

[No. 37.]

ON THE

MEANING OF ANGER,

WHEN ASCRIBED TO GOD

IN THE SCRIPTURES.

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IN examining the various species of existences in nature, we intuitively regard as superior among them those, whose natures more nearly resemble the human. Naturalists, in classifying the substances and productions of nature, find order and succession prevailing throughout, leading outward, as it were, or downwards from man, to things inanimate, and comparatively simple. Shewing, that while man is the only creature capable of investigating and estimating the things of this world it is to him, as the head, that all the lower things of creation refer. His nature is the living standard of their several perfections, as his happiness is the end of all their existences. Yet, nothing of existence or of law, of goodness or truth, originates in him. Whatever makes up the complexity of his wondrous being, he receives from the great Creator and Lawgiver. A proper standard, whereby to form his character, cannot be found for him, in any thing below the law of God Himself. No precept, can rightly be regarded as final, until confirmed by appealing to the authority of the Word of God. Thus, as the universal effort of nature is to approach, by its uses, to a resemblance of humanity, so is it the proper business of humanity to endeavour to resemble the Deity. Here is order, such as might be expected to result from the operation of Infinite wisdom. God created man in His own image and likeness, and placed him as His representative, and the chief medium of His influences in the world of nature, which world, the discoveries of science are proving to us, arrived not at its perfection until this image of God existed upon it. The glory and excellence, then, of the human character, consist in their resemblance of the Divine Perfection.

tions. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. v. 48.) But can man be likened unto his Maker? Divine Attributes cannot be communicated, but Divine Influence from them can be received into finite faculties; and thus man can become godlike, though between him and the perfections of Jehovah an infinite disparity must for ever exist. While, therefore, all the capabilities of man, which exalt him high above the whole universe of nature, are the gifts of God, and for which he must ever be dependent on the Divine bounty, perfection—absolute perfection—can belong to God alone, creaturely perfections being only its images and likenesses. He is Omnipotent, because no power can exist that was not derived from Him. All possible power either to be or to do is His. Its perversions and misuses are to be attributed to the imperfections of His creatures. He is Almighty, and therefore no degree of frailty can attach to the exercise of His power. He is infinitely wise, and therefore all His operations are the result of perfect wisdom. Whatever He appoints accords with His wisdom, and nothing of evil is permitted but such as could not be prevented consistently with wisdom; and every thing is known to His omniscience—all is understood by Him. He is absolutely perfect, not only in power and in wisdom, but also in goodness. Unless we allow this Divine Attribute its infinity—its perfection—we mutilate the Divine Character in a most essential principle; for we may perceive, that while the mention of His power leads us to look at the operations of His hand, and the mention of His wisdom to think of His purposes and laws, His goodness when named directs us at once to the very essence of all that is revealed of Him, or that can be thought respecting Him: it brings immediately before us the Divine Motives; we see that all that can be thought respecting every other attribute, must be according to our thoughts respecting this; for this is as the soul of all the rest. How necessary, then, that we suffer no opinions, no fears, no obscure doctrines or unexamined testimonies, to