

AN
HISTORICAL PRESENTATION
OF
AUGUSTINISM AND PELAGIANISM

FROM THE
ORIGINAL SOURCES,

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,
WITH NOTES AND ADDITIONS,

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other passages, from De Cor. et Gr. c. 11, where he even says, that no man is so blind in the faith as to set up such a proposition.

It may, however, be readily admitted, that individual Pelagians were likewise Nestorians, or differed from the subsequent orthodoxy respecting the person of Christ. This was true particularly of Leporius. Still he did not do this as a Pelagian; and in this respect the connection between Pelagianism and Nestorianism must be totally denied. And nothing even of this kind, was maintained by Pelagius, Caelestius, and Julian, the proper representatives of Pelagianism. See Walch's History of Heresies, Part IV. p. 816, 817.

Nestorius, too, we may venture to regard as no Pelagian in the proper sense, though he, as also all the orientals, might differ from the Augustinian theory, on many points.

CHAPTER XIX.

View of the Augustinian and Pelagian systems, in their main features.

I. INFANT BAPTISM.

Aug.—The baptism of infants as well as of adults, is for the forgiveness of sin. Children have, indeed, committed no actual sins, yet, by original sin, they are under the power of the devil, from which they are freed by baptism. Hence christian children who die before baptism, no more escape positive punishment in the future life, than do all who are not Christians.

Pel.—The baptism of children takes place, in order to their receiving the benefits of Christianity, and particularly to procure for them the salvation of Christians. Even without baptism, they may obtain salvation in general (salus); but baptism is the necessary condition to the salvation of Christians, or the kingdom of heaven. But by no means is the forgiveness of original sin the object of baptism.

II. ORIGINAL SIN.

Aug.—By Adam's sin, in whom all men jointly sinned together, sin and the other positive punishments of Adam's sin, came into the

world. By it, human nature has been both physically and morally corrupted. Every man brings into the world with him a nature already so corrupt, that he can do nothing but sin. The propagation of this quality of his nature, is by concupiscence.

Pel.—By his transgression, Adam injured only himself, not his posterity. In respect to his moral nature, every man is born in precisely the same condition in which Adam was created. There is therefore no original sin.

III. FREEWILL.

Aug.—By Adam's transgression, the freedom of the human will has been entirely lost. In his present corrupt state, man can will and do only evil.

Pel.—Man's will is free. Every man has the power to will and to do good, as well as the opposite. Hence it depends on himself, whether he will be good or evil.

IV. GRACE.

Aug.—If, nevertheless, man, in his present state, wills and does good, it is merely the work of grace. It is an inward, secret, and wonderful operation of God upon man. It is a preceding as well as an accompanying work. By preceding grace, man attains faith, by which he comes to an insight of good, and by which power is given him to will the good. He needs cooperating grace for the performance of every individual good act. As man can do nothing without grace, so he can do nothing against it. It is irresistible. And as man by nature has no merit at all, no respect at all can be had to man's moral disposition, in imparting grace, but God acts according to his own freewill.

Pel.—Although by freewill, which is a gift of God, man has the capacity of willing and doing good, without God's special aid, yet, for the *easier* performance of it, God revealed the law; for the *easier* performance, the instruction and example of Christ aid him; and for the *easier* performance, even the supernatural operations of grace are imparted to him. Grace, in the most limited sense (gracious influence), is given to those only who deserve it by the faithful employment of their own powers. But man can resist it.

V. PREDESTINATION AND REDEMPTION.

Aug.—From eternity, God made a free and unconditional decree to save a few from the mass that was corrupted and subjected to damnation. To those whom he predestinated to this salvation, he gives the requisite means for the purpose. But on the rest, who do not belong to this small number of the elect, the merited ruin falls. Christ came into the world and died for the elect only.

Pel.—God's decree of election and reprobation, is founded on pre-science. Those, of whom God foresaw that they would keep his commands, he predestinated to salvation; the others to damnation.—Christ's redemption is general. But those only need his atoning death, which have actually sinned. *All*, however, by his instruction and example, may be led to higher perfection and virtue.

These were the grand principles in the systems of Augustine and the Pelagians. We cannot but perceive the great consistency of each system. If one doctrine is adopted, all the doctrines must be adopted; for they stand in indissoluble connection. In Augustine's system, the doctrine of original sin is to be regarded as peculiarly the central point, from which his doctrines of grace and predestination necessarily spring. Predestination forms as it were the keystone of the structure, from which the theory of redemption may be regarded as a corollary.—The doctrine of Pelagius, too, is distinguished for its consistency,—or, as I have not undesignedly expressed it, the *Pelagian* doctrine, since several opinions, which incontrovertibly lie in the grand principles of Pelagius, cannot be historically exhibited as announced by him, though Caelestius and other Pelagians expressly acknowledged them.

As man is not by nature corrupt, but finds himself in the same state in which Adam was created, he needs no special grace in order to be saved. It is not, however, inconsistent with this, that he may thereby obtain a higher degree of morality, and consequently a higher degree of felicity.

By this system, redemption must be general, and acquire a more comprehensive import than it could have according to Augustine's assumption, which always confined it to the elect few. And even