transaction very different from the entering into covenants ; and a judgment of it is to be formed on very different prin­ciples. Every thing around us proclaims that the Sovereign of the universe is a being of perfect benevolence ; but, say the disciples of the school now under consideration, the dispensation given to Adam in Paradise was so far from be­ing the offspring of benevolence, that, as it is understood by the followers of Calvin, it cannot possibly be reconciled with the eternal laws of equity. The self-existent and all- sufficient God might or might not have created such a be­ing as man ; and in either case there would have been no reason for the question “ What dost thou ?” But as soon as he determined to create him capable of happiness or mi­sery, he would not have been either benevolent or just, if he had not placed him in a state where, by his own exer­tions, he might, if he chose, have *a* greater share of happi­ness than of misery, and find his existence, upon the whole, a blessing. They readily acknowledge, that the existence of any created being may be of longer or shorter duration, according to the good pleasure of the Creator ; and there­fore they have no objection to the apostolic doctrine, that “ in Adam all die ;” for immortality being not a debt, but *a free gift,* may be bestowed on any terms, and with perfect justice withdrawn when those terms are not complied with. Between death, however, as it implies a loss of conscious­ness, and the extreme misery of eternal life in torments, there is an immense difference. To death all mankind might justly be subjected through the offence of one ; be­cause they had originally no claim to be exempted from it, though that one and they too had remained for ever inno­cent ; but eternal life in torments is a punishment which a God of justice and benevolence can never inflict but upon personal guilt of the deepest die. That we can personally have incurred guilt from a crime committed some thousands of years before we were born, is impossible. It is indeed a notion as contrary to reason as to common sense ; for the apostle expressly informs us, (1 John iii. 4), “ that sin is the transgression of some law and the sin of Adam was the transgresion of a law which it was never in our power either to observe or to break. Another apostle (Rom. iv. 15) assures us, that “ where no law is, there is no trans­gression ;” but there is now no law, nor has been any these five thousand years, forbidding mankind to eat of a parti­cular fruit ; for, according to the Calvinists themselves, (Gill’s Body of Divinity, book iii. ch. 10.) Adam had no sooner committed his first sin, by which the covenant with him was broken, than he ceased to be a covenant-head. This law given him was no more ; the promise of life by it ceased ; and its sanction, death, took place. But if this be so, how is it possible that his unborn posterity should be under a law which had no existence, or that they should be in a worse state in consequence of the covenant being bro­ken, and its promise having ceased, than he himself was be­fore the covenant was first made ? He was originally a mortal being, and was promised the supernatural gift of im­mortality on the single condition of his abstaining from the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. From that fruit he did not abstain ; but by eating it fell back into his natural state of mortality. Thus far it is admitted that his posterity fell with him ; for they have no claim to a super­natural gift which he had forfeited by his transgression. But we cannot admit, say the divines of this school, that they fell into his guilt ; for to render it possible for a man to incur guilt by the transgression of a law, it is necessary not only that he have it in his power to keep the law, but also that he be capable of transgressing it by a *voluntary* act. But surely no man could be capable of voluntarily eating the forbidden fruit five thousand years before he him­self or his volitions existed. The followers of Calvin think it a sufficient objection to the doctrine of transubstantiation, that the same numerical body cannot be in different

places at the same instant of time. But this ubiquity of body, say the Remonstrants, is not more palpably absurd, than the supposition that a man could exert volitions before he or his will had any existence.

Nor will the introduction of the word *imputation* into this important question remove a single difficulty. For what is it that we mean by saying that the sin of Adam is imputed to his posterity ? Is the guilt of that sin transferred from him to them ? So surely thought Dr. Gill, when he said that it *is made over to them.* But this is the same absur­dity as the making over of the sensible qualities of bread and wine to the internal substance of the Saviour’s body and blood. This imputation either found the posterity of Adam guilty of his sin, or it made them so. It could not find them guilty for the reason already assigned, as well as because the apostle says expressly, that for the offence of *one* judgment came upon *all* men, which would not be true had *all* offended. It could not make them guilty ; for this reason, that if there be in physics or metaphysics a single truth self-evident, it is, that the numerical powers, actions, or qualities of one being cannot possibly be transferred to another, and be made its powers, actions, or qualities. Dif­ferent beings may in distant ages have qualities of the same kind ; but as easily may 4 and 3 be made equal to 9, as two beings be made to have the same identical quality. In Scripture we nowhere read of the actions of one man being imputed to another. “ Abraham,” we are told, “believed in God, and it was counted to him for righteousness but it was his *own* faith, and not the faith of another man, that was so counted. “ To him that worketh not, but believeth,his faith (not another’s) is imputed for righteousness.” And of our faith in him that raised Christ from the dead, it is said, that “ it shall be imputed, not to our fathers or our children, but to us for righteousness."

When this phrase is used with a negative, not only is the man’s own personal sin spoken of, but the non-imputation of that sin means nothing more but that it brings not upon the sinner condign punishment. Thus when Shemei “ said unto David, Let not my lord *impute* iniquity unto me;” it could not be his meaning that the king should not think that he had offended; for with the same breath he added, “ Neither do thou remember that which thy servant *did perversely,* the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his *heart.* For thy servant doth *know* that *I have sinned.”* Here he plainly confesses his sin, and declares, that by entreating the king not to *impure it to him,* he wishes only that it should not be so remembered as that the king should take it to heart, and punish him as his perverseness deserved. When there­fore it is said, (2 Cor. v. 19,) that “ God was in Christ re­conciling the world to himself, not imputing to them their iniquities,” the meaning is only, that for Christ’s sake, he was pleased to exempt them from the punishment due to their sins. In like manner, when the prophet, foretelling the sufferings of the Messiah, says, that “ the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all,” his meaning cannot be, that the Lord by *imputation* made his immaculate Son guilty of all the sins that men have ever committed; for in that case it would not be true that the “ just suffered for the unjust,” as the apostle expressly teaches, (1 Peter iii. 28); but the sense of the verse must be, as Bishop Coverdale translated it, “ through him the Lord pardoneth all our sins.” This interpretation is countenanced by the ancient version of the Seventy, *και* Kυ*ριoς πaρεδωκεν ἀυτov ταις ἁμαρτιαις ἡμων*: *:* words which express a notion very different from that of imputed guilt. The Messiah was, without a breach of jus­tice, delivered for sins of which he had voluntarily offered to pay the penalty; and St. Paul might have been justly charged by Philemon with the debts of Onesimus, which he desired might be placed to his account. Had the apostle, however, expressed no such desire, surely Philemon could