

if they repent in this world, they may be forgiven; if they sin against Jesus his Son, and repent and work the works of righteousness, these sins may be blotted out; but if they sin against the Holy Ghost after having received the same and been baptized by him, there is no forgiveness for that sin, neither in this world nor in the world to come.

Now if there is to be a variety of punishments as well as a variety of glories, there must be a variety of places of punishment. It would look inconsistent to us, even here in this life, to see a person guilty of but a small crime against the laws of our country thrust into the same dungeon with the murderer. It would be unjust, for instance, according to our notions, for a person who has committed but a trifling offense against the law to be thrust into the darkest and deepest dungeon along with him who has shed innocent blood. We have sufficient justice in our own bosoms to classify these individuals and to point out to each the apartment in which he is to dwell. Is the Lord less just than man? Is he not filled with the great principles of justice far beyond that which any man ever did receive? From him have emanated all our ideas of justice, consequently we cannot look upon him as a being who would consign the poor heathen who died without a knowledge of the law, and others who have led moral lives but who have not obeyed the Gospel of the Son of God, to the same punishment as the murderer and him who sheds innocent blood. We should regard it as unjust if all these classes were to be thrust into one place, there to welter under the same conditions of punishment throughout the endless ages of eternity without any hope of redemption. I could not look upon this as just, and I pre-

sume that no other reflecting being could, especially if he was acquainted with the Scriptures. Jesus, in speaking upon this subject, says—"He that knows his master's will, and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes;" while he who is ignorant of his master's will and does things that are worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. I have not quoted the saying of Jesus, word for word, but I have given you the sentiment; the Lord, therefore, in judging man, judges not by the act in all cases, but according to the understanding and knowledge of the individual who performs that act. If two persons were each to commit a murder—shed innocent blood—and one had a full knowledge of the revealed law of God, and the other was in entire ignorance of it, there would be a distinction in judging these two characters. We would say at once that he who had sinned against knowledge should receive a heavier punishment than he who had not this knowledge.

Suppose that Saints, who have not only heard the law of God, but have embraced the Gospel of the Son of God, have been renewed in their minds by the power of the Holy Ghost and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, should be so far overcome as to shed innocent blood, would there be any forgiveness for them? Not at all. Would it be our duty, if such a person were judged, and condemned by the laws of our country to be hanged by the neck until dead, to visit him and pray that God would forgive his sins? No, we would be sinning against God in doing so. Why? Because God has revealed to us that persons who have this light and knowledge, and shed innocent blood, cannot be forgiven in this world nor in the