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Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity
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list continually.

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WATCH TOWER ADDRESS TAGS.

We are adopting a new method of addressing TOWER wrappers,
omitting the date of expiration of subscription which few
seem to notice. Hereafter all subscriptions will be acknowledged
by card or letter and a notice of expiration will be printed plainly
on the wrapper.

RE-ENLISTED VOLUNTEERS! TO ARMS!

The new lot of "Bible vs. Evolution" ammunition is not yet ready, but by March 15 to April 1 we will have plenty of the new ammunition for use where the Bible vs. Evolution has already been distributed. You will like it, we assure you this in advance. It will consist of "Which is the True Gospel?" and "What Say the Scriptures about Hell?" in the shape of a double number of the WATCH TOWER. Get your several squads together and let us have your orders stating (1) the number of white Protestant churches in the district; (2) the average attendance at service which the church members chiefly attend; (3) the number of Volunteers in your squad; (4) to what address would you prefer to have the ammunition sent.

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WATCH TOWER INDEX FROM 1895 TO 1899.

Inset in this issue is an index to Bible references which will be found very helpful in study. It can be touched with paste and set into your Bible among the Helps. It is the preparation of two dear sisters at Los Angeles who do not care to have their names mentioned. They have had pleasure in thus serving the Lord and his "brethren."

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"MARK THE PERFECT MAN! BEHOLD THE UPRIGHT!"

--MATT. 4:25-5:12.--APRIL 1.--

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

WHAT characteristics are essential to our attainment of the most blessed conditions God has to bestow? What must we be in order to inherit the Kingdom, be filled with righteousness, obtain divine mercy and everlasting comfort, be called the sons of God, and be permitted to see his face, obtaining a great reward in heaven? What question, what topic, what Bible lesson, could be more interesting to us or a more profitable study than this one? The great Teacher made it the topic, the text, of one of his principal discourses at his first advent, and caused the gist of his argument to be recorded for the admonition of his true followers throughout this Gospel age.

While the character of our Lord, which we as

his followers are to copy, is one; and the attainment of that one character or disposition means the attainment of all the blessings God has to bestow; nevertheless, in order to present the matter the more distinctly to our minds the Lord divides this one character or disposition into different sections, giving us a view of each particular part; just as a photographer would take a front view, right-side view, left-side view, rear view and angling views, of any interesting subject, so that all the details of construction might be clearly discernible.

THE FIRST ESSENTIAL.

The first character-picture which our Lord presents we may reasonably assume was in some respects at least most important: It is Humility. "Blessed are the humble-minded (poor in spirit) for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." We do not understand this to signify that humility is the only essential grace, and that whoever is humble will therefore attain the Kingdom; but rather that to the attainment of the Kingdom humility is a prerequisite of first importance. In other words, while all humble people will not attain the Kingdom, the Kingdom cannot be attained by anyone who is not humble: the Kingdom is theirs, in the sense that it is possible for this class to accept the terms and to attain to the honors and blessings, while all of a different attitude of mind--the proud, the haughty, the self-conceited, are absolutely debarred from any possibility of attaining the Kingdom so long as these contrary conditions lie at the foundation of their characters.

O that all of the Lord's people might see this point clearly and distinctly, and realize once and forever that "The Lord resisteth the proud and showeth his favors to the humble" exclusively! How this thought should put a guard upon every one of the Lord's little ones who is seeking to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son. How jealously they would watch and foster the development of this spirit of humility in their own hearts, and how it would be more and more discernible to others in their daily course of life, and what a blessing and what an influence for good, especially upon the "brethren," would result!

Growing out of this first essential quality or characteristic, as a tree of many branches out of the root, come the other graces of the spirit, which the Lord has declared blessed--divinely approved. How different our Lord's teachings in this respect from all human teachings! Earthly wisdom would say, on the contrary: Hold up your head; think well of yourself, if you would have other people think well of you;

be high-spirited, instead of poor in spirit, a little haughty, rather than of humble demeanor; it will have a greater influence in many respects, for no one will think more highly of you than you think of yourself, nor give you credit for more than you claim; hence, think highly of yourself, and claim much, carrying a high head, and having a lofty and self-important look.

No doubt there is worldly wisdom in the worldly counsel; no doubt there is some truth in the worldly suggestion, so far as success in earthly matters in the present time is concerned. But here as in other instances, the Lord shows us that his ways are not as man's ways, but higher, as the heavens are higher

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than the earth. He assures us that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted in due time, while he who exalts himself shall be brought low, in due time. (Matt. 23:12.) In the Scriptures he points us to our dear Redeemer as the illustration of the humble and obedient one, whom he has now exalted to the right hand of divine power; and our attention is also called to the great Adversary, who, taking a reverse course, sought to exalt himself, and has been abased, and is ultimately to be destroyed.--Phil. 2:9; Heb. 2:14.

A sharp distinction should be noted between being poor in spirit and being poor in pocket, or in intellectual gifts and attainments. We have all seen people who were poor in these earthly senses, yet proud in spirit. The point to be noticed is that whatever our financial or intellectual gifts and conditions, the thing acceptable in the divine sight is humility of spirit. Such a disposition is essential to those who would receive the wisdom which cometh from above--they must have a humble appreciation of their own deficiencies and lack of wisdom, else they cannot receive freely, heartily, the wisdom which God is pleased to grant in the present time, only to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it. And it will be seen also that this humility of mind is essential as a basis for the spirit of a sound mind--for who is in a proper condition to think justly, reasonably, impartially, except first of all he have a humble disposition? Hence we must agree that humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ.

CONSOLATIONS THE REWARD OF SYMPATHY.

The second beatitude or blessed condition mentioned by our Lord stands closely related to the first --"Blessed are they that mourn." Mourning of itself is not a grace, but it betokens an attitude of mind which is acceptable in the Lord's sight. Nor should

we think of a mournful spirit, without consolation or joys, as being a Christian spirit. We cannot suppose that our Heavenly Father and the holy angels are continual mourners, as they would certainly be if mourning possessed any merit of itself. The thought rather is, Blessed are ye that mourn now--to whom present earthly conditions are not entirely satisfactory and happifying--who are not blind to the difficulties and trials through which the human family as a whole is passing--sin and sickness, pain and trouble, dying and crying: blessed are those who have sympathy of heart under present conditions, and to whom they are not satisfactory; for the time is coming when, under God's providence, a better order of things shall be instituted, and their dissatisfaction with present conditions will but bring them into closer sympathy and fellowship with those better things for which the divine plan is preparing. When God's Kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven, all cause for mourning and for sorrow and for tears will be done away: that will be a time for consolation, for satisfaction, to this class.

Indeed, a good measure of comfort comes to the Lord's people even in the present age--through faith built upon the exceeding great and precious promises

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of the divine Word. The fact that they are able to discern the wrongs, the inequities, the distresses of the present time, creates in this class that very condition of heart to which divine promises appeal, whereas others not so touched at heart with sympathy for the groaning creation, are unable to so thoroughly appreciate the hopes set before us in the gospel. Hence it is by a natural law that such are drawn to the Lord's Word, and are enabled to draw therefrom consolation which speaks peace to their hearts, and gives them an inner joy which the less sympathetic cannot know under present conditions. Blessed are the sympathetic!

As we can cultivate the first of these graces, humility of mind, and by cultivation develop more and more of this first and essential characteristic, so we can cultivate also the second grace, the sympathetic spirit. To do this we should frequently think of others--their interests, their trials, their difficulties, and should seek to enter into these as tho they were all our own, and should seek to lend a helping hand and to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith."--Gal. 6:10.

HOW THE GENTLE INHERIT.

The third of these graces which the Lord declares blessed is Meekness, or, as we should say, Gentleness. Webster's Dictionary defines meekness to be, "Submission to the divine will; patience and gentleness from moral and religious motives." It will be perceived that there is quite a difference between this patient, gentle submission to the divine will, and the ordinary gentleness and patience which may frequently be exercised simply for the gratification of selfish desires. Patient submission to the divine will is impossible to those who have not the first grace in the list, a humble mind: the proud and self-willed find it impossible to be submissive to divine conditions; self rises up, perverts their judgments, and misleads their consciences to such an extent that they cannot have full confidence in divine providence, but feel that they must put forth their hand and steady the ark.

Moreover, patient submission can be developed only in those who mourn, in the sense of having large sympathies, and who have been comforted by the blessed promises of God, through which the holy spirit comforteth his people. Realizing the evils of our time, and that they are permitted of God for the present for a wise purpose, these not only sympathize with the groaning creation, but this sympathy and the comfort received as its reward tend to make them patient, submissive to the divine will. Remembering that all things are working together for good to them that love God, they are prepared to recognize divine providence in whatever may befall them, and prepared also to look for the lessons of those providences, as blessings which will be helpful to them and to others, in preparing for the future and eternal joys.

This third grace--patient submission to the divine will--which can be noted by those with whom we come in contact, might be said to be the outer manifestation of the second grace, which is inward, of the heart, and which might not be outwardly discerned

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by our fellow-creatures. The grace of sympathy manifests itself in our patient submissiveness in all the affairs of life, realizing that to those who are in Christ all matters are under divine supervision, and this patience in respect to God's providences in our own circumstances and affairs leads also naturally and properly to patience with others in their weaknesses and failures and ignorance, and leads properly to helpfulness toward them as we have opportunity.

These "meek," patiently submissive to the divine will, shall inherit the earth. The Lord did not mean, nor is it true, that the patient and submissive to the divine will inherit the earth at the present time: quite to the contrary, the arrogant, the impatient, the aggressive,

the selfish, succeed in grasping the chief things of power, of influence and of wealth now; and the patiently submissive have comparatively a poor chance. The reward of this grace, therefore, like the others, is future: following on under the divine leading, these shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; and the earth is a part of that great inheritance, which in turn, by divine arrangement, they shall bestow at the close of the Millennial age, upon the world of mankind who then survive--those proved worthy of eternal life by the Millennial tests.

Nevertheless, as there is a sense in which the Lord's people are comforted now, so there is also a sense in which they now inherit the earth--a figurative sense, by faith. The Apostle speaks of this when he says, "All things are yours--things present or things to come." (1 Cor. 3:21-23.) Those who have the proper humble attitude of mind and are patiently submissive to the divine will, get more of blessing out of the things of the present time than do their actual owners, because their hearts are in the attitude in which it is possible to receive blessing. The world, full of selfish craving, is never satisfied, never contented; the child of God, patiently submissive to the divine will, is always satisfied--

"Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me."

FILLED WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The fourth blessing is that of Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness. No one can have this hunger and thirst unless he previously have to a considerable extent the previous characteristics. If he have not humility of mind he will be satisfied with his attainments of righteousness, being unable to see beyond his own low plane, unable to discern the heights and grandeurs of the divine perfection. He cannot hunger and thirst after that which he does not in some measure comprehend. Unless he have the spirit of sympathy, which discerns the wrongs, the inequities of our present time (which in great measure mankind is unable to counteract and overcome--by which some of the human family, very deficient in the virtues, have an overplus of wealth and influence and authority, while some possessing superior virtues have scarcely the necessities of life) he cannot yearn for the better condition of things which the Scriptures declare can only be introduced by the establishment of Messiah's Millennial Kingdom. It is a blessed indication then, if we find in our hearts a hungering and a thirsting for justice, for righteousness, for truth --an antipathy to untruth in every form, and to all injustice, in-equity--an antipathy, nevertheless, modified,

influenced, controlled, by the third grace of this list, viz., by patient submission to the divine will. The control of this last quality is what the Apostle refers to when he says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men." It is this quality which stepping in hinders our hunger and thirst after righteousness, and our zeal for it, (both as respects truth and practice) from making us anarchistic or extremists in any sense of the word. This quality of hunger and thirst after righteousness, uncontrolled by the other of these graces of the spirit, has led many worldly people, as reformers, into wild excesses: whereas the child of God altho having this same hunger and thirst in a larger degree than others, yet, under the control of the spirit of a sound mind, instructed from the Lord's Word, rests in his promises and waits for their fulfillment, patiently submissive, and assured of the victory of righteousness in God's due time, which he adopts as his time also.

Those who have and cultivate this blessed hunger and thirst shall be satisfied, abundantly satisfied, by and by, when God's Kingdom shall be established, and when as a result of its reign all evil and all sin, all in-equities (iniquities) shall be suppressed, and God's holy will shall "be done on earth even as it is done in heaven." Our hunger and thirst after righteousness is not to be destroyed, but, as our Lord promised, it is to be satisfied. The appetite for truth and righteousness will still be there, but the prevalence of truth and righteousness shall be its satisfaction.

In this grace, as in the others, there is a sense in which by faith we already attain some measure of the fulfillment to come--altho it is but a foretaste. Those who have the hunger and thirst for righteousness, in line with the other graces of the spirit, find in the gracious promises of the Lord that comfort and consolation which already, even in this present life, can be assimilated by faith, and which proves to be "meat in due season for the household of faith," sustaining, strengthening, resting, and at least partially satisfying the hunger and the thirst, as they realize the divine provision for everlasting righteousness is exceeding and abundant, more than all that they could have thought or have requested.

HOW TO OBTAIN MERCY.

The fifth blessed condition is that of Mercifulness. Mercy is the outward expression that man can discern, resulting from an appreciation of righteousness and a hunger and thirst for it in the renewed heart. After we have taken the preceding steps, and have learned to appreciate the inequities of the present time, and our own imperfections (unrighteousness) and

those of other men; and after we have learned that God alone is able to right these matters in the full and complete sense, and that he has made provision for the righting of every wrong, and for the restoration to his favor of all who will accept his grace in Christ, to be made known to all in due time--it is then we begin to feel merciful, benevolent, kind, toward

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others, to an extent and degree that we could not feel these sentiments previously. Worldly people, who have not traveled on the pathway marked by these blessings of character and growths in grace, cannot to the same degree sympathize with nor feel merciful toward others.

The Lord lays great stress upon this quality of mercy, declaring that whatever else may be our attainments of knowledge or of grace, if we have not this one we can never be acceptable to him--if we do not have mercy upon others neither will our Heavenly Father have mercy upon us. And to insure that we do not consider this mercy to be merely an outward form, an expression of forgiveness and benevolence, our Lord expounds the matter, saying, "If ye do not from the heart forgive one another, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." It must be a genuine mercy, and not a feigned one; it must cover from sight, and so far as possible blot from memory, the failings and weaknesses of others, else it cannot hope for forgiveness and blotting out of its own shortcomings which its hunger and thirst for righteousness has clearly revealed to it. Only the merciful shall obtain mercy: and if we have not mercy at the hands of the Lord all is lost; for by nature we were children of wrath, even as others, and under just condemnation.

The exercise of mercy, benevolence, forgiveness, is a blessing, not merely because it is essential to our own forgiveness, and hence to our salvation, but also because this condition of heart which sympathizes with others in their failures and imperfections helps to rid our hearts of certain of the works of the flesh and of the devil, which incline to cling to the Lord's people long after they have been justified by faith, and even after they have made full consecration of themselves to the Lord and are seeking to "walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

The Apostle includes amongst the works of the flesh which require putting away, after we are fully the Lord's, the following--anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. All of these qualities of selfishness are antagonized by mercy, and by it largely they are driven from their secret hidings and entrenched positions in our hearts. The blessed character of Mercy is closely related to Love, for it is in proportion as we obtain

the Lord's spirit of love that we manifest toward others mercy, even as he has manifested his love toward us in the mercy extended to us in Christ. Love and mercy, consideration for others, has much to do with driving out envy. How can we envy those whom we love sincerely? How can we have malice toward those who are our enemies, if we love them and have mercy, compassion, upon them, and forgive them from our hearts? How can we have hatred toward them, if we have mercy upon them, and feel toward them only a forgiving spirit? And how can we be strifeless, if we have a merciful, a forgiving spirit ready to forgive trespasses against us, as we hope for forgiveness of our trespasses against the divine law?

"Mercy rejoiceth against justice," the Apostle explains. (Jas. 2:13.) Divine Mercy satisfied divine Justice, and thus prepared the way for the rescue of our race from the sentence of Justice: and so those who have become partakers of the divine spirit, and in whom it has reached a reasonable development, will permit their mercy to triumph over their conceptions of justice (for they have no law of justice over their fellows which needs to be satisfied).

While justice may not be blind in the Lord's people, while they may discern the faults of others most clearly, and while they may seek to let justice rule in respect to all of their own words, and thoughts, and actions, nevertheless they are to let mercy triumph in their hearts over justice as respects those who trespass against them, and they are not to hold resentments against those who have done them injury, nor to seek to avenge themselves and to inflict justice upon their opponents. Rather, they are to say, It is for God to be just; it is for me, who am a transgressor also against perfect justice, through the weaknesses which I have inherited, to have compassion upon my fellow-creature, who has inherited similar yet different weaknesses: it is for me to exercise accordingly the divine command, the blessed characteristic of mercy, compassion, forgiveness. And those who do so not only get rid of the evil works and sentiments of the world, the flesh and the devil, but increasingly become filled more and more with the spirit of love and gentleness and patient submission to the divine will, and thus the merciful are blessed even in the present time.

"WITHOUT HOLINESS NO MAN SHALL SEE THE LORD."

The sixth step of blessedness is Purity of Heart --purity of motive, purity of intention, purity of effort, purity of will: purity, in the sense of sincerity, of transparency, of truthfulness. In other words, Blessed are the honest-hearted, those who have absolutely

right intentions. True, there are worldly people who to some extent might claim honesty of heart, purpose, intention, but until they have come along the way of divine appointment in Christ, until they have become his followers through faith and consecration to him, and until they have taken the preceding steps of blessedness, we could not recognize them as being of the class here specified.

Many have misunderstood this statement, "pure in heart," and have thought of it as signifying absolute perfection--not only outward but inward; not only of words and of deeds, but also of thoughts. This view of the matter has tended to discourage some who honestly said to themselves, I am not perfect in deed nor in word nor in thought; how then can I claim to be blessed under this provision as one of the pure in heart? We answer that this is a misconception. The Lord knows as well and better than we do, that in our flesh dwells no perfection; that by reason of the fall all of Adam's children have their teeth set on edge by the sour grape of sin, so that sometimes we cannot do the things that we would do, and through ignorance we no doubt frequently leave undone the things which we ought to do.--Jer. 31:29,30; Rom. 7:16-18.

The Lord taught a great lesson during the Jewish age by the giving of the Law to that people, with a promise of life attached to it, but the Apostle assures us that God foreknew, even when he gave that

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Law to the Israelites, that "by the deeds of the Law should no flesh be justified in his sight"--that on the contrary the clearer the Law would be discerned the more clear would be the knowledge of sin--of imperfection. God's provision in Christ is that he will forgive those imperfections which are due, not to personal wilfulness, but to the original sin, and the weaknesses and imperfections which have resulted from it --he will extend his mercy toward us as respects those deflections which are not wilful. That our Lord Jesus was not ignoring human imperfection is evident from the statement he makes in reference to the fifth of these blessed characteristics, viz., that the merciful "shall obtain mercy"--an implication of our need of mercy. Having assured us that we may obtain mercy, he is not in this sixth Beatitude declaring that we must be absolutely perfect in thought, word and deed; for if we were so, or could attain to such a condition, it would be wholly unnecessary for God to provide us mercy and forgiveness of sins through Christ's sacrifice.

The thought of "pure in heart" is not perfection of conduct nor of word, nor of thought, but perfection of intention as respects all of these. Our desire and effort must be for perfection--in thought, word

and deed. The standard before us, to which our hearts, our wills, must give assent, is the divine standard, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.) God has set no lower standard than this absolute perfection, but he has provided for us grace, mercy and peace through Christ, if we will walk in his footsteps,--this purity of heart being one of the essential steps in the narrow way.

Only the pure in heart have the promise of seeing God. They continue faithfully to the end of the pilgrimage, not only attaining the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ in the present life (Rom. 8:29) in their purity of heart, purity of intention, sincerity of their efforts toward God and men, but eventually according to the Lord's promise, they shall, by the power of the first resurrection, be changed from earthly to heavenly, spiritual conditions. Then, as the Apostle declares, "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." And when we have thus become changed to be like the glorious Son of God, who is "the express image of the Father's person," we shall be able also unquestionably to see the Heavenly Father himself, and shall be introduced to him by our dear Redeemer--"complete in him," "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."--1 John 3:2; Heb. 1:3; Eph. 5:27; Col. 2:10.

In this, as in the other blessings, a portion, a foretaste, comes in the present life. There is such a thing as having the eyes of our understanding opened, that we may be enabled to "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ." (Eph. 3:18.) But not all have this opening of the mental eye; not all are privileged to see the glories of Jehovah's character in symmetrical harmony, divine justice, wisdom, love and power coordinated and cooperating in unison for the blessing of every creature, according to the purpose which God purposed in himself before the world was.

But who may enjoy this blessing, this clearer vision, and who may, by seeing it, be enabled more and more to grow in likeness of that glorious perfection? Only "the pure in heart," only the sincere, the honest-hearted. Those who have a double mind, a double will, are Scripturally said to have a double vision, a double eye. They see spiritual things cross-eyed, see things double, and proportionately indistinctly. Many of God's people have failed thus far to grow up into Christ in all things, see thus doubly and confusedly--they see something of the heavenly things, and something of the earthly; they see but dimly and indistinctly the lines of the divine character, and proportionately they lack ability to copy it. Let all who have named the name of Christ seek more and more to have but

service--a pure, a sincere, a faithful heart.

THE SONS OF GOD ALL PEACEMAKERS.

The seventh Beatitude is an outward manifestation of the sixth. The purity of heart toward God, which others cannot discern, will manifest itself in this seventh characteristic of blessedness and growth--namely, in peaceable desires and efforts to promote peace in others. For beyond question no one will be a peacemaker from this divine standpoint unless he have already become sincere, pure in heart toward God; and unless he have also the preceding developments of grace in his heart: (1) humility, (2) sympathy, (3) patient submission, (4) hunger and thirst for righteousness (which includes trust), (5) a love or mercifulness toward others, (6) sincerity of heart. And one who has developed these characteristics to any particular degree can surely be nothing else than peaceably disposed himself, and a peacemaker with others.

Very evidently but a small number of the Lord's people have progressed so far as to have this grace markedly developed and exemplified in their lives. The great majority, even of those who have named the name of Christ, seem to pursue a reverse course, which indicates that even if their hearts are pure and their sympathies large, they have still much to learn in the school of Christ; for instead of being peace promoters they are strife promoters. Yet this is not of evil intent, but rather of habit, and of ignorance and of failure to discern the wide difference between the divine course of love, and the opposite course of selfishness which prevails in the world. Strife-making is chiefly stirred up with the tongue, tho it may be aroused by a gesture or by a glance. Likewise, peacemaking is chiefly done with the tongue, tho it also may operate through the eye. How many Christian people we all know who have tongues which are continually stirring up strife! The Adversary controls many in this manner long after they have escaped from his control in many other respects; and this is largely because they do not detect that in this they are doing Satan service--do not even detect that they are stirrers up of strife, hatred, envy, malice, and planters of roots of bitterness by which many are defiled.

When will Christians learn the length and breadth and depth of the injunctions "Speak evil of no man," and "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of

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your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying?"

(Titus 3:2; Eph. 4:29.) How long will it take some of God's true children to learn that in uttering an evil thing (even if they were positive of its truth), they may be doing a world of evil? How long will it take them to learn that it is not always necessary to speak the truth, nor ever proper to do so except when it would be for the edifying of others? How many lessons, line upon line, must they have to convince them that they are not only to avoid gossip about other people's business, and fault-finding, and cynicism, but that all these are evidences of their deficiency in love--of their deficiency in the likeness of Christ, and their lack of the qualities of the peacemaker; and that these lacks need to be striven against earnestly, if they would make their calling and election sure to a place in the heavenly kingdom?

Oh, that all would learn by heart, and continually seek to exemplify in life, the words of the Apostle, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Those who are thinking on the true and lovely and good and beautiful things will speak to each other of the same; hence the importance of having our hearts filled with good things, in order that out of the abundance of the good things of our hearts our mouths may speak continually good things, that the Lord would approve, and that would minister blessing to those who hear.--Phil. 4:8; Luke 6:45.

Such have a very precious promise, well worthy of their efforts--"They shall be called the children of God"--they have God's spirit, the likeness of his dear Son has been traced in their hearts; they have been sanctified with the truth; they shall ultimately be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." Only such at heart will the Lord ever recognize as his sons and joint-heirs with his great Son, our Lord, in the Kingdom. Moreover, this is a test which we may well recognize for ourselves particularly, and to some extent for each other, as evidencing the degree of our growth as children of God--our peaceable dispositions, and our carefulness to pursue such a course in life as will tend toward peace.

Some of the Lord's people find in themselves naturally considerable of a spirit of combativeness, unfavorable to peace. Indeed, it requires something of the spirit of combativeness to fight a good fight against the world, the flesh and the Adversary, and to "contend earnestly for the faith"; so that those who have combativeness naturally find themselves in antagonism with others along some line continually. However, they should not be discouraged by this, but should remember that combativeness is a valuable servant and soldier, if turned and exercised in the right direction.

Its exercise toward fellow creatures must be modified by mercy, by a realization of our own imperfections and the imperfections of all. Combativeness must be trained to fight along the lines of love and mercy--to fight for the truth and for all the servants and agencies of the truth, and against the error,--but not against the blinded and ignorant servants of the error. Combativeness must be given plenty to do in fighting against the imperfections and weaknesses of our own natures, and being thus busily engaged in this good work, it will find comparatively little time for assaulting others: and realizing the difficulties connected with the conquering of self it will have the greater compassion for the weaknesses of others.

ATTAINING GREAT REWARD IN HEAVEN.

The blessing that comes through persecution is the eighth Beatitude. It is not until the Lord's people have experienced some of these preceding blessings of His grace that they reach the point where they can "glory in tribulations also," as did the Apostle Paul. But our Lord carefully distinguishes as between different kinds of persecution, marking out the blessed kind as distinct from all other sorts. We are not to invite persecution by fault-finding and general cantankerousness and combative opposition to everybody and everything; nor are we to invite persecution by fanaticism. Rather, we are to cultivate the "spirit of a sound mind," and to learn gradually what the sound mind of the Lord is, as revealed in the Scriptures. Even then, no doubt we will be falsely accused by the world of "fanaticism," because the wisdom of God is oft esteemed foolishness with men, as often the wisdom of men is foolishness from the divine standpoint.

Whenever a course of action would appear to be fanatical and unreasonable, we are to hesitate to do it until we have first made sure that we find the same spirit, teaching and example in our Lord and in the apostles: then we may safely follow, regardless of what the world may say or think respecting our course. For instance, from the divine standpoint it is insanity for a man to labor day and night to amass millions, for his children to fight over at his death; but from the human standpoint this is the reasonable course. From the divine standpoint it was wise for the apostles to spend their lives in the service of the truth, sacrificing earthly interests and prospects, name and fame, to obtain eventually a better resurrection, and eternal glory, honor and immortality; but this, from the world's standpoint was foolishness, fanaticism.

If persecution come to us as a result of our following the Lord, and the apostles,--their teachings and example, and if it is because of our faithfulness to the

vows of consecration to His service that all manner of evil is said against us, falsely, then indeed we may rejoice; for so were the prophets persecuted, so was our Lord persecuted, so were the apostles and all the faithful ones since persecuted. Being thus in good company in our experiences, it becomes a witness or testimony to us that we shall be in like good company in that day when the Lord shall make up his Jewels.

All who have such experiences may well rejoice, and if, as the Lord's words intimate, the more of such experiences we have the more will be our reward in heaven, then the more we may rejoice in these experiences. And if we be without any such experiences it behooves us to look well to ourselves, lest peradventure it mean that we are not faithfully walking in the "narrow way" of self-sacrifice,--or are not doing with our might what our hands find to do, but are holding

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back our sacrifice. Should such be the reflection of any let him not be discouraged, but, in the language of the Prophet, let him "bind the sacrifice to the altar," with fresh cords of love and of zeal, praying the Lord to accept the sacrifice, and to furnish opportunities for being and doing and suffering for His cause, and for the Lord's and the truth's sake.--Psa. 118:27.

The prismatic sum of all these graces is--Love; and those who have them are loveable and shall by and by be made gloriously lovely, with and like him who is "altogether lovely." Our call is to attain these blessed conditions in the Kingdom.

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THE ROYAL LAW--THE GOLDEN RULE.

--MATT. 7:1-14.--APRIL 8.--

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

IN THIS lesson we have another leaf from our Lord's great Sermon on the Mount. This is not a sermon to sinners but to the Lord's consecrated people; and although there were multitudes within the hearing of our Lord's voice, all of whom belonged to the typically consecrated nation, yet our Lord addressed himself specially to his twelve chosen disciples, who were being particularly and fully instructed, that they, under the spirit dispensation soon to be inaugurated, might become the twelve foundations of the heavenly Kingdom, represented symbolically in the New Jerusalem of Revelation.--

Rev. 21:14.

True, many of the features of this Royal Law were then and still are sound advice for all who can receive them; but the fact remains that comparatively few are blessed with the opening of eyes and unstopping of ears to permit their appreciation of these holy pearls of truth; and assuredly they were addressed to and intended for only those who could receive them. Thank God for the good hope that ere long, the Kingdom being established, all the blind eyes shall be opened, all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and that in God's "due time" these precepts of the Golden Rule of Love will be appreciated by all and be applicable to all--whether they respond to them or reject them.

Following our Lord's example and injunction, we are endeavoring to set meat in due season, "things new and old," before the household of faith, the children of the Kingdom, and not before "dogs"--those who are still outside of divine favor, who have not yet received the grace of God and been adopted into his family and constituted sons. These precious truths are pearls of great price--of great value--to those who have the hearing ear and the understanding and appreciative heart--those who have been begotten of the spirit and are "new creatures in Christ Jesus," and seeking to live the new life. We do not attempt to present these matters to the brutish, the swinish, knowing that they would not appreciate them; but would merely feel a disappointment and resent our good intentions to our injury. Our Lord points this out later on in the discourse (verse 6), and his words are in full accord with those of Solomon, "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee."--Prov. 9:7,8.

It is to the household of faith, then, that the Lord says, "Judge not that ye be not judged." It is useless that we give this advice to others than the pupils in the school of Christ, for not having put themselves under the instruction of the great Teacher it gives evidence that his instructions are not appreciated by them. But all true disciples (learners, pupils) should give earnest heed to this injunction, and should understand that it contains a very important lesson, which unlearned will render them unready for the great examination, unready for graduation, unready for the Kingdom; because in their examination this will be one of the tests. If they have been fault-finding, cynical, hypercritical, etc., judging others harshly and uncharitably, it will be a clear token that they have not developed the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, --which is full of kindness and consideration: hence such would be judged or condemned as unfit for the Kingdom, for according to our way of judging others we will be judged--since nothing else will better demonstrate our true spiritual condition,--the presence or absence of love.

Whatever measure of mercy and generosity we

mete out to others will be the measure of divine mercy that will be extended to us. If all the Lord's people could have well impressed upon their hearts this lesson from the great Teacher's lips, how wonderfully it would affect their attitude toward others, in thought as well as in deed; how generous, how forgiving, how sympathetic for the weaknesses of others they would become; how the spirit of love would grow in their hearts and manifest itself in their words and deeds!

RAFTERS IN THEIR EYES.

Emphasizing this lesson, our Lord suggests that those who are always finding fault with the "brethren" who, like themselves, are seeking to walk in the narrow way--who can never see the noble efforts of the "brethren" to copy the Master, but are continually picking at them, are the very ones who have the greatest of faults in themselves,--lovelessness. The exaggeration of our Lord's words of reproof to this class seems to imply a vein of sarcasm, for literally he says, Why do you stare so at your fellow who is troubled with a grain of sawdust in his eye, while you have a whole rafter in your own eye? All the "brethren" are more or less troubled with difficulties of one kind or another, weaknesses of the flesh,--because all have the treasure of the new nature in imperfect earthen vessels--marred by original sin. "There is none righteous, no, not one" absolutely perfect. Yet the brethren whose hearts are full of love, even though they have sawdust in their eye of faith, or intellectual discernment or spiritual discernment, and perhaps also splinters in their hands, which affect all the deeds of life, and render their work imperfect, and tho many of them have splinters in their feet also, so that their walk is by no means perfect, as they would desire it to be--yet if they have the spirit of faith and of love and of sympathy, the spirit of Christ, they are his, and far

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more acceptable to him than any could possibly be who are devoid of the spirit of love and sympathy, and who therefore in this parable are represented as wholly perverted in their judgment of others, because possessing so little of the Lord's spirit and so much of the spirit of the Adversary--the great "accuser of the brethren."

This loveless, fault-finding, brethren-accusing class the Lord denominates hypocrites. Why? Because in finding fault with others they are evidently wishing to give the inference that they are not afflicted with the same malady of sin themselves; they evidently wish to give the impression that they are holy,

and since they know in their own hearts that this is untrue, and that they have many failings, many imperfections --therefore their course is hypocritical, false, deceptive, displeasing to God. Their claim that their fault-finding is prompted by love for the erring and a hatred of sin is deceptive and hypocritical as our Lord's words clearly show. Otherwise they would find plenty to do in hating and condemning and battling with their own sins and weaknesses;-- casting out their own rafter of self-conceit and hypocrisy. The experiences thus gained would make them very tender and merciful and loving in their assistance of others.

All of the "brethren" should carefully view this picture which our Lord portrayed, and should note well to see whether or not they have any of the evil disposition of heart--fault-finding, nagging, harsh criticism and denunciation--different degrees of the same fault. If they find any trace of such a "beam" of lovelessness and self-conceit in their spiritual eye, they should go at once to the great Physician and have it thoroughly eradicated, that they thus may speedily become gentle, sympathetic assistants to the "brethren," and be prepared as successful surgeons and physicians for the great work of the Millennial age--the kindly and sympathetic opening of the blind eyes of humanity and the healing of all the wounds of sin.

TYING GRAPE CLUSTERS TO THORN BUSHES.

But while we are not to judge our "brother," who with us professes to be endeavoring to walk in the footsteps of our Master, and who gives any evidences at all of sincerity in the matter, we nevertheless are to do a certain kind of judging as respects mankind in general. Elsewhere the Lord intimates that "by their fruits" we are to "know" grapevines from thorn-bushes, and figs from thistles. And in this sermon he intimates that we are to judge or discern as between the brethren and "dogs" and "swine"--the selfish, the sensual, who mind earthly things and who have never been begotten of the spirit of God. We may know these by outward evidences, for "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his;" and if he is none of his, not a branch of the Vine, we are not to waste our time in trying to tie onto him bunches of the fruits of the vine. We are not to attempt to deceive others or ourselves by helping to counterfeit the true holy spirit in the selfish, unregenerate world. We are not to expect that this class, whose appreciation is only for earthly things, to appreciate holy, heavenly things, any more than we would expect that dogs would appreciate the difference between meat from the butcher-shop and the holy, consecrated meat eaten only by

the priesthood. We are not to expect that the swinish and groveling, who think only of money and the things of this life, would appreciate the pearls of truth which are so precious in the sight of the brethren, begotten of the spirit.

This does not mean that we should never bring holy things to the attention of those who are not the Lord's consecrated people; but it does mean that a mere presentation of the first principles of righteousness and truth should quickly manifest to us those who have an ear for the truth, and those who have not,-- that finding the hearing ear we might give diligence to serve it, and finding the ear closed we might cease to waste our time, knowing that the effort would be fruitless as respects the calling of this Gospel age--to saintship, to the divine nature, to joint-heirship in the Kingdom. The Millennial age will soon be ushered in, and that will be God's time for breaking the hard hearts, for opening the blind eyes, and unstopping the deaf ears.

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Indeed, in some respects the efforts which have been expended upon the "dogs" and the "swine"-- the thorn-bushes and the thistles, endeavoring to tie to these various imitations of the fruits of the spirit of Christ, and to make the meat of the household palatable to them, have been positively injurious to the Lord's cause. The "brethren" have been neglected in the endeavor to feed the "dog" class; the making ready of the Bride for the Bridegroom, and adorning her with the pearls of truth, has been neglected in the endeavor to interest the "swine" in the pearls. The real value of the true vine, in producing good fruit, and the wide difference of nature between it and a bramble bush, has been greatly obscured by the appropriation of the vine's natural fruitage to the bramble.

Let us not be wise above what is written; let us attend in the present time to the work which God has appointed for this age, and leave to his appointed time the general work for the world of mankind.

HOW TO OVERCOME LOVELESS SELF-CONCEIT.

Returning to the lessons which the "brethren" must learn, and possibly having specially in mind the correction of the tendency to judge one another, our Lord gives instructions how these wrong qualities may be eradicated. We are to ask of the Lord the needed measure of love and sympathy which will hinder us from judging others, and which will help us in correcting our own defects. If we ask sincerely, truly, we will receive his grace and help in this direction.

And while asking, it is our duty to be seeking the things which we lack, the holy spirit of love to fill our hearts; and if we seek it we shall find it. We are to knock upon the Lord's store-house of grace and blessing by continued efforts, as well as prayer without ceasing, and as a result it will surely be opened to us. The asking, the seeking, the knocking, will all imply faith in the Lord, which will be pleasing in his sight, and it will also imply faithfulness on our part and a desire to be conformed fully to the Lord's will. And these good desires of our hearts shall be gratified, because, as an earthly parent would respond to his

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child's request for earthly food, so will the Lord respond and supply grace in every time of need to his children. He will not deceive us nor give us evil things, when we desire the good, but will do for us exceedingly abundantly more than we could ask or think; for is not our heavenly Father much better than any imperfect human father could possibly be?

Luke's reference to this discourse (11:13) declares that the good thing that God will be pleased to give these asking, seeking, knocking ones, is his holy spirit. And this is exactly what is needed, as an offset to the unholy, unloving, selfish, judging and fault-finding spirit of the flesh, which must be cast out. The antidote for the poison is that we should be filled with the holy spirit, the spirit of love, for "love worketh no ill to his neighbor;" love "suffereth long and is kind;" love "is not puffed up" to see the faults of others and to be blind to its own; it "vaunteth not itself" to be a general critic, fault-finder and "accuser of the brethren." Love is sympathetic, helpful, the spirit of God.--1 Cor. 13:4; Rom. 13:10.

"WORKING IN YOU THAT WHICH IS WELLPLEASING IN HIS SIGHT."--HEB. 13:21.

"Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." The word "therefore" shows the connection between this and the preceding features of the lesson: it signifies that this will be a test or rule by which we may discern when and to what extent we are misjudging the motives of others, and officiously endeavoring to perform the very delicate operation of removing their splinters. This verse is therefore known as the "Golden Rule,"--the rule which God would have his people use in respect to all the affairs of life--especially in their relationship and dealings with the "brethren." When disposed to find a fault, or pick a flaw, when disposed to condemn another or to criticize another's faults, or to hold him up to odium, we can generally know of the propriety or impropriety of so doing or

thinking by asking ourselves the question: Would I wish the brother to do, to say or to think thus respecting me, if I were he and he were I?

This rule, closely followed, will very generally be a guide, and yet we have known instances in which the Lord's people seemed so anxious for an excuse for slander, for evil speaking, for gossip, that they found some kind of a way of excusing themselves for the violation of the Golden Rule, even when they remembered it and at heart wished to obey it. Let us be very careful, dear brethren, how we handle the Lord's rule--that we do not handle the Word of God deceitfully --that we do not blind and deceive ourselves respecting its true importance--that we do not thus vitiate and impair our consciences--that we do not thus thwart our prayers for the holy spirit. For the holy spirit can flow into our hearts only as the channel is open; and the channel can be kept open only by keeping this Golden Rule continually at work at its full gauge. This Golden Rule and all these lessons, that seem so new because presented by the great Teacher in a clearer and sharper light than ever before, were nevertheless the gist or essence of the Mosaic Law, and of the Lord's teachings through the prophets.

NARROW IS THE WAY.

Our Lord intimates that such a life of carefulness respecting not only our actions but also our words and even our very thoughts (which are the springs from whence proceed our words and actions) will be a very "narrow way"--a difficult way. And yet it is the only way by which we can hope to enter into the life and Kingdom of joys which are now set before us in the Gospel call. The broad way, the easy way, the selfish way, the worldly way, does not lead to the Kingdom: on the contrary, it leads to death--to the Second Death, to utter destruction. The many are going in that way now, and only the few find and enter into the straight gate and narrow way to the Kingdom and its glory, honor and immortality.

This does not, however, either say or imply that the present age is the only one in which any opportunity will be given to escape the destruction toward which the broad way and the world tend; though it is the only way now open. The Word of the Lord elsewhere points out to us that after the select little flock, the elect Church, the Bride, the body of Christ, shall have been selected from amongst mankind--composed of those who seek and walk in the narrow way--after these shall have been glorified with the Redeemer, will come a time when, in the Lord's providence, a grand highway of holiness shall be opened to the world

of mankind, during the Millennial age. While it will be an upward way and not a downward one, so that it will require effort to walk thereon and to attain to the full restitution, the prize at its further end, nevertheless it will be very different from the narrow, the difficult way now open before the elect church, God's peculiar people. It will be a way of righteousness, but not a way of sacrifice, as is the present narrow way, which thus selects the "royal priesthood," each one of whom must present his body a living sacrifice, in order to make his calling and election sure.

No lions shall be in that grand Millennial highway; nothing to hurt or destroy or intimidate from well-doing; nothing to seduce or to devour as a prey those who seek to walk righteously and to come back

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into harmony with the Lord; whereas all these besetments are now about us, because Satan, the prince of this world, is still unbound. (Isa. 35:8,9; Rev. 20:2.) All who now enter the "narrow way" are compelled to fight a good fight, to contend earnestly for the faith, to resist the devil, if they would secure the greater "prize" of our high calling. We must not only contend with the weaknesses of the flesh, which we have inherited, but we must also wrestle with wicked spirits in exalted places (Eph. 6:12), but the Lord giveth us the more grace, that thereby we may come off conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.--1 Tim. 6:12; Jude 3; Jas. 4:7; Rom. 8:37.

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THE MEMORIAL SUPPER.

OUR USUAL CUSTOM of celebrating our dear Redeemer's death on its anniversary will be followed this year by a larger number, we believe, than ever before. The date will be the evening of April 12th after 6 P.M.;--that date corresponding to "the fourteenth day of the first month" Jewish time.

Our Lord, as the antitype of the Passover lamb (1 Cor. 5:7), was crucified the day before the "Feast of Passover" began; and "on the same night in which he was betrayed" he took bread, representing his flesh, and "fruit of the vine," representing his blood, and with these instituted a new memorial by which the spiritual Israelites were to celebrate their greater antitypical Passover, secured by his "blood of sprinkling" applied by faith, and his flesh, eaten by faith,

"meat indeed."--John 6:55.

Our celebration has nothing in common with that of the Jews: indeed what they celebrate is the "Feast" week; while we celebrate on the day preceding their Feast the death of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. The day we celebrate represents the entire Gospel age, in which the entire Church--the body of Christ Jesus, the Head--must suffer with him as voluntary sacrificers. The Feast week to us typifies the glory and joy soon to be introduced, --in the Millennium.

Our Lord's words respecting this Memorial are, "This do ye in remembrance of me." And the Apostle adds, "As oft as ye do this ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come"--till he in his Kingdom shall have come in power and shall have gathered you unto himself. Many Christian people have assumed

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the liberty to celebrate this Memorial at various times --weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc.; but in harmony with the early Church we understand our Lord to mean that we should celebrate this as we celebrate any other event--on its anniversary: just as we now might say, As oft as the Fourth of July is celebrated it shows forth the independence of this nation.

Those who celebrate our Lord's death in the "Last Supper" at noon every Sunday, mistake it for the weekly "Love Feast" or "Breaking of Bread" practiced every Lord's Day by the early Church in memory of our Lord's resurrection and his opening of the eyes of their understanding in the breaking of bread. Rightly understood, nothing in these weekly feasts of joy resembled the annual commemoration of our Master's sorrow and death--nor is the "cup" ever mentioned in connection with them.

The Church at Allegheny will celebrate the Memorial Supper commemorative of our Redeemer's death for us, and of our Pass-over from death unto life through the merit of his sacrifice, and of our consecration to "be dead with him"--to drink his "cup"--on the evening of April 12th at 7:30 o'clock at Bible House chapel, Allegheny, Pa. Friends of the Truth who can make it convenient to meet with us will be welcomed cordially: but we advise that wherever there are home-meetings or wherever such gatherings seem possible they be not deserted. No other season seems so favorable for the drawing of the hearts of the Lord's people closely together;--even as it seems also to be specially an hour of temptation to all professing to be the Lord's followers, who like Peter of old seem to be specially sifted at this season of the year.

The advice of our Lord to the early disciples, at this time of the year, seems still specially appropriate, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation!" And

recognizing this the older systems, Roman Catholic and Episcopalian, still precede the Memorial with a fast or Lenten season--which entered into not formally but in the spirit we believe is a very helpful custom to many--not only physically but spiritually.

"Good Friday" was substituted for the Memorial Supper as originally observed by the Lord's people--the system of counting being slightly changed. The more frequent celebrations of the Lord's Supper by Protestants are based upon Papacy's celebration of the "Mass" an institution which both in fact and theory is an abomination to our Lord--denying as it does the fullness of the efficacy of the original sacrifice at Calvary.

We trust that the Lord's people everywhere will "do this" in remembrance of the great sin-sacrifice--not merely as an outward memorial but also and specially at the same time feeding on the Lord by faith

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in their hearts, and afresh pledging their consecration unto death with him while partaking of the "cup."
For further particulars see our issue of March 1, 1898.

We will be glad to have prompt postal card reports from the appointed secretary or scribe of each little group--wherever "two or three" meet in his dear name to do this. Make all your arrangements beforehand that the precious season of heart "communion" be not disturbed by business affairs. Let us not only all unite in prayer and communion, but also so far as practicable in our songs of praise--using numbers 23, 122 and 1 of Hymns of Dawn.

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JESUS SAID UNTO HIM, FOLLOW ME.

--MARK 2:13-22.--MARCH 18.--

CAPERNAUM, where our Lord had been teaching and healing, was situated on the sea of Galilee, or, as we today should say, the Lake of Galilee. It was a city of considerable commercial importance, especially for the fish business, and undoubtedly the lake-shore in that vicinity was quite populous. The tense of the Greek would seem to indicate that our Lord kept going by the sea-shore, stopping here and there to discourse to the people, multitudes of whom flocked to hear him. It was during this journey that he passed Matthew, formerly known as Levi, a custom-house agent of the Roman government--a revenue collector, who was attending to his business, and whom our Lord addressed, saying,

"Follow me," and who obeyed the call to discipleship.

Many get a very false thought from the brevity of the narrative, and infer that Levi (Matthew) had never heard of Jesus before, and that our Lord, as he passed him, cast upon him some kind of a spell which led him to instantly drop his business, as though bereft of his senses. On the contrary, we are to remember that

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the Lord and his disciples were well known in that vicinity for years, and that probably Matthew had not only knowledge of our Lord, but also faith in him, as the Messiah. Not until now, however, had Jesus invited him to become one of His immediate disciples; not until now, therefore, could Matthew essay to become such. There evidently were many who heard the Lord discourse time and again, and who were to be reckoned as amongst his friends, but who were by no means invited to become special followers, companions and associates in the ministry of the gospel, as were the Twelve.

Nor are we to suppose that Matthew left his money-drawer open, and his accounts with the Roman government unsettled, to immediately follow the Master. Rather, we may assume that it may have taken days, or possibly weeks, to straighten his affairs and to enable him to respond to the Lord's call to apostleship. We should remember that the history of several years, and many discourses, conversations and incidents, are crowded in the gospel narrative into very brief space.

It would seem probable that as Simon's name was changed by the Lord to Peter, so Levi's name was changed to Matthew, which signifies "the gift of God." He was a publican--a person who farmed the taxes and the public revenue. The name "publican" and the profession were both extremely odious to the Jews, who very reluctantly submitted themselves to the tax regulations of the Romans. Publicans were counted unpatriotic, disloyal to their own nation, in that they accepted the service of an alien government, and made use of their knowledge of their country and people in assisting to collect revenues deemed unjust. The office, as will be readily seen, offered many opportunities for dishonesty and extortion, bribery, etc., but we cannot for a moment suppose that Levi was one of these dishonest publicans, for had he been so we may be sure he would not have been called to the apostleship and would not have responded to the call, for we are not to forget that it is written, "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him."-- John 6:44.

THE CONSECRATED HOME HONORED.

Matthew was a man of influence, and as soon as he accepted the Lord's call, and responded by consecrating himself and his all, he set about to use his influence in drawing others to the Savior. He would announce his own devotion to the cause in such a manner and under such favorable circumstances as if possible would win some. To these ends he arranged a banquet for the Lord and his disciples at his house, and invited many of his friends and business associates. These in our lesson are called "Many publicans and sinners."

We have seen why the publicans were ostracised by the scribes and Pharisees--not because they were wicked, but because their business was disesteemed: and being thus cut off socially from the ultra-religious, the publicans were forced to have most of their social intercourse with the non-religious, by way of contrast called "sinners." By the term sinners we are not necessarily to understand vile persons and evildoers, but rather persons who did not profess nor attempt the holiness claimed by the Pharisees--persons who did not claim to be absolute keepers of the divine Law--who did not profess to make the outside of the cup or platter absolutely clean, tho perhaps in many instances the inside was as clean or more clean than were the hearts of the Pharisees, who professed perfect holiness. This our Lord intimated on several occasions. When, therefore, we read that our Lord was the friend of publicans and sinners we are not to understand that he made companions of the rowdies or moral lepers of his time. We are rather to understand that in the usage of that time one class of Jews was designated the holy people (Pharisees), and another class designated as not professing absolute holiness (sinners).

Matthew's endeavor to bring his friends and associates into contact with the Master and his teachings is certainly commendable, and is a good illustration of

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what each one who enters the Lord's flock should do. Each should seek to exert his influence where it is greatest, amongst those with whom he is acquainted and who are acquainted with him, and upon whom either his past honesty and good character should have an influence, or else those to whom his radical change of life would be the most manifest. Another lesson for us is the propriety of using hospitality as a channel for the advancement of the truth--the homes of those who have consecrated themselves to the Lord should be consecrated homes, in which the first consideration should be the service of the Master; and its influence should be to draw out friends to the Lord, that they might be taught of him. Too frequently the consecration of the home is overlooked and antagonistic influences

are permitted to dominate, with the result that neither the Lord nor the Lord's people are entertained, nor his cause served in them. Such a house and home loses a great blessing, and the head of such a house has serious reason to question whether or not he is overcoming, and therefore an "overcomer," to whom only the prize is promised,--or whether he is being overcome by adverse influences.

The Lord desires a courageous people, a people so full of faith, and love to him and his, that they will conquer adverse influences in the interest of righteousness. What would we think of Matthew if he had said to the Lord: Master, I would much like to have a banquet at my home, and to invite there some of my friends, that I might introduce you to them, and that thus a favorable influence might be exerted on behalf of the truth; but I have no liberty in my own home--my wife would not hear of it for a moment,--or, my children are unruly, have no respect for me as a parent, and would create a great disturbance if I were to mention such a thing as a banquet in your honor, so greatly are they offended that I am giving up my lucrative business, and so fearful are they that they will not have the same social standing as before, or the same privileges of extravagance?

We would consider him a most unfit man to be an apostle, or to occupy even the position of elder or deacon in the Church, according to the terms laid down by the Apostle Paul. (1 Tim. 3:4,5.) We would esteem such an one unworthy of any responsible position in the Church, and so deficient in the qualities of an "overcomer" that he would be in great danger of losing the prize, unless he promptly instituted a reform of his character. It is only what we should expect, to find Matthew's case very different from this--to find that he had a strong character. Nor can we expect that the Master would have said to him, "Follow me," unless he had such character that would permit him to follow in the Master's footsteps, for surely our Lord Jesus, while gentle, kind and loving, was never weak or characterless.

And what would we have thought of Matthew's wife and family, had they objected to the banquet? We would have considered them rather hopeless as respects saintship, and that his wife had not learned even the first element of wifeness;--that she was a hinderer instead of a helping mate. As it was we may be assured that with the Lord came a special blessing to that home.

SPIRITUAL FOOD AT THE BANQUET.

It would seem from other narratives of this same banquet (which was probably several weeks after Matthew's

call) that a large number of people were gathered at Matthew's house, aside from those who partook of the banquet (Luke 5:29), and from the connection of the narrative it is supposed that it was on one of the regular fast days of the Pharisees. These facts led to the two questions:

(1) Why does your Teacher associate with these people, who do not profess sanctification? The objection was not that our Lord should not teach the publicans and sinners, but that he should not eat with them, which implied a social equality, and the Pharisees evidently recognized that our Lord and his apostles were professing and living lives of entire consecration to God.

In answer to this query our Lord said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"; the implication being that the physician had a right to go to and mingle with those whom he sought to relieve, and might mingle with them in whatever manner he saw to be expedient for their cure. This language does not imply that the Pharisees were not sick, and that they did not need our Lord's ministry, tho the fact was that not admitting that they were sin-sick they were not disposed to receive his good medicine of doctrine. The same thought is otherwise expressed by our Lord in the same connection, saying, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Anyone who considered himself to be righteous would be beyond the call of repentance. His first lesson would be to learn that he was not righteous, not perfect; hence our Lord went chiefly to those who admitted that they were not righteous, and whose hearts therefore were better soil for the truth than others. Our Lord intimated this in his parable of the publican's and the Pharisee's prayers, assuring us that in God's sight the publican had the better standing, because of his acknowledgment of imperfections and his petition for mercy.

Another of the Evangelists adds others of our Lord's words--"Go ye and learn what that meaneth: I will have mercy and not sacrifice." (Matt. 9:13.) Our Lord here evidently quoted from Hosea 6:6. The lesson the Pharisees should have learned from this was that in their particularity respecting sacrifices, self-denials, tithing of mint, anise, cummin, etc., the very things in which they boasted as evidences of their holiness were things which God did not appreciate nearly so much as he would have appreciated mercy. They should have had compassionate feelings toward their fellow Jews, the yearning compassion which would have delighted to have lifted them out of sin and brought them nearer to the Lord and nearer to righteous influences. Instead of having this spirit of mercy, which would have been very pleasing in God's sight, and would have prepared them to be recipients of his mercy, they had instead a loveless sentiment which

despised others and boasted of self,--a self-satisfied and complacent condition of mind and heart, very reprehensible to the Lord--a condition of heart unready to be blessed with divine mercy.

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FASTING AND FEASTING--TYPICAL AND ANTITYPICAL.

(2) The next question was: Why is it that your Master and all who affiliate with him are banqueting and feasting and rejoicing, while we Pharisees "fast twice in the week," and the followers of John's teachings also fast? Is not this a sign that you and your Master are not so devout as we?--Luke 18:12.

The Lord's answer is very comprehensive and far-reaching, and requires considerable study to be appreciated. He explained:--

(a) That it would be inappropriate for his followers to be in sadness and mourning at a time when they were receiving such wonderful blessings--at a time when the Bridegroom himself was present, cheering their hearts, refreshing and strengthening them, opening the eyes of their understanding, and giving them hearing ears to appreciate the divine favor that was coming unto them. Such would not be an appropriate time for fasting and mourning. By and by, when the Bridegroom would be away, there would be an abundance of perplexity and sorrow and then fasting would be in order. And so surely it has been: the Lord's people throughout the Gospel age have frequently felt called upon in times of darkness and adversity to seek a very close approach to the Lord by the humbling of the flesh, and have found fasting a valuable means to this end.

But fasting has a typical significance--it means self-denial. So long as the Master was with his people, and especially so long as he was honored by the multitudes, it required comparatively little self-denial to be one of his followers--it was in many respects an honor to be called to follow him, and an honor to sacrifice something of earthly interests to be a follower; and this made this kind of self-denial or fasting really a feast of pleasure. But later on trials came, when the Master got into the toils of his enemies, when his cause was unpopular, and the multitudes clamored for his death--then it required self-denial (antitypical fasting) to confess him and follow him; and so it has been all through the Gospel age--none can be a follower of the Lamb without self-denial, fasting, refusing the desires and appetites of the flesh--sacrificing some and mortifying others in the interest of the new creature and its spiritual development.

Now, in the Lord's Second Presence, we might

say that the feast has begun again--that from a spiritual standpoint there are so many and so great blessings, so much and so dainty spiritual food, that to those who are invited into the Lord's banqueting house and whom he causes to sit down to meat, and to whom he brings forth things new and old, newly and refreshingly served, it almost appears as tho the fasting time has passed, and that the feasting and "joys of the Lord" have begun. Not that there are no trials and difficulties, according to the flesh, but that as new creatures his people are so refreshed and exhilarated with the meat in due season that the trials and difficulties and self-denials (fastings) incidental to the way may now be esteemed so lightly as not to be worthy to be compared with the spiritual refreshments enjoyed, tho these be but foretastes of the great Marriage Feast soon to be enjoyed.

(b) In addition to the fact that our Lord's presence with his disciples would antidote sorrow, was another fact which the Pharisees did not comprehend, viz., that our Lord's work was not like that of John the Baptist--was not a work of reformation, seeking to patch up the Jewish system and arrangement. John had been commissioned to do that if he could, and had failed and been beheaded; and the work which Jesus was doing was a new work altogether: he was not attempting to patch and reform Judaism with his doctrines, but was making an entirely new institution, gathering out a Church, which would not be a Jewish Church nor a Reformed Jewish Church, but a wholly different institution, a Christian Church. This was the reason he was not attempting to discuss with the Pharisees the proprieties and improprieties of their methods, and to straighten them out. He would let alone the old garment, already worn out and ready to be laid aside; he would provide as a new garment, not the impossible righteousness required by the Law, but an imputed righteousness according to faith, based upon the merits of his own sacrifice for sins.

Had he attempted to combine Christianity with Judaism the result would have been disastrous to both, for they are opposites--the one demanding absoluteness of righteousness, which was impossible to sinners; the other demanding that the impossibility of personal righteousness should be acknowledged, and that faith should be the only condition of forgiveness and mercy.

(c) The same lesson was illustrated by the custom of that time in the use of skins of animals as instead of the barrels and bottles of today--indeed, such skins are used to the present time in various parts of the world, and called bottles. New wine put into such skins in fermenting would stretch them to almost bursting point, and such skins could never be used again for new wine, because the elasticity having gone out of them the new wine in fermenting would surely burst them. The lesson which our Lord taught here

is that Judaism having had its day, had accomplished its purpose; and that it was not the divine intention that it should be reformed, as his hearers expected. The system had become effete, and to have attempted to put into Judaism the new doctrines, the new wine of the Gospel, would have meant that not only the Jewish nation would have been convulsed and wrecked by the spirit of the new teachings, but also that the doctrines themselves would have gone down with the wreck of the nation. Consequently it was the divine plan that a new Israel should be started, "a holy nation, a peculiar people," and that it should be the receptacle of the new grace and truth then due.

Similarly now in the end of the Gospel age we perceive the impossibility of putting the new wine which the Master is now providing into the old wineskins of sectarianism, and all sectarians realize this too --they realize that to receive what is now being presented as present truth into their denominations would unquestionably mean the utter wreck of the denominations. God is therefore now, as in the end of the Jewish age, calling out of the whole system such as are Israelites indeed, that they may receive at his hands the wine (doctrine) of the new dispensation just

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at hand. As for the old institutions, they have served a purpose, partly good and partly bad. Their work, so far as the divine plan is concerned, is at an end. "The voice of the Bridegroom and of the Bride shall no more be heard" in Babylon at all. (Rev. 18:23.) Babylon will not permit them to be heard. The voice, the teaching of present truth is consequently outside her walls; and whoever has an ear for the truth, whoever desires to be filled with present truth, must come outside of sectarianism before he can be thus filled and blessed and used as a vessel in bearing the blessing to others.--Rev. 18:4,23.

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INTERESTING LETTERS.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--By way of introduction let me say "Thank you!" for the spiritual food which my hungry soul has found in the MILLENNIAL DAWN series. Years ago I "left the church" as the phrase goes, i.e., I withdrew from membership in the Methodist church, and burned my ships behind me, destroying my church letter and telling the good people who came to labor with me in the matter that it

was a matter of conscience with me not to call men my brothers one day in the week knowing that the other six I must watch them like a hawk, lest they cheat me out of my eyeteeth. I would not "take communion" with the knowledge that beside me sat one who fed poisoned grain to my fowls and poisoned meat to my dog and whispered scandalous stories about every person she knew in the church and out of it. So for years I have been counted a heathen.

How marvelous is God's leading! And because I could not see his hand in thus making my very soul sick over the hypocrisy and sham religion of the nominal church, I thought there was no church at all and wandered out into the desert beyond sight of the promised land. Theosophy, Spiritism, Christian Science, the Higher Criticism--O, the barren months and years of hungry searching! And while planning a course of study in Swedenborgianism and hunting for some second-hand copies of his works I ran across VOL. I. of the MILLENNIAL DAWN series. Do you know that I bought that volume and two others of the series as a joke? I said, "I'll lend them to some Second Adventist neighbors of ours," for I could see that the author turned the tables on that doctrine of fire and fury in a style as comprehensive as it was logical. But Swedenborg went into the box of "books to exchange and burn" and "The Helping Hand" led me out of the desert and set my feet once more in the narrow path. And now I want to help others enjoy these truths--the ministers particularly. The most of them here are good men, they see but they don't see far enough. They know that I will not join any of their churches, but the Methodist preacher and the Congregationalist both tell me where Want has knocked at the door of one, or where trouble has found out another; and the Baptist preacher will talk Prophecy to me, and the Presbyterian, Practical Christianity. I believe I can get hold of them and of members of their churches better than if I "belonged" to any of them. I have told them that the only reason I sit still and listen to them slander the Word is because I know they as individuals are broader than their creeds, and that I guess God can forgive them if I can.

And now to get down to business. I have but little money that the Lord lets me call mine because he shows me so many ways to use it as soon as it comes, in that the purse is very slim. When I want books or papers he always shows me a way to pitch in and make tents, like Paul. I have wanted to send you a dollar for the WATCH TOWER for the last month, but he did not show me the way to make it until yesterday. I inclose it in stamps in this letter. Send me any extra copies or tracts that you can spare; I will put them into empty hands.

Near me lives a lady who has sore domestic trouble --a Swiss, reads French and German fluently--and she

will gladly read anything that will help her to believe that "the Herr Gott is not deaf" as she expresses it.

Pardon this long letter.

Very sincerely your sister in Christ,

ELIZABETH ANNE GRAHAM,--California.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--In Jan. 1st TOWER you speak of the time being short before the door of opportunity is closed. Some of us find the door to many churches closed to us. It was only on the last day of December, '99 that the minister of the church where I was giving out tracts ordered me off from the church and forbade me giving any more. He said that we ought to be ashamed of ourselves, giving those to the people. I asked him if he had ever read it. He said that he had never read it, but knew all about it. I asked him what he knew about it. He said that it was breaking up all the churches and he would not allow me to explain.

The "Volunteer" work is a grand work for many reasons. (1) It enables us to preach with the printed page; (2) it gives us an opportunity to study character as well as to build character; (3) it gives us an opportunity to confess with our lips what we believe with our heart; (4) it strengthens us to be always able to give a "reason for the hope that is within us;" (5) it creates in us a love and sympathy for those whom we are trying to rescue from the awful blackness of infidelity; (6) it empties us of selfishness and causes us to sacrifice pleasures for the welfare of others. So as long as the Lord permits I will consider it a pleasure to be able to serve in so grand a work.

Enclosed please find check and order. With best wishes, Yours in redeeming love,

WM. J. DAVIS.--Massachusetts.

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In a recent letter one of the "Pilgrims," after giving particulars respecting his efforts to feed the Lord's sheep and lambs concludes thus:--

"Pray for me, dear brother, that I may be kept a 'servant.' Could you not in some way through the TOWER suggest to the friends not to praise a 'pilgrim' to his face: they do not know what 'offences' they sometimes cause, what feelings of latent pride they arouse."

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WHICH IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?

"I am not Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."--Rom. 1:16.

A Discourse by Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., delivered at The Florida Chautauqua Assembly, Defuniak Springs, Fla., March 4, 1900, as reported by the Associated Press.

NO APOLOGY seems necessary for our subject --"Which is the true Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed?" If time and thought may be profitably expended in the study of the earthly sciences--sociology, finance, etc., etc., built largely upon human inferences and conjectures --surely none could dispute the propriety of studying the science of divine revelation. If it be profitable to investigate the physical diseases of mankind and their causes, and the laws of medicine and of sanitation for the offset of these, it surely cannot be disputed that the Gospel which God has presented as the antidote

for soul-sickness and soul-death, and as the science pertaining to life eternal, is worthy of still greater and more profound consideration.

The greatest minds, the noblest specimens of our race, have admitted our topic to be the one above all others in importance; and have weighed it carefully --whether as a result they accepted or rejected it. We are not now discussing the weight of mental acumen enlisted for and against the Gospel: we are merely noting the fact that all men of ability have recognized that the subject is worthy of their careful consideration, and as having claims upon their attention paramount to any and all others. Indeed, it may be set down as a fact that whoever has given the subject of religion no consideration is one of three things,--a novice in mental exercise, or a near relative to "the fool who hath said in his heart there is no God," or a coward, preyed upon by fears, instigated by Satan to hinder honest investigation of the divine message of love and mercy.

Even a hasty glance into the intelligent faces of this large audience assures me that you all have given some thought to our theme;--though experience assures me that comparatively few of you have ever reached conclusions on this subject fully satisfactory to yourselves. Hence your faith and love and zeal toward God and your zeal for the Gospel are less strong than you could desire. Let us hope that as we reason together on this great subject to-day, we may, by God's grace, see more clearly than ever before which is the true Gospel--the one of which the Apostle was not ashamed, and of which, therefore, none of us need feel ashamed,--the Gospel, therefore, which should more and more move and energize us, as the power of God unto salvation.

No one of intelligence will dispute the meaning of the word "Gospel;" it signifies "good tidings," good news,--a good message. Nevertheless, in some unaccountable manner, by common consent, "a real Gospel sermon" is almost universally understood to signify bad tidings--tidings of eternal misery to the great mass of our race--to all except the little flock of God's faithful people. As a consequence the preacher of a "Gospel sermon" is expected to figuratively shake the congregation over an abyss of everlasting torture, making as strong an effort as possible to intimidate them thereby to a thorough reformation of life, in hope of thus escaping an awful eternity.

True, this that we might term "the Gospel (?) of damnation" is not so generally preached as it once was, because more enlightened minds of cultured people repudiate it as a fetich of the past. Yet this perversion of the Gospel is still to be heard in country places, at camp meetings, occasionally in the city pulpit,

and universally in Salvation Army meetings. Nothing is further from our intention than a criticism of the consciences and honesty of intention of those who thus preach. It is no part of our mission to criticise persons and motives, but "With malice toward none and with charity toward all" we consider it not only our privilege but our duty to criticise doctrines, that thereby the truth may be more firmly established, and error brought into disrepute.

Before we proceed to the consideration of the Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed--the Gospel set forth in the Scriptures--it will be expedient for us to take a glance at the different Gospels set forth by the various denominations of Christendom. It is not our thought that each denomination represents a different Gospel, for the differences in many instances are chiefly respecting ceremonies, forms, methods of government, name, etc., and not in respect to the message or Gospel held forth. Nevertheless,

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there are three distinct lines of faith, or doctrine--three distinct Gospels set forth in Christendom, all recognized as "orthodox," because they all contain as their fundamental the doctrine of the eternal torment of all mankind, except the comparatively few "saved." Each of these three Gospels have millions of supporters, divided into numerous denominations. These in point of numbers are

(1) The Roman Catholic faith, or Gospel, in which concur the Greek Catholics and Arminian Catholics, and some of the high-church Episcopalians.

(2) The Calvinistic Gospel, which is held by the various Presbyterian denominations, the Congregationalists, Baptists, and many Lutherans and Episcopalians.

(3) The Arminian Gospel, held and chiefly represented by the Methodists of various names and connections, and by the Free-Will Baptists: however, many of other denominations at heart accept the Arminian Gospel, while their church connections identify them with the Calvinistic Gospel. Hence we may say, so far as Protestantism is concerned, that the Arminian and the Calvinist Gospels are about equally supported.

It may not be possible for us to handle our subject properly and thoroughly without offering some criticism of these three Gospels which for centuries have entrenched themselves in Christian minds, each fortified by the decisions of its own Councils, backed by voluminous opinions from their several theological seminaries, but we can and assuredly will strenuously avoid saying one solitary word in criticism of those who we believe conscientiously uphold these

several conflicting Gospels. We call you to witness that we are all Scripturally enjoined to "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" (the true Gospel), at the same time that we are enjoined by the same authority to "Speak evil of no man." We shall endeavor to keep strictly within these admittedly proper lines, and, additionally, as the Apostle admonishes, "Speak the truth in love."

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ROMAN CATHOLICISM.

The Gospel according to Roman Catholicism is that all men fell into sin and under sentence of eternal torment: that Christ accomplished a redemptive work which, supplemented by the sacrifice of the mass, and by prayers and penances, permits all believers (Roman Catholics) to escape that eternal torment, which will be the sure portion of all heretics, regardless of their good works or morals. As for its own people, it holds that even its highest officials, including Bishops and Popes, go to Purgatory for refinement, purification from sin and to be prepared for heaven. It claims that some will spend only a short time in Purgatory, assisted out of it by the merit of prayers, masses, etc., on their behalf by their friends after death. But their expectation is that ultimately Purgatory will be no more, its thousands of millions being prepared for a better and happier condition. But according to all the great theologians of Papacy, and according to all the Papal bulls, all Protestants, all rejecters of Papacy's teachings, will suffer endless torment. This is the Roman Catholic Gospel fairly presented, as we understand it. It does not seem to us to be very good news--not very good tidings, even to those who get the very best it has to offer, and it certainly would be very bad tidings to all out of harmony with Papacy.

Let us next look at the great Protestant doctrine represented in the word Calvinism--the doctrine of the election of the Church and the reprobation of all others.

THE GOSPEL PRESENTED BY CALVINISM.

Calvinism claims that faith in Christ is essential to salvation and it admits that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Calvinism requires more than a mere knowledge of Christ and belief in him as a good and exemplary man, who died a martyr to his too extreme convictions. It requires faith in Christ's death as a sacrifice for man's sin, and at least some manifestation towards righteousness of life before

any could be recognized as being of the elect Church. Consequently, according to Calvinism, the elect Church could not include the heathen of the present time and all the way back through the past, who have never heard of the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved. Stretched to its very broadest, Calvinism could not include more than one in twenty of earth's fifty thousand millions that are estimated to have lived from Adam's day until the present time. In other words, according to the broadest possible estimate of this view, more than forty-seven thousand millions of humanity were, in the language of the Westminster Confession of Faith, "passed by" as non-elect in the divine plan.

And what does this mean--"passed by" or "non-elect?" It means, according to Calvinism, that God, who knew the end from the beginning, before creating this world and mankind upon it, determined that he would "pass by" and not elect those forty-seven thousand millions of his creatures to life and happiness, but would predestine them to an eternity of torture, and that carrying out this diabolical plan, he prepared a great place large enough to hold forty-seven thousand millions, and fuel sufficient to produce the necessary combustion there to all eternity--did all this with a full appreciation of all the awful facts and circumstances of the case.

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Moreover, we remember the statement of Calvinism which many of us learned in our youth, to the effect that God's favor toward the elect is not because of any worthiness on their part, nor because of any works which they had done, but "of his own sovereign grace" he saves them from all the horrible conditions which he has predestined shall be upon the others. Now if the salvation of the elect is not because of their works or worthiness, but because of God's sovereign grace only, the simplest mind can see that God might without any violation of principle have extended that sovereign grace to others--to all, since it was not because of worthiness nor because of works, but merely of his own volition that any are saved,--according to Calvinism.

The celebrated Jonathan Edwards, when preaching upon this subject in New England years ago, after picturing the awful torment of the non-elect, was asked the question, Would not the thought of the anguish of the lost mar the bliss of God's people in glory? His answer in substance was, No; you will be so changed that such matters will not affect you; you will look over the battlements of heaven and see in torment your neighbors and friends, yea, your own parents and children, brothers and sisters, and turning

round will praise God the louder because his justice is made manifest.

Now, my dear friends, I do not charge any who are here present with having so false a view of the divine character and plan as this. Indeed, I am glad to note that our Calvinistic friends in general are repudiating this doctrine, realizing that there is in it a serious lack, not only as respects divine love, but also as respects divine justice. I was glad some years ago to note that some of our Presbyterian friends were so moved by higher and nobler conceptions of the Almighty that they wished to rid themselves of any part in so blasphemous a statement respecting his character and his plan. I was sorry, however, that when the matter of "the revision of the Presbyterian standards" was taken up it was found that only a minority was in favor of revision, and I was still more sorry to note that that minority of intelligent, godly people was willing to continue to confess to such a horrible mis-statement of their true views--willing, shall I say, to continue to "blaspheme that holy name" because a majority of their brethren were unwilling that such blasphemous misrepresentations should be discontinued.

I am glad to believe that if this matter were brought to the intelligent attention of Presbyterians in general, a large majority would be found willing, nay, anxious, to undo the wrong and to make such reparation as would be within their power, by way of honoring the great Jehovah and attesting their appreciation of his love and his justice, as well as of his wisdom and of his power. This is just the point: Calvinism, in its anxiety to establish the wisdom and power of God, his foreknowledge and his ability to carry out his plan, has conceived of a plan which is far from the correct one, lacking both in justice and in love.

It may be argued that Love is a grace and that its exercise is not incumbent upon Jehovah; that all that could be asked or expected of him would be simple Justice, and some might be ready to claim that for God to eternally torment these forty-seven thousand millions "passed by" would be in strict accord with Justice. This we deny! We claim that having the power to create mankind would not justify their creation if the Creator saw that the result would be the everlasting torture of a single creature. Justice would say that power is not to be exercised to the injury of another, and that to exercise the creative power under such foreknown conditions would be injustice. And Wisdom attuned to Justice would say, Better a thousand times never to have created anybody than to have created one being to suffer unjustly eternally.

This statement, dear friends, is a fair, impartial statement of the Gospel according to our beloved

brother, John Calvin, and those who subscribe to the Westminster Confession, and their allies. This surely is not the Gospel of which the Apostle Paul, in our text, declared, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Paul would assuredly have been ashamed

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of such a Gospel, and so are all true Christians, who have the true spirit of love and justice,--none more so, perhaps, than those who unfortunately, through circumstances of birth, etc., and hitherto without realizing what it meant, have been lending their name and influence to this great blasphemy against the divine character.

THE ARMINIAN VIEW OF THE GOSPEL.

Let us now examine the Arminian view. This view is growing popular. Its message or Gospel is, God is love--he loves you; he loves everybody; he is doing all that he can to save everybody; if you are lost it will not be God's fault, but your own. On the surface, at least, this theory seems much more loving and much more just than the one already examined, but before we go far we will also find it very defective, very far from being either a reasonable or a Scriptural Gospel. We will find it inconsistent with its own statement--illogical.

For instance, while it sounds nice theoretically to say that God is doing all that he can do to save the whole world at the present time, everybody knows that this is not true; that on the contrary you or I or any other intelligent human being if possessed of the one-thousandth part of the divine power and wisdom could speedily accomplish the evangelization of the whole world. Nor will it do to say that God has committed himself to a certain mode of procedure through his Church, and that if the Church fails to contribute with sufficient liberality both money and evangelists the heathen will not hear of "the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved," but will go to eternal torment, etc. Neither will it do to say that God is doing all that he can do and is hampered by the lack of interest in the Church; because his wisdom and foreknowledge foresaw all these conditions as they are, and he could not justly be excused from the real responsibility of the matter, since he is the Creator, and in him is vested the all-power as well as the all-wisdom. Such a claim as this would be tantamount to saying that God has erred in wisdom when he thought to leave the conversion of the world to the Church, seeing that the Church has not accomplished this. Such a

claim would be merely excusing God from doing all that he can do, instead of showing that he is doing all that he can do.

But let us look more critically into this matter. If this view we are criticising is correct, if God is doing all that he can to save the world, and if he has been doing this during all the past ages, then without question the world's conversion is a hopeless thing, and we can never expect to see better results than at present. This theory presupposes a race or battle between the Almighty and Satan, each seeking to capture the human family, and to the discredit of the theory it shows Satan the victor thus far. Starting out with one pair, both on the Lord's side, the first 1656 years ended with a flood in which the whole world of mankind was blotted out because of wickedness, and only eight persons reckoned sufficiently righteous to be preserved. Starting again with those eight persons counted sufficiently righteous for preservation, we find that there are in the world to-day sixteen hundred millions, and that out of that whole number there are about one hundred millions nominal Roman Catholics and one hundred millions nominal Protestants, and a very much smaller number of true "saints of God."

What would be the lesson from this if the Arminian theory be correct, that God is doing all that he can do to save the world? The lesson would be that with all his good intentions of love and mercy our God is thoroughly incapable of the work he undertook to do. And if these are the results in six thousand years, what could we hope for in the future? How many hundreds of millions of years would it be before the whole world would be converted? We answer that according to statistics it would never be, for statistics show that the natural increase of population throughout the world is far, far beyond the proportion of even nominal conversions from heathendom. Indeed, according to some good reckonings, the percentage of Christians every year is decreasing, the births of heathen lands so far outnumbering the births of Christian lands--even counting all the children born in Christendom as Christians.

Is any Christian, in view of these facts, prepared to claim that our God has been doing all that he could do for the conversion of the world? If so, that Christian may as well write upon his hopes at once the word "Ichabod." If we saw that the Calvinistic view magnifies the wisdom and power of God at the expense of his justice and love, we find on the other hand that the Arminian view magnifies the love of God at the expense of his wisdom and power. The true Gospel must show divine Wisdom and Power in full

accord with divine Justice and Love: of any other we must needs be ashamed.

DISTINCTIONS WITHOUT PRACTICAL DIFFERENCE.

But, my dear friends, we may as well now as at any time concede that there is comparatively little difference in the outcome of these two popular Protestant Gospels--the difference is merely a theoretical one respecting how the results are to be reached. The results themselves are the same in both cases--the eternal doom and torment of over forty-seven thousand millions of human creatures. For our Arminian friends no less than Calvinists agree that there is no salvation aside from faith in Christ, the only name given; and they admit also that of those who believe in Christ only the sanctified are of the real Church; and their Gospel is also that only the real Church is to be saved and that all others are to be eternally and most horribly tormented;--some claim in literal flames, others say by the torments and gnawings of conscience and remorse, which they proceed to say will be worse than the literal flames,--and we respond, if worse, so much worse for the argument.

All will surely agree as respects these two theories or Gospels held out to the world by Protestant Christendom that it would make no difference to the forty-seven thousand millions, whether they got into that awful state of hopeless woe by divine predestination and lack of love and justice, or by divine incapacity and lack of foreknowledge and proper arrangements. We believe that no true Christian will be ready after examining the subject thus far to say that he fully approves either of these theories, and that he is not ashamed of both of them.

CONSIDER NOW THE TRUE GOSPEL.

Let us now proceed to examine what is the true Gospel, presented to us in the Word of God--the Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed.

The word "gospel" itself should be the clue--should save the intelligent Christian from being misled by the various theories of bad tidings of great misery for nearly all people, miscalled "gospel." He who thinks it good news that one out of a thousand of the human family is to be saved and the remaining 999 to be eternally tormented, is either not a Christian at all, or he is decidedly undeveloped in Christian character, in mercy, in love, in justice. In our opinion he is at most only a "babe in Christ" who has need

first of the milk of the Word and subsequently of the "strong meat" thereof, that he may grow up into Christ in all things, and be able to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth all understanding. --Eph. 3:18,19.

When occasionally we come across some one who gives evidence of being a Christian, and who still entertains such horribly blasphemous views respecting the Heavenly Father's character, we feel like quoting to him the Lord's words through the Prophet, "My ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts, for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans higher than your plans." (Isa. 55:8,9.) And part of our object in this discourse, dear friends, is to have those, whose eyes are anointed of the Lord, that they may see spiritual things, discern some of the Lord's higher ways and higher plans which he presents to us in his Word under the name "gospel"--good tidings.

NOT UNIVERSAL SALVATION BUT A UNIVERSAL OPPORTUNITY FOR SALVATION.

The Apostle tells us that God preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, "beforehand" signifying

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before it was due to begin; for the Gospel did not begin with Abraham, but with our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Apostle again declares, this salvation "began to be declared by our Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Heb. 2:3.) All that ever went before our Lord's preaching was not the Gospel, but merely types and promises which foreshadowed it. Let us notice next what, according to the Apostle, constituted this forestatement of the Gospel to Abraham: he says that it was couched in the words, "In thee and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. 3:16,29.) Note this carefully: it does not say, In thy seed shall one out of a thousand out of the families of the earth be blessed, and the remainder be doomed to an indescribably horrible eternity, but that the whole Gospel is a Gospel of blessing, applicable to all the families of the earth--through Christ, the true seed of Abraham.

When our Lord Jesus was born into the world, the Heavenly Father sent a message respecting him, and the angels who bore that message declared that it was a Gospel message. Let us hearken to what the angels said about the eternal torment of the vast

majority of our race. They said to the shepherds, "Behold we bring you good tidings [gospel] of great joy, which shall be unto all people." (Luke 2:10.) Let it be distinctly noted that the Gospel of the angels, like the Gospel communicated to Abraham, contains no reference to the damnation and eternal misery of any of the Lord's creatures, and that consequently our friends of the Salvation Army and others, who in ignorance preach damnation and call it the Gospel, are doing so in utter violation of the meaning of the word and of all the uses of that word throughout the Scriptures. However well they may mean, they are in this certainly committing a wrong, a grievous wrong, and we long to see the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God shine into their hearts and relieve them of this blindness which comes not from God nor from his Word, but from the prince of darkness. --2 Cor. 4:4.

It will require all the Millennial age (which is to follow this Gospel age in which we live) to bless all the families of the earth with the joyful knowledge of divine grace in Christ. Just so surely as the forty-seven thousand millions went down into death without hearing of the Saviour, without coming to a clear knowledge of the truth, without the good tidings of great joy reaching their ears,--just so surely must they all come forth from the grave that this very Gospel message of "good tidings" may be declared to them, and that they may be tested thereby and either be accepted to eternal life or destroyed, as unworthy of life, in the Second Death. We say just so surely, for three reasons:

(1) The announcement of the Gospel to Abraham says, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," and all of these forty-seven thousand millions belong to this very class specified, the families of the earth--and they have not yet been blessed with this knowledge of the only name wherein is the blessing.

(2) The same is true of the message by the angels, --the good tidings of great joy is for all people, and these forty-seven thousand millions of humanity are surely the great bulk of all people.

(3) We are sure that this testimony must be given to them in the future because the Scriptural declaration is that "Christ died for the ungodly;" "he tasted death for every man," and as a consequence every man must have an opportunity granted him for benefitting by that death, and of availing himself of the privilege of eternal life which was secured by our Lord's ransom sacrifice.

DID CHRIST DIE FOR THE CHURCH ONLY?

But some one would perhaps say, Christ died only for the sins of the Church and not for the sins of the world, and consequently the sins of the world cannot be forgiven them. We answer, No; the Scriptural declaration most positively is that "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man," "to be testified in due time." And, additionally, the Apostle says, "He is a propitiation [satisfaction] for our [the Church's] sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."--1 John 2:2.

What could be plainer than this? If the price for the sins of the whole world has been paid to Justice, we may rest well assured that Justice will furnish opportunity through the Redeemer whereby all these whose sins were atoned for may come to a knowledge of Christ, and to an opportunity of accepting divine grace through him.

But some one will say, Why should God adopt a plan which would necessitate a resurrection of the dead, and a post-resurrection trial for eternal life except for all the elect Church of this Gospel age?

We answer,--(1) It is not for us to inquire why the Lord adopts certain plans which differ from those which our poor finite minds might arrange for him: rather it is for us to acknowledge that our wisdom is insufficient on such a subject and that we should come humbly to the Lord to hear from his Word whatever he may be pleased to inform us respecting his purposes.

(2) As a matter of fact only those who approach the question from this standpoint need expect to see the truth or to "comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God."--Eph. 3:18; 1 Cor. 2:12.

God has been pleased, however, to reveal to us some of his reasons for arranging his plan as we see it. He assures us of his full wisdom and power to manage every feature of his own work according to his own good pleasure, assuring us that he knows the end from the beginning, and that the end will fully justify every step that he has taken. His Word, no less than observation, shows us that during all these six thousand years the world has been getting a lesson respecting the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its wages of sorrow and death. His Word assures us also that during the next age, the Millennium, the whole world will be brought to a knowledge of the way of righteousness and love and peace, and will see the divine law in practical operation, and witness its beneficent results in all those who will come into harmony with the great Mediator.

Thus mankind learns the lesson of evil and its consequences first in the present life, and the lesson of righteousness and its blessed results under divine

providence, in the Millennium; and when thus fully equipped with knowledge on both sides of the question and instructed by the Royal Priesthood, (the completed and glorified elect Gospel Church), mankind will be ready for the tests, that will be applied by the Lord Jesus, under which the obedient and faithful will be granted full perfection and eternal life, and the disobedient and incorrigible will "be destroyed from amongst the people."--Acts 3:22,23.

"IF YE BE CHRIST'S, THEN ARE YE ABRAHAM'S SEED AND HEIRS."

Another matter, really the key to the whole question which we are discussing, is revealed in God's Word, viz., that in the divine purpose the promised "Seed of Abraham" that should perform the great work of blessing all the families of the earth, is to be one, in the sense of one kind, but not in the sense of one person--that is to say, that the seed of Abraham consists of Jesus Christ the Head, and of the Church which is the body. Not the nominal or professing church, but the true Church, "whose names are written in heaven," and who walk in the footsteps of their Lord, and are found faithful unto death, and shall be granted with their Lord the crown of life.

This Gospel age intervening between the time of the great sin offering and the time when the blessing of earth's billions will commence, God has set apart for the work of selecting or electing the body of Christ, the Church, the Bride, the "little flock," the "royal priesthood," the joint heirs with Christ in his kingdom. These, like their Head, are called with a "high calling," a "heavenly calling," and the salvation provided for them is higher than that which God purposes for the world in general. He is selecting this "little flock" and trying them and proving them, fitting them and polishing them for the heavenly Kingdom, and it is to these, as the Apostle Peter declares, God has given "exceeding great and precious promises [far beyond any promises given to any other of his creatures] that by these [promises] we might become partakers of the divine nature," and joint-heirs with his Son. This is denominated a "heavenly calling" in contrast with the earthly salvation intended for whosoever will "in due time."

This true view of the calling and election of the Church is another feature of the Gospel. If it is splendid, good news to know that ultimately all families of the earth are to be blessed with opportunities for salvation through the Christ, it is still an additional

feature to the good news to know that God has invited us to become members of the Christ company, "members in particular of the body of Christ." No wonder the Apostle calls this our "high calling," our "heavenly calling": it is to the attainment of this great prize that the Apostle exhorts all the faithful to lay aside every weight and every besetment and to run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel, looking unto Jesus, the author, until he shall have become the finisher of our faith.

This is the true Gospel, dear friends, the one we find set forth in the Scriptures, set forth by Paul himself, and of which he was not ashamed. This Gospel shows the character of our Creator in a most wonderful light,--his Wisdom, able to discern the end from the beginning; his Power, able to accomplish that which he pleases; his Justice, squaring every feature of the plan from first to last, according to the most absolute features of righteousness; his Love, whose lengths and breadths and heights and depths we have not yet been able to explore; a love which sympathizes with his creatures in their fallen estate; a love which provided a Saviour, and a great one; a love which prompted that Saviour to give his life as our ransom price; a love which met all the requirements of divine justice for us; a love which still pursues mankind, and in this Gospel age calls us to joint heirship with his Son in a nature and kingdom far above angels, principalities and powers, of which the Apostle says:

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." This divine love, still pursuing its original plan for man's salvation, will use the "elect" glorified house of sons, of which Christ Jesus is the Head (Eph. 1:22), in blessing all families of the earth with full opportunity of knowledge and full assistance up the highway of holiness (Isa. 35:8) that so many as will may attain to restitution to all that was lost in Adam

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by coming back into harmony with God through the great Mediator.--Acts 3:19-23.

NONE NEED BE ASHAMED OF THE TRUE GOSPEL.

Verily, dear friends, of this Gospel we are not ashamed, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." It has in our hearts a transforming and renewing power, a sanctifying power which no error could possibly have, and which all the theories of eternal torment have never equaled and never will. Let us more and more "show forth

the praises of our God, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," by renouncing all God-dishonoring creeds and theories, and instead hold forth the Word of life, and witness the good confession--the "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

All who will declare the true Gospel will need to be well shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace (gentleness, patience, meekness) for, strange to say, they will find bitter opposition from professed servants of the Lord who have been blinded and prejudiced by Satan's misrepresentations of the Gospel,-- by which he seeks to drive from the Lord all who have a remnant of reason in their religious thinking. All who have ears to hear, and who do hear the true Gospel, will quickly distinguish it from the miserable counterfeits which for so long have passed current among God's people. Let all such remember that ability to hear is an evidence of divine favor, and let them not be ashamed, but glorify God on this behalf. Let such remember, also, that their acceptance of truth as due, in the face of unpopularity, is a part of their testing. The Lord puts his plan, his Word, as his representative, saying--He that is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with his holy angels.--Mark 8:38.

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WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES CONCERNING HELL?

"To the Law and to the Testimony: If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them."--Isa. 8:20.

A CORRECT understanding of this subject has become almost a necessity to Christian steadfastness. For centuries it has been the teaching of "orthodoxy," of all shades, that God, before creating man, had created a great abyss of fire and terrors, capable of containing all the billions of the human family which he purposed to bring into being; that this abyss he had named "hell"; and that all of the promises and threatenings of the Bible were designed to deter as many as possible (a "little flock") from such wrong-doing as would make this awful place their perpetual home.

As knowledge increases and superstitions fade, this monstrous view of the divine arrangement and character is losing its force; and thinking people cannot but disbelieve the legend, which used to be illustrated on the church walls in the highest degree of art

and realism, samples of which are still to be seen in Europe. Some now claim that the place is literal, but the fire symbolic, etc., etc., while others repudiate the doctrine of "hell" in every sense and degree. While glad to see superstitions fall, and truer ideas of the great, and wise, and just, and loving Creator prevail, we are alarmed to notice that the tendency with all who abandon this long revered doctrine is toward doubt, skepticism, infidelity.

Why should this be the case, when the mind is merely being delivered from an error,--do you ask? Because Christian people have so long been taught that the foundation for this awful blasphemy against God's character and government is deep-laid, and firmly fixed, in the Word of God--the Bible--and, consequently, to whatever degree that belief in "hell" is shaken, to that extent their faith in the Bible, as the revelation of the true God, is shaken also;--so that those who have dropped their belief in a "hell," of some kind of endless torment, are often open infidels, and scoffers at God's Word.

Guided by the Lord's providence to a realization that the Bible has been slandered, as well as its divine Author, and that, rightly understood, it teaches nothing on this subject derogatory to God's character nor to an intelligent reason, we will attempt to lay bare the Scripture teaching on this subject, that thereby faith in God and his Word may be re-established, in the hearts of his people, on a better, a reasonable foundation. Indeed, it is our opinion that whoever shall hereby find that his false view rested upon human misconceptions and misinterpretations, will, at the same time, learn to trust hereafter less to his own and other men's imaginings, and, by faith, to grasp more firmly the Word of God, which is able to make wise unto salvation.

That the advocates of the doctrine of eternal torment have little or no faith in it is very manifest from the fact that it has no power over their course of action. While all the denominations of Christendom sustain the doctrine that eternal torment and endless, hopeless despair will constitute the punishment of the wicked, they are mostly quite at ease in allowing the wicked to take their course, while they pursue the even tenor of their way. Chiming bells and pealing organs, artistic choirs, and costly edifices, and upholstered pews, and polished oratory which more and more avoids any reference to this alarming theme, afford rest and entertainment to fashionable congregations that gather on the Lord's day and are known to the world as churches of Christ and representatives of his doctrines. But they seem little concerned about the eternal welfare of the multitudes, or even of themselves and their own families, though one would naturally presume that with such awful possibilities in view they would be almost frantic in their efforts to rescue

the perishing.

The plain inference is that they do not believe it. The only class of people that to any degree show their faith in it by their works is the Salvation Army; and these are the subjects of ridicule from almost all other Christians, because they are somewhat consistent with their belief. Yet their peculiar, and often absurd, methods, so strikingly in contrast with those of the Lord of whom it was written, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street" (Isa. 42:2), are very mild compared with what might be expected if they were fully convinced of the doctrine. We cannot imagine how sincere believers of this terrible doctrine go from day to day about the ordinary affairs of life, or meet quietly in elegance every Sunday to hear an essay from the pulpit on the peculiar subjects often advertised. Could they do so while really believing all the time that fellow mortals are dying at the rate of one hundred a minute, and entering

"That lone land of deep despair," where

"No God regards their bitter prayer"?

If they really believed this few saints could complacently sit there and think of those hurrying every moment into that awful state described by that good, well-meaning, but greatly deluded man, Isaac Watts (whose own heart was immeasurably warmer and larger than that he ascribed to the great Jehovah), when he wrote the hymn--

"Tempests of angry fire shall roll

To blast the rebel worm,

And beat upon the naked soul

In one eternal storm."

People often become frantic with grief when friends have been caught in some terrible catastrophe, as a fire, or a wreck, though they know they will soon be relieved by death; yet they pretend to believe that God is less loving than themselves, and that he can look with indifference, if not with delight, at billions of his creatures enduring an eternity of torture far more terrible, which he prepares for them and prevents any escape from forever. Not only so, but they expect that they will get literally into Abraham's bosom, and will then look across the gulf and see and hear the agonies of the multitudes (some of whom they now love and weep over); and they imagine that they will be so changed, and become so like their present idea of God, so hardened against all pity, and so barren of love and sympathy, that they will delight in such a God and in such a plan.

It is wonderful that otherwise sensible men and women, who love their fellows, and who establish hospitals, orphanages, asylums, and societies for the prevention of cruelty even to the brute creation, are so unbalanced mentally that they can believe and subscribe

to such a doctrine, and yet be so indifferent about investigating its authority!

Only one exception can we think of--those who hold the ultra-Calvinistic doctrine; who believe that God has decreed it thus, that all the efforts they could put forth could not alter the result with a single person; and that all the prayers they could offer would not change one iota of the awful plan they believe God has marked out for his and their eternal pleasure. These indeed could sit still, so far as effort for their fellows is concerned: but why sing the praises of such a scheme for the damnation of their neighbors whom God has told them to love as themselves?

Why not rather begin to doubt this "doctrine of devils," this blasphemy against the great God, hatched in the "dark ages," when a crafty priesthood taught that it is right to do evil that good may result?

The doctrine of eternal torment was undoubtedly introduced by Papacy to induce pagans to join her and support her system. It flourished at the same time that "bull fights" and gladiatorial contests were the public amusements most enjoyed; when the Crusades were called "holy wars," and when men and women were called "heretics" and were often slaughtered for thinking or speaking contrary to the teachings of the Papacy; at a time when the sun of gospel truth was obscure; when the Word of God had fallen into disuse and was prohibited to be read by any but the clergy, whose love of their neighbors was often shown in torturing "heretics" to induce them to recant and deny their faith and their Bibles--to save them, if possible, they explained, from the more awful future of "heretics,"--eternal torture. They did not borrow this doctrine from the heathen, for no heathen people in the world have a doctrine so cruel, so fiendish and so unjust. Find it, whoever can, and show it up in all its blackness, that, if possible, it may be shown that the essence of barbarism, malice, hate and ungodliness has not been exclusively appropriated by those whom God has most highly favored with light from every quarter, and to whom he has committed the only oracle--his Word. Oh! the shame and confusion that will cover the faces of many, even good men, who verily thought that they did God service while propagating this blasphemous doctrine, when they awake in the resurrection, to learn of the love and justice of God, and when they come to know that the Bible does not teach this God-dishonoring, love-extinguishing, truth-beclouding, saint-hindering, sinner-hardening, "damnable heresy" of eternal torment.

--2 Pet. 2:1.

But we repeat that, in the light and moral development of this day, sensible people do not believe this doctrine. However, since they think that the Bible teaches it, every step they progress in real intelligence and brotherly kindness, which hinders belief in eternal torment, is in most cases a step away from God's word, which is falsely accused of being the authority for this teaching. Hence the second crop of evil fruit, which the devil's engraftment of this error is producing, is skepticism. The intelligent, honest thinkers are thus driven from the Bible into vain philosophies and sciences, falsely so-called, and into infidelity. Nor do the "worldly" really believe this doctrine, nor is it a restraint to crime, for convicts and the lower classes are the firmest believers in it.

But, says one, Has not the error done some good? Have not many been brought into the churches by the preaching of this doctrine in the past?

No error, we answer, ever did real good, but always harm. Those whom error brings into a church, and whom the truth would not move, are an injury to the church. The thousands terrorized, but not at heart converted, which this doctrine forced into Papacy, and which swelled her numbers and her wealth, diluted what little truth was held before, and mingled it with their unholy sentiments and errors so that, to meet the changed condition of things, the "clergy" found it needful to add error to error, and resorted to methods, forms, etc., not taught in the Scriptures and useless to the truly converted whom the truth controls. Among these were pictures, images, beads, vestments, candles, grand cathedrals, altars, etc., to help the unconverted heathen to a form of godliness more nearly corresponding to their former heathen worship, but lacking all the power of vital godliness.

The heathen were not benefited, for they were still heathen in God's sight, but deluded into aping what they did not understand or do from the heart. They were added "tares" to choke the "wheat," without being profited themselves. The Lord tells who sowed the seed of this enormous crop. (Matt. 13:39). The same is true of those who assume the name "Christian" to-day, who are not really at heart converted by the truth, but merely frightened by the error, or allured by promised earthly advantages of a social or business kind. Such add nothing to the true Church: by their ideas and manners they become stumbling blocks to the truly consecrated, and by their inability to digest the truth, the real food of the saints, they lead even the few true pastors to defraud the true "sheep" in order to satisfy the demands of these "goats" for something pleasing to their unconverted tastes. No: in no way has this error accomplished good except in the sense that God is able to make even the wrath of man to praise him. So also he will overrule this evil thing eventually to serve his purposes.

When by and by all men (during the Millennium)
shall come to see through this great deception by
which Satan has blinded the world to God's true character,
it will perhaps awaken in them a warmer,
stronger love for God.

Seeing, then, the unreasonableness of man's view,
let us lay aside human opinions and theories and come
to the Word of God, the only authority on the subject,
remembering that

"God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

"HELL," AS AN ENGLISH WORD.

In the first place bear in mind that the Old Testament
Scriptures were written in the Hebrew language,
and the New Testament in the Greek. The word
"hell" is an English word sometimes selected by the
translators of the English Bible to express the sense
of the Hebrew word sheol and the Greek words hades,
tartaroo and gehenna,--sometimes rendered "grave"
and "pit."

The word "hell" in old English usage, before
Papal theologians picked it up and gave it a new and
special significance to suit their own purposes, simply
meant to conceal, to hide, to cover; hence the concealed,

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hidden or covered place. In old English literature
records may be found of the helling of potatoes
--putting potatoes into pits; and of the helling of a
house--covering or thatching it. The word hell was
therefore properly used synonymously with the words
"grave" and "pit," to translate the words sheol and
hades as signifying the secret or hidden condition
of death. However, the same spirit which was willing
to twist the word to terrorize the ignorant is willing
still to perpetuate the error;--presumably saying--
"Let us do evil that good may follow."

If the translators of the Revised Version Bible
had been thoroughly disentangled from the Papal
error, and thoroughly honest, they would have done
more to help the English student than merely to substitute
the Hebrew word sheol and the Greek word
hades as they have done. They should have translated
the words. But they were evidently afraid to tell
the truth, and ashamed to tell the lie; and so gave us
sheol and hades untranslated, and permitted the inference
that these words mean the same as the word
"hell" has become perverted to mean. Their course,
while it for a time shields themselves, dishonors God
and the Bible, which the common people still suppose
teaches a "hell" of torment in the words sheol
and hades. Yet anyone can see that if it was proper

to translate the word sheol thirty-one times "grave" and three times "pit," it could not have been improper to have so translated it in every other instance.

A peculiarity to be observed in comparing these cases, as we will do shortly, is that in those texts where the torment idea would be an absurdity the translators of the King James version have used the words "grave" or "pit"; while in all other cases they have used the word "hell"; and the reader, long schooled in the Papal idea of torment, reads the word "hell" and thinks of it as signifying a place of torment, instead of the grave, the hidden or covered place or condition. For example, compare Job 14:13 with Psa. 86:13. The former reads,--"Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave [sheol] etc.," while the latter reads,--"Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell [sheol]." The Hebrew word being the same in both cases, there is no reason why the same word "grave" should not be used in both. But how absurd it would have been for Job to have prayed to God to hide him in a hell of eternal torture! The English reader would have asked questions and the secret would have gotten out speedily.

While the translators of the Reformation times are somewhat excusable for their mental bias in this matter, as they were just breaking away from the old Papal system, our modern translators, specially those of the recent Revised Version, are not entitled to any such consideration. Theological professors and pastors of congregations consider that they are justified in following the course of the revisers in not explaining the meaning of either the Hebrew or Greek words sheol or hades and by their use of the words they also give their confiding flocks to understand that a place of torture, a lake of fire, is meant. While attributing to the ignorant only the best of motives, it is manifestly only duplicity and cowardice which induces educated men, who know the truth on this subject, to prefer to continue to teach the error inferentially.

But not all ministers know of the errors of the translators, and deliberately cover and hide those errors from the people. Many, indeed, do not know of them, having merely accepted, without investigation, the theories of their seminary professors. It is the professors and learned ones who are most blameworthy. These have kept back the truth about "hell" for several reasons. First, there is evidently a sort of understanding or etiquette among them, that if they wish to maintain their standing in the "profession" they "must not tell tales out of school"; i.e., they must not divulge professional secrets to the "common people," the "laity." Second, they all fear that to let it be known that they have been teaching an unscriptural doctrine for years would break down the popular respect and reverence for the "clergy," the denominations and the theological schools, and unsettle confidence

in their wisdom. And, oh, how much depends upon confidence and reverence for men, when God's Word is so generally ignored! Third, they know that many of the members of their sects are not constrained by "the love of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:14), but merely by the fear of hell, and they see clearly, therefore, that to let the truth be known now would soon cut loose the names and the dollars of many in their flocks; and this, to those who "desire to make a fair show in the flesh" (Gal. 6:12) would seem to be a great calamity.

But what will be the judgment of God, whose character and plan are traduced by the blasphemous doctrine which these untranslated words help to support? Will he commend these unfaithful servants? Will he justify their course? Will the Chief Shepherd call these his beloved friends, and make known to them his further plans (John 15:15) that they may misrepresent them also to preserve their own dignity and reverence? Will he continue to send forth "things new and old," "meat in due season," to the household of faith, by the hand of the unfaithful servants? No, such shall not continue to be his mouthpieces or to shepherd his flock. (Ezek. 34:9,10.) He will choose instead, as at the first advent, from among the laity-- "the common people"--mouthpieces, and will give them words which none of the chief priests shall be able to gainsay or resist. (Luke 21:15.) And, as foretold, "the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." --Isa. 29:9-19.

"HELL" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The word "hell" occurs thirty-one times in the Old Testament, and in every instance it is sheol in the Hebrew. It does not mean a lake of fire and brimstone, nor anything at all resembling that thought: not in the slightest degree! Quite the reverse: instead of a place of blazing fire it is described in the context as a state of "darkness" (Job 10:21); instead of a place where shrieks and groans are heard, it is described in the context as a place of "silence" (Psa. 115:17); instead of representing in any sense pain and suffering, or remorse, the context describes it as a place or condition of forgetfulness. (Psa. 88:11,12.) "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, in the grave [sheol] whither thou goest."--Eccles. 9:10.

The meaning of sheol is "the hidden state," as applied to man's condition in death, in and beyond which all is hidden, except to the eye of faith; hence,

by proper and close association, the word was often used in the sense of grave--the tomb, the hidden place, or place beyond which only those who have the enlightened eye of the understanding can see resurrection, restitution of being. And be it particularly noted that this identical word sheol is translated "grave" thirty-one times and "pit" three times in our common version by the same translators--more times than it is translated "hell"; and twice, where it is translated "hell," it seemed so absurd, according to the present accepted meaning of the English word "hell," that scholars have felt it necessary to explain in the margin of modern Bibles, that it means grave. (Isa. 14:9 and Jonah 2:2.) In the latter case, the hidden state, or grave, was the belly of the fish in which Jonah was buried alive, and from which he cried to God.

ALL TEXTS IN WHICH "SHEOL" IS TRANSLATED
"HELL."

(1) Amos 9:2.--"Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them." [A figurative expression; but certainly pits of the earth are the only hells men can dig into.]

(2) Psa. 16:10.--"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." [This refers to our Lord's three days in the tomb.--Acts 2:31; 3:15.]

(3,4) Psa. 18:5 and 2 Sam. 22:6--margin.--"The cords of hell compassed me about." [A figure in which trouble is represented as hastening one to the tomb.]

(5) Psa. 55:15.--"Let them go down quick into hell" --margin, "the grave."

(6) Psa. 9:17.--"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." This text will be treated later, under a separate heading.

(7) Psa. 86:13.--"Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell"--margin, "the grave."

(8) Psa. 116:3.--"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me." [Sickness and trouble are the figurative hands of the grave to grasp us.]

(9) Psa. 139:8.--"If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." [God's power is unlimited: even over those in the tomb he can and will exert it and bring forth all that are in the graves.--John 5:28.]

(10) Deut. 32:22.--"For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn into the lowest hell." [A figurative representation of the destruction, the utter ruin, of Israel as a nation--"wrath to the uttermost," as the Apostle called it, God's anger burning that nation to the "lowest deep," as Leeser here translates the word sheol.--1 Thes. 2:16.]

(11) Job 11:8.--"It [God's wisdom] is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell [than any pit]; what canst thou know?"

(12) Job 26:6.--"Hell [the tomb] is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering."

(13) Prov. 5:5.--"Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell [i.e., lead to the grave]."

(14) Prov. 7:27.--"Her house is the way to hell [the grave], going down to the chambers of death."

(15) Prov. 9:18.--"He knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell." [Here the harlot's guests are represented as dead, diseased or dying, and many of the victims of sensuality in premature graves from diseases which also hurry off their posterity to the tomb.]

(16) Prov. 15:11.--"Hell and destruction are before the Lord." [Here the grave is associated with destruction and not with a life of torment.]

(17) Prov. 15:24.--"The path of life (leadeth) upward for the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath." [This illustrates the hope of resurrection from the tomb.]

(18) Prov. 23:14.--"Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell" [i.e., wise correction will save a child from vicious ways which lead to premature death, and may also possibly prepare him to escape the "Second Death"].

(19) Prov. 27:20.--"Hell [the grave] and destruction are never full: so the eyes of man are never satisfied."

(20) Isa. 5:14.--"Therefore hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure." [Here the grave is a symbol of destruction.]

(21,22) Isa. 14:9,15.--"Hell [margin, grave] from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming." ... "Thou shalt be brought down to hell" [the grave--so rendered in verse 11].

(23) Isa. 57:9.--"And didst debase thyself even unto hell." [Here figurative of deep degradation.]

(24,25) Ezek. 31:15-17.--"In the day when he went down to the grave,...I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit.... They also went down into hell with him, unto them that be slain with the sword." [Figurative and prophetic description of the fall of Babylon into destruction, silence, the grave.]

(26) Ezek. 32:21.--"The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him." [A continuation of the same figure representing Egypt's overthrow as a nation to join Babylon in destruction--buried.]

(27) Ezek. 32:27.--"And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell with their weapons of war: and they have laid their swords under their heads; but

their iniquities shall be upon their bones, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living." [The grave is the only "hell" where fallen ones are buried and lie with their weapons of war under their heads.]

(28) Hab. 2:5.--"Who enlargeth his desire as hell [the grave] and as death, and cannot be satisfied."

(29) Jonah 2:1,2.--"Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God, out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." [The belly of the fish was for a time his grave--see margin.]

(30,31) Isa. 28:15-18.--"Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell [the grave] are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore, saith the Lord, ...Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell [the grave] shall not stand." [God thus declares that the present prevalent

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idea, by which death and the grave are represented as friends, rather than enemies, shall cease; and men shall learn that death is the wages of sin, now and that it is in Satan's power (Rom. 6:23; Heb. 2:14) and not an angel sent by God.]

ALL OTHER TEXTS WHERE "SHEOL" OCCURS--
RENDERED "GRAVE" AND "PIT."

Gen. 37:35.--"I will go down into the grave unto my son."

Gen. 42:38.--"Then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." [See also the same expression in 44:29,31. The translators did not like

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to send God's servant, Jacob, to hell simply because his sons were evil.]

1 Sam. 2:6.--"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up."

1 Kings 2:6,9.--"Let not his hoar head go down to the grave with peace....His hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood."

Job 7:9.--"He that goeth down to the grave."

Job 14:13.--"Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me [resurrect me]!"

Job 17:13.--"If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness." [Job waits for resurrection--"in the morning."]

Job 17:16.--"They shall go down to the bars of the pit [grave], when our rest together is in the dust."

Job 21:13.--"They spend their days in mirth, and in a moment go down to the grave."

Job 24:19,20.--"Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the grave those which have sinned." [All have sinned, hence "Death passed upon all men," and all go down to the grave. But all have been redeemed by "the precious blood of Christ"; hence all shall be awakened and come forth again in God's due time--"in the morning," Rom. 5:12,18,19.]

Psa. 6:5.--"In death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?"

Psa. 30:3.--"O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." [This passage expresses gratitude for recovery from danger of death.]

Psa. 31:17.--"Let the wicked be ashamed; let them be silent in the grave."

Psa. 49:14,15, margin.--"Like sheep they are laid in the grave: death shall feed on them; and the upright [the saints--Dan. 7:27] shall have dominion over them in the morning [the Millennial morning]; and their beauty shall consume, the grave being an habitation to every one of them. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave."

Psa. 88:3.--"My life draweth nigh unto the grave."

Psa. 89:48.--"Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?"

Psa. 141:7.--"Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth."

Prov. 1:12.--"Let us swallow them up alive as the grave: and whole, as those that go down into the pit" [i.e., as of an earthquake, as in Num. 16:30-33].

Prov. 30:15,16.--"Four things say not, it is enough: the grave," etc.

Eccl. 9:10.--"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

Song of Solomon 8:6.--"Jealousy is cruel as the grave."

Isa. 14:11.--"Thy pomp is brought down to the grave."

Isa. 38:10.--"I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years."

Isa. 38:18.--"The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth."

Num. 16:30-33.--"If...they go down quick into the pit, then shall ye understand....The ground clave asunder that was under them, and the earth

opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation."

Ezek. 31:15.--"In the day when he went down to the grave."

Hosea 13:14.--"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction. Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." [The Lord did not ransom any from a place of fire and torment, for there is no such place; but he did ransom all mankind from the grave, from death, the penalty brought upon all by Adam's sin, as this verse declares.]

The above list includes every instance of the use of the English word "hell" and the Hebrew word sheol in the Old Testament. From this examination it must be evident to all readers that God's revelations for four thousand years contain not a single hint of a "hell," such as the word is now understood to signify.

"HELL" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

In the New Testament, the Greek word hades corresponds exactly to the Hebrew word sheol. As proof see the quotations of the Apostles from the Old Testament, in which they render it hades. For instance, Acts 2:27, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades," is a quotation from Psa. 16:10, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol." And in 1 Cor. 15:54,55, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave [hades], where is thy victory?" is an allusion to Isa. 25:8, "He will swallow up death in victory," and to Hos. 13:14, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O sheol, I will be thy destruction."

"HELL" FROM THE GREEK WORD "HADES."

Matt. 11:23.--"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell"; Luke 10:15: "Shall be thrust down to hell." [In privileges of knowledge and opportunity the city was highly favored, or, figuratively, "exalted unto heaven"; but because of misuse of God's favors, it would be debased, or, figuratively, cast down to hades, overthrown, destroyed. It is now so thoroughly buried in oblivion, that even the site where

it stood is a matter of dispute. Capernaum is certainly destroyed, thrust down to hades.]

Luke 16:23.--"In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." [A parabolic figure explained further along, under a separate heading.]

Rev. 6:8.--"And behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him." [Symbol of destruction or the grave.]

Matt. 16:18.--"Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." [Although bitter and relentless persecution, even unto death, should afflict the Church during the Gospel age, it should never prevail to her utter extermination; and eventually, by her resurrection, accomplished by her Lord, the Church will prevail over hades--the tomb.]

CHRIST IN "HELL" (HADES) AND RESURRECTED FROM "HELL" (HADES).--ACTS 2:1,14,22-31.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, ...Peter...lifted up his voice and said,...Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you,...being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ['He was delivered for our offenses'], ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains [or bands] of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it [for the Word of Jehovah had previously declared his resurrection]; for David speaketh concerning him [personating or speaking for him], 'I [Christ] foresaw the Lord [Jehovah] always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope, because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [hades, the tomb, the state of death], neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou [Jehovah] hast made known to me [Christ] the ways of life.'" Here our Lord, as personified by the prophet David, expresses his faith in Jehovah's promise of a resurrection and in the full and glorious accomplishment of Jehovah's plan through him, and rejoices in the prospect.

Peter then proceeds, saying--"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day [so that this prophecy could not have referred to himself personally; for David's soul was left in "hell"--[hades, the tomb, the state of death --and his flesh did see corruption]: Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an

oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before [prophetically], spake of the resurrection of Christ [out of "hell"--hades, the tomb--to which he must go for our offenses], that his soul was not left in hell [hades--the death state], neither his flesh did see corruption." Thus Peter presents a strong, logical argument, based on the words of the prophet David--showing first, that Christ, who was delivered by God for our offenses, went to "hell," the grave, the condition of death, destruction (Psa. 16:10;) and, second, that according to promise he had been delivered from hell, the grave, death, destruction, by a resurrection--a raising up to life; being created again, the same identical being, yet more glorious, and exalted even to "the express image of the Father's person." (Heb. 1:3.) And now "this same Jesus" (Acts 2:36), in his subsequent revelation to the Church, declares--

Rev. 1:18.--"I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [hades, the grave] and of death."

Amen! Amen! our hearts respond; for in his resurrection we see the glorious outcome of the whole plan of Jehovah to be accomplished through the power

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of the Resurrected One who now holds the keys of the tomb and of death and in due time will release all the prisoners who are, therefore, called the "prisoners of hope." (Zech. 9:12; Luke 4:18.) No craft or cunning can by any possible device wrest these Scriptures entire and pervert them to the support of that monstrous and blasphemous Papal tradition of eternal torment. Had that been our penalty, Christ, to be our vicarious sacrifice, must still, and to all eternity, endure such torment, which no one will claim. But death was our penalty, and "Christ died for our sins," and "also for the sins of the whole world." --1 Cor. 15:3; 1 John 2:2.

Rev. 20:13,14.--"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell [the grave] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged, every man, according to their works. And death and hell [the grave] were cast into the lake of fire: this is the Second Death." [The lake of fire is the symbol of final and everlasting destruction. Death and hell [the grave] both go into it. There shall be no more death; "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."--1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:4.]

OTHER OCCURRENCES OF THE WORD "HELL."

Having examined the word sheol, the only word in the Old Testament rendered "hell," and the word hades, most frequently in the New Testament rendered "hell" we now notice every remaining instance in Scripture of the English word "hell." In the New Testament two other words are rendered "hell"; namely, gehenna and tartaroo, which we will consider in the order named.

"GEHENNA" RENDERED "HELL."

This word occurs in the following passages--in all twelve times:--Matt. 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mark 9:43-47; Luke 12:5; Jas. 3:6. It is the Grecian mode of spelling the Hebrew words which are translated "Valley of Hinnom." This valley lay just outside the city of Jerusalem, and served the purpose of sewer and garbage burner to that city. The offal, garbage, etc., were emptied there, and fires were kept continually burning to consume utterly all things deposited therein, brimstone being added to assist combustion and insure complete destruction. But no living thing was ever permitted to be cast into Gehenna. The Jews were not allowed to torture any creature.

When we consider that in the people of Israel God was giving us object lessons illustrating his dealings and plans, present and future, we should expect

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that this Valley of Hinnom, or Gehenna, would also play its part in illustrating things future. We know that Israel's priesthood and temple illustrated the Royal Priesthood, the Christian Church as it will be, the true temple of God; and we know that their chief city was a figure of the New Jerusalem, the seat of kingdom power and center of authority--the city (government) of the Great King, Immanuel. We remember, too, that Christ's government is represented in the book of Revelation (Rev. 21:10-27) under the figure of a city--the New Jerusalem. There, after describing the class permitted to enter the privileges and blessings of that Kingdom--the honorable and glorious, and all who have right to the trees of life--we find it also declared that there shall not enter into it anything that defileth, or that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but only such as the Lamb shall write as worthy of life. This city, which thus will represent the entire saved world in the end of the Millennium, was typified in the earthly city, Jerusalem; and the defiling, the abominable, etc., the class unworthy of life everlasting, who do not enter in, were represented by the refuse and the filthy, lifeless carcasses cast

into Gehenna outside the city,--whose utter destruction was thus symbolized--the Second Death. Accordingly, we find it stated that those not found worthy of life are to be cast into the "lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15) --fire here, as everywhere, being used as a symbol of destruction, and the symbol, lake of fire, being drawn from this same Gehenna, or Valley of Hinnom.

Therefore, while Gehenna served a useful purpose to the city of Jerusalem as a place for garbage burning, it, like the city itself, was typical, and illustrated the future dealings of God in refusing and committing to destruction all the impure elements, thus preventing them from defiling the holy city, the New Jerusalem, after the trial of the Millennial age of judgment shall have fully proved them and separated with unerring accuracy the "sheep" from the "goats."

So, then, Gehenna was a type or illustration of the Second Death--final and complete destruction, from which there can be no recovery; for after that, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," but only "fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." --Heb. 10:26.

Let us remember that Israel, for the purpose of being used as types of God's future dealing with the race, was typically treated as though the ransom had been given before they left Egypt, though only a typical lamb had been slain. When Jerusalem was built, and the Temple--representative of the true temple, the Church, and the true kingdom as it will be established by Christ in the Millennium--that people typified the world in the Millennial age. Their priests represented the glorified Royal Priesthood, and their Law and its demands of perfect obedience represented the law and conditions under the New Covenant, to be brought into operation for the blessing of all the obedient, and for the condemnation of all who, when granted fullest opportunity, will not heartily submit to the righteous ruling and laws of the Great King.

Seeing then, that Israel's polity, condition, etc., prefigured those of the world in the coming age, how appropriate that we should find the valley or abyss, Gehenna, a figure of the Second Death, the utter destruction in the coming age of all that is unworthy of preservation; and how aptly, too, is the symbol, "lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. 19:20), drawn from this same Gehenna, or Valley of Hinnom, burning continually with brimstone. The expression, "burning with brimstone," adds force to the symbol, "fire," to express the utter and irrevocable destructiveness of the Second Death; for burning brimstone is the most deadly agent known. How reasonable, too, to expect that Israel would have courts and judges resembling or prefiguring the judgments of the next age; and that the sentence of those (figurative) courts of that (figurative) people under those (figurative) laws

to that (figurative) abyss, outside that (figurative) city, would largely correspond to the (real) sentences of the (real) court and judges in the next age. If these points are kept in mind, they will greatly assist us in understanding the words of our Lord in reference to Gehenna; for though the literal valley just at hand was named and referred to, yet his words carry with them lessons concerning the future age and the antitypical Gehenna--the Second Death.

SHALL BE IN DANGER OF GEHENNA.
MATTHEW 5:21,22.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, 'Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be amenable to the judges;' but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall [future--under the regulations of the real Kingdom] be amenable to the judges; and whosoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca' [villain], shall be in danger of the high council; but whosoever shall say, 'Thou fool,' shall be in danger of hell [Gehenna] fire."

To understand these references to council and judges and Gehenna, all should know something of Jewish regulations. The "Court of Judges" consisted of seven men (or twenty-three,--the number is in dispute), and had power to judge some classes of crimes. The High Council, or Sanhedrin, consisted of seventy-one men of recognized learning and ability. This constituted the highest court of the Jews, and its supervision was over the gravest offenses. The most serious sentence was death; but certain very obnoxious criminals were subjected to an indignity after death, being refused burial and cast with the carcasses of dogs, the city refuse, etc., into Gehenna, there to be consumed. The object of this burning in Gehenna was to make the crime and the criminal detestable in the eyes of the people, and signified that the culprit was a hopeless case. It must be remembered that Israel hoped for a resurrection from the tomb, and hence they were particular in caring for the corpses of their dead. Not realizing fully God's power, they apparently thought he needed their assistance to that extent. (Exod. 13:19; Heb. 11:22; Acts 7:15,16.) Hence the destruction of the body in Gehenna after death (figuratively) implied the loss of hope of future life by a resurrection. Thus to such Gehenna represented the Second Death in the same figurative way that they as a people represented or illustrated a future order of things under the New Covenant.

Notice that our Lord, in the above words, pointed out to them that their construction of the Law, severe though it was, was far below the real import

of that Law, as it shall be interpreted under the real Kingdom and Judges, which theirs only typified. He shows that the command of their Law, "Thou shalt not kill," reached much farther than they supposed; that malicious anger and vituperation "shall be" considered a violation of God's Law, under the New Covenant; and that such as, under the favorable conditions of that new age, will not reform so thoroughly as to fully observe God's Law will be counted worthy of that which the Gehenna near them typified --the Second Death. However, the strict severity of that Law will be enforced only in proportion as the discipline, advantages and assistance of that age, enabling each to comply with its laws, shall be disregarded.

The same thought is continued in

MATTHEW 5:22-30.

"Ye have heard," etc., "but I say unto you...it is better for thee to lose one of thy members, than that thy whole body should be cast into Gehenna."

Here again the operation of God's Law under the New Covenant is contrasted with its operation under the Old or Jewish Covenant, and the lesson of self-control is urged by the statement that it is far more profitable that men should refuse to gratify depraved desires (though they be dear to them as a right eye, and apparently indispensable as a right hand) than that they should gratify these, and lose, in the Second Death, the future life provided through the atonement for all who will return to perfection, holiness and God.

These expressions of our Lord not only serve to show us the perfection (Rom. 7:12) of God's Law, and how fully it will be defined and enforced in the Millennium, but they served as a lesson to the Jews also, who previously saw through Moses' commands only the crude exterior of the Law of God. Since they found it difficult in their fallen state to keep inviolate even the surface significance of the Law, they must now see the impossibility of their keeping the finer meaning of the Law revealed by Christ. Had they understood and received his teaching fully, they would have cried out, Alas! if God judges us thus, by the very thoughts and intents of the heart, we are all unclean, all undone, and can hope for naught but condemnation to Gehenna (to utter destruction, as brute beasts). They would have cried, "Show us a greater priesthood than that of Aaron, a High Priest

and Teacher able fully to appreciate the Law, and able fully to appreciate and sympathize with our fallen state and inherited weaknesses, and let him offer for us 'better sacrifices,' and apply to us the needed greater forgiveness of sin, and let him as a great physician heal us and restore us, so that we can obey the perfect Law of God from our hearts." Then they would have found Christ.

But this lesson they did not learn, for the ears of their understanding were "dull of hearing"; hence they knew not that God had already prepared the very priest and sacrifice and teacher and physician they needed, who in due time redeemed those under the typical Law, as well as all not under it, and who also "in due time," shortly, will begin his restoring work--restoring sight to the blind eyes of their understanding, and hearing to their deaf ears. Then the "vail shall be taken away"--the vail of ignorance, pride and human wisdom which Satan now uses to blind the world to God's true law and true plan of salvation in Christ.

And not only did our Lord's teaching here show the Law of the New Covenant, and teach the Jew a lesson, but it is of benefit to the Gospel Church also. In proportion as we learn the exactness of God's Law, and what would constitute perfection under its requirements, we see that our Redeemer was perfect, and that we, totally unable to commend ourselves to God as keepers of that Law, can find acceptance with the Father only in the merit of our Redeemer, while none can be of that "body," covered by the robe of his righteousness, except the consecrated who endeavor to do only those things well pleasing to God, which includes the avoidance of sin to the extent of ability. Yet their acceptability with God rests not in their perfection, but upon the perfection of Christ, so long as they abide in him. These, nevertheless, are benefited by a clear insight into the perfect Law of God, even though they are not dependent on the perfect keeping of it. They delight to do God's will to the extent of their ability, and the better they know his perfect Law, the better they are able to rule themselves and to conform to it. So, then, to us also the Lord's words have a lesson of value.

The point, however, to be specially noticed here is that Gehenna which the Jews knew, and of which our Lord spoke to them, was not a lake of fire to be kept burning to all eternity, into which all would be cast who get "angry with a brother" and call him a "fool." No; the Jews gathered no such extreme idea from the Lord's words. The eternal torment theory was unknown to them. It had no place in their theology, as will be shown. It is a comparatively modern invention, coming down, as we have shown, from Papacy--the great apostasy. The point is that Gehenna symbolizes the Second Death--utter, complete

and everlasting destruction. This is clearly shown by its being contrasted with life as its opposite. "It is better for thee to enter into life halt, or maimed, than otherwise to be cast into Gehenna." It is better that you should deny yourselves sinful gratifications than that you should lose all future life, and perish in the Second Death.

ABLE TO DESTROY BOTH SOUL AND BODY IN
GEHENNA.
MATTHEW 10:28; LUKE 12:5.

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell [Gehenna]." See also another account of the same discourse by Luke--12:4,5.

Here our Lord pointed out to his followers the great cause they had for courage and bravery under the most trying circumstances. They were to expect persecution, and to have all manner of evil spoken against them falsely, for his sake, and for the sake of the "good tidings" of which he made them the ministers and heralds; yea, the time would come, that whosoever would kill them would think that he did God a service. Their consolation or reward for this was

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to be received, not in the present life, but in the life to come. They were assured, and they believed, that he had come to give his life a ransom for many, and that all in their graves must in consequence, in due time, hear the Deliverer's voice and come forth, either to reward (if their trial had been passed in this life successfully), future trial, or judgment, as must be the case with the great majority who do not, in this present life, come to the necessary knowledge and opportunity essential to a complete trial.

Under present conditions men are able to kill our bodies, but nothing that they can do will affect our future being (soul),* which God has promised shall be revived or restored by his power in the resurrection day--the Millennial age. Our revived souls will have new bodies (spiritual or natural--"to each 'seed' his own [kind of] body"), and these none will have liberty to kill. God alone has power to destroy utterly--soul and body. He alone, therefore, should be feared, and the opposition of men even to the death is not to be feared, if thereby we gain divine approval. Our Lord's bidding then is, Fear not them which can terminate the present (dying) life in these poor dying bodies. Care little for it, its food, its clothing, its pleasures, in comparison with that future existence or

being which God has provided for you, and which, if secured, may be your portion forever. Fear not the threats, or looks, or acts of men, whose power can extend no farther than the present existence; who can harm and kill these bodies, but can do no more. Rather have respect and deference to God, with whom are the issues of life everlasting--fear him who is able to destroy in Gehenna, the Second Death, both the present dying existence and all hope of future existence.

UNDYING WORMS AND QUENCHLESS FIRES.
MATTHEW 18:8,9; MARK 9:43-48.

Here it is conclusively shown that Gehenna as a figure represented the Second Death--the utter destruction which must ensue in the case of all who, after having fully received the opportunities of a future being or existence through our Lord's sacrifice, prove themselves unworthy of God's gift, and refuse to accept it, by refusing obedience to his just requirements. For it does not say that God will preserve soul or body in Gehenna, but that in it he can and will "destroy" both. Thus we are taught that any who are condemned to the Second Death are hopelessly and forever blotted out of existence.

[Since these two passages refer to the same discourse, we quote from Mark--remarking that verses 44 and 46, and part of 45, are not found in the oldest Greek MSS., though verse 48, which reads the same, is in all manuscripts. We quote the text as found in these ancient and reliable MSS.] "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into Gehenna, into the fire that never shall be quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into Gehenna. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into Gehenna, where the worm dies not and the fire is not quenched."

After reading the above, all must agree with the prophet that our Lord opened his mouth in figures and obscure sayings. (Psa. 78:2; Matt. 13:35.) No one for a moment supposes that our Lord advised the people to mutilate their bodies by cutting off their limbs, or gouging out their eyes. Nor does he mean us to understand that the injuries and disfigurements of the present life will continue beyond the grave, when we shall "enter into life." The Jews, whom the Lord addressed, having no conception of a place of everlasting torment, and who knew the word Gehenna to refer to the valley outside their city, which was not

a place of torment, nor a place where any living thing was cast, but a place for the utter destruction of whatever might be cast into it, recognizing the Lord's expression regarding limbs and eyes to be figurative, knew that Gehenna also was used in the same figurative sense, to symbolize utter destruction.

*We will supply free on application a tract on "What is the Soul?"

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The Lord meant simply this: The future life, which God has provided for redeemed man, is of inestimable value, and it will richly pay you to make any sacrifice to receive and enjoy that life. Should it even cost an eye, a hand or a foot, so that to all eternity you would be obliged to endure the loss of these, yet life would be cheap at even such a cost. That would be better far than to retain your members and lose all in Gehenna. Doubtless, too, the hearers drew the lesson as applicable to all the affairs of life, and understood the Master to mean that it would richly repay them to deny themselves many comforts, pleasures and tastes, dear to them as a right hand, precious as an eye, and serviceable as a foot, rather than by gratification to forfeit the life to come and be utterly destroyed in Gehenna--the Second Death.

But what about the undying worms and the unquenchable fire?

We answer, In the literal Gehenna, which is the basis of our Lord's illustration, the bodies of animals, etc., frequently fell upon ledges of rocks and not into the fire kept burning below. Thus exposed, these would breed worms and be destroyed by them, as completely and as surely as those which burned. No one was allowed to disturb the contents of this valley; hence the worm and the fire together completed the work of destruction--the fire was not quenched and the worms died not. This would not imply a never-ending fire, nor everlasting worms. The thought is that the worms did not die off and leave the carcasses there, but continued and completed the work of destruction. So with the fire: it was not quenched, it burned on until all was consumed. Just so if a house were ablaze and the fire could not be controlled or quenched, but burned until the building was destroyed, we might properly call such an "unquenchable fire."

Our Lord wished to impress the thought of the completeness and finality of the Second Death, symbolized in Gehenna. All who go into the Second Death will be thoroughly and completely and forever destroyed; no ransom will ever again be given for any

(Rom. 6:9); for none worthy of life will be cast into the Second Death, or lake of fire, but only those who

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love unrighteousness after coming to the knowledge of the truth.

Not only in the above instances is the Second Death pointedly illustrated by Gehenna, but it is evident that the same Teacher used the same figure to represent the same thing in the symbols of Revelation, --though there it is not called Gehenna, but a "lake of fire."

The same valley was once before used as the basis of a discourse by the Prophet Isaiah. (Isa. 66:24.) Though he gives it no name, he describes it; and all should notice that he speaks, not as some with false ideas might expect, of billions alive in flames and torture, but of the carcasses of those who transgressed against the Lord, who are thus represented as utterly destroyed in the Second Death.

The two preceding verses show the time when this prophecy will be fulfilled, and it is in perfect harmony with the symbols of Revelation: it appertains to the new dispensation, the Millennium, the "new heavens and new earth" condition of things. Then all the righteous will see the justice as well as the wisdom of the utter destruction of the incorrigible, wilful enemies of righteousness, as it is written: "They shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

MATTHEW 23:15,33.

The class here addressed was not the heathen who had no knowledge of the truth, nor the lowest and most ignorant of the Jewish nation, but the Scribes and Pharisees, outwardly the most religious, and the leaders and teachers of the people. To these our Lord said, "How can ye escape the judgment of Gehenna?" These men were hypocritical: they were not true to their convictions. Abundant testimony of the truth had been borne to them, but they refused to accept it, and endeavored to counteract its influence and to discourage the people from accepting it. And in thus resisting the holy spirit of light and truth, they were hardening their hearts against the very agency which God designed for their blessing. Hence they were wickedly resisting his grace, and such a course, if pursued, must eventually end in condemnation to the Second Death, Gehenna. Every step in the direction of wilful blindness and opposition to the truth makes return more difficult, and makes the wrongdoer

more and more of the character which God abhors, and which the Second Death is intended to utterly destroy. The Scribes and Pharisees were progressing rapidly in that course: hence the warning inquiry of our Lord, "How can ye escape?" etc. The sense is this,--Although you boast of your piety, you will surely be destroyed in Gehenna, unless you change your course.

SET ON FIRE OF GEHENNA.

JAMES 3:6.

"So [important] is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and [or when] it is set on fire of Gehenna."

Here, in strong, symbolic language, the Apostle points out the great and bad influence of an evil tongue --a tongue set on fire (figuratively) by Gehenna (figuratively). For a tongue to be set on fire of Gehenna signifies that it is set going in evil by a perverse disposition, self-willed, selfish, hateful, malicious, the sort of disposition which, in spite of knowledge and opportunity, unless controlled and reformed, will be counted worthy to be destroyed--the class for whom the "Second Death," the real "lake of fire," the real Gehenna, is intended. One in that attitude may by his tongue kindle a great fire, a destructive disturbance, which, wherever it has contact, will work evil in the entire course of nature. A few malicious words often arouse all the evil passions of the speaker, engender the same in others and react upon the first. And continuance in such an evil course finally corrupts the entire man, and brings him under sentence as utterly unworthy of life.

"TARTAROO" RENDERED "HELL."

The Greek word tartaroo occurs but once in the Scriptures, and is translated hell. It is found in 2 Pet. 2:4, which reads thus:

"God spared not the angels who sinned, but cast [them] down to hell [tartaroo], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

Having examined all other words rendered "hell," in the Bible, and all the texts in which they occur, we conclude the examination with this text, which is the only one in which the word tartaroo occurs. In the above quotation, all the words shown in *Italic type* are translated from the one Greek word tartaroo. Evidently the translators were at a loss to know how to translate the word, but concluded they knew where

the evil angels ought to be, and so they made bold to put them into "hell," though it took six words to twist the idea into the shape they had pre-determined it must take.

The word tartaroo, used by Peter, very closely resembles tartarus, a word used in Grecian mythology as the name for a dark abyss or prison. But tartaroo seems to refer more to an act than to a place. The fall of the angels who sinned was from honor and dignity, into dishonor and condemnation, and the thought seems to be--"God spared not the angels who sinned, but degraded them, and delivered them into chains of darkness."

This certainly agrees with the facts known to us through other Scriptures; for these fallen spirits frequented the earth in the days of our Lord and the apostles. Hence they were not down in some place, but "down" in the sense of being degraded from former honor and liberty, and restrained under darkness, as by a chain. Whenever these fallen spirits, in spiritualistic seances, manifest their powers through mediums, pretending to be certain dead human beings, they must always do their work in the dark, because darkness is the chain by which they are bound until the great Millennial day of judgment. Whether this implies that in the immediate future they will be able to materialize in daylight is difficult to determine. If so, it would greatly increase Satan's power to blind and deceive for a short season--until the Sun of Righteousness has fully risen and Satan is fully bound.

Thus we close our investigation of the Bible use

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of the word "hell." Thank God, we find no such place of everlasting torture as the creeds and hymn-books, and many pulpits, erroneously teach. Yet we have found a "hell," sheol, hades, to which all our race were condemned on account of Adam's sin, and from which all are redeemed by our Lord's death; and that "hell" is the tomb--the death condition. And we find another "hell" (Gehenna--the Second Death--utter destruction) brought to our attention as the final penalty upon all who, after being redeemed and brought to the full knowledge of the truth, and to full ability to obey it, shall yet choose death by choosing a course of opposition to God and righteousness. And our hearts say, Amen! True and righteous are thy ways, thou King of nations! Who shall not venerate thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou art entirely holy. And all nations shall come and worship before thee, because thy righteous dealings are made manifest.--Rev. 15:3,4.

PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

--LUKE 16:19-31.--

The great difficulty with many in reading this scripture is that, though they regard it as a parable, they reason on it and draw conclusions from it as though it were a literal statement. To regard it as a literal statement involves several absurdities; for instance, that the rich man went to "hell" because he had enjoyed many earthly blessings and gave nothing but crumbs to Lazarus. Not a word is said about his wickedness. Again, Lazarus was blessed, not because he was a sincere child of God, full of faith and trust,

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not because he was good, but simply because he was poor and sick. If this be interpreted literally, the only logical lesson to be drawn from it is, that unless we are poor beggars full of sores, we will never enter into future bliss; and that if now we wear any fine linen and purple, and have plenty to eat every day, we are sure of future torment. Again, the coveted place of favor is "Abraham's bosom"; and if the whole statement be literal, the bosom must also be literal, and it surely would not hold very many of earth's millions of sick and poor.

But why consider absurdities? As a parable, it is easy of interpretation. In a parable the thing said is never the thing meant. We know this from our Lord's own explanations of his parables. When he said "wheat," he meant "children of the kingdom"; when he said "tares," he meant "the children of the devil"; when he said "reapers" his servants were to be understood, etc. (Matt. 13.) The same classes were represented by different symbols in different parables. Thus the "wheat" of one parable correspond to the "faithful servants," and the "wise virgins" of others. So, in this parable, the "rich man" represents a class, and "Lazarus" represents another class.

In attempting to expound a parable such as this, an explanation of which the Lord does not furnish us, modesty in expressing our opinion regarding it is certainly appropriate. We therefore offer the following explanation without any attempt to force our views upon the reader, except so far as his own truth-enlightened judgment may commend them as in accord with God's Word and plan. To our understanding, Abraham represented God, and the "rich man" represented the Jewish nation. At the time of the utterance of the parable, and for a long time previous, the Jews had "fared sumptuously every day"--being the especial recipients of God's favors. As Paul says: "What advantage, then, hath the Jew? Much every way: chiefly, because to them were committed the oracles of God [Law and Prophecy]." The promises

to Abraham and David and their organization as a typical Kingdom of God invested that people with royalty, as represented by the rich man's "purple." The typical sacrifices of the Law constituted them, in a typical sense, a holy (righteous) nation, represented by the rich man's "fine linen,"--symbolic of righteousness. --Rev. 19:8.

Lazarus represented the outcasts from divine favor under the Law, who, sin-sick, hungered and thirsted after righteousness. "Publicans and sinners" of Israel, seeking a better life, and truth-hungry Gentiles who were "feeling after God" constituted the Lazarus class. These, at the time of the utterance of this parable, were entirely destitute of those special divine blessings which Israel enjoyed. They lay at the gate of the rich man. No rich promises of royalty were theirs; not even typically were they cleansed; but, in moral sickness, pollution and sin, they were companions of "dogs." Dogs were regarded as detestable creatures in those days, and the typically clean Jew called the outsiders "heathen" and "dogs," and would never eat with them, nor marry, nor have any dealings with them.--John 4:9.

As to how these ate of the "crumbs" of divine favor which fell from Israel's table of bounties, the Lord's words to the Syro-Phoenician woman give us a key. He said to this Gentile woman--"It is not meet [proper] to take the children's [Israelites'] bread and to cast it to dogs [Gentiles]"; and she answered, "Truth, Lord, but the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." (Matt. 15:26,27.) Jesus healed her daughter, thus giving the desired crumb of favor.

But there came a great dispensational change in Israel's history when as a nation they rejected and crucified the Son of God. Then their typical righteousness ceased--then the promise of royalty ceased to be theirs, and the kingdom was taken from them to be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof --the Gospel Church, "a holy nation, a peculiar people." (Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:7,9; Matt. 21:43.) Thus the "rich man" died to all these special advantages, and soon he (the Jewish nation) found himself in a cast-off condition,--in tribulation and affliction. In such condition that nation has suffered from that day to this.

Lazarus also died: the condition of the humble Gentiles and the God-seeking "outcasts" of Israel underwent a great change, being carried by the angels (messengers--apostles, etc.) to Abraham's bosom. Abraham is represented as the father of the faithful, and receives all the children of faith, who are thus recognized as the heirs of all the promises made to Abraham; for the children of the flesh are not the children of God, "but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (children of Abraham); "which

seed is Christ";--and "if ye be Christ's, then are ye [believers] Abraham's seed [children], and heirs according to the [Abrahamic] promise."--Gal. 3:29.

Yes, the termination of the condition of things

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then existing was well illustrated by the figure, death --the dissolution of the Jewish polity and the withdrawal of the favors which Israel had so long enjoyed.

There they were cast off and have since been shown "no favor," while the poor Gentiles, who before had been "aliens from the commonwealth [the polity] of Israel and strangers from the covenant of promise [up to this time given to Israel only] having no hope and without God in the world," were then "made nigh by the blood of Christ" and reconciled to God.--Eph. 2:12,13.

To the symbolisms of death and burial used to illustrate the dissolution of Israel and their burial or hiding among the other nations, our Lord added a further figure--"In hell [hades, the grave] he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off," etc. The dead cannot lift up their eyes, nor see either near or far, nor converse; for it is distinctly stated, "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave"; and the dead are described as those who "go down into silence." (Eccl. 9:10; Psa. 115:17.) But the Lord wished to show that great sufferings or "torments" would be added to the Jews as a nation after their national dissolution and burial amongst the other peoples dead in trespasses and sins; and that they would plead in vain for release and comfort at the hand of the formerly despised Lazarus class.

And history has borne out this parabolic prophecy. For eighteen hundred years the Jews have not only been in distress of mind over their casting out from the favor of God and the loss of their temple and other necessities to the offering of their sacrifices, but they have been relentlessly persecuted by all classes, including professed Christians. It was from the latter that the Jews have expected mercy, as expressed in the parable--"Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue"; but the great gulf fixed between them hinders that. Nevertheless, God still recognizes the relationship established in his covenant with them, and addresses them as children of the covenant. (Verse 25.) These "torments" have been the penalties attached to the violation of their covenant, and were as certain to be visited upon them as the blessings promised for obedience.--See Lev. 26.

The "great gulf fixed" represents the wide difference between the Gospel Church and the Jew--the former enjoying free grace, joy, comfort and peace,

as true sons of God, and the latter holding to the Law, which condemns and torments. Prejudice, pride and error, from the Jewish side, form the bulwarks of this gulf which hinder the Jew from coming into the condition of true sons of God by accepting Christ and the gospel of his grace. The bulwark of this gulf which hinders true sons of God from going to the Jew--under the bondage of the Law--is their knowledge that by the deeds of the Law none can be justified before God, and that if any man keep the Law (put himself under it to try to commend himself to God by reason of obedience to it), Christ shall profit him nothing. (Gal. 5:2-4.) So, then, we who are of the Lazarus class should not attempt to mix the Law and the Gospel, knowing that they cannot be mixed, and that we can do no good to those who still cling to the Law and reject the sacrifice for sins given by our Lord. And they, not seeing the change of dispensation which took place, argue that to deny the Law as the power to save would be to deny all the past history of their race, and to deny all of God's special dealings with the "fathers," (promises and dealings which through pride and selfishness they failed rightly to apprehend and use); hence they cannot come over to the bosom of Abraham, into the true rest and peace--the portion of all the true children of faith.--John 8:39; Rom. 4:16; Gal. 3:29.

True, a few Jews probably came into the Christian faith all the way down the Gospel age, but so few as to be ignored in a parable which represented the Jewish people as a whole. As at the first, Dives represented the orthodox Jews, and not the "outcasts of Israel," so down to the close of the parable he continues to represent a similar class, and hence does not represent such Jews as have renounced the Law Covenant and embraced the New Covenant, or such as have become infidels.

The plea of the "rich man" for the sending of "Lazarus" to his five brethren we interpret as follows:

The people of Judea, at the time of our Lord's utterance of this parable, were repeatedly referred to as "Israel," "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," "cities of Israel," etc., because all of the tribes were

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represented there; but actually the majority of the people were of the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, but few of the ten tribes having returned from Babylon under Cyrus' general permission. If the nation of the Jews (chiefly two tribes) were represented in the one "rich man," it would be a harmony of numbers to understand the "five brethren" to represent the ten tribes chiefly scattered abroad. The request relative to them was doubtless introduced to show that all special favor of God ceased to all Israel (the ten

tribes, as well as to the two more directly addressed). It seems to us evident that Israel only was meant, for no other nation than Israel had "Moses and the prophets" as instructors. (Verse 29.) The majority of the ten tribes had so far disregarded Moses and the prophets that they did not return to the land of promise, but preferred to dwell among idolaters; and hence it would be useless to attempt further communication with them, even by one from the dead--the figuratively dead, but now figuratively risen, Lazarus class. --Eph. 2:5.

Though the parable mentions no bridging of this "great gulf," other portions of Scripture indicate that it was to be "fixed" only throughout the Gospel age, and that at its close the "rich man," having received the measurement of punishment for his sins,* will walk out of his fiery troubles over the bridge of God's promises yet unfulfilled to that nation.

Though for centuries the Jews have been bitterly persecuted by pagans, Mohammedans and professed Christians, they are now gradually rising to political freedom and influence; and although much of "Jacob's trouble" is just at hand, yet as a people they will be very prominent among the nations in the beginning of the Millennium. The "vail" (2 Cor. 3:13-16) of prejudice still exists, but it will be gradually taken away as the light of the Millennial morning dawns;

*See Isa. 40:1,2, margin; Rom. 11:27-31, and MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, page 227.

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nor should we be surprised to hear of great awakenings among the Jews, and many coming to acknowledge Christ. They will thus leave their hades state (national death) and torment, and come, the first of the nations, to be blessed by the true seed of Abraham, which is Christ, Head and body. Their bulwark of race prejudice and pride is falling in some places, and the humble, the poor in spirit, are beginning already to look upon him whom they have pierced, and to inquire, Is not this the Christ? And as they look the Lord pours upon them the spirit of favor and supplication. (Zech. 12:10.) Therefore, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her appointed time is accomplished."--Isa. 40:1,2, margin.

In a word, this parable seems to teach precisely what Paul explained in Rom. 11:19-32. Because of unbelief the natural branches were broken off, and the wild branches grafted into the Abrahamic root-promise. The parable leaves the Jews in their trouble, and does not refer to their final restoration to favor--doubtless because it was not pertinent to

the feature of the subject treated; but Paul assures us that when the fulness of the Gentiles--the full number from among the Gentiles necessary to make up the bride of Christ--is come in, "they [natural Israel] shall obtain mercy through your [the Church's] mercy." He assures us that this is God's covenant with fleshly Israel (who lost the higher, spiritual promises, but are still the possessors of certain earthly promises), to become the chief nation of earth, etc. In proof of this statement, he quotes from the prophets, saying: "The deliverer shall come out of Zion [the glorified Church], and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob [the fleshly seed]." "As concerning the Gospel [high calling], they are enemies [cast off] for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"--Rom. 11:26-33.

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PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS.

"These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."--Matt. 25:31-46.

WHILE the Scriptures, as we have shown, do not teach the blasphemous doctrine of everlasting torment, they do most emphatically teach the everlasting punishment of the wicked, the class represented in the parable as "goats." Let us examine the parable, and then the sentence pronounced at its close.

It has been truly said that "Order is Heaven's first law;" yet few, we think, have realized how emphatically this is true. In glancing back over the plan of the ages, there is nothing which gives such conclusive evidence of a Divine Director as the order observed in all its parts.

God has had definite and stated times and seasons for every part of his work; and in the end of each of these seasons there has been a finishing up of its work and a clearing off of the rubbish, preparatory to the beginning of the new work of the dispensation to follow. Thus in the end of the Jewish age order is observed--a harvesting and complete separation of the "wheat" class from the "chaff," and an entire rejection of the latter class from God's favor. With the few judged worthy in the end of that age, a new age--the Gospel age--began. And now we find ourselves amidst the closing scenes, the "harvest," of this age: the "wheat" and the "tares" which have grown together

during this age are being separated. With the former class, of which our Lord Jesus is the Head, a new age is about to be inaugurated, and these "wheat" are to reign as kings and priests in that new dispensation, while the "tare" element is judged as utterly unworthy of that favor.

While observing this order with reference to the Jewish age and the one just closing, our Lord informs us through the parable under consideration that the same order will be observed with reference to the age to follow this Gospel age.

The harvest of the Jewish age was likened to the separation of wheat from chaff; the harvest of this age to the separation of wheat from tares; and the harvest of the Millennial age to the separation of sheep from goats.

That the parable of the sheep and the goats refers to the Millennial age is clearly indicated in verses 31 and 32--"When the son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." As in the present age every act of those on trial (the Church) goes to make a part of that character which, in due time, will determine the final decision of the Judge in our case, so will it be with the world (the "nations") in the age to come. As in the present age the trial of the majority of the individual members of the Church ends, and the decision of their case is reached, long before the end of the age (2 Tim. 4:7,8), so under the Millennial reign the decision of some individual cases will be reached long before the end of the age (Isa. 65:20); but in each age there is a "harvest" or general separating time in the end of the age.

In the dawn of the Millennial age, after the "time of trouble," there will be a gathering of the living nations before Christ, and, in their appointed time and order, the dead of all nations shall be called to appear before the judgment seat of Christ--not to receive an immediate sentence, but to receive a fair and impartial, individual trial (Ezek. 18:2-4,19,20) under the most favorable circumstances, the result of which trial will be a final sentence, as worthy or unworthy of everlasting life.*

The scene of this parable, therefore, is laid after the time of trouble, when the nations shall have been subdued, Satan bound (Rev. 20:1,2) and the authority of Christ's kingdom established. Ere this, the bride of Christ (the overcoming Church) will have been seated with him in his throne of spiritual power and will have taken part in executing the judgments of the

*See THE PLAN OF THE AGES, Chapter 8.

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great day of wrath. Then the Son of man and his bride, the glorified Church, will be revealed and be seen by men, with the eyes of their understanding and shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."--Matt. 13:43.

Here is the New Jerusalem as John saw it (Rev. 21), "that holy city [symbol of government]...coming down from God out of heaven." During the time of trouble it will be coming down, and before the end of it, it will have touched the earth. This is the stone cut out of the mountains without hands (but by the power of God), and it will then have become a great mountain (kingdom), filling the whole earth (Dan. 2:35), its coming having broken to pieces the evil kingdoms of the prince of darkness.--Dan. 2:34,35.

Here is that glorious city (government), prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2), and early in the dawn of the Millennium the nations will begin to walk in the light of it. (Verse 24.) These may bring their glory and honor into it, but "there shall in no wise enter into it [or become a part of it] anything that defileth," etc. (Verse 27.) Here, from the midst of the throne, proceeds a pure river of water of life (truth unmixed with error), and the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and take it freely. (Rev. 22:17.) Here begins the world's probation, the world's great judgment day--a thousand years.*

But even in this favored time of blessing and healing of the nations, when Satan is bound, evil restrained, mankind in process of release from the grasp of death, and when the knowledge of the Lord fills the earth, two classes will be developed, which our Lord here likens to sheep and goats. These, he tells us, he will separate. The sheep class--those who are meek, teachable and willing to be led, shall, during the Millennial age, be gathered at the Judge's right hand--symbol of his approval and favor; but the goat class, self-willed and stubborn, always climbing on the rocks--seeking prominence and approval among men--and feeding on miserable refuse, while the sheep graze in the rich pastures of the truth furnished by the Good Shepherd--these are gathered to the Judge's left hand, the opposite of the position of favor--as subjects of his disfavor and condemnation.

This work of separating sheep and goats will require all of the Millennial age for its accomplishment. During that age, each individual, as he comes gradually to a knowledge of God and his will, takes his place at the right hand of favor or the left hand of disfavor, according as he improves or misimproves the opportunities of that golden age. By the end of that age, all the world of mankind will have arranged themselves,

as shown in the parable, into two classes.

The end of that age will be the end of the world's trial or judgment, and then final disposition will be made of the two classes. The reward of this "sheep" class will be granted them because, during the age of trial and discipline, they cultivated and manifested the beautiful character of love, which Paul describes as the fulfilling of the Law of God. (Rom. 13:10.) They will have manifested it to each other in their times of sorest need; and what they will have done for one another the Lord will count as done unto him, counting them all as his brethren--children of God, though they will be of the human nature, while he is of the divine.

The condemnation of the "goat" class is shown to be for the lack of this spirit of love. Under the same favorable circumstances as the "sheep," they wilfully resist the moulding influence of the Lord's discipline, and harden their hearts. The goodness of God does not lead them to true repentance; but, like Pharaoh, they take advantage of his goodness and do evil. The "goats," who will not have developed the element of love, the law of God's being and Kingdom, will be counted unworthy of everlasting life, and will be destroyed; while the "sheep," who will have developed God-likeness (love), and who will have exhibited it in their characters, are to be installed as the subordinate rulers of earth for future ages.

In the end of the Millennial age, in the final adjustment of human affairs, Christ thus addresses his sheep: "Come, ye blessed,...inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

It is manifest the "sheep" here addressed, at the close of the Millennium, are not the sheep of the Gospel age, the Gospel Church, but those "other sheep" to whom the Lord referred in John 10:16. And the kingdom prepared for them in the divine plan, from the foundation of the world, is not the kingdom prepared for the Gospel Church. The Church will receive her kingdom at the beginning of the Millennium; but this is the kingdom prepared for the "sheep" of the Millennial age. Their kingdom will be the dominion of earth which was originally given to Adam, but which was lost through sin, and which is again to be restored when man is brought to perfection, and so made fit to receive and enjoy it. That dominion will not be a dominion of some of the race over others, but a joint dominion, in which every man will be a king, and all will have equal rights and privileges in appropriating and enjoying every earthly good. It will be a sovereign people--a great and grand republic on a basis of perfect righteousness, wherein the rights of every man will be conserved; because the golden rule will be inscribed on every heart, and every man will love his neighbor as himself. The dominion of all will be over the whole earth, and all its rich and

bountiful stores of blessing. (Gen. 1:28; Psa. 8:5-8.)
The kingdom of the world, to be given to the perfected

*See THE PLAN OF THE AGES, Chap. 8, The Day of Judgment.

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and worthy ones of the redeemed race at the close of the Millennium, is clearly distinguished from all others by being called the kingdom prepared for them "from the foundation of the world," the earth having been made to be the everlasting home and kingdom of perfect men. But the kingdom bestowed upon Christ, of which the Church, his "bride," becomes joint-heir, is a spiritual kingdom, "far above angels, principalities and powers," and it also shall "have no end"--Christ's Millennial Kingdom, which will end, being merely a beginning of Christ's power and rule. (1 Cor. 15:25-28.) This endless heavenly, spiritual kingdom was prepared long before the earth was founded--its inception being recognized in Christ, "the beginning of the creation of God." It was intended for Christ Jesus, the First Begotten; but even the Church, his bride and joint-heir, was chosen or designed also, in him, before the foundation of the world.--Eph. 1:4.

The kingdom or rule of earth, is the kingdom that has been in preparation for mankind from the foundation of the world. It was expedient that man should suffer six thousand years under the dominion of evil, to learn its inevitable results of misery and death, in order by contrast to prove the justice, wisdom and goodness of God's law of love. Then it will

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require the seventh thousand-years, under the reign of Christ, to restore him from ruin and death, to the perfect condition, thereby fitting him to "inherit the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world."

That kingdom, in which all will be kings, will be one grand, universal republic, whose stability and blessed influence will be assured by the perfection of its every citizen, a result now much desired, but an impossibility because of sin. The kingdom of Christ during the Millennium will be, on the contrary, a theocracy, which will rule the world (during the period of its imperfection and restoration) without regard to its consent or approval.

The brethren of the Gospel Church are not the only "brethren" of Christ. All who at that time will have been restored to perfection will be recognized as sons of God--sons in the same sense that Adam was a son of God (Luke 3:38)--human sons. And all of

God's sons, whether on the human, the angelic or the divine plane, are brethren. Our Lord's love for these, his human brethren, is here expressed. As the world now has the opportunity to minister to those who are shortly to be the divine sons of God, and brethren of Christ, so they will have abundant opportunity during the age to come to minister to (each other) the human brethren.

The dead nations when again brought into existence will need food, raiment and shelter. However great may have been their possessions in this life, death will have brought all to a common level: the infant and the man of mature years, the millionaire and the pauper, the learned and the unlearned, the cultured and the ignorant and degraded: all will have an abundant opportunity for the exercise of benevolence, and thus they will be privileged to be co-workers with God. We are here reminded of the illustration given in the case of Lazarus: Jesus only awakened him from death, and then were the rejoicing friends permitted to loose him from his grave clothes and to clothe and feed him.

Further, these are said to be "sick and in prison" (more properly, under ward or watch). The grave is the great prison where the millions of humanity have been held in unconscious captivity; but when released from the grave, the restoration to perfection is not to be an instantaneous work. Being not yet perfect, they may properly be termed sick, and under ward: not dead, neither are they yet perfected in life: and any condition between those two may be properly symbolized by sickness. And they will continue to be under watch or ward until made well--physically, mentally and morally perfect. During that time there will be abundant opportunity for mutual helpfulness, sympathy, instruction and encouragement, and any failure to assist will mark a lack of the Lord's spirit of love.

Since all mankind will not be raised at once, but gradually, during the thousand years, each new group will find an army of helpers in those who will have preceded it. The love and benevolence which men will then show to each other (the brethren of Christ) the King will count as shown to him. No great deeds are assigned as the ground for the honors and favors conferred upon the righteous: they will have simply come into harmony with God's law of love and proved it by their works. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10), and "God is love." So, when man is restored again to the image of God--"very good"--man also will be a living expression of love.

"Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," does not signify a rule independent of the divine law and supremacy: for although God gave earth's dominion to man at first, and designs restoring it to him when he has prepared him for

the great trust, we are not to suppose that God intends man to rule it, otherwise than as under, or in harmony with, his supreme law. "Thy will be done in earth as in heaven," must forever be the principle of government. Man thenceforth will rule his dominion in harmony with the law of heaven--delighting continually to do his will in whose favor is life, and at whose "right hand [condition of favor] there are pleasures forevermore." (Psa. 16:11.) Oh! who would not say, "Haste ye along, ages of glory!" and give glory and honor to him whose loving plans are blossoming into such fulness of blessing?

Let us now examine the message to those on the left--"Depart from me, ye cursed" (condemned)--condemned as unfit vessels for the glory and honor of life, who would not yield to the moulding and shaping influences of divine love. When these, "brethren," were hungry and thirsty, or naked, sick, and in prison, ye ministered not to their necessities, thus continually proving yourselves out of harmony with the heavenly city (Kingdom); for "there shall in no case enter into it anything that defileth." The decision or sentence regarding this class is--"Depart from me into everlasting fire [symbol of destruction], prepared for the devil and his angels." Elsewhere (Heb. 2:14) we read without symbol that Christ "will destroy...him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

"And these [the "goats"] shall go away into everlasting [Greek, aionios--lasting] punishment, but the righteous into life eternal [Greek, aionios--lasting.]" The punishment will be as lasting as the reward. Both will be everlasting.

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EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT.

THE EVERLASTINGNESS of the punishment being thus established, only one point is left open for discussion; namely, the nature of the punishment. Take your Concordance and search out what saith the great Judge regarding the punishment of wilful sinners who despise and reject all his blessed provisions for them through Christ. What do you find? Does God there say--All sinners shall live in torture forever? No; we find not a single text where life in any condition is promised to that class.

God's declarations assure us that ultimately he will have a clean universe, free from the blight of sin and sinners,--because "All the wicked will he destroy." --Psa. 145:20.

But while we do not find one verse of the Bible saying that this class can have life in torment, or in any other condition, we do find numerous passages teaching the reverse. Of these we give a few merely as samples--"The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23.) "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4,20.)

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"The wicked shall perish." (Psa. 37:20.) "Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be." (Psa. 37:10.) Thus God has told us plainly the nature of the everlasting punishment of the wicked--that it will be death, destruction.

The false ideas of God's plan of dealing with the incorrigible, taught ever since the great "falling away," which culminated in Papacy, and instilled into our minds from childhood, are alone responsible for the view generally held, that the everlasting punishment provided for wilful sinners is a life of torment. This view is held, notwithstanding the many clear statements of God's Word that their punishment is to be death. Hear Paul state very explicitly what the punishment is to be. Speaking of the same Millennial Day, and of the same class, who, despite all the favorable opportunities and the fulness of knowledge then, will not come into harmony with Christ, and hence will "know not God," in the true sense and "obey not," he says--"Who shall be punished." Ah, yes! but how punished? He tells us how: They "shall be punished with everlasting destruction [a destruction from which there shall be no recovery, no redemption or resurrection --Heb. 10:26-29] from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." (2 Thes. 1:9.) This destruction is represented in the parable as the everlasting "fire" prepared for the devil and his angels: it is "the lake of fire and brimstone," which is the Second death (Rev. 20:14), into which the "goat" class of this parable are sent.--Matt. 25:41.

Thus the meaning and reasonableness of this statement concerning everlasting punishment are readily seen when looked at from the correct standpoint.

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The fire of the parable, by which the punishment (destruction) is to be accomplished, will not be literal fire, for the "fire" is as much a symbol as the "sheep" and "goats" are symbols. Fire here, as elsewhere, symbolizes destruction, and not in any sense preservation.

We might well leave this subject here, and consider that we have fully shown that the everlasting punishment of the "goat" class will be destruction; but we direct attention to one other point which clinches the truth upon this subject. We refer to the Greek

word kolasin, translated "punishment," in verse 46. This word has not in it the remotest idea of torment. Its primary signification is to cut off, or prune, or lop off, as in the pruning of trees; and a secondary meaning is to restrain. The wicked will be everlastingly restrained, cut off from life in the Second death. Illustrations of the use of kolasin can easily be had from Greek classical writings. The Greek word for "torment" is basinos, a word totally unrelated to the word kolasin.

Kolasin, the word used in Matt. 25:46, occurs in but one other place in the Bible, viz., 1 John 4:18, where it is improperly rendered "torment" in the common version, whereas it should read, "Fear hath restraint." Those who possess a copy of Young's Analytical Concordance will see from it (page 995) that the definition of the word kolasis is "pruning, restraining, restraint." And the author of the Emphatic Diaglott, after translating kolasin in Matt. 25:46 by the words "cutting off," says in a foot note:

"The common version and many modern ones render kolasin aionion 'everlasting punishment,' conveying the idea, as generally interpreted, of basinos, torment. Kolasin in its various forms occurs in only three other places in the New Testament: Acts 4:21; 2 Pet. 2:9; 1 John 4:18. It is derived from kolazoo, which signifies, 1. To cut off; as lopping off branches of trees, to prune. 2. To restrain, to repress. The Greeks write--'The charioteer restrains [kalazei] his fiery steeds.' 3. To chastise, to punish. To cut off an individual from life, or from society, or even to restrain, is esteemed as a punishment; hence has arisen this third or metaphorical use of the word. The primary signification has been adopted [in the Diaglott], because it agrees better with the second member of the sentence, thus preserving the force and beauty of the antithesis. The righteous go to life, the wicked to the cutting off from life, death.-- 2 Thes. 1:9."

Now consider carefully the text, and note the antithesis, the contrast, shown between the reward of the "sheep" and the reward of the "goats," which the correct idea of kolasin gives--the one class goes into everlasting life, while the other is everlastingly cut off from life--forever restrained in death. And this exactly agrees with what the Scriptures everywhere else declare concerning the wages or penalty of wilful sin.

Consider for a moment the words of verse 41: "Depart from me, ye cursed [once redeemed by Christ from the Adamic curse or condemnation to death, but now condemned or cursed, as worthy of the Second death, by the One who redeemed them from the first curse], into everlasting fire [symbol of everlasting destruction], prepared for the devil and his messengers [servants]."

Remember that this is the final sentence at the

close of the final trial--at the close of the Millennium; and that none will then be servants of Satan ignorantly or unwillingly, as so many now are; for the great Deliverer, Christ, will remove outside temptations, and provide assistance toward self-improvement, which will enable all who will to overcome inherent weaknesses and to attain perfection. These "goats," who love evil and serve Satan, are the messengers ("angels") of Satan. For these and Satan, and for no others, God has prepared Second death--the everlasting destruction. Fire will come from God out of heaven and consume them. Consuming fire and devouring fire all can appreciate, unless their eyes are holden by false doctrine and prejudice. No one ever knew of a preserving fire; and as fire never preserves, but always consumes, God uses it as a symbol of utter destruction.--Rev. 20:9.

"THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE, WHICH IS THE SECOND DEATH."

--REV. 19:20; 20:10,14,15; 21:8.--

"The lake of fire and brimstone" is several times mentioned in the book of Revelation, which all Christians admit to be a book of symbols. However, they generally think and speak of this particular symbol as a literal statement giving strong support to the torment doctrine, notwithstanding the fact that the symbol is clearly defined as meaning the Second death: "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the Second Death," etc. (Rev. 20:14.) It is sometimes spoken of as "a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. 19:20), the element brimstone being

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mentioned to intensify the symbol of destruction, the Second death: burning brimstone being one of the most deadly elements known. It is destructive to all forms of life.

The symbolism of this lake of fire is further shown by the fact that the symbolic "beast" and the symbolic "false prophet," and death and hell [hades], as well as the devil and his followers, are destroyed in it.--Rev. 19:20; 20:10,14,15; 21:8.

This destruction or death is called the Second death in contradistinction to the First or Adamic death, and not to signify that everything which goes into it dies a second time. For instance, death (the first or Adamic death), and hades, the grave, are to be cast into it;--this work will require the entire Millennium to accomplish it; and in no sense will they ever have been destroyed before. So also "the devil," "the beast," and "the false prophet," will never have been destroyed before.

From the first, or Adamic death, a resurrection has been provided. All that are in their graves shall therefore come forth. The Revelator prophetically declares: "The sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell [hades, the grave] gave up the dead which were in them....And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened." (Rev. 20:13,12.) It was in view of God's plan for redeeming the race from Adamic death that in both the Old and New Testaments it is called a "sleep." In Israel's history of the good and the wicked it is repeatedly stated that they "slept with their fathers."

The Apostles used the same symbol, and our Lord also. But no such symbol is used in reference to the Second death. On the contrary, the strongest figures of total and utter destruction are used to symbolize it; viz., "fire and brimstone;" because that will be a destruction from which there will be no recovery.

Blessed thought! the Adamic death (which claimed the whole race for the sin of their progenitor) shall be forever swallowed up, and shall cease in this Second death into which it is to be cast by the great Redeemer who bought the whole world with the sacrifice of himself. Thus God tells us through the Prophet, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave [sheol]. I will redeem them from death....O grave [sheol] I will be thy destruction." (Hos. 13:14.) The first or Adamic death shall no longer have liberty or power over men, as it has had for the past six thousand years; no longer shall any die for Adam's sin. (Rom. 5:12; Jer. 31:29,30; Ezek. 18:2.) Thenceforth the New Covenant, sealed with the precious blood, shall be in force, and only wilful transgressions will be counted as sin and punished with the wages of sin--death--the Second death. Thus will the Adamic death be cast into and swallowed up by the Second death.

And hades and sheol--the dark, secret condition, the grave, which in the present time speaks to us of a hope of future life by God's resurrection power in Christ--shall be no more; for the Second death will devour no being fit for life--none for whom there remains a shadow of hope, but such only as, by the unerring Judge, have been fully, impartially and individually found worthy of destruction. And Satan, that lying tempter who deceived and ruined the race, and who, with persistent energy and cunning, has sought continually to thwart the purpose of God for our salvation through Christ, and with him all who are of his spirit, "his angels," shall be destroyed, and shall never awake from death to trouble the world again. Here he is said to be cast into "the lake of fire,"--the Second death; and Paul in Heb. 2:14, referring to the same thing, calls it destruction--"that he might destroy death, and him that hath the power of death, that is the devil." And "the beast and the false prophet," the great false systems which have

long oppressed and misled nominal Christendom, shall never escape from it. These systems are said to be cast "alive" (that is, while they are still organized and operative) into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. --Rev. 19:20.

The great time of trouble, the Lord's judgment, which will utterly destroy these systems, will undoubtedly cause great social, financial and religious difficulty and pain to all those identified with these deceived and deceiving systems, before they are utterly destroyed. These systems will be cast in, destroyed, at the beginning of the Millennium, while Satan's destruction is reserved until its close, when all the "goats" shall have been separated from the "sheep," and they shall perish with Satan in the Second death, as "his angels," messengers or servants. None of those abominable characters among men, who, knowing the truth, yet love unrighteousness--none of "the fearful and unbelieving"--those who will not trust God after all the manifestations of his grace afforded during the Millennial reign of Christ; nor the abominable, who, at heart are murderers and whoremongers

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and sorcerers and idolaters and liars: none of these shall escape from the Second death, to defile the earth again. All such, after a full and abundant opportunity for reformation, will be judged unworthy of life, and will be forever cut off in the Second death, symbolized by the lake of fire and brimstone.

Several prophetic pen pictures of the Millennial age and its work, in chapters 20 and 21 of Revelation, clearly show the object and result of that age of trial, in harmony with the remainder of the Scriptures already noted.

Chapter 20, verses 2,4,11, with verses 1,2,10,11 of chapter 21, show the beginning of that Age of Judgment, and the restraining of blinding errors and misleading systems. The "beast" and the "false prophet" are the chief symbols, and represent the organizations or systems of error which, together, constitute "Babylon." This judgment against the "thrones" of the present time, and against "the beast and the false prophet" systems follows speedily upon the introduction of this Millennial judgment reign. The thrones of the present dominion of earth will be "cast down," and the dominion transferred to the great Prophet, Priest, King and Judge, "whose right it is." (Compare Dan. 7:14,22; Ezek. 21:27.) Then the systems of error will be speedily judged worthy of destruction, "the lake of fire," "the Second death."--Rev. 19:20.

Thus the second destruction (or death) begins quite early in the new judgment: it begins with the false systems symbolized by the beast, false prophet,

etc., but it will not reach the world of mankind, as individuals, until they have first had full trial, with full opportunity to choose life and live forever. Chapters 20:12,13, and 21:3-7, indicate the blessed, favorable

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trial in which all, both dead and living (except the Church, who, with Jesus Christ, are kings, priests, joint-heirs and judges), will be brought to a full knowledge of the truth, relieved from sorrow and pain, and freed from every blinding error and prejudice, and tried "according to their works."

The grand outcome of that trial will be a clean universe. As the Revelator expresses it, "Every creature which is in heaven and on the earth...heard I saying, Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever." But this result will be accomplished in harmony with all God's dealings past and present, which have always recognized man's freedom of will to choose good or evil, life or death.

We cannot doubt then that in the close of the Millennial age, God will again for a "little season" permit evil to triumph, in order thereby to test his creatures (who will by that time have become thoroughly acquainted with both good and evil, and the consequences of each, and will have had his justice and love fully demonstrated to them), that those who finally prefer and choose evil may be cut off--destroyed. Thus God will for all eternity remove all who do not love righteousness and hate iniquity.

We read, regarding that testing, that Satan will endeavor to lead astray all mankind, whose numbers will then be as the sand of the sea for multitude; but that many of them will follow Satan's evil example and choose evil and disobedience, with past experience before them, and unhampered by present weaknesses and blinding influences, we need not suppose. However, when God does not tell us either the number or the proportion of those to be found worthy of life, and those to be judged worthy of death (the Second death), we may not dogmatize. Of one thing we may be confident, God willeth not the death of the wicked, but would that all should turn to him and live; and no one will be destroyed in that "lake of fire and brimstone" (figurative of utter destruction,--Gehenna) who is worthy of life, whose living longer would be a blessing to himself or to others in harmony with righteousness.

That utter and hopeless destruction is intended only for wilful evil doers, who, like Satan, in pride of heart and rebellion against God, will love and do evil notwithstanding the manifestations of God's disapproval, and notwithstanding their experience with its penalties. Seemingly the goodness and love of God

in the provision of a ransom, a restitution, and another opportunity of life for man, instead of leading all to an abhorrence of sin, will lead some to suppose that God is too loving to cut them off in the Second death, or that if he did so he would give them other, and yet other future opportunities. Building thus upon a supposed weakness in the divine character, these may be led to try to take advantage of the grace (favor) of God, as a license for wilful sin. But they shall go no further, for their folly shall be made manifest. Their utter destruction will prove to the righteous the harmony and perfect balance of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power in the Divine Ruler.

REVELATION 21:8

The true character of the goat class is portrayed. "The fearful and unbelieving [who will not trust God], the abominable, murderers [brother-haters], whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters [such as misappropriate and misuse divine favors, who give to self or any other creature or thing that service and honor which belong to God], and all liars" -- "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" [in a word, all who do not love the truth and seek it, and at any cost defend and hold it] "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone [Gehenna, symbol of utter destruction], which is the Second death." Such company would be repulsive to any honest, upright being. It is hard to tolerate them now, when we can sympathize with them, knowing that such dispositions are now in great measure the result of inherited weakness of the flesh. We are moved to a measure of sympathy by the remembrance that in our own cases, often, when we would do good, evil is present with us. But in the close of the Millennial judgment, when the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall have given every advantage and opportunity of knowledge and ability, this class will be an abhorrence and detestation to all who are in harmony with the King of Glory. And the righteous will be glad when, the trial being ended, the gift of life of which these shall have proved themselves unworthy, shall be taken from them, and when the corrupters of the earth, and all their work and influence, shall be destroyed.

THE DEVIL, THE BEAST AND THE FALSE PROPHET TORMENTED.

Rev. 20:9 tells of the destruction of those individuals who join with Satan in the last rebellion; and verse 15 tells of that same destruction in other words, using the symbol "lake of fire." They are devoured or consumed in fire. This being the case, the torment of verse 10 cannot refer to these human beings who are consumed, destroyed. Hence the question narrows

down to this, Will Satan and a false prophet and a beast be tortured forever? and does this verse so teach?

We answer in God's own words, "All the wicked will he destroy." Concerning Satan, the arch enemy of God and man, God expressly advises us that he will be destroyed, and not preserved in any sense or condition. --Heb. 2:14.

The beast and false prophet systems, which during the Gospel age have deceived and led astray, will be cast into a great, consuming trouble in the close of this Gospel age. The torment of those systems will be aionion, i.e., lasting. It will continue as long as they last, until they are utterly consumed. So also the system of error, which will suddenly manifest itself at the end of the Millennial age and lead the "goats" to destruction, will be consumed. (Rev. 20:7-10.) That deceiving system (not specified as to kind, but merely called Satan, after its instigator) will be cast into the same sort of trouble and destruction, in the end of the Millennial age, as the beast and false prophet systems are now being cast into, in the end of the Gospel age.

Rev. 19:3, speaking of one of these systems, says, "Her smoke rose up forever and ever." That is to say, the remembrance ("smoke") of the destruction of these systems of deception and error will be lasting, the lesson will never be forgotten--as smoke, which continues to ascend after a destructive fire, is testimony that the fire has done its work.--See also Isa. 34:8-10.

Of Rev. 14:9-11 we remark, incidentally, that all will at once concede that if a literal worshiping of a

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beast and image were meant in verse 9, then few, if any, in civilized lands are liable to the penalty of verse 11; and if the beast and his image and worship and wine and cup are symbols, so also are the torments and smoke and fire and brimstone.

The casting of death and the grave into utter destruction, the Second death, during the Millennial age, is a part of the utter destruction which will include every improper, injurious and useless thing. (Isa. 11:9; Psa. 101:5-8.) The Second death, the sentence of that individual trial, will be final: it will never be destroyed. And let all the lovers of righteousness say, Amen; for to destroy the Second Death, to remove the sentence of that just and impartial trial, would be to let loose again not only Satan, but all who love and practice wrong and deception, and who dishonor the Lord with their evil institutions--to oppose, offend and endeavor to overthrow those who love and desire to serve him and enjoy his favor. We rejoice that there is no danger of this, but that divine justice unites with divine wisdom, love and power, to bring in everlasting righteousness on a permanent basis.

TURNED INTO HELL.

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and the nations that forget God."--Psa. 9:17.

This statement of the Lord recorded by the Psalmist we find without any qualification whatever, and we must accept it as a positive fact. If the claims of "Orthodoxy" respecting hell were true, this would be, indeed, a fearful message.

But let us substitute the true meaning of the word sheol, and our text will read: "The wicked shall be turned into the condition of death, and all the nations that forget God." This we believe; but next, who are the wicked? In one sense all men are wicked, in that all are violators of God's law; but in the fullest sense the wicked are those who, with full knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the remedy provided for their recovery from its baneful effects, wilfully persist in sin.

As yet few--only consecrated believers--have come to a true knowledge of God. The world knows him not, and the nations cannot forget God until they are first brought to a knowledge of him. The consecrated have been enlightened, led of the Spirit through faith to understand the deep and hidden things of God, which reveal the glory of God's character, but which, though expressed in his Word, appear only as foolishness to the world.

As we have hitherto seen, this will not be so in the age to come, for then "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9.) Much that we now receive by faith will then be demonstrated to the world. When he who has ransomed man from the power of the grave (Hos. 13:14) begins to gather his purchased possessions back from the prison-house of death (Isa. 61:1), when the sleepers are awakened under the genial rays of the Sun of Righteousness, they will not be slow to realize the truth of the hitherto seemingly idle tale, that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man."

We have also seen that the gradual ascent of the King's Highway of Holiness in that age will be possible to all, and comparatively easy, because all the stones--stumbling-blocks, errors, etc.--will have been gathered out, and straight paths made for their feet. It is in that age that this text applies. Those who ignore the favoring circumstances of that age, and will not be obedient to the righteous Judge or Ruler--Christ--will truly be the wicked. And every loyal

subject of the Kingdom of God will approve the righteous judgment which turns such an one again into sheol--the condition of death. Such an one would be unworthy of life; and, were he permitted to live, his life would be a curse to himself and to the rest of mankind, and a blemish on the work of God.

This will be the Second Death, from which there will be no resurrection. Having been ransomed from the grave (sheol) by the sacrifice of Christ, if they die again on account of their own sin, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." (Heb. 10:26.) "Christ dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." (Rom. 6:9.) The Second death should be dreaded and shunned by all, since it is to be the end of existence to all those deemed unworthy of life. But in it there can be no suffering. Like Adamic death, it is the extinction of life.

It is because through sin mankind had become subject to death (sheol, hades) that Christ Jesus came to deliver us and save us from death. (1 John 3:8; Heb. 2:14.) Death is a cessation of existence, the absence of life. There is no difference between the conditions in the Adamic and Second deaths, but there is hope of a release from the first, while from the second there will be no release, no return to life. The first death sentence passed upon all on account of Adam's sin, while the Second death can be incurred only by wilful, individual sin.

That the application of our text belongs to the coming age is evident, for both saints and sinners go into sheol or hades now. This scripture indicates that, in the time when it applies, only the wicked shall go there. And the nations that forget God must be nations that have known him, else they could not forget him; and never yet have the nations been brought to that knowledge, nor will they be until the coming time, when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and none shall need to say unto his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest of them.--Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34.

The Hebrew word *goi*, rendered "nations" in this verse, is elsewhere used by the same writer and rendered "heathen," "Gentiles" and "people." The thought seems to be,--any who do not become God's covenant people, even though they be not openly wicked. The nations (Gentiles, all who under that full knowledge do not become Israelites indeed) who are forgetful or negligent of God's favors enjoyed, and of their duties and obligations to him, shall share the fate of the wilfully "wicked," and be cast into the Second death.

In further proof of this, we find that the Hebrew word *shub*, which in our text is translated "turned," signifies turned back, as to a previous place or condition. Those referred to in this text have been either in sheol or liable to enter it, but being redeemed by

the precious blood of Christ, will be brought out of sheol. If then they are wicked, they, and all who forget God, shall be turned back or returned to sheol.

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DID THE JEWS BELIEVE IN EVERLASTING TORMENT?

Noting that we teach that the doctrine of everlasting torment was engrafted upon the doctrines of the Christian Church during the period of the apostasy, the great falling away which culminated in Papacy, some have inquired whether it does not seem, according to the works of Josephus, that this doctrine was firmly held by the Jews; and, if so, they ask, does it not seem evident that the early Christians, being largely converts from Judaism, brought this doctrine with them, in the very outstart of Christianity?

We answer, No; the doctrine of everlasting torment sprang naturally from the doctrine of human immortality, which as a philosophic question was first promulgated in anything like the present form by the Platonic school of Grecian philosophy. These first affirmed that each man contained a fragment of deity, and that this would prevent him from ever dying. This foundation laid, it was as easy to describe a place for evil-doers as for well-doers. But to the credit of those heathen philosophers be it recorded that they failed to develop, or at least to manifest, that depth of degradation from benevolence and reason and pity, necessary to paint, by word and pen and brush, such details of horrors and agonies as were soon incorporated into their doctrine, and a belief thereof declared "necessary to salvation" in the professed church of Christ.

To appreciate the case, it is necessary to remember that, when the Christian Church was established, Greece stood at the head of intelligence and civilization. Alexander the Great had conquered the world, and had spread respect for Greece everywhere; and though, from a military point of view, Rome had taken her place, it was otherwise in literature. For centuries, Grecian philosophers and philosophies led the intellectual world, and impregnated and affected everything. It became customary for philosophers and teachers of other theories to claim that their systems and theories were nearly the same as those of the Grecians, and to endeavor to remove differences between their old theories and the popular Grecian views. And some sought to make capital by claiming that their system embraced all the good points of Platonism with others which Plato did not see.

Of this class were the teachers in the Christian Church in the second, third and fourth centuries. Conceding

the popularly accepted correctness of the philosophers, they claimed that the same good features of philosophy were found in Christ's teachings, and that he was one of the greatest philosophers, etc. Thus a blending of Platonism and Christianity took place. This became the more pronounced as kings and emperors began to scrutinize religious teachings, and to favor those most likely to awe the people and make them law-abiding. While heathen teachers were truckling to such imperial scrutiny, and teaching an everlasting punishment for those who violated the laws of the emperors (who ruled as divinely appointed), we cannot suppose otherwise than that the ambitious characters in the church at that time, who were seeking to displace heathenism and to become the dominant religious power instead, would make prominent such doctrines as would in the eyes of the emperors seem to have an equal hold upon the fears and prejudices of the people. And what could be more to the purpose than the doctrine of the endless torment of the refractory?

The same motives evidently operated with Josephus when writing concerning the belief of the Jews. His works should be read as apologies for Judaism, and as efforts to exalt that nation in the eyes of Rome and the world. It should be remembered that the Jews had the reputation of being a very rebellious people, very unwilling to be ruled even by the Caesars. They were hoping, in harmony with God's promises, to become the chief nation. Many rebellious outbreaks had occurred among them, and their peculiar religion, different from all others, came in for its share of blame for favoring too much the spirit of liberty.

Josephus had an object in writing his two principal works, "Antiquities" and "Wars of the Jews." He wrote them in the Greek language while living at Rome, where he was the friend and guest successively of the Roman emperors Vespasian, Titus and Domitian,

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and where he was in constant contact with the Grecian philosophers. These books were written for the purpose of showing off the Jewish people, their courage, laws, ethics, etc., to the best advantage before the Grecian philosophers and Roman dignitaries. This object is covertly admitted in his preface to his "Antiquities," in which he says:

"I have undertaken the present work as thinking it will appear to all the Greeks worthy of their study. ...Those that read my book may wonder that my discourse of laws and historical facts contains so much of philosophy....However, those that have a mind to know the reasons of everything may find here a very curious philosophical theory."

In a word, as a shrewd man who himself had

become imbued with the spirit of the Grecian philosophers then prevailing, Josephus drew from the Law and the Prophets, and from the traditions of the elders and the theories of the various sects of the Jews, all he could find that in the most remote degree would tend to show:--

First, that the Jewish religion was not far behind popular Grecian philosophy; but that somewhat analogous theories had been drawn from Moses' Law, and held by some Jews, long before the Grecian philosophers broached them.

Secondly, that it was not their religious ideas which made the Jews as a people hard to control or "rebellious," as all liberty-lovers were esteemed by the Caesars. Hence he attempts to prove, at a time when virtue was esteemed to consist mainly in submission, that Moses' Law "taught first of all that God is the Father and Lord of all things, and bestows a happy life upon those that follow him, but plunges such as do not walk in the paths of virtue into inevitable miseries." And it is in support of this idea, and for such purposes, evidently, that Josephus, after saying: "There are three philosophical sects among the Jews; first, the Pharisees; second, the Sadducees, and third, the Essenes," proceeds to give an account of their three theories; especially detailing any features which resembled Grecian philosophy. And because the last and least, the Essenes, most resembled the doctrines of the Stoics and leading Grecian theories, Josephus devotes nearly ten times as much space to their views as to the views of both Sadducees

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and Pharisees combined. And yet the Essenes were so insignificant a sect that the New Testament does not even mention them, while Josephus himself admits they were few. Whatever views they held, therefore, on any subject, cannot be claimed as having Jewish sanction, when the vast majority of Jews held contrary opinions. The very fact that our Lord and the apostles did not refer to them is good evidence that the Essenes' philosophy by no means represented the Jewish ideas. This small sect probably grew up later and probably absorbed from Grecian philosophy its ideas concerning immortality and the everlasting torment of the non-virtuous. It should be remembered that Josephus was not born until three years after our Lord's crucifixion, and that he published his "Wars" A.D. 75 and "Antiquities" A.D. 93--at a time when he and other Jews, like all the rest of the world, were eagerly swallowing Grecian philosophy and science falsely so called, against which Paul warned the church.--Col. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:20.

Josephus directed special attention to the Essenes

because it suited his object to do so. He admits that the Sadducees, next to the largest body of Jewish people, did not believe in human immortality. And of the Pharisees' views he makes a blind statement, calculated to mislead, as follows: "They also believe that souls have an immortal vigor in them [this might be understood to mean that the Pharisees did not believe as the Sadducees that death ended all existence, but believed in a vigor or life beyond the grave--by a resurrection of the dead], and that under the earth there will be rewards and punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and that the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison [death--not torture], but that the former [the virtuous] shall have power to revive and live again."

Is it not apparent that Josephus has whittled and stretched the views of the Pharisees, as much as his elastic conscience would allow, to show a harmony between them and the philosophies of Greece? Paul, who had been a Pharisee, contradicts Josephus. While Josephus says they believed "that only the virtuous would revive and live again [Does not this imply a resurrection, and imply also that the others would not live again, but remain dead, in the great prison --the tomb?]" Paul, on the contrary, says: "I have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."--Acts 24:15.

We have no hesitancy about accepting the testimony of the inspired Apostle Paul, not only in regard to what the Jews believed, but also as to what he and the early Church believed; and we repeat, that the theory of the everlasting torment of the wicked, based upon the theory that the human soul cannot die, is contrary to both the Old and the New Testament teachings, and was introduced among Jews and Christians by Grecian philosophers. Thank God for the purer philosophy of the Scriptures, which teaches that the death of the soul (being) is the penalty of sin (Ezek. 18:20); that all souls condemned through Adam's sin were redeemed by Christ's soul (Isa. 53:10); and that only for wilful, individual sin will any die the Second death--an everlasting punishment, but not an everlasting torment.

CHOOSE LIFE THAT YE MAY LIVE.

"I have set before thee this day life and good, death and evil." "I have set before thee life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."--Deut. 30:15,19.

We come now to the consideration of other Scripture statements in harmony with the conclusions set forth in the preceding articles.

The words here quoted are from Moses to Israel. To appreciate them we must remember that Israel as a people, and all their covenants, sacrifices, etc., had a typical significance.

God knew that they could not obtain life by keeping the Law, no matter how much they would choose to do so, because they, like all others of the fallen race, were weak, depraved through the effect of the "sour grape" of sin which Adam had eaten, and which his children had continued to eat. (Jer. 31:29.) Thus, as Paul declares, the Law given to Israel could not give them life because of the weaknesses or depravity of their fallen nature.--Rom. 8:3; Heb. 7:19; 10:1-10.

Nevertheless, God foresaw a benefit to them from even an unsuccessful attempt to live perfectly; namely, that it would develop them, as well as show them the need of the better sacrifice (the ransom which our Lord Jesus gave) and a greater deliverer than Moses. And with all this their trial furnished a pattern or shadow of the individual trial insured to the whole world (which Israel typified) and secured by the better sacrifices for sin, which were there prefigured, to be accomplished by the great prophet of whom Moses was but a type.

Thus seeing that the trial for life or death presented to Israel was but typical of the individual trial of the whole world, and its issues of life and death (of eternal life or the Second death), may help some to see that the great thousand-year-day of trial, of which our Lord Jesus has been appointed the Judge, contains the two issues, life and death. All will then be called upon to decide, under that most favorable opportunity, for righteousness and life or sin and death, and a choice must be made. And, although there will be rewards and "stripes" according to the deeds of the present life, as well as according to their conduct under that trial (John 3:19; Matt. 10:42; Matt. 11:20-24), the verdict in the end will be in harmony with the choice expressed by the conduct of each during that age of trial.

The second trial, its sentence and its result, are also shown in the words of Moses quoted by Peter (Acts 3:22,23): "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me. Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul [being] which will not hear [obey] that Prophet [and thus choose life] shall be destroyed from among the people." In few words this calls attention to the world's great trial, yet future. It shows the great Prophet or Teacher raised up by God to give a new judgment or trial to the condemned race which he has redeemed from the condemnation which came upon it through its progenitor, Adam. It shows, too, the conditions of eternal life to be righteous obedience, and that with the close of that trial some will be

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judged worthy of that life, and some worthy of destruction
--the Second death.

Our Lord Jesus, having redeemed all by his perfect and precious sacrifice, is the Head of this great Prophet; and during the Gospel age God has been selecting the members of his body, who, with Christ Jesus, shall be God's agents in judging the world. Together they will be that Great Prophet or Teacher promised. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"--1 Cor. 6:2.

The first trial was of mankind only, and hence its penalty or curse, the first death, was only upon man. But the second trial is to be much more comprehensive. It will not only be the trial of fallen and imperfect mankind, but it will include every other thing and principle and being out of harmony with

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Jehovah. "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing."

The "judgment to come" will include the judgment to condemnation of all false systems--civil, social and religious. These will be judged, condemned and banished early in the Millennial day, the light of truth causing them to come into disrepute and therefore to pass away. This judgment comes first, in order that the trial of man may proceed unhindered by error, prejudice, etc. It will also include the trial of "the angels which sinned"--those angels "which kept not their first estate" of purity and obedience to God. Thus it is written by the Apostle of the members of the body of the great Prophet and High Priest, who is to be Judge of all--"Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels?"--1 Cor. 6:3.

This being the case, the condemnation of the Millennial trial (destruction, second death) will cover a wider range of offenders than the penalty or curse for the sin of Adam, which "passed upon all men." In a word, the destruction at the close of the trial will be the utter destruction of every being and every thing which will not glorify God and be of use and blessing to his general creation.

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FORGIVABLE AND UNPARDONABLE SINS.

IN THE preceding pages we briefly show the extreme penalty

for wilful sin. Adam's penalty, which involved his entire race, was of this sort; and only as the result of Christ's death as our ransom from that penalty of that wilful sin, is any forgiveness of it or subsequent sins possible.

Forgivable sins are those which result from weaknesses incurred through that one Adamic sin which Christ settled once for all. They are such as are not wilful, but are committed through ignorance or weaknesses of the flesh. God stands pledged to forgive all such sins upon our repentance, in the name and merit of Christ's sacrifice.

Unpardonable sins, sins which cannot be forgiven, are such as are wilfully done. As the penalty of the first wilful sin was death--extinction of being--so death is the penalty of every wilful sin against full knowledge and ability to choose and to do the right. This is called Second Death, in distinction from the first or Adamic penalty, from which Christ's ransom sacrifice will release all mankind.

The "sin unto [second] death," for the forgiveness of which the Apostle declares it is useless to pray (1 John 5:16), is not only a wilful sin but a sin against clear knowledge; a sin for which no adequate excuse can be found. Because it is a sin against clear knowledge, or enlightenment in holiness, it is called the "sin against the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 12:31,32), for which there is no forgiveness.

But there are other partly-wilful sins, which are, therefore, partially unpardonable. In such the temptations within and without (all of which are directly or indirectly results of the fall) have a share;--the will consenting under the pressure of the temptation or because of the weakness. The Lord alone knows how to properly estimate our responsibilities and guilt in such cases. But to the true child of God there is but one proper course to take;--repentance and an appeal for mercy in the name and merit of Christ, the great sacrifice for sin. The Lord will forgive such a penitent, in the sense of restoring him to his favor; but he will be made to suffer "stripes" (Luke 12:47,48) for the sin, in proportion as God sees it to have been wilfully committed.

Not infrequently a conscientious person realizes that he has committed sin, and that it had some wilfulness in it. He properly feels condemned, guilty before God; realizing his own guilt, and forgetting the fountain for sin and uncleanness, opened by God for our weak, fallen race, he falls into a state of sadness, believing that he has committed the sin unto death. Such wander in deserts drear, until they find the cleansing fountain. Let such remember, however, that the very facts of their sorrow for sin and their desire to return to divine favor are proofs that they have not committed the sin unto death; for the Apostle declares that those who commit sin of this sort cannot be renewed unto repentance. (Heb. 6:6.) Penitents, then, may always feel confident that their sins were in part, at least, results of the fall, and hence not unto death, but requiring forgiveness and stripes.

Such is the wonderful provision of God, through Christ, for the acceptance of every soul which, forsaking sin and the love of it, seeks righteousness and life through him who is the Way, as well as the Truth and the Life. Thus all, whether

naturally stronger or weaker, have an equal opportunity to gain everlasting life as well as to gain the great prize of joint-heirship with Christ.

FUTURE RETRIBUTION.

While the Scriptures teach that the present Gospel age is the Church's Judgment-day or period of trial, and that the world's Judgment-day or time of trial will be the Millennial age, it is, nevertheless, a reasonable question to ask,--To what extent will those who are not of the consecrated Church be held responsible, in the Millennial age, for their misdeeds, of cruelty, dishonesty and immorality, of the present time? And to what extent will those of the same class then be rewarded for present efforts to live moral and benevolent lives?

These are important questions, especially to the world; and well would it be for them if they could realize their importance and profit thereby. They are important also to the Church, because of our interest in the world, and because of

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our desire to understand and teach correctly our Father's plans.

We have learned that the sacrifice of Christ secures for all mankind, however vile, an awakening from death, and the privilege of thereafter coming to perfection, and, if they will, of living forever. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15.) The object of their being again brought into existence will be to give them a favorable opportunity to secure everlasting life, on the conditions which God requires--obedience to his righteous will. We have no intimation whatever in the Scriptures that, when awakened, the moral condition of men will have changed, but we have much, in both reason and revelation, to show that as they went into death weak and depraved so they will come out of it. As there is "no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave" (Eccl. 9:10), they will have learned nothing; and since they were sinners and unworthy of life and divine favor when they died, they will still be unworthy; and as they have received neither full rewards nor full punishments for the deeds of the present life, it is evident that just such a time of awakening as God has promised during the Millennium is necessary;--for rewarding, and punishing, and giving to all mankind the opportunity for eternal life secured by Christ's great ransom-sacrifice.

While, strictly speaking, the world is not now on trial: that is, the present is not the time for its full and complete trial, yet men are not now, nor have they ever been, entirely without light and ability, for the use of which they are accountable. In the darkest days of the world's history, and in the deepest degradation of savage life, there has always been at least a measure of the light of conscience pointing more or less directly to righteousness and virtue. That the deeds of

the present life have much to do with the future, Paul taught very clearly when, before Felix, he reasoned of justice and self-government, in view of the judgment to come, so that Felix trembled.--Acts 24:25, Diaglott translation.

At the first advent of our Lord, an increased measure of light came to men, and to that extent increased their responsibility, as he said: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19.) For those evil deeds committed against the light possessed, whether of conscience or of revelation, men will have to give an account, and will receive, in their day of judgment, a just recompense of reward. And, likewise, to the extent of their effort to live righteously: they will receive their reward in the day of trial.--Matt. 10:42.

If men would consider what even reason discerns, that a time of reckoning, of judgment, is coming, that God will not forever permit evil to triumph, and that in some way he will punish evil-doers, it would undoubtedly save them many sorrows and chastisements in the age to come. Said the Prophet, "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" (Isaiah 29:15.) Behold, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. 15:3); and "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Eccl. 12:14.) He "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."--1 Cor. 4:5.

The age of Christ's reign will be a time of just judgment; and though it will be an age of golden opportunities to all, it will be a time of severe discipline, trial and punishment to many. That the judgment will be fair and impartial, and with due consideration for the circumstances and

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the opportunities of each individual, is also assured--by the character of the Judge (the Christ--John 5:22; 1 Cor. 6:2), by his perfect knowledge, by his unwavering justice and goodness, by his divine power and by his great love as shown in his sacrifice to redeem men from death, that they might enjoy the privilege of this favorable, individual trial.

The varied circumstances and opportunities of men, in this and past ages, indicate that a just judgment will recognize differences in the degree of individual responsibility, which will also necessitate differences in the Lord's future dealings with them. And this reasonable deduction we find clearly confirmed by the Scriptures. The Judge has been, and still is, taking minute cognizance of men's actions and words (Prov. 5:21), although they have been entirely unaware of it; and he declares that "Every idle ["pernicious," injurious or malicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36); and that even a cup of cold water, given to one of his little ones, because he is Christ's, shall in nowise lose its reward.

(Matt. 10:42.) The context shows that the "pernicious" words to which Jesus referred were words of wilful and malicious opposition spoken against manifest light. (Matt. 12:24,31,32.) He also affirmed that it would be more tolerable for Tyre, Sidon and Sodom in the day of judgment than for Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, which had misimproved greater advantages of light and opportunity." --Matt. 11:20-24.

In the very nature of things, we can see that the punishments of that age will be in proportion to past guilt. Every sin indulged, and every evil propensity cultivated, hardens the heart and makes the way back to purity and virtue more difficult. Consequently, sins wilfully indulged now, will require punishment and discipline in the age to come; and the more deeply the soul is dyed in willing sin, the more severe will be the measures required to correct it. As a wise parent would punish a wayward child, so Christ will punish the wicked for their good.

His punishments will always be administered in justice, tempered with mercy, and relieved by his approval and reward to those who are rightly exercised thereby. And it will only be when punishments, instructions and encouragements fail; in short, when love and mercy have done all that wisdom can approve (which is all that could be asked), that any will meet the final punishment which his case demands--the Second Death.

None of the world will meet that penalty until they have first had all the blessed opportunities of the age to come. And while this is true of the world, the same principle applies now to the consecrated children of God in this our judgment (trial) day. We now receive God's favors (through faith), while the world will receive them in the next age, viz., instruction, assistance, encouragement, discipline and punishment. "For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Therefore, when we receive grievous chastisement, we should accept it as from a loving Father for our correction, not forgetting "the exhortation which speaketh unto us as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." --Heb. 12:4-13.

How just and equal are God's ways! Read carefully the rules of the coming age--Jer. 31:29-34 and Ezek. 18:20-32.

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They prove to us, beyond the possibility of a doubt, the sincerity and reality of all his professions of love to men: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?"--Ezek. 33:11.

All who in this life repent of sin, and, as the term repentance implies, begin and continue the work of reformation

to the best of their ability, will form character which will be a benefit to them in the age to come; when awakened in the resurrection age, they will be to that extent advanced towards perfection, and their progress will be more rapid and easy; while with others it will be more slow, tedious and difficult. This is implied in the words of our Lord (John 5:29,30 --Diaglott): "The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life [those whose trial is past, and who were judged worthy of life, will be raised perfect--the faithful of past ages to perfect human life, the overcomers of the gospel age to perfect life as divine beings], and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."--These are awakened to judgment--to receive a course of discipline and correction--as the necessary means for their perfecting, or, otherwise, their condemnation to the second death.

The man who, in this life, by fraud and injustice, accumulated and hoarded great wealth, which was scattered to the winds when he was laid in the dust, will doubtless awake to lament his loss, and bewail his poverty and his utter inability under the new order of things to repeat unlawful measures to accumulate a fortune. With many it will be a severe chastisement and a bitter experience to overcome the propensities to avarice, selfishness, pride, ambition and idleness, fostered and pampered for years in the present life. Occasionally we see an illustration of this form of punishment now, when a man of great wealth suddenly loses all, and the haughty spirit of himself and family must fall.

We are told (Dan. 12:2) that some shall awake to shame and age-lasting contempt. And who can doubt that, when every secret thing is brought into judgment (Eccl. 12:14), and the dark side of many a character that now stands measurably approved among men is then made known, many a face will blush and hide itself in confusion? When the man who steals is required to refund the stolen property to its rightful owner, with the addition of twenty per cent. interest, and the man who deceives, falsely accuses or otherwise wrongs his neighbor, is required to acknowledge his crimes and so far as possible to repair damages, on peril of an eternal loss of life, will not this be retributive justice? Note the clear statement of this in God's typical dealings with Israel, whom he made to represent the world.--1 Cor. 10:11; Lev. 6:1-7. See also "Tabernacle Shadows," page 99.

As we are thus permitted to look into the perfect plan of God, how forcibly we are reminded of his word through the prophet Isaiah, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet." (Isa. 28:17.) We also see the wholesome influence of such discipline. Parents, in disciplining their children, realize the imperative necessity of making their punishments proportionate to the character of the offences; and so in God's government: great punishments following great offences are not greater than is necessary to establish justice and to effect great moral reforms.

Seeing that the Lord will thus equitably adjust human affairs in his own due time, we can afford to endure hardness

for the present, and resist evil with good, even at the cost of present disadvantage. Therefore, "Recompense to no man evil for evil." "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus our Lord."--Rom. 12:17-19; Phil. 2:5.

The present order of things will not always continue: a time of reckoning is coming. The just Judge of all the earth says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay;" and the Apostle Peter adds, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." (2 Pet. 2:9.) And, as we have seen, those punishments will be adapted to the nature of the offences, and the benevolent object in view--man's permanent establishment in righteousness.

Other Scriptures corroborative of this view of future rewards and punishments are as follows: 2 Sam. 3:39; Matt. 16:27; 1 Pet. 3:12; Psa. 19:11; 91:8; Prov. 11:18; Isa. 40:10; 49:4; Matt. 5:12; 10:41,42; Luke 6:35; Rev. 22:12; Rom. 14:11,12.

LET HONESTY AND TRUTH PREVAIL.

Having demonstrated that neither the Bible nor reason offers the slightest support to the doctrine that eternal torment is the penalty for sin, we note the fact that the various church creeds, and confessions, and hymn-books, and theological treatises, are its only supports; and that under the increasing light of our day, and the consequent emancipation of reason, belief in this horrible, fiendish doctrine of the dark ages is fast dying out. But alas! this is not because Christian people generally are zealous for the truth of God's Word and for his character, and willing to destroy their grim creed-idols. Ah no! they still bow before their admitted falsities; they still pledge themselves to their defense, and spend time and money for their support, though at heart ashamed of them, and privately denying them.

The general influence of all this is, to cause the honest-hearted of the world to despise Christianity and the Bible; and to make hypocrites and semi-infidels of nominal Christians. Because the nominal church clings to this old blasphemy, and falsely presents its own error as the teaching of the Bible, the Word of God, though still nominally revered, is being practically repudiated. Thus the Bible, the great anchor of truth and liberty, is being cut loose from,

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by the very ones who, if not deceived regarding its teachings, would be held and blessed by it.

The general effect, not far distant, will be, first open infidelity, then anarchy. For much, very much of this, lukewarm Christians, both in pulpits and pews, who know or ought to know better, are responsible. Many such are willing to compromise the truth, to slander God's character, and to stultify and deceive themselves, for the sake of peace, or

ease, or present earthly advantage. And any minister, who, by uttering a word for an unpopular truth, will risk the loss of his stipend and his reputation for being "established" in the bog of error, is considered a bold man, even though he ignominiously withhold his name from his published protests.

If professed Christians would be honest with themselves and true to God, they would soon learn that "their fear toward God is taught by the precepts of men." (Isa. 29:13.) If all would decide to let God be true, though it should prove every man a liar (Rom. 3:4), and show all human creeds to be imperfect and misleading, there would be a great creed-smashing work done very shortly. Then the Bible would be studied and appreciated as never before; and its testimony that the wages of sin is death (extinction), would be recognized as a "just recompense of reward."

We have given foregoing but a mere suggestion of the light now shining in "due season" for the "household of faith." We invite correspondence from all who "hunger and thirst after right." We have free tracts, and books to loan to the poor in spirit who are poor also in purse. See page 2.

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