or passive [“to renew them,” or, “that they  
should be renewed”] : the impossibility  
merely within the limits of the hypothesis  
itself. Whether God, of His infinite mercy  
and almighty power, will ever, by judgments or the strong work of His Spirit reclaim the obdurate sinner, so that even  
*he* may look on Him whom he has pierced,  
is, thank Him, a question which neither  
this, nor any other passage of Scripture,  
precludes us from entertaining. There is  
no barring here of God’s grace, but just as  
1 have observed above, an axiomatic preclusion by the very hypothesis itself, of a renewal to repentance of those who have  
passed through, and rejected for themselves,  
God’s appointed means of renewal. 5)  
Another dispute over our passage has been,  
whether the *sin against the Holy Ghost* is  
in any way brought in here. Certainly  
we may say that the fall here spoken of  
cannot be identical with that sin: for as  
Bleek has well remarked, that sin may  
be predicated of persons altogether outside the Christian Church, as were those with reference to whom our Lord uttered  
His awful saying on it. It is true, the  
language used in the parallel place, ch. x. 29, does approach that sin, where he says, *“have done despite to the Spirit of grace:”* but it is also clear that the impossibility here spoken of cannot depend  
ou the fact of such sin having been committed, by the construction of the  
sentence, which itself renders the reason  
for that impossibility).

**7,8.]** *Illustration of the last position*, by a contrast  
between profitable and unprofitable land.  
{7} **For land which hath drunk in the rain  
frequently coming on it** (so far, is the  
*subject* of both sides of the hypothesis:  
and not the word *“land”* only. The A.V.,  
“But that which beareth thorns, &c.,”  
is mistranslated. Besides which, the A. V.  
has neglected the past participle here, in  
rendering, *“the earth which drinketh in.”*  
The drinking in the rain is an act prior to  
both the hypotheses. The term **hath drunk in** implies not only that the earth has *received* the rain, Int that it has *taken it in*,  
sucked it in, “being no impenetrable rocky  
soil, from which the rain runs off without  
sinking in. And thus it is an appropriate figure for men who have really taken into themselves the word of God, and experienced its power,” and so furnishes an explanation of vv. 4, 5, as  
well as being explained by them. In the  
interpretation, **rain** must not be too  
strictly confined to “teaching,” but taken  
widely, as importing all spiritual influences  
whatever), **and bringeth forth plants** (properly fodder, provender, for man or beast: the word is generally used for grass, or corn, or any kind of green herb) **fit** (meet) **for those on whose account** (the A V. renders  
ungrammatically, *“by whom.”* On the sense below) **also** (this **also** is common  
in cases where some special reference of an  
already patent fact is adduced) **it is tilled**  
(*who are* these persons, in the *interpretation?* Theophylact mentions two references : 1) to the men themselves, who  
bearing Christian graces as fruit, will  
themselves reap the advantage: 2) to  
their teachers, who participate in their  
disciples’ excellences. But both these fall  
short of the mark: and there can be no  
doubt that if, as is probable, the features  
of the parable are to be traced in the interpretation, we must understand GOD as the owner of the land which is tilled, and  
the tillers are the teachers and preachers  
of the Gospel. So 1 Cor. iii. 9), **partaketh of** (the verb is often used without any necessary reference to *others also*  
being sharers) **blessing from God:** {8} **but if  
it bear thorns and thistles is accounted  
worthless (***‘reprobate,’* tried and found  
wanting. Being thus rejected, it gets no  
share of God’s blessing), **and nigh unto  
cursing** (there appears here to be an  
allusion to Gen. iii. 17, 18, “Cursed be  
the ground for thy sake: thorns and  
thistles shall it bring forth unto thee.”  
Chrysostom has noticed that in the expression