but the belonging to, and being possessed  
by, sin.—De Wette observes, ‘The words  
“*in the likeness of the flesh of sin*,” appear  
almost to border on Docetism (the heresy  
which held the Humanity of our Lord to  
be only apparent, not real) ; but in reality  
contain a perfectly true and consistent  
sentiment.’ “ *The flesh of sin*” is *flesh*  
(human nature, John i. 14; 1 John iv. 2;  
Heb. ii. 14) *possessed with sin*: the Apostle  
could not then have said, “sending His  
Son *in* the flesh of sin,” without making  
Christ *partaker of sin*: nor could he have  
said merely “*in the flesh*,” for then the  
bond between the Manhood of Jesus, and  
sin, would have been wanting: he says  
then, **in the likeness of the flesh of sin**,—  
meaning by that, He had a nature *like*  
*sinful human nature*, but had not Himself  
*a sinful nature*,—comp. Heb. iv.15: “ *For  
we have not an High Priest which cannot  
sympathize with our infirmities, but one  
who was tempted in all things, like as we  
are, apart from sin*.” The *likeness* must  
be referred not only to the word “*flesh*,”  
but also to the epithet “*of sin* :”—it did  
not however consist in this, that He took  
our sins (literally) on Himself and became  
Himself sinful, which would not amount to  
likeness of *nature*,—but in this, that He  
was *able to be tempted*, i.e. subjected to  
sensuous incitements, e. g. of *pain*, which  
in other men break out into sin, but in  
Him did not. See Phil. ii. 7, and note.—  
“*Flesh*” is not equivalent to “*body*,”  
but as in John i. 14, the *material*, of which  
man is in the body compounded),—**and for**  
(on account of) **sin** (to be joined with  
“*sending*,” not “*condemned* :” least of all  
may we understand it as Luther, “ *and  
condemned sin in the flesh by means of  
sin*.” The *‘for*,’ or ‘*on account of*’ sin,  
is at present *indefinite*, and not to be  
restricted to Christ’s death as a sin-offering,   
which is not just now the subject.  
‘On account of sin’ then, is equivalent to  
“*to put away sin*,” as Heb. x. 6, 18),  
**condemned sin in the flesh** (not ‘the  
sin which was in the flesh,’ which is  
against the context, in which “*sin*” is  
throughout an *absolute principle*.  
  
  
In **condemned** we have an allusion to  
“*condemnation*,” ver. 1. Hence it has  
been taken to mean that God condemned,  
*punished*, sin in the flesh by the death of  
Christ. But that can hardly be the meaning   
here, for several reasons. 1. The  
Apostle is not speaking of the removal of  
the *guilt*, but of the *practice* of sin, and of  
the real fulfilment of the law in those who  
are in Christ. It is this which even in  
ver. 1 is before him, grounding as he does  
the fact of *no condemnation* on the serving  
the law of God, ch. vii. 25; on the *new and  
sanctifying power of the Spirit by Christ*,  
in spite of *the continued subjection of the  
flesh to the law of sin*. 2. The context  
shews that the weakness of the law was,  
its having no *sanctifying* power ;—it could  
arouse sin, but it could not condemn and  
cast it out. This indeed is the burden of  
ch. vii. The absence of *justifying* power in  
the law has already been dealt with. 3.  
The following verse clearly makes the fulfilling   
the *righteous demand* of the law no  
matter of mere imputation, but of *walking  
after the Spirit*.—We must then look for  
the meaning of the word **condemned** in the  
*effects* and accompaniments of condemnation,—  
*victory over*, and *casting out* *of* sin.  
See, for example, John xii. 31, where “ the  
judgment of this world” is explained by  
*the ruler of this world shall be cast out*,  
and also John xvi. 11. I have dwelt at  
length on this question, as being very   
important to the right apprehension of the  
whole chapter, in this part of which *not  
the justification*, but the *sanctification*, of  
Christians is the leading subject. It is a  
strong confirmation of the above view, that  
God’s condemnation of sin in the flesh by  
Christ is stated in ver. 3 as the ground of  
(ver. 2) my being freed from *the law of  
sin and death*: because, viz. *Christ’s victory   
over sin is mine, by my union with  
Him and participation in His Spirit*.  
**in the flesh** does not mean ‘*in His flesh*,’  
or ‘*by means of his flesh* ;’ but ‘in *the  
flesh*, which Christ and ourselves haye in  
common) :   
  
**4.**] (**in order**) **that** (the  
purpose of God’s condemning sin in the  
flesh) **the righteous demand** (or, requirement)   
**of the law** (meaning, all its requirements   
[statutes], but here *combined  
in one for the sake of more distinct   
objectivity*)   
**might be fulfilled in us** (*find its  
full accomplishment* :—not merely ‘be  
performed *by* us,’—for the Apostle has a  
much deeper meaning, viz. that the *aim of  
God in giving the Law* might be