

Let us now look at some of the advantages of the third theory above advanced.

In the first place, it satisfactorily harmonizes revelation with geology, physiology, and experience, on the subject of death. It agrees with physiology and experience in representing death to be a law of organic being on the globe. Yet it accords with revelation, in showing how this law may be a result of man's apostacy; and with geology, also, in showing how death might have reigned over animals and plants before man's existence. To remove so many apparent discrepancies is surely a presumption in favour of any theory.

In the second place, the fundamental principle of this theory is also a fundamental principle of natural and revealed theology, namely, that all events in this world entered originally into the plan or purpose of the Deity. To suppose that God made the world without a plan previously determined upon, is to make him less wise than a human architect, who would be charged with great folly to attempt building even a house without a plan. And to suppose that plan not to extend to every event, is to rob God of his infinite attributes.

In the third place, this theory falls in with the common interpretation of Scripture, which refers the whole system of suffering, decay, and death in this world to man's apostacy. And although the general reception of any exegesis of Scripture does not prove it be correct, it is certainly gratifying when a thorough examination proves the obvious sense of a passage to be the true one. For to disturb the popular interpretation is, with many, equivalent to a denial of Scripture.

In the fourth place, this theory shows us the infinite skill and benevolence of Jehovah in educing good from evil.

The free agency of man was an object in the highest degree desirable. Yet such a character made him liable to fall; and God knew that he would fall. To human sagacity that act would seem to seal up his fate for ever. But infinite wisdom saw that the case was not hopeless. It placed him in a state of temporal suffering and temporal death, that he might still have a chance of escaping eternal suffering and eternal death. The discipline of such a world was eminently adapted to restore his lost purity, and death was probably the only means by which a fallen being could pass to a higher state of existence. That discipline, indeed, if rightly improved, would