), and in the same words of Ishmael, Isaac, and Jacob. The promise to Abraham ran: "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age." Of course those fathers were in existence, not out of it. Note, also, what Jacob said of Joseph: "An evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces"; yet he adds: "I will go down into the grave (Sheol) to my son, mourning." This was not the going of his lifeless body into the grave to lie there in company with Joseph's dead body; for he supposed that to have been devoured by some evil beast, its fragments nowhere to be found. He thought of an underworld (Sheol) where he should meet the real Joseph; not the mangled flesh, but the undying soul. To the same purport are the words of David, said of his dead babe: "Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. xii. 23).

On this great question Moses is a first-class witness, repre-

senting more wisdom, more public opinion, more weight of character than any other man of ancient times. Personally, Moses gave the strongest possible proof of his belief in future existence, in "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season [a short earthly life], esteeming reproach for Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect to the recompense of the reward"; of course, in another life beyond this (Heb. xi. 24-26). This "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (says Stephen, Acts vii. 22), which, as shown above, included a belief in future existence and retributions.

To Moses God spake those memorable words upon which our divine Lord gave his not less memorable comment; viz. the words, "I am the God of thy fathers; the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"; the comment being this: "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. xxii. 32). He is not the God of non-entities, mere nothings, but of living souls. To be the God of Abraham is a relationship which assumes Abraham's existence. For the Lord did not say to Moses, I *was* the God of Abraham, but I *am*. I have made promises to him which are yet to be fulfilled. He yet lives before me, and, if need were, might hold me to my covenant. It should be noticed, also, that this comment by our Lord was intended to refute the Sadducean doctrine of no spirit-existence after death. It was a perfect refutation. God meant to affirm something quite beyond friendship for Abraham during this short life, even all this: I am Abraham's God and Friend, both now and *forever*.

Further, it may be safely assumed that Moses wrote the Book of Job, and supposably during his forty years' life in Arabia.¹ This book gives the primitive ideas of the race in

¹ The decisive points of proof may be put thus: *Known capability*, which can be said of very few men in our world's history; *Proved poetic power*, seen in his song at the Red Sea (Ex. xv., and in Dent. xxxii., and xxxlii.); *Corresponding poetic power and sentiment*, seen by comparing Job xiv. with Ps. xc., and Job xxxviii. with Gen. i. and ii. Every original poet is a poet of *nature*, and deter-

regard to real existence in Sheol, the future world (as may be seen in iii. 13-19 and x. 20-22 and xiv. 12-15). No one can read these passages intelligently without seeing that however dark in the gloomy thought of Job that future world might be, it was yet a world of living souls; not of defunct nonentities.

It cannot be necessary to cite in detail all the proofs of a future existence which appear in the later Old Testament writings. Yet let it be suggested: When Elijah went up living to heaven, nobody said, there are now two men of our race, just two, and no more, who are living in some other world; all the rest sunk into non-existence. We have not a whisper of this opinion. The point put in the case of Enoch and again of Elijah, was only this, that they missed the usual dissolution of soul and body. As to other Old Testament authorities, let it suffice to refer to David, saying, "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness" (Ps. xvii. 15); and to Solomon, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it"; "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl. xii. 7, 14); and to Daniel, "Those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (xii. 2). Inevitably the doctrine of resurrection carries with it a future existence as opposed to non-existence after death. Yet this doctrine was so well known and so universally held that both

mines his own location by his allusions to objects in the visible world about him. Under this law the writer of Job locates himself not in Palestine, but in Arabia; and moreover, shows himself about equally familiar with Egypt. At this writing he had lived in Egypt and in Arabia, but not in Palestine. Again, every religious Hebrew poet draws from Hebrew history, and cannot ignore it. The author of Job drew from the creation and the flood, but never from Hebrew life later than the residence of Moses in Arabia. Finally, the presence of this book in the Hebrew canon cannot be accounted for save through the agency of Moses. Written in Arabia it must have been; but imported from Arabia at any point later than Moses, it never could have been. [These points are more fully developed in the Introduction to the Author's volume on Job].

Isaiah and Ezekiel use it as a figure to illustrate analogous changes in the political state of kingdoms. (See Isa. xxvi. 14, 19 and Ezek. xxxvii. 1-14.) Who does not know that sensible writers draw their figures for illustration from things known, and not from things unknown; from things believed, and not from things that nobody believes in?

We are therefore authorized to regard the proof as conclusive that the Old Testament writers assumed, and their first readers admitted, the *soul's future existence*.

Did they also assume, teach, and believe the *future misery of the wicked* as the doom threatened by the law of God? The evidence will fall chiefly under the following heads:

I. *Special Words*; e.g. die, death, hell, etc.

II. *Special Facts*: judgments from God upon guilty men in this world.

III. Some *Special Passages*.

IV. Light thrown back from the New Testament upon the Old.

V. The doctrine prevalent in the leading Jewish mind at and before the Christian era.

I. To simplify the discussion of *special words* we begin with the cardinal one *die*. In the sense of dissolution of soul from body everybody knows its meaning; all men naturally dread its presence and power. That this would be a very appropriate word for the future doom of the sinner, supposing that doom to be supremely dreadful, has been suggested already. We now come to the question of fact. Does it appear that God did in fact use this word to denote the sinner's future doom?

In his first announcement of precept and penalty, God said to Adam: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. ii. 17). Did they die the bodily death on that day? By no means. Was this death physical dissolution, and nothing more? Something far more, most certainly. Mortality may have been in it, but did not exhaust it. The physical event supplied the word, and gave it its

first and normal sense. The Lord took up this word (some word with an earthly sense he must take), and used it to represent a death beyond, far more dreadful.

The usage of this same word by Ezekiel (xxxiii. 9, 11) serves to interpret the word "die" in this primal precept. "If the wicked turn not from his way, he shall *die* in his iniquity. As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye *die*?" This death, be it noticed, does not befall the righteous; and the wicked man is delivered from it if he turns from his evil ways. Therefore it cannot have here the sense of dissolution. Hence we are shut up to the sense of *another* death beyond the present state of being—a *second death*.

This conclusion is fully sustained by the well-established usage of the Old Testament and of the Scriptures throughout; indeed, we might say, of all human language. Death and life are used figuratively; death to denote the worst of evils; life, the best of blessings. Thus Moses, solemnly laying before all Israel the consequences of obeying God, and of not obeying: "See," said he, "I have set before thee this day *life* and good, *death* and evil. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you *life* and *death*, blessing and cursing" (Deut. xxx. 15, 19). Here life and good are synonymous; so are death and evil. Life means blessing; death means cursing. Life is over against death, as good is over against evil, blessing antithetic to cursing. Consequently death is far more and other than physical dissolution.

Throughout the Scriptures life is used often in this intensive and figurative sense for the best of blessings, e.g. "A man's *life* consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesses" (Luke xii. 15). "In his favor is *life*; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Ps. xxx. 5). "Wisdom is a tree of *life* to them that lay hold upon her; happy is every one that retaineth her"

(Prov. iii. 18). "Shall we not be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and *live*?" (Heb. xii. 9). "Now we *live* if ye stand fast in the Lord" (1 Thess. iii. 8).

Correspondingly, death is used for the worst of evils. Pharaoh said of the locusts: "Entreat the Lord that he take away from me this *death* only" (Ex. x. 17). With a keen sense of the mischief and heart-pain wrought by slander, Solomon said: "*Death* and *life* are in the power of the tongue" (Prov. xviii. 21). The historian made a strong case as to the pressure of his Delilah upon Samson, by putting it thus: "She pressed him daily with her words, and urged him so that his soul was vexed unto *death*" (Judg. xvi. 16). The transition from a sinning to a godly life—from the vanity, emptiness, remorse, shame, of the former, to the rest, the peace, the joy unspeakable of the latter—is put briefly as a "passing from *death* unto *life*" (John v. 23; 1 John iii. 14). So, in common speech, what is worse than a living death? What is richer than real life, a life worth having?

The usual Hebrew word for the place of wicked souls after bodily death is Sheol, whose nearest Greek equivalent is Hades, and whose best English representative in the later Hebrew is hell; in the earlier, the under-world. In some cases *grave* translates it, sometimes, *the pit*. That the sacred writers were slow and late in developing definite ideas as to the place where human souls have their future destiny, indicates rather their good sense than any scepticism as to the fact of such future doom. They were too truthful and too wise to pretend to know what they knew not. It sufficed the earliest fathers to know the *fact* of a future life of real retribution, without knowing *where* in the unknown realms of the universe it might have its local habitation.¹

Naturally the first step toward definite thought as to the future locality of the soul would regard the *direction* of its course. Which way does it go after death? Clearly their

¹ This mode of speaking of the sacred writers by no means ignores their true inspiration. I use it for the sake of brevity. The case does not require us to distinguish between the thought of God and the thought of his inspired servants. His mind was in them.

first thought was *downward*, following the direction of the mortal body, which turned back to its mother dust, and found its normal home under ground. Therefore Sheol was in their thought an under-world, deeper than the grave for the body.

By etymology Sheol is from the verb בָּשַׁע , with middle ש , which means *to ask, demand*; and in this line of thought the noun should signify the insatiate, the insatiable — a sense which appears in such passages as Prov. xxx. 15, 16: “Four things never say *enough*,” and Sheol heads the list; also Prov. xxviii. 20: “Sheol and destruction [Abaddon, its synonyme] are never *full*”; and Hab. ii. 5: “Who enlargeth his desire as Sheol, and is as death, and cannot be *satisfied*.”

Another etymology, favored by Gesenius (yet not by Fuerst), supposes the primary sense of בָּשַׁע to be that of בָּשַׁע with middle ש , viz. *to dig, or to hollow out*; so that the word “Sheol” would mean *the hollowed receptacle* — the great excavated world beneath. Critical opinions are divided between these two etymological senses. Etymology, however, is of only secondary importance. Usage is the only point really vital.

Old Testament usage will justify the following threefold classification of its special senses: 1. The one home for all departed souls, with no particular reference to their moral character, or to their destiny to happiness or woe; 2. The home and doom of the lost; 3. Used figuratively, in regard to earthly things, for a state of great calamity and suffering.

1. In the first class stand the cases of its earliest use — Jacob going down to Sheol to his son Joseph (Gen. xxxvii. 35; xlii. 38; xliv. 31); also 1 Sam. ii. 6: “The Lord killeth and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the [borders of the] grave (Sheol), and bringeth up.” Here, also some would assign Ps. xvi. 10: “Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol”; but it is better to personify Sheol as the ruling power of the under-world, and read: “wilt not leave me to the power of the under-world,” — viz. corruption, — as the parallelism shows.

2. Of the second class are the following: "The wicked shall be turned into Sheol, and all the nations that forget God" (Ps. ix. 17); "Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on Sheol" (Prov. v. 15); "But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of Sheol" (Prov. ix. 18); "The way of life is above [upward] to the wise, that he may depart from Sheol beneath" (Prov. xv. 24); "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from Sheol" (Prov. xxiii. 14); "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest Sheol [unto Sheol below, underneath]" (Deut. xxxii. 22); "The earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up [Korah and his company], and they went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed upon them" (Num. xvi. 30-33). So the Psalmist, with perhaps his eye upon this case of Korah, said: "Let death seize upon them; let them go down living into Sheol; for wickedness is in their dwellings" (Ps. lv. 15). Similar is the usage of Ezekiel (xxxi. 15, 16, 17).

3. Of the third class is Ps. lxxxvi. 13: "Great is thy mercy toward me; thou hast delivered my soul [life] from the lowest Sheol."

A careful examination of old Testament usage, later than the Pentateuch, will show that Sheol is the locality for the wicked under their doom of woe, but is not the name for the blessed home of the righteous. As to the wicked, the passages cited under the second head above will suffice. On the other hand, we find no case where Sheol is the name for the exclusive abode of the righteous after death. This abode is indicated variously; e.g. "Thou wilt show me the path of *life*; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures forevermore" (Ps. xvi. 11); "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness" (Ps. xvii. 15); "Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee?" (Ps. lxxiii. 24, 25). Putting the contrast between the wicked and the righteous, Ps. xlix. 14, 15 has it (in substance): "The wicked they

drive into Sheol, as flocks to the slaughter ; but God [and he only] will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me [to himself].”

II. Under the head of *Special Facts* — great judgments from God upon guilty man in this world — we have first in order the Flood.

To estimate at their full value the moral bearings of this judgment we need to consider that the godly were reduced in number to a single family, for whose safety God, first of all, made ample provision ; that the whole race outside of this household had “ corrupted their way before God ” ; that “ the earth was filled with violence ” ; that men were hopelessly apostate, the Lord solemnly declaring, “ My Spirit shall not always strive [in vain] ” ; that though warned by righteous Noah, they went on, reckless and unbelieving, till the day of vengeance came and swept that godless generation from the earth.

What were the moral lessons of this deluge of death-bearing waters ? What did it teach, and what did it resistlessly suggest as to the future life and doom of the wicked ? The Apostle Peter leads the answer ; that God knows how to discriminate between the righteous and the wicked ; that he has both the heart and the power to make this discrimination ; that such discrimination involves salvation for the righteous, but the reserving of the wicked unto the day of judgment to be yet more fearfully punished. No man could reasonably suppose that a few moments’ death-struggle in those surging waters would exhaust the punishment justly due to such defiant rebels. Rather he must infer that such swift, consuming judgments in this world are the guarantee and pledge of analogous judgments far more fearful in the world to come. For it would be only madness to infer that when a holy God can endure rebels no longer here, he swoops them with one mighty avalanche of flood or flame into heaven.

Any ungodly man, reflecting upon the moral lessons of the the flood, must rationally say, When, like those ungodly men, I too shall have defied the Almighty as long as he can bear

with me in this world of mercy, what must I look for in the world to come? In that awful flood he shows me the might of his arm and the energy of his indignant and righteous judgment; alas! how shall I escape the doom of the lost? Remembering that I can never cease to be, remembering that my spirit must return to God who gave it, and that every work of mine must come into judgment before him, what possible hope can I have of blessedness beyond this mortal life?

The same great moral lessons come from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The historic narrative, coupled with numerous subsequent allusions, makes every vital point stand out in most appalling vividness. The unspeakable moral rottenness, the hopelessness of reform, the pains taken to show that not a righteous man remained out of all the people of Sodom and her neighbor cities, the removal of righteous Lot, then the awful judgment coming from the very hand of the Almighty, for it is said "The Lord rained upon Sodom fire and brimstone *from the Lord* out of heaven," — every point in particular, and all combined, serve to make this a most impressive example of righteous and discriminating judgment from God upon incorrigible, unendurable sinners. Subsequent writers often refer to it as a destruction of the wicked and of their polluted homes, at once *total* and *final* — no vestige left; no rebuilding, no restoration. (Deut. xxix. 23.) All these circumstances, coupled with the fearful agencies of fire in their destruction, combine to make this the standard example of the doom of the wicked in the world to come. As said by Jude (vs. 7), "Set forth for an example [of what it is] to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire." The elements of this scene color the language of the Psalmist: "Upon the wicked God shall rain snares [better, *forked lightnings*], fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; the portion of their cup" (xi. 6). Indeed, it is supposable that the very frequent imagery of *fire* in the later Scriptures to represent the sufferings inflicted on the wicked in the world of their woe, takes its rise in this illustrative example. Of analogous sort is the case of Korah and

his party (Num. xvi.), and also of God's judgments on guilty cities and nations; e.g. Israel (Deut. xxviii.) and Idumea (Isa. xxxiv.). But the flood and Sodom suffice to reveal and illustrate the principles of God's moral administration. In the light of reason and conscience they must bear upon the doctrine of future punishment thus: The present is a state of only partial, not perfect, retribution; adjusted throughout to the purposes of probation and moral transformation; a sphere, therefore, of merciful endeavor on God's part to turn sinners to repentance. Therefore is his great patience and long-forgiveness with rebels; therefore all the goodness and mercy he can safely indulge in; therefore these admonitions of future doom; therefore these illustrative cases to set forth its certainty and fearfulness.

Now our question is, do such events as the flood and Sodom reveal anything from God as to the future doom of sinners? Did the Lord intend by them to teach anything as to this doom? Would thinking men, of fair sagacity and average honesty, infer anything certainly from these judgments? Take into account that these reason-endowed men expect to live on after they leave this world; know they must carry with them the character and the deeds of their earthly life; know they must find there the same God against whom they have sinned here. Now, with these beliefs and with the certain knowledge of these facts, must they not say in their hearts, All that God could do to turn me from my sins has proved unavailing. His patience, long-abused, is at last exhausted,—and I must die. Will he take me up into his home for the redeemed, or hurl me down to the abode of hardened rebels and hopeless apostates? Is it his nature to discriminate between the righteous and the wicked? Alas! this world is full of such testimonies; it were simple madness for me to ignore them. I have never turned out of my chosen way to please him here; I have no favor to hope for when I awake to meet him there.

Thus when men are compelled to believe in a future existence, their hearts are naturally open to that terrible infer-

ence to which we have alluded : If God can no longer bear with my insults and rebellion in this world, but sends swift judgments down upon me here, will he not send more and swifter judgments there? I know I have done nothing but abuse him here; what but wrath and ruin can await me there!

The righteous have an entirely different inference to make; of this sort: My God has proved himself my refuge and friend a thousand times, all along my earthly pilgrimage. I know, therefore, that I can trust him in the hour when flesh and heart shall fail me; can trust him to be then the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

III. Some *Special passages* should have particular attention.

“The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Ps. ix. 17). Three considerations suffice to determine the meaning of this passage; viz. (1) “Hell” [Sheol] cannot be the grave, that so the death of the body may exhaust the meaning, for this would make it mean virtually nothing. To restrict its sense to mean mere bodily death makes it no revelation; for who does not know that in this sense, all nations die? (2) This doom is made to turn upon character, bad character. It is the wicked (not the righteous) who are “turned into hell”; those that “forget God”; not those who reverently, obediently, remember him. (3) Old Testament usage of the word Sheol, as shown above, compels its reference to the doom of the lost. If it be replied that this passage says nothing about suffering, punishment, in the hell of which it speaks, the answer is, the whole context of the Psalm makes this sufficiently definite: “Thou has destroyed the wicked; thou hast put out their name forever and ever. The Lord shall judge the world in righteousness. When he makes inquisition for blood he remembereth them. The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth.”

Prov. xiv. 32: “The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death.” These

words as to the wicked are at once telling and terrible. "Driven away" when he would fain resist if he could; forced along out of this world, despite of every struggling endeavor to withstand. "Driven away," not *from* his wickedness, but *in* it, with all his heart-depravity in full strength, and all his guilty deeds lying upon his unforgiven soul. Alas! how can he meet God in the world of retribution! "The righteous has hope in his death"; *he has none*. This is the very point made emphatic by this contrast.

Another passage from Solomon must be noticed — one fearfully fraught with the sentiment of dread retribution (Prov. i. 20-32). "Wisdom crieth all abroad [wheresoever there are mortal ears to hear], How long, ye simple, will ye love simplicity [folly], and ye scorers delight in your scorning? Turn ye at my reproof; Behold, I pour out my spirit upon you; I make known my words unto you." Then, assuming that they repel her loving entreaty, she takes up the strain of threatened retribution: "Because I have called and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hands and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel and would not consent to my reproof; I also (as if stung by your insults and roused to retaliation) will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish come upon you; Then shall they call upon me, and I [in my turn] will not answer; they shall seek me most earnestly, but [too late] they shall not find me: Because they hated knowledge and chose not the fear of the Lord; they would not have my counsel; they despised all my reproof: Wherefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them."

Here is great plainness of speech. The words are all but too significant, as if with saddened heart and sternly honest purpose on the part of Wisdom to make herself understood, despite of dulness, dislike, and aversion. At some points she comes down even to anthropomorphism, using words after

the manner of men, as when she says, "laugh at your calamity"; "mock when your fear cometh." But the dullest souls cannot help feeling in these words the breath of an awful solemnity — cannot resist the conviction that all this means terrible retribution.

If it be said that the writer's thought here is altogether upon things of time, and travels never beyond those laws of temporal retribution under which vice comes to grief and sin earns its wages of death, this helps not the sinner's case, for even so, it *proves a principle*; it *reveals a law* of God's universal empire — a law no less sure and terrible in the next world than in this. If God brings such retribution on sinners in this life, where mercy reigns and blesses all she can, how much more terribly must his retributions come down upon the incorrigible in that other world, where judgment reigns without mercy!

Perhaps the most fearful application of these terrible words is that which bears upon the hope, fondly cherished in many bosoms, of renewed probation in the next world, even though it be the world of doom. With that hope, the significance of these words has no sympathy; for the folly of it, the voice of Wisdom, speaking here assumes no responsibility! The ring of these awful words should be the death-knell of that vain hope forever!

Notice should next be taken of Isa. xxxiii. 14. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites" [hardened sinners]. "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings"?

The full force of these words will not be felt, their legitimate application will scarcely be apprehended, unless we have in mind the stupendous scene then passing before Isaiah's eye, viz. the sudden destruction in one eventful night of the invading hosts of Sennacherib. Isaiah was in the city (we must suppose); himself saw the encamped foe within striking distance, shaking his hand defiantly at the daughter of Zion (x. 32); was cognizant of the terror that

shook so many strong men's hearts at night-fall (xvii. 14), and led off in the song of glad thanksgiving when at opening day the tidings came in that 185,000 of their foe lay strewn in death! The whole people were thrilled, but not with the same emotions. Upon every heart there fell, as if from heaven, *the sense of a present God* — to all his friends inspiring with a joy almost unspeakable; but alas! to the sinners in Zion, and to the hypocrites [hardened souls], it suggested a power they feared, a doom that filled them with horror. "Fearfulness surprised" them; they recoiled under an awful dread of such power in the hands of a holy God. The passage gives the words of their outcry: "Who of us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who of us shall dwell with everlasting burnings"?

The "fire" and the "burnings" are here, perhaps, in symbol, because the prophet a moment before had used the same symbol for the destruction of the Assyrians. "Ye shall conceive chaff; your breath as fire shall devour you. The people shall be as the burnings of lime; as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire" (vs. 11, 12). Hence, to those sinners in Zion, the symbolic fires which consumed the Assyrians, suggested the everlasting fires and burnings which represented the sinner's future doom. This language certainly seems to imply that the elements of that future doom (suggested possibly by the case of Sodom) were currently thought and spoken of as *fire*. It is common in Scripture that the New Testament symbols have their root and rise in the Old Testament.

As to the legitimate sense of the Hebrew עָרִיב, applied here to "burnings," both etymology and usage conspire to put it entirely beyond question; for (1) By etymology it comes from the verb עָרַב, to hide, conceal; giving, therefore, when applied to time, the sense — that which lies in the dim, dark distance, too remote to be visible; (2) By usage, the time it indicates is as long as the nature of the case admits; the longest possible. Thus "a servant forever" serves during life; "everlasting mountains" stand while the world stands;

“the everlasting God” (Gen. xxi. 33; Isa. xl. 28), exists without end, or beginning (Ps. xc. 2). Hence, to “live forever,” said of man (Gen. iii. 22; Dan. xii. 2) must be to live eternally; and burnings that are “everlasting” must be without end. This being the well established sense, by what right do we tamper with God’s own words? On what authority can we take out of them the sense which God has put in?

IV. Light *thrown back* from the New Testament upon the Old.

It is legitimate to learn all we can from the New Testament of the true sense of the Old, and of the amount of divine truth then extant.

I shall not exhaust this field. Suffice it to refer to two passages. The first (Jude 14) preserves to us a short sermon preached by Enoch, “the seventh from Adam,” i.e. in the age before the flood. We know little as to the preaching in those days, and perhaps have been wont to assume that there was none. Yet Peter said, incidentally, that Noah was “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Pet. ii. 5); and Jude tells us that Enoch preached, “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” This coming of the Lord in judgment with ten thousand of his holy ones must be the same which Jesus portrays more fully (Matt. xxv. 31–46). Its supreme purpose is put, here as there, with unmistakable clearness, viz. to convict ungodly men of their ungodly deeds,—a process of investigation and proof legitimately antecedent to the infliction of their final sentence. This preaching, therefore, proves beyond dispute that sinners in that age were by no means left in darkness as to the fact of a future life, nor as to the *certain doom* of the finally impenitent.

The second passage bears upon the doctrines taught by Moses and the prophets as to the future doom of the wicked.

In Luke xvi. 27-31 our Lord represents a rich but godless Jew as having passed at death into the "place of torment," and as crying from thence to father Abraham to send Lazarus to his five living brethren to testify to them as to the awful realities of the future world, "lest they also come to that place of torment." But Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." The suppliant still pressed his plea: "Nay, father Abraham" [put me not off so], for if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." Note the final answer: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Moses and the prophets have said enough *as to the future torments of the lost* to persuade men to repent. The prayer is denied on the sole ground that the Jews have already in their Old Testament Scriptures all they need to know of the sinner's future doom. For it were an unpardonable hardihood and affront to say back to the very face of the Lord Jesus, No future punishment is taught in Moses and the prophets; you quite mistake the teachings of the Old Testament if you suppose any clear revelation of that punishment is made there.

V. The doctrine of the leading Jewish mind as to future punishment, at and before the Christian era.

In opposition to the Sadducees the Pharisees held strenuously the doctrines of the soul's existence after death and of the resurrection. This fact lies upon the face of New Testament history; e.g. Matt. xxii. 23, and its parallel passages. Paul in his defence before the Sanhedrim (Acts xxiii. 6-9) adroitly brought the Pharisees into sympathy by placing himself with them and against the Sadducees on these great points, the existence of departed spirits, and the resurrection of the body. The "certain ruler" who asked (Luke xviii. 8) "What good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life"? manifestly believed in the possibility of attaining eternal life [blessedness] — a belief which carries with it the corresponding possibility of failure, and of its results — eternal death. The Pharisees (not the Sadducees) led

and represented current Jewish thought at the Christian era. On the points above named this thought was well defined and well established. Of this the historic proof above referred to is quite decisive. But this proof is heightened by the fact that John the Baptist and our Lord speak of the future doom of the wicked in a way which itself assumes a general belief in that doctrine. They do not assert it as new, nor prove it as being doubted, but assume it as a point generally believed. The thing they solemnly affirm is, that men of a certain moral character "cannot escape the damnation of hell." That there *was* such a damnation, they had not the least occasion to prove.

We thus find ample authority in the New Testament for the existence of this belief in the leading Jewish mind. It now becomes an interesting and somewhat important inquiry, whether, outside of the New Testament, there is historical evidence which confirms this current belief. Moreover, does the testimony cover also an earlier date?

Josephus, himself a Pharisee, is a competent witness to their belief. He says: "They believe that souls have in them an immortal vigor [anti-Sadducean doctrine], and that, under the earth, there will be rewards and punishments, according as men have lived virtuously or viciously in this life. The latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison."¹ "They say that all souls are incorruptible, and that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment."² "The souls of those whose hands have acted madly against themselves [in suicide] are received by the darkest place in Hades."³ This last quotation is from his own address to his soldiers, exhorting them against self-destruction.

Yet another witness to current Jewish opinion in the century before the Christian era has come quite prominently to view within the present century, viz. the Book of Enoch. This book has attracted the more attention because, as is now generally admitted, Jude quotes from it his vs. 14, 15

¹ Antiq., 18. 1, 3.² Bell. Jud., 2. 8, 18.³ Ibid., 3. 8, 5.

— the prophecy of Enoch. The ablest critics differ somewhat as to the date of this book; the weight of critical authority, however, locating it between B.C. 150 and B.C. 50. Professor Stuart favors a later date, on the ground of its Messianic doctrine; but the earlier date is best supported.

The doctrine of the book on the point now in hand is unambiguous and emphatic. B. F. Westcott (in Smith's Bible Dictionary) says: "The mysteries of the spiritual world, the power of Satan and the legions of darkness, the doctrines of resurrection, retribution, and eternal punishment are dwelt upon with growing earnestness. The book repeats in every form the great principle that the world, natural, moral, and spiritual, is under the immediate government of God. Hence it follows that there is terrible retribution reserved for sinners, and a glorious kingdom prepared for the righteous. The Messiah is regarded as the divine Mediator of this double issue" (xc., xci.). Professor S. Davison says: "The doctrine of a future state of retribution is implied in many passages. Thus: 'Ye have committed blasphemy and iniquity, and are destined to the day of the effusion of blood, to the day of darkness, and to the day of the great judgment. This I declare and point out to you, that he who created you will destroy you,' " etc. "The eternity of future punishment is also contained in the Book of Enoch. Thus: 'Abundant is their suffering until the time of the great judgment, the castigation and the torment of those who eternally execrate, whose souls are punished and bound there forever. A receptacle of this sort has been formed for the souls of unrighteous men and of sinners. Their souls shall not be annihilated in the day of judgment, neither shall they arise out from this place' (xxii. 12, 14); 'Never shall they obtain mercy, saith the Lord of spirits' (xxxix. 2); 'Darkness shall be their habitation, and worms shall be their bed; nor from that bed shall they hope to be again raised, because they exalted not the name of the Lord of spirits' (xlvi. 4); 'But has it not been shown to them that when to the receptacle of the dead their souls shall be

made to descend their evil deeds shall become their greatest torment? Into darkness and into the snare and into the flame which shall burn to the great judgment shall their spirits enter; and the great judgment shall take effect forever and forever'” (ciii. 5).

Of this Book of Enoch Professor Stuart says: “Composed by a Jew unusually familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures; written by a serious man for serious purposes. . . . the rewards of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked are his great themes. His book will therefore give us the usual sentiments of his time. . . . The writer’s manner is such as to show that in his view the subject is not a controverted one. . . . The declarations that God will punish the wicked and reward the righteous are almost without number,”¹ — so many that Professor Stuart for the most part omits them, and quotes only such as indicate how much or how long the wicked are to be punished. On these points the testimonies in this book are perfectly decisive. No human words or figures could well be more so.

The reader will bear in mind that neither the Book of Enoch nor Josephus are quoted as being the inspired words of God. They come in here only as reliable human history, valuable to us because they testify to a current popular belief at and before their date. This era of popular belief may be supposed, on this historical authority, to fill some two or more centuries anterior to the birth of Christ, and to have been in force during the lifetime of Jesus and his apostles — a fact which has vital bearings upon the interpretation of their words. Our present theme applies their testimony to the interval from Malachi to Christ. From David, through Solomon and Isaiah, to Malachi (iv. 1-3), our testimonies make up a chain stretching a thousand years next preceding the Christian era, showing conclusively that during that period belief in the endless future punishment of the wicked was positive, and apparently unquestioned.

Certain *objections* and *misapprehensions* should receive notice.

¹ Bib. Sac., 1840, pp. 6-9.

1. It is objected that the rewards and punishments of the Mosaic law are temporal only ; therefore it must be inferred that Moses and his people neither believed in, or even knew of, future rewards and punishments. This objection has been often made ; yet it rests on gross misapprehension. For (1) The Mosaic law was framed to be administered largely by human hands — not by the Almighty alone, or through his angels, but by civil rulers — judges, priests, kings. Therefore, like all human governments, its rewards and penalties must be such as human hands can administer. If its threatened penalties had lain in the future world, how could these mortal men execute them ? With what hardihood and insults would presumptuous transgressors have hurled back defiance upon those Hebrew magistrates who should have threatened them with eternal damnation ! How dangerous, morally, the temptation in that case to dare those magistrates to put the threats of the law in execution ! God was too wise to append such penalties to laws given to his people to administer.

(2) In so far as the Lord interposed to enforce this law by providential retributions, it was done on a principle of consummate wisdom, palpable even to very dull human thought, in these two directions ; viz. (a) That the most hardened and sceptical might see God's hand and feel its terrible severity, despite of the most stubborn unbelief in future retribution ; and (b) That present retribution might become both illustration and proof of that which lay on beyond in the eternal future.

(3) The assumption that Moses, “ learned in all the wisdom of Egypt ” ; Moses, familiar from earliest years with the Egyptian doctrine of future life ; Moses, who “ chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy ” all the glory of Egyptian royalty, — the assumption that this Moses knew nothing of future rewards and punishments, is of all assumptions most puerile, most baseless.

2. A second point I put in the words of Canon Farrar (as in Smith's Dictionary, “ hell ”) : “ Generally speaking, the

Hebrews regarded the grave as the final end of all sentient and intelligent existence; the land where all things are forgotten." To sustain this statement he refers to Ps. lxxxviii. 10-12; vi. 5; Isa. xxxviii. 9-20; Eccl. ix. 10; Ecclus. xvii. 27, 28, appending only this further proof of his doctrine: "Even the righteous Hezekiah trembled lest 'when his eyes closed upon the cherubim and the mercy-seat,' he should no longer 'see the Lord, even the Lord *in the land of the living.*'"

The marvel is that Mr. Farrar's sole argument did not open his own eyes to its fallacy. Yes, verily, Hezekiah not only feared, but knew, that after death he could no longer see the Lord *in this land of the living*. That was the very point. He longed to see more of the Lord God of Israel here, in this earthly life. He could not bear to go hence, and leave so much of his purposed earthly work unfinished. He felt the vast responsibilities of his kingdom; and especially he longed to lead out the praises of Israel yet far more for all the Lord's great mercies. All these he must fail to see and enjoy (so he thought) if his life were to close then.

Let it be well kept in mind that Hezekiah, and indeed all pious Israelites, were elated, enraptured, we might say, with the grateful songs and testimonials prescribed in the temple worship as acknowledgment of mercies. We see the spirit of it in Ps. cxvi.: "I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplication. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people." So felt Hezekiah: "The grave cannot praise thee; . . . but the living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day; the fathers to the children shall make known thy truth. The Lord [sprang] to save me; therefore we will sing my songs with stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord." These thanksgiving songs filled his vision in the present.

From precisely these thanksgiving songs the dead were debarred. So of God's wonderful redeeming mercies. The living upon whom they fell might see and celebrate them; but, in their idea, the dead could not look from their other world to participate in them or to praise the Lord for them in his Jerusalem temple. What the sainted dead might see and how they might praise and love in their new life beyond, Hezekiah does not say. It was not in place here to say it. As to the experiences of that life beyond, he neither affirms nor denies. In the same line of thought the writer of Ps. lxxxviii. sung: "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise [from their graves] and praise thee" [here in thy temple]? He does not undertake to say that the dead see no wonderful doings of God *in the new world where they are*, nor that they never praise God there for what they see. But, being there, they see not the wonders God is revealing here; and they do not rise out of their graves to join in our glorious thanksgiving songs in our earthly temple.

Thus the writer of this Ps. lxxxviii.; thus Hezekiah in his song; thus Solomon in his passage Eccl. ix. 4-6, 10, held the doctrine, not that the dead are unconscious, but that they are not cognizant of what is transpiring here; not that they know nothing of God and his works in the world where they are; but that they see not his wonders wrought in our world, and rise not to join us in our temple praises.

8. It is objected that so far from *teaching* future eternal punishment, the Old Testament teaches the annihilation of the wicked at their death.

In proof of this, appeal is made chiefly to Ps. xxxvii. and lxxiii.: "The wicked shall perish; the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." "Transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off." "He passed away, and lo, he was not [literally there was nothing of him] (Ps. xxxvii. 20, 38, 36). "Thou castest them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation as

in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors” (Ps. lxxiii. 18, 19).

The one sufficient and conclusive answer to this objection is that these passages affirm as to the wicked only his *sudden death*, his vanishing from the view of the living; and *not* the extinction of his being. “He passed away, and lo, he *was not*; I sought him [among the living], but he *could not be found*.” No trace of him remained in the land of the living. But this by no means denies that God could find him in the world of departed souls. This strongest phrase “he *was not*” [there was nothing of him] is used of Enoch; he *was not*; for God took him.” Yet this was not annihilation. Far from it. Nor is it ever.

The sudden disappearance of the wicked under God’s righteous judgments was one of the great and oft-occurring facts of his ancient administration. It often appears in both scripture history and sacred song. Never can it be legitimately held to teach that sinners, thus suddenly cut down in their sins, cease therefore to exist. This is never the teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures.