

The Christadelphian Shield

OR

Papers explanatory of the passages of Scripture usually urged in support of popular theology, in opposition to the doctrines believed by Christadelphians.

BY J. J. ANDREW, LONDON.

"HE THAT IS FIRST IN HIS OWN CAUSE SEEMETH JUST, BUT HIS NEIGHBOUR COMETH AND SEARCHETH HIM" (PROV. XVIII. 17). "PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD" (1 THESS. V. 21).

THE THIEF ON THE CROSS.*

THIS well known incident is quoted to support the following theological traditions: 1st, Salvation without Baptism; 2nd, Entrance of the righteous into their reward at the instant of death; 3rd, Immortality and immateriality of the soul; 4th, Heaven, the abode of the redeemed; 5th, Death-bed and scaffold repentances. A careful consideration of the case will show that all of these points of popular creeds, notwithstanding appearances, are unsupported by Christ's answer to the thief; and a glance at a few collateral passages will discover that they are opposed to the teaching of the word of God throughout.

1st.—With reference to Baptism, there is no proof that the thief had not previously submitted to John's baptism. But even if he were not baptised, his case is no rule for the guidance of persons in the present day; because, not only was it a peculiar one,—his confession having been made under circumstances which rendered submission to that ordinance an impossibility, and at a time when One in whom God dwelt and spake was present,—but it occurred in a different dispensation from the present. The position in which the thief was placed has never been followed by one precisely analogous; and as long as Jesus is absent from the earth such a case is an absolute impossibility, therefore it affords no precedent whatever for persons living between Christ's departure and return. Since the Crucifixion the conditions of salvation have been re-enacted and altered by Jesus and his apostles. In so doing they have given

* Luke xxiii. 42, 43.

special commands concerning Baptism, which show that it is now necessary to submit to this ordinance to enable anyone to become a disciple of Christ. The following passages are sufficient to prove this:—"He that believeth [the gospel] and is baptised shall be saved" (Mark xvi. 16); "Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts. ii. 38); "We are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life; for if we are planted together in the likeness of his death we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Romans vi. 4, 5); "As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. iii. 27). These testimonies teach that upon repentance,—that is, the change of mind which accompanies belief of the gospel,—it is necessary to be baptized; that those who do so have all their past sins forgiven, and are thus introduced into Christ, whose death and resurrection is symbolised by their being buried in water, and then raised out of it. Those who are not so "planted in the likeness of Christ's death" have not "put on Christ," and will never be "planted in the likeness of his resurrection;" as a consequence they cannot enjoy any life beyond the present,—for resurrection, not death, is the gate to eternal life. It is the duty of all who would be saved to obey these injunctions, and not be guided by a solitary exceptional case, occurring in a previous dispensation.

2nd.—The idea that the thief entered into his reward at death is based upon the word "to-day," which is presumed to define a period of twenty-four hours. But the following passages show that it is sometimes used in a more extended sense,—*"I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected"*—(Luke xiii. 32); *"To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts"*—(Heb. iii. 7). In the first instance the phrase "to-day" indicates more than one literal day, probably 365, for the word "day" is frequently used in prophecy to symbolise a year. The period referred to in the second "to-day" was in existence in the time of David, for the sentence is quoted from one of his Psalms; it was in existence in Paul's time, and it has not come to an end yet. It comprises, therefore, some hundreds of years; the apostle Paul defines it to mean "after so long a time"

(Heb. iv. 7), and calls it "the day of salvation"—(2 Cor. vi. 2). This evidence is sufficient to show how unsafe it is to rely on the word "to-day" in a matter of such importance: for if it can be used for a long and indefinite period of time in one case it can in another. But there is other evidence which conclusively proves that the promise to the thief could not have been fulfilled within twenty-four hours of its utterance. In this as in all other cases, that interpretation must be adopted which harmonises with the actual facts and the teaching of the rest of scripture. Jesus said to him, "Thou shalt be with me." If, therefore, the thief went to "Paradise" immediately after death, Jesus did also; if Jesus did not, neither did the thief. We have the testimony of Jesus himself that he went into the grave:—"The Son of man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Matt. xii. 40). That this does not refer to his body merely, in the "orthodox" sense, is shewn by Peter's statement on the day of Pentecost: His soul was not left in hell "[hades, i.e., the grave], neither did his flesh see corruption"—(Acts ii. 31). If "his soul was not left in hades" it must have been brought out, and before it could have been brought out it must first have gone in. His "soul" which is here used, for the whole being, went into the grave at his burial, and came out at his resurrection: consequently he could not have gone into heaven (where "Paradise" by some is supposed to be) immediately after expiring on the cross. He did not go there for upwards of forty days afterwards! for after his resurrection he said, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my father"—(John xx. 17). And as he did not ascend there, it follows that the thief did not.

To say that the answer of Jesus was a promise that the thief should go to heaven at death, is to make him contradict his previous teaching concerning the time of reward. He showed that resurrection must precede the enjoyment of eternal life; "They that have done good [shall come forth] unto the resurrection of life"—(John v. 29); "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just"—(Luke xiv. 14). He taught, also, that the righteous would not be rewarded until they had been judged at his second appearing;—"The son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works" (Matt. xvi. 27). If the thief be entitled to eternal life, he cannot obtain it

until he has become the subject of a resurrection and been judged when Jesus comes to establish his kingdom. It was, in fact, this period to which his petition referred,—the coming of Jesus from heaven, and not his going there; and as the meaning of an answer must be determined by the request which precedes it, it is presumable that the promise of Jesus had reference to the same time also. Some manuscripts give the thief's question as follows:—"Remember me, O King, when thou returnest in the day "of thine Advent." If this be correct, we can easily see why Jesus used the phrase "to-day" or "this day"; he alluded not to the day on which he was speaking, but to the "day" referred to by the thief,—the day of his future advent, when he "comes in his kingdom."

In speaking to Jesus about "his kingdom," the thief showed not only that he had the same expectations as his fellow-countrymen regarding the re-establishment of the kingdom of Israel, but also that he believed Jesus to be the king of that kingdom. This was what the Jews who subjected Jesus to an ignominious death did not believe: they regarded him as an impostor; a fact which is illustrated by what they said respecting the inscription placed on the cross. "Pilate wrote a title, and put it "on the cross; and the writing was, 'JESUS OF NAZARETH "THE KING OF THE JEWS'"—(John xix. 19). But many of the Jews were not satisfied with this; therefore they came to Pilate, and said, "Write not, The King of the Jews, "but that *he said, I am King of the Jews.*" The title which Pilate had put up was doubtless written in derision; but, nevertheless, it appeared to recognise the validity of Jesus' claim to be their king. This was what the chief priests did not want; and hence their request that Pilate should put up another inscription simply stating what Jesus himself claimed to be. The thief on the contrary recognised the truthfulness of Pilate's inscription, as representing the real claims of Jesus. This was an exhibition of great faith on his part. He must have believed that Jesus would be raised from the dead and appear at some future day on the land of Palestine to "restore again the kingdom to Israel"—(Acts i. 6). He might have been one of the audience who listened to the parable by which Jesus illustrated his departure and return. On that occasion "He spake "a parable because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because "they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately

"appear. He said, therefore, A certain nobleman went into "a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to "return"—(Luke xix. 11, 12). That Jesus himself is here represented by the "nobleman" there can be no doubt. The reason given for its utterance, that "He was nigh to "Jerusalem" indicates the nature of the kingdom which "they thought should immediately appear." They expected that Jesus, as their Messiah, was then and there going to set up the kingdom of which he was the king, and Jerusalem the capital. He did not tell them that their expectations as to the *nature* of the kingdom were wrong; on the contrary, he confirmed them, by pointing to a future epoch as the period for its establishment. He simply corrected their mistake as to the *time*. This he did by stating parabolically that he must go away into a "far country to receive for "himself a kingdom and to return," at which time he will establish it. Since uttering this parable he has gone into the "far country," which is heaven, but he has not yet returned to his own home; when he does, he will take account from his disciples of the use made of the talents entrusted to them during his absence,—punishing or rewarding them according to their deserts. It was this "return" of the "nobleman" which the thief had in his mind when he said "Lord, remember me when thou comest "in thy kingdom." He did not expect Jesus would enter his kingdom when he got to heaven, but on his return; and, consequently, his hopes of reward were centred, not on his death and the departure of Jesus, but on that event so frequently alluded to in the New Testament epistles,—the second appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

3rd.—Before this incident can be of any service in support of the alleged "immortality and immateriality of the soul," these theories must be proved from other evidence, as there is no mention of them whatever in the narrative; their existence is first assumed, and then the passage is advanced in support of the assumption. This untenable position is based solely on the word "to-day," which, as already shown, is no proof of the thief's ascension to heaven at death; and, consequently, no proof of the above theories. Until immortalsoulism can be demonstrated from unmistakable evidence in other parts of the Bible, this passage ought never to be quoted in its behalf.

4th.—It is always assumed that "Paradise" means

heaven ; this is a mistake ; it is a word derived from the Persian language, and simply means a park or garden. It is so applied in several passages in the Old Testament. As used by Jesus it had reference to the land of Palestine, which we are told is to "become like the garden of Eden"—(Ezek. xxxvi. 35), sometimes called Paradise ; "The Lord shall make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like "the garden of the Lord"—(Isa. li. 3). It is on this land that Jesus will establish his kingdom when he returns to the earth. His promise, therefore, was that the thief should be with him on this land at this day. Had he given a promise to the thief to go to heaven, he would have done that which he had never done before. In his sermon on the mount he said, "Blessed are the meek : for *they shall inherit the earth*."—(Matt. v. 5)—not heaven. To the twelve he gave a promise that they should "eat and drink in my kingdom, and sit on thrones *judging the twelve tribes of Israel*"—(Luke xxii. 30) ; and before leaving them he, said "*Whither I go ye cannot come*"—(John xiii. 33) ; thus showing that although he was going to heaven they could not go there. But he comforted them with a promise that he would return :—"I will come again, and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, there be may be also"—(John xiv. 3). Seeing, then, that the twelve disciples could not go to heaven, and cannot be with him until his return, it is unreasonable to suppose that the thief was blessed with these superior privileges. All the promises of Jesus to the righteous had reference to "the kingdom of God, which he will set up when he comes from that far country" where he now is. His faithful servants will then receive immortality, and be exalted to be kings and priests to assist him in ruling the earth in righteousness. Until that time arrives neither the thief nor anyone else will be permitted to "eat of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. ii. 7). This tree of life is "the true vine" (John xv. 1), of whom it is said, "He that eateth me even he shall live by me" (John vi. 57). The same truth is taught, in somewhat different language, in the following passage : "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life" (Rev. xxii. 14). To eat of the "true vine" now is to do the commandments of Jesus. This necessitates, amongst other things a belief in the kingdom which the thief believed in :—"Seek

"ye first the kingdom of God" (Matt. xi, 33). Those who are seeking to go to heaven, at death or any other time, are not seeking this kingdom ; they are not complying with this all-important command ; they are not imbibing nourishment from the "true vine" now, and therefore they will have no right to eat of the "tree of life" when Jesus "comes in his kingdom" to establish a paradise upon earth. Only those who are now obedient will then be permitted to eat of it ; they will "be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord"—(Isa. lxi. 3) ; and "be like trees planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth their fruit in their season, whose leaf also shall not wither"—(Ps. i. 3) ; they will be symbolic trees of righteousness surrounding the symbolic "tree of life" There will, therefore, be both a literal and a symbolic Paradise ; the former consisting of Palestine in a highly fertilised and fruitful condition, and the latter of Jesus and his faithful disciples, to whom that land has been promised as an everlasting inheritance. If the thief be accepted at "the judgment seat of Christ," he will be one of these trees of righteousness ; then will be fulfilled the promise that in the day of Christ's appearing he should be with him in Paradise.

This evidence excludes the suggestion that the Paradise referred to by Jesus was the Paradise believed in by the Pharisees,—a place where the righteous were supposed to dwell in a state of bliss between death and the resurrection. To endorse this theory is to adopt one of the traditions by which the Pharisees made void the Word of God, and thereby to identify oneself with a class which the Messiah most severely denounced. Jesus believed the Hebrew prophets, not the Pharisees,—and, therefore, his use of the word must be determined by the inspired teaching of the former, and not by the nullifying traditions of the latter.

5th.—Death-bed and scaffold repentances are invalid ; not only because they are the result of fear, and are made at a time when the present life is no longer of any value to its possessors, but because they do not comprise a belief in that which is necessary for Salvation, namely, "the kingdom of God"—(Mark i. 14 ; xvi. 15, 16). The thief *did believe* in this "kingdom" which being the subject-matter of "the gospel" is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth"—(Rom. i. 16) ; and there is, therefore, far greater probability of the thief being

saved than there is of those who at death make confessions of faith in accordance with the lifeless creeds of Christendom, which repudiate God's kingdom, and thereby deny the "gospel." The conditions on which God offers salvation are, a belief in His promises, and obedience to His commandments. No amount of religious profession, knowledge, or zeal, will be of any avail unless these conditions are complied with.

It will thus be seen that the belief of the thief presents a striking contrast to the belief of the vast majority of religious people in the present day: he believed in the kingdom which Jesus preached about, whereas they believe in a kingdom which exists only in their own imaginations: he believed in the claims of Jesus to be the King of the Jewish nation, whereas they assert that he is king of a Sky-Kingdom, thus nullifying the numerous predictions of the Hebrew prophets: he looked for his reward to a time which is yet future:—"When the Son of Man shall come "in his glory . . . then shall he sit on the throne "of his glory"—(Matt. xxv. 31); whereas they place their hopes of reward upon death, when they expect their "immortal souls" will be translated into the skies. If so-called "Christians" of this age are right, the thief was undoubtedly wrong; and, as a consequence, it is very inappropriate to quote his case in support of their belief. On the other hand, if the thief was right, they are unmistakably in error. That such is really the case is clearly proved by the evidence here adduced. Religious people who are constantly referring to the thief on the cross do not believe that which he believed, although his belief was based upon the teaching of Jesus: whereas the interpretation which such persons put upon the answer of Jesus is not in accordance with either his teaching or the actual facts of the case, but, on the contrary, is totally opposed to them.

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"ABSENT FROM THE BODY AND PRESENT WITH THE LORD."*

The above sentence is usually supposed to convey the idea that the apostle Paul expected, immediately after quitting this life, to enter into the presence of the Lord Jesus; and hence it is concluded that all the righteous ascend to heaven when they die. This most erroneous conclusion is arrived at from inattention to the context, a superficial view of the passage itself, and total disregard of Paul's teaching in other parts of his writings on the various points involved. In order that the apostle's meaning may be correctly understood, the verses which precede and follow the sentence above quoted must be carefully examined in the light of the more explicit teaching of the Pauline epistles, as well as other parts of inspired Scripture.

1st.—THE RESURRECTION. The fifth chapter of 2 Cor., from which the passage in question is quoted, begins with the word "for," thereby indicating that it is connected with the previous one. It is necessary, therefore, to ascertain what is written by the apostle in the latter portion of the 4th chap., before proceeding to examine the 5th. In v. 14 he alludes to the resurrection of Christ as a ground of hope that he and the Corinthian believers would also be raised from the dead:—"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus *shall raise up us also* by Jesus, and shall *present us with you*. This was not the first occasion on which he had written to the Corinthians respecting the resurrection of Jesus and the faithful. In his first epistle he had entered into a very elabo-

*2 Cor. v. 8.

rate argument on the point: some among the Corinthians, to their shame, denied that such an event as resurrection would occur at all, as is evident from the apostle's question to them, "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Cor. xv. 12). To refute them he reasons out the consequences which follow this negative assumption:—"If there be no resurrection of the dead then is Christ not risen" (v. 13); "and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain: ye are yet in your sins; then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (v. 17, 18).

These verses should be most carefully noted; there are few of greater importance in the New Testament. They teach clearly the absolute necessity in the case of the deceased saints, of resurrection from the dead as a preliminary to the enjoyment of a future life; for if a resurrection be necessary to prevent those who have fallen asleep in Christ from perishing, it is obvious, not only that such deceased persons will utterly perish unless they become subjects of the resurrection, but that they cannot by any possibility attain to eternal life until they have been raised from the dead. This passage teaches furthermore that the dead saints could not have gone to heaven at death; had they ascended there, it would have been absurd in the highest degree for Paul to say that, if they were not raised from the dead, they would perish.

It was on the *Resurrection*, not on death, that the Apostle based his hopes of salvation; in v. 32 of the same chapter he writes, "*What advantageth it me if the dead rise not?*" Had he held the views attributed to him by the theology of our day, it would have been far more appropriate for him to have said—"What advantageth it me if I go not to heaven at death?" But Paul held no such views as these—so common in the present day—and therefore he gave utterance to no such vain and useless desires. Neither did he teach anything in his second epistle to the church at Corinth which at all clashed with what he set forth in the first epistle. In the one he showed the necessity of a resurrection before entering into a future life, and therefore he could not in the other have taught that a future life could be enjoyed before the resurrection. The great burden of his preaching was, not the translation of immortal souls to the skies at death, but the resurrection of the dead in a bodily state at the time of the Lord's appearing in power and glory.

2nd.—CHRIST'S SECOND APPEARING. The next point introduced by the apostle, which it is necessary to notice, occurs in v. 17, where he says "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." By the "glory" here mentioned, an "orthodox" believer will doubtless understand a state of bliss entered upon at death. But such cannot be Paul's meaning, for, in writing to the Colossians, he says, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, THEN shall ye appear also with him in glory" (Col. iii. 4); and to the Romans he says, "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. viii. 17). In both these passages the apostle clearly points to the Lord's future appearing, and not to the period of death, as the epoch of the promised glory.

Would Paul, we ask, in writing to the Corinthians, contradict what he wrote to the Colossians and Romans, by teaching that the promised "glory" would be entered upon at death, instead of at the appearing of "Christ our life?" No reasonable person would give an affirmative answer to this question. And yet this is what is in effect done by all who affirm that Paul entered into "glory" at death; for if he then became "present with the Lord," he must have received his crown of glory at that time: and if this be true of the apostle, it would necessarily follow that all the other righteous receive their crowns of glory at death also; in which latter case they would be glorified one at a time, instead of altogether according to apostolic teaching. It was the invariable custom of Paul and the other apostles to point the early Christians, not to death, but to the Second Appearing of the Lord, as the time of reward, because it is *then* that the resurrection is to take place; and, as already shown, no one can enter into another life until raised from the dead. Thus, in writing to the Thessalonians, Paul says, "Ye turn to God from idols to serve the living and the true God, and to wait for his son from heaven" (1 Thess. i. 9, 10), not "that ye might go to His Son in heaven." How seldom do we find the example of these Thessalonians in the present day!

3rd.—THE TWO BODIES. With the foregoing evidence in view, the reader will be better prepared for understanding the apostle's meaning, in the first few verses of the 5th chapter. He begins by saying, "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a

house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (v. 1). The use of the word "house" is usually supposed to indicate that man consists of an immaterial entity dwelling in a material framework. If this could be clearly proved by unmistakable evidence in those parts of the Bible which make known the nature of man, then this passage might be adduced to illustrate it; but as such proof is entirely wanting, and the literal language of the Scriptures is opposed to it, this figurative expression can afford no support to such a philosophical speculation.

That Paul understood man to be animated dust, and not, as currently believed, a mere body of dust tenanted by an immaterial spirit, is evident from his statement that "the first man is of the earth earthy" (1 Cor. xv. 47). He further writes, "The first man, Adam, was made," not an everliving or immortal soul, but "a living soul" (v. 45), which is clearly a quotation from the Mosaic account of the creation (Gen. ii. 7). In the previous verse he defines a "living soul" to be a "natural body," and then he contrasts the nature of this "natural body," common to all men in the present life, with the nature of the "spiritual body" promised to the saints in the life to come:—"There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor. xv. 44).

It is these two distinct and different kinds of bodies he has in his mind when writing the 5th chapter of his second epistle; he speaks of only two living states, the present and the future; and both of them *bodily states*: he entirely ignores a *disembodied state*, the interval between the two being passed over as nothing. The former, that is the "natural body," he designates "our earthly house of this tabernacle," or "this tabernacle;" and the latter, that is the "spiritual body," he terms "a building of God," "our house which is from heaven." A tabernacle being a more temporary place of abode than a house, it is appropriately used to represent the "natural body," which pertains to this life only. Paul did not desire always to exist in this earthly tabernacle; knowing that as long as he lived in the flesh it would be impossible for him to enjoy eternal life,—for "*flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*" (1 Cor. xv. 50), he "earnestly desired to be clothed upon" with a heavenly house—a "spiritual body." The body pertaining to the future life is called a "*heavenly house*" because the life which is to be bestowed upon the righteous is now deposited

with Christ, who is *in heaven*: "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3); "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to his son to have life in himself" (John v. 26), "that he should give eternal life to as many as God has given him" (John xvii. 2). Eternal life or immortality being a gift held in reserve by Christ for those who are worthy, it is obvious that none can exist between death and the resurrection, when Jesus will come from heaven as a "quickening (or life-giving) spirit" (1 Cor. xv. 45), to "clothe" Paul, and all other faithful ones, with a "heavenly house."

What force or meaning there can be from the "orthodox" point of view, in Paul's desire to be thus clothed, it is difficult to perceive. The religious teachers of the day represent the righteous as earnestly desiring that their "immortal souls" may be liberated by death from their gross material bodies: they have not a "clothing upon" in view; their idea is to be *unclothed*. This is the very thing which Paul did not desire:—"Not for that we would be *unclothed*, but *clothed upon*, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." When writing thus, the apostle did not, as many supposed, desire to die; he ardently longed for Jesus Christ to reappear during his lifetime, that he might be one of those who would "not sleep." But, even if he did die, he well knew that he would be raised from the dead when that event occurred, for he had previously told the same church that "We shall not all sleep, but *we shall all be changed*, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, *at the last trump*" (1 Cor. xv. 51-52). The next verse—"This corruptible must *put on* incorruption, *this mortal must put on immortality*"—not only shows the nature of this change, but strikes at the root of that theory which makes the resurrection to consist in an immortal soul re-entering a mortal body; for, according to that theory, it would be immortality putting on mortality, whereas Paul says that "mortality must put on immortality," in order that the former may be "swallowed up" of the latter.

When Paul becomes the subject of this process, he will be changed from a "natural body" to a "spiritual body," by receiving his "house from heaven;" he will then realise the prediction he made in writing to the Philippians, that "the Lord Jesus Christ shall *change our vile body*, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body" (Phil.

iii. 21). He will still be Paul, but possessed of a different nature; his identity or individuality will be preserved, but his constitution will be changed to a state incapable of decay. He was well aware that until this change took place it would be impossible for him to be "present with the Lord," because that presence is to be enjoyed in an incorruptible kingdom which corruptible flesh and blood cannot inherit. Hence, he said, "While we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord"; and not desiring to be absent from the Lord, either by death or a continued life of the "natural body," he was "willing rather to be absent from the body, AND to be present with the Lord."

He does not say, as frequently represented, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord;" he had too much respect for the teaching of Moses and the prophets concerning the state of the dead to make such a false statement. Those inspired writers inform us that "the dead praise not the Lord" (Ps. cxv. 17); that "*in death there is no remembrance of God*" (Ps. vi. 5); that, when a man dies, "his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, *in that very day his thoughts perish*" (Ps. cxlvi. 4); and that, as a consequence, "*the dead know not anything*" (Eccles. ix. 5). This is the Divine record concerning all who are dead; they are in a state of utter oblivion, or non-existence.

Only those who believe this testimony can appreciate the prominence given by Paul to the resurrection, and understand his argument thereon. Keeping these facts in view, it is easy to perceive why the apostle said if there was no resurrection, then the righteous dead had perished. Paul himself is now one of those dead ones, who are said to "sleep in Jesus." He and they are all now "absent from the body," but they are not yet "present with the Lord;" for they are devoid of all life and consciousness, and will so continue until the "Lord shall descend from heaven," when "the dead in Christ shall rise," after which all who are approved by him will "ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 16-17). Paul desired the two things conjoined, namely, "To be absent from the body, AND to be present with the Lord:" he is now realising the former, but not the latter: he has no knowledge of anything, and, therefore, is unconscious of the lapse of time. When he awakes from his sleep of death, it will be to him as though he had but

recently fallen asleep; the events of the past 1,800 years will be a perfect blank. After being changed from "flesh and blood" to a spirit nature, it will appear to him as though his presence with the Lord followed immediately upon his death when he became "absent from the (natural) body." A portion of mankind will always be in the condition expressed by the phrase "absent from the body"; for it is written of certain lords, who have had dominion over Israel, "They are deceased, *they shall not rise*" (Isa. xxxvi. 14), and of the heathen, that "*They shall be as though they had not been*" (Obad. v. 16). Not being the subjects of a resurrection, they will never experience the blessed change from a natural to a spiritual body, which Paul and all other faithful disciples will experience: they will never know what it is for this mortal to put on immortality, or to be clothed upon with a house from heaven, and consequently they will never be "present with the Lord."

4th.—THE JUDGMENT. For further evidence that the popular view of this passage is entirely erroneous, it is but necessary to point to the verse but one which succeeds it, where Paul says, "*We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things in body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad*" (v. 10). The first question to which this gives rise is,—To what period of time does Paul refer? He himself supplies the answer in writing to Timothy:—"The Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;" "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 1, 8).

It is obvious from this that Paul did not expect to "appear before the judgment seat of Christ" until Messiah's return, and that he expected to stand there in a *bodily* state, not *un-clothed*, or as an "immortal soul." It was *then*, and not at death, that Paul expected to receive a "crown of righteousness;" it was *then*, consequently, that he expected to be "present with the Lord." If, as many say, Paul went to his reward at death, the question arises—Of what use is the Judgment? Obviously none. If he appears there clothed with a spiritual body, he will already have received "in body" according to the good things he did, and thus the Judgment will be reduced to an unmeaning ceremony.

After the foregoing exposition, the reader will be able to appreciate the following admirable paraphrase of the first ten verses of 2 Cor. v. by Dr. JOHN THOMAS :

“For we know that if our mortal body be dissolved in the dust, we are to receive a new body and a new habitation, a building from God, a home not made with hands, enduring in the New Heavens. For in the midst of the things which are seen we groan, earnestly desiring that our habitation which is from heaven may be clothed upon us; if so be that being raised and appearing before the tribunal of Christ, we shall not be found naked or destitute of the wedding garment. For we that are surrounded by the things seen and temporal do groan, being burdened: not that we desire to enter the death state by being unclothed or divested even of mortal life, but clothed upon by putting on immortality, that mortality may be swallowed up of life. Now he that has begotten in us this earnest hope is God, who has given us the spirit as the earnest of what we shall receive at the coming of the Lord. We are therefore always confident, having full assurance of faith, knowing that whilst we who believe are mortal, we are absent from the Lord: (for whilst absent we walk by faith, not by sight :) we are full of hope, I say, and rejoice rather to be delivered from mortality, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour that whether ‘present’ at his tribunal or ‘absent’ from it, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things in body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad.”

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“HE THAT IS FIRST IN HIS OWN CAUSE SEEMETH JUST, BUT HIS NEIGHBOUR COMETH AND SEARCHETH HIM” (PROV. XVIII. 17). “PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD” (1 THESS. V. 21).

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU.*

THE above passage is frequently adduced to prove that the Kingdom of God consists, not of the personal reign of Christ upon the earth, but of a spiritual reign in the hearts of his disciples; just as if an isolated passage was sufficient to overturn the abundant Scripture testimony which exists to prove the restoration of the Kingdom again to Israel. This Kingdom is the great topic which runs through the entire Bible, from one end to the other; the statements of Jesus alone, however, are quite sufficient to show the nature of the Kingdom, as well as the time and place of its establishment.

1st.—KINGDOM AND KING ARE SOMETIMES USED SYNONYMOUSLY. In one of Daniel’s visions he saw “four great ‘beasts’ (Dan. vii 3), the meaning of which is subsequently explained to him in the following words:—“These great ‘beasts, which are four, are *four Kings*, which shall arise ‘out of the earth’” (v. 17). Although the beasts are said to represent “four Kings,” they in reality symbolise four Kingdoms, or empires; namely, the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. Each of these great (gentile dominions had a plurality of kings; hence the term in Daniel’s vision has reference, not to individual kings, but to kingdoms ruled by a succession of Kings or Emperors. Additional proof of this is to be found by a comparison of

*Luke xvii. 23.

v. 17 with v. 23, which states that "the fourth beast shall be the fourth *Kingdom* upon earth"; King is used in the former verse, but Kingdom in the latter. The Evangelists record an instance of an opposite nature, in which the term "Kingdom" is used for "King": when Jesus, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Zechariah, entered Jerusalem riding upon an ass, the people cried out, "Blessed is *he that cometh* in the name of the Lord; Blessed is *the Kingdom* of our father David *that cometh* in the name of the Lord" (Mark xi. 9, 10). It requires no great discernment to see that the latter part of this exclamation is but a repetition of the former; therefore the phrase "the Kingdom cometh," is synonymous with the phrase "he cometh." The people did not mean that the Kingdom of David was entering Jerusalem, but that he whom God had promised to David as a king to sit on his throne was then present, and was coming to Jerusalem to assume his Kingly functions; for they expected that he would there and then set up his Kingdom. Thus the people used the word "Kingdom" to signify the King himself. This is precisely the sense in which Jesus uses it in the passage under consideration. There is nothing incongruous in this; for according to Parkhurst, the lexicographer, the word translated "Kingdom" also means "Royalty, royal power, or dignity," which are but other terms for "King." The Pharisees refused to believe that Jesus was the Messiah promised by their prophets, for they expected him to come not in a lowly or humble manner, but with great pomp and ceremony, and accordingly they demanded of Jesus "when the Kingdom of God should come." His answer was, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation [or outward show, see margin]; neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! for, behold the Kingdom of God is within you." This was spoken to show that the personage about whom they were asking was actually present in their midst: he was the embodiment or nucleus of the Kingdom which God had promised to establish. An objection will doubtless be raised to this with regard to the word "within," which is usually supposed to signify an individual indwelling. In reply we might substitute for "within" the alternative rendering "among" given in the margin of all reference

Bibles, respecting which Dr. Trench, Archbishop of Dublin, says—"The marginal reading 'among you' should have been textual. 'He in whom the whole Kingdom of Heaven is shut up as in a germ, and from whom it will unfold itself, *stands* in your midst.'" But there is no necessity for substituting it. The word "within" does not necessarily mean within each individual. It may be used to indicate that a certain object is in the midst of a company, circle, or crowd of persons. Such, indeed, is the sense in which it is made use of here. Jesus was "within" the company or circle of individuals whom he was addressing; that is to say, they surrounded him. This is in harmony with the marginal rendering of the Revised Version, which gives "in the midst of you." For a conclusive proof that Jesus was not speaking of a spiritual reign in the hearts of each individual, it is only necessary to point to the fact that he was addressing, not his disciples, but the Pharisees. Surely no one will assert that either Christ or God reigned in the hearts of this wicked class, so frequently denounced by Jesus, and to whom he on one occasion said, "Ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men; for *ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in*" (Matt. xxiii. 13). To suppose that they could at the same time refuse to do that by which they would enter the Kingdom, and yet have the Kingdom dwelling within them, is preposterous.

2nd.—THE KINGDOM IS SOMETHING TO BE ENTERED. It being evident that the Kingdom could not be a spiritual reign in the hearts of the Pharisees, it may be suggested by some that it is the same kind of figurative reign in the hearts of Christ's disciples, and that thus it might be said the Kingdom was within them individually. On this theory is it not very strange that Jesus, in his sermon on the Mount, addressed them in the following manner? "*Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness*" (Matt. vi. 33). Here is an exhortation for them to seek the Kingdom of God: and, as a reward for so doing, he promises to give it to them:—"Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's *good pleasure to give you the Kingdom*" (Luke xii. 32). If they had actually possessed it, or it had been within them, there would have been no need for either the exhorta-

tion or the promise. On another occasion, when conversing with Nicodemus, he laid down the conditions by which it might be obtained:—"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God" (John iii. 5). It will be seen from this that the Kingdom is something which a person enters; it cannot, therefore, be within any individual. A subject of Queen Victoria is in the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, but that kingdom is not within him. The very nature of the conditions shows that even in the case of believers they cannot enter the Kingdom in the present life. Two preliminaries are absolutely necessary; 1st, to be born of water, and 2nd, to be born of the Spirit. The first birth takes place when a man believes the gospel, and is baptised. This is styled by Paul "the washing of water by the word" (Eph. v. 26) Hence, baptism must be in accordance with what is taught in the word of God; the mere act of dipping in water is not being "born of water;" that act must be accompanied by a belief of what is taught in God's word. The gospel to be believed consists of "glad tidings of the Kingdom of God" (Luke viii. 1). Hence, for a man to be "born of water," he must believe in the Kingdom of God, frequently termed "the gospel of the Kingdom" (Matt. iv. 23), and be immersed in water. Jesus clearly defines, in the next verse, what it is to be "born of the Spirit:"—"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit" (v. 6). All mankind are "born of the flesh," and hence are "flesh," but none have as yet been "born of the Spirit." If they had already been the subjects of the latter birth they would no longer be flesh and blood; they would be Spirit, for Jesus plainly says, "that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." The same truth is enunciated by Paul, when he says, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor. xv. 50); he then shows how disciples will be fitted for this inheritance:—"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump" (v. 51, 52). Now of what will the change here referred to consist? A change from flesh to spirit. All who are made partakers of this change will then have been "born of the Spirit," and will thus be in that incor-

ruptible condition in which they can be addressed by the Judge of quick and dead with the joyful words:—"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. xxv. 34). Until that Judgment-day arrives, none of Christ's disciples can either enter or inherit the Kingdom which they are seeking. How is it possible, then, in view of the quotations just given, that any of them can now either be in the Kingdom, or the Kingdom in them?

3rd.—THE KINGDOM IS NOT YET ESTABLISHED. The Lord's Prayer of itself contains sufficient evidence to convince any reasonable person that the Kingdom he commanded them to seek was then future, for he taught them to pray, "*Thy Kingdom come*" (Matt. vi. 10). Though the time for its establishment is not here defined, the Lord did not leave his disciples without some data as to the time the Kingdom would "come." On one occasion, "he spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought *the Kingdom of God should immediately appear*. He said, therefore, a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a Kingdom, and to return" (Luke xix. 11-12). Those who accompanied Jesus believed that he was about to set up the Kingdom immediately: this was an error, and Jesus spoke the parable to correct that error. Hence, his object was to show that the Kingdom would not appear or be established until some future day. He does this by comparing himself to "a certain nobleman," whose departure into a far country to receive a Kingdom is representative of his own departure from earth to heaven. When upon earth he had not received the Kingdom; that is to say he had not received authority from his Father to establish it. Hence it was impossible that it should "immediately appear." But the "nobleman" does not stop in the "far country" for ever; for "it came to pass that *when he was returned*, having received the Kingdom," he commanded his servants to be brought unto him (v. 15). Having received the constitution of the Kingdom, he comes back to his own land to take possession of it. For the same reason it will be necessary for Jesus, after receiving authority from the Father, to return to this earth and establish the Kingdom of which he is the King. That

event is called his Second Appearing, and until the time of that appearing it is impossible that the Kingdom can have any existence. Jesus would never make a statement, such as that recorded in the 17th chapter of Luke, which would contradict the one in the 19th. It is necessary, therefore, to examine both passages carefully, and harmonise them. The only way to do this is to consider the former to have reference to the King, and the latter to the Kingdom. Additional proof that the Second Appearing of Christ is the time when he will assume that Kingly power or authority which God has promised him, is to be found in the following words:—"When the Son of Man cometh in 'his glory . . . then shall he sit upon the throne of 'his glory'" (Matt. xxv. 31). The Son of Man, Jesus Christ, has only, as yet, appeared in humiliation; he has not appeared in glory, and therefore, he has not yet ascended the throne of his glory—the throne of that Kingdom for which he taught his disciples to pray.

4th.—THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NONE OTHER THAN THE RESTORED KINGDOM OF ISRAEL. In the model prayer which Jesus gave to his disciples, he did not simply teach them that the Kingdom had yet to come; he also indicated its locality in the words, "*Thy will be done in earth as it is 'in heaven'*" (Matt. vi 10). This phrase is but an amplification, or reiteration, in other words, of the former part of the same prayer, "Thy Kingdom come." When God's Kingdom comes, *then*, and not till then, will His will be done upon earth as it is in heaven, a state of things which has certainly not been manifested upon the earth since the Fall of Adam. It is, consequently, a Kingdom destined to exist on the earth at some future day. When that day arrives Jesus will fulfil the prediction contained in the angelic announcement to the Virgin Mary previous to his birth:—"The Lord God shall give unto him *the throne 'of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of 'Jacob for ever; of his Kingdom there shall be no end'*" (Luke i. 32, 33). Has Jesus ever reigned in the manner here described? If so, how, when, and where? Instead of acknowledging him as their King, did not the Jews crucify him for claiming this title? saying, "Whoso 'maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar'" (John

xix. 12). "He came unto his own, and his own received 'him not'" (John i. 11). From that time to the present he has been in heaven, at God's right hand, not on David's throne, and the Jews have been scattered among all the nations of the earth. Instead of being Christ's subjects, they have been the subjects of tyrannical Gentile rulers; and so far from acknowledging the crucified Jesus as their Messiah, they have, as a nation, scoffed at the very idea. But the Jews cannot always occupy this antagonistic attitude, for it is expressly stated by the angel, "He shall reign over the house of Jacob." He will reign over them, not while in heaven, but upon the earth, after he returns hither. He will exercise those functions while sitting on "the throne of his father David," which throne was at Jerusalem. In view of this Scriptural truth one of his injunctions, in the sermon on the Mount, assumes a significance which it does not otherwise possess:—"Swear 'not by Jerusalem for it is the city of the Great King'" (Matt. v. 35). Few persons will doubt that the "Great King" is Jesus himself, of whom he on one occasion said, "Behold a greater than Solomon is here" (Matt. xii. 42). Although Solomon was the greatest king the Jews ever had, Jesus will be "greater." Those who declare he is not destined to reign on the earth in effect deny that Jerusalem is the city of the Great King Jesus, and give the lie to the angelic prediction, that he shall have the throne of David given to him by the Father, and reign over the house of Jacob. Such persons also render the following promise of Jesus meaningless:—"I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as 'my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and 'drink at my table in my Kingdom, and sit on thrones 'judging [or ruling] the twelve tribes of Israel'" (Luke xxii. 29, 30). In promising the twelve Apostles a Kingdom Jesus does not leave them in ignorance as to its nature. He defines it by saying "ye shall sit on thrones judging the 'twelve tribes of Israel." Thus his Kingdom is Israelitish, in the rulership of which he is to be assisted by his twelve Apostles. Is it surprising that, with such a plain promise as this, the Apostles should have been so anxious for Jesus to set up his Kingdom, as to ask him, just before his ascension, the following question?—"Lord, wilt thou at this time

"*restore again the Kingdom to Israel?*" (Acts i. 6). It would be well for those who affirm that the Apostles were mistaken in their views of the Kingdom, to compare this question with the promise given by Jesus already quoted. In asking whether the Kingdom was at once to be restored to Israel, the Apostles in effect asked whether they were at that time to be raised up to "sit on thrones judging the 'twelve tribes of Israel.' Before asking the question, they had been listening to his conversations on this very subject; Jesus "being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the 'things pertaining to the Kingdom of God'" (Acts i. 3). Is it likely that, after such instruction as this statement implies, they should still have been as ignorant of the Kingdom of God as some people would have us believe? To say that Jesus had been talking to the Apostles more or less for forty days about the Kingdom of God, and that they immediately asked him a question which showed their total ignorance of the nature of that Kingdom, is a libel on both him and them. Jesus instructed them concerning the Kingdom of God; their question related to the Kingdom of Israel; these are but two phrases to express the same thing. The Israelites were chosen as a special nation by Jehovah, and when He appointed them a king, they became His Kingdom, and existed as such for many years, under kings of Divine appointment. But, since their overthrow by the Romans, they have ceased to exist as a kingdom at all. God has, however, promised to re-establish them as a kingdom under the rulership of their Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, assisted by all who, at the Day of Judgment, are found worthy to be "born of the Spirit." When these promises are fulfilled, the Jews will again constitute the Kingdom of God, being the subjects thereof "as in the days of old."

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"THE DEVIL AS A ROARING LION."*

THE verse in Peter's first Epistle, from which the above phrase is taken, is often quoted in support of the popular belief in a personal Agent of evil, briefly described as the Devil, possessing attributes of omnipotence and omnipresence almost equal to the Deity. But when compared with other passages, in which similar words are used, it will be seen that Peter's expression does not convey the idea usually attributed to it. To understand the Apostle's meaning, the Scriptural use of the following five words must be ascertained:—Devil, Lion, Roaring, Devour and Prey.

1st.—DEVIL. The primary meaning of this word is "a false accuser," or "slanderer." It is applied in the Bible to human beings who have slandered God or opposed His revealed truth. Thus Jesus in addressing his Apostles said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John vi. 70). This undoubtedly has reference to Judas, who acted the part of a "devil" or false accuser by betraying Jesus. In writing to Timothy about deacons, the Apostle Paul says, "So must their wives be grave, not slanderers" (1 Tim. iii. 11); and in his second Epistle he predicts a time when "men shall be false accusers" (2 Tim. iii. 3). The word translated "slanderers" in the former passage, and "false accusers" in the latter, is precisely the same as that which is rendered "devil" in the words just quoted from

*1 Peter v. 8.

Jesus; the only difference being that it is singular in one case and plural in the other. If, therefore, it had been uniformly rendered "devil," it would have been evident that Paul was giving an injunction that deacons' wives should not be devils, and predicting that men would become devils. Thus the word "devil" is applicable either to masculine or feminine beings, to one or to a multitude. It may also be used with reference to a class of beings, and yet be in the singular number; in this respect it is like our English word "enemy," which, though singular, is sometimes applied to a whole army of soldiers. This is the way in which Peter uses it in the passage under consideration. In saying the "devil," he does not mean the imaginary fiend portrayed by Milton, but a class of men who were opposed to the true God or slandered His truth. As a whole, they were "the devil" or the "adversary" of the early Christians. Confirmation of this is found in the exhortation with which the verse commences:—"Be sober, be *vigilant*;" then follows the reason for this injunction:—"because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." In order that anyone may manifest vigilance against an adversary, it is necessary first to know who is meant. Now there is no evidence as to the form or attributes of the devil of modern theology. How, then, can anyone be vigilant against such an adversary? But there is abundant evidence to show the nature of the adversary of whom Peter was writing. In his second Epistle he describes him (speaking multitudinally) as false teachers, "bringing in damnable heresies" (chap. ii. 1), "speaking evil of the things that they understand not" (v. 12), and "beguiling unstable souls" (v. 14). Against such adversaries as these it was not only possible, but very necessary, to exercise vigilance; for it was by such Jewish and Pagan perverters of the truth that many of the early Christians were led away from the simplicity of the Gospel, and the foundation laid for the present Great Apostacy.

2nd.—LION. Beasts are not infrequently used in Scripture to symbolise both nations and men. Thus the prophet Daniel records that in a vision he saw "*four great beasts* come up from the sea" (Dan. vii. 3), which, in a subsequent part of the same chapter, are explained to be kings or kingdoms; "*these great beasts, which*

are four, *are four kings*, which shall arise out of the earth" (v. 17). They were not, however, all alike; they were "diverse one from another" (v. 3); "the first was like a *lion*" (v. 4). The kingdom symbolised by this lion, is the ancient kingdom of Babylon; and under this figure the same kingdom is alluded to by the Prophets. Jeremiah, in predicting the Babylonish captivity, says, "The *lion* is come up from his thicket, and the *destroyer of the Gentiles* is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to *make thy land desolate*" (Jer. iv. 7). And elsewhere, in recording the same event, he says, "Israel is a scattered sheep; the *lions* have driven him away; *first the king of Assyria* hath devoured him; and *last this Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon*, hath broken his bones" (Jer. i. 17). Thus the Kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon are here denominated "lions."

The instances in which wicked men are compared to lions are chiefly to be found in the Psalms:—"He [the wicked, see v. 4] lieth in wait secretly *as a lion* in his den; he lieth in wait to catch the poor" (Ps. x. 9). "Many *bulls* have compassed me, strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, *as a ravening and roaring lion*" (Ps. xxii. 12, 13). "Save me from the lion's mouth" (v. 21). The latter Psalm undoubtedly has reference to the Messiah, for its opening sentence was used by him when on the Cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." Does any one suppose that the "bulls" and "lions" here spoken of were quadrupeds? Was it wild beasts, or human beings degraded to the level of the beasts, who were the most dangerous to Jesus? Anyone who calls to mind the cruel, malignant persecution which he suffered from his enemies, ending as it did in a violent death, must come to the conclusion it was the latter. A more appropriate symbol could scarcely be found for such, than that of "ravening and roaring lions." But perhaps the clearest illustration of this point is to be found in the 57th Psalm:—"My soul is among lions. . . . and I lie even among them that are set on fire, *even the sons of men*, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword" (v. 4). The Psalmist first says, "My soul is among lions," and then he defines who those "lions" are, saying, "even the sons of men."

3rd.—ROARING. When a lion roars it makes a great noise. Hence when men who are symbolised by lions make a great noise, they are described as a lion roaring. When one nation threatens war against another, it is like the roaring of a lion, for it indicates an intention to destroy its enemies; this is sometimes described as a voice of thunder. The desolations inflicted on Israel by the surrounding nations are thus described by Jeremiah :—“*The young lions roared upon him, and yelled, and they made his land waste*” (Jer. ii. 15). The same Prophet, in predicting the great noise which the “inhabitants of Chaldea” would make at the destruction of Babylon, says, “*They shall roar together like lions, they shall yell as lions’ whelps*” (Jer. li. 38). This is always the course of the wicked when their pleasures or interests are interfered with. The devil roared like a lion when the Ephesians tried to drown Paul’s voice by crying out for about two hours, “*Great is Diana of the Ephesians*” (Acts xix. 34). The devil roared like a lion when the chief priests cried out to Pilate upon Jesus being presented before them, “*Crucify him, crucify him*” (John xix. 6). The devil roared like a lion when the Papacy thundered its anathemas against Luther and the Reformers of the sixteenth century. In fact this has been the attitude which this system of blasphemy has assumed from its first establishment to the present day; hence it is very appropriately described in the Apocalypse as possessing a “mouth as the mouth of a lion” (Rev. xiii. 2). Its whole course has been an illustration of Solomon’s words :—“*As a roaring lion and as a roaring bear, so is a wicked ruler over the poor people*” (Prov. xxviii. 15).

4th.—DEVoured. This word is used in two senses; first, in reference to men being put to death; and second, to the disciples of Christ being turned away from the truth by teachers of false doctrine, which ultimately leads to death. It is used in the former sense by Jeremiah when, in addressing his kinsmen, he says, “*Your own sword hath devoured your prophets like a destroying lion*” (Jer. ii. 30). Jesus makes the same statement in the following words : “*Ye are the children of them which killed the prophets*” (Matt. xxiii. 31). Thus the devil devoured like a lion when the Jews put their Prophets to death; when they crucified their Messiah; and when they stoned Stephen. And

they would have devoured Paul like a lion had they been allowed to carry out their vow, that they would “*neither eat nor drink till they had killed him*” (Acts xxiii. 21). An instance of the second mode of devouring is given by Jesus in the warning delivered to his disciples : “*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves*” (Matt. vii. 15). These wolves in sheep’s clothing were a very numerous class in that day; they comprised nearly the whole of the religious teachers of the Jewish nation. It was very necessary for Jesus to warn his disciples against them, in order that they might not be led away and devoured by them, as were their fathers of old; to which Ezekiel makes reference in the following passage : “*There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls . . . her priests have violated my law*” (Ezek. xxii. 25, 26). These false prophets devoured souls by leading the Jews away from the true God, and inducing them to commit idolatry,—an act contrary to the Mosaic law, and therefore productive of everlasting death. The early Christians were liable to both these forms of devouring: in being put to death by their Jewish and Gentile enemies; and in losing the one hope and faith through listening to the enticing words of the false teachers who arose in the early church. Paul was several times in danger of being devoured by the enemy; to which he makes allusion in writing to the Corinthians : “*In deaths oft; once was I stoned; in perils of robbers; in perils by mine own countrymen; in perils by the heathen*” (2 Cor. xi. 23-26). And when at Rome, near the close of his life, he writes to Timothy in the following language : “*I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion*” (2 Tim. iv. 17). It was not a literal lion of which Paul here speaks. The context indicates that the Apostle is speaking of a time when those who were with him forsook him, on account of persecution; but he says that nevertheless he was strengthened by God, and enabled to preach fully unto the Gentiles. The precise event to which he alluded is not given; the probability is, that it refers to the first time he was brought before the Roman tribunal, as indicated by the statement in *v.* 16, “*At my first answer no man stood with me.*” On this occasion, however, he was released. Paul was doubtless aware that,

in the prophecies of Daniel, the Roman Empire was symbolised by a beast, and that it was the fourth development of the Babylonian kingdom which, as already shown, is represented as a lion. Hence the appropriateness of his alluding to his deliverance from the Rulers of the Fourth beast dominion as a deliverance from the mouth of the lion. This was tantamount to saying he was delivered from the hand of the devil. For the want of that fidelity which Paul manifested, the church at Smyrna was threatened with being subjected to the power of the devil: "*Behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried*" (Rev. ii. 10). Does anyone suppose that by the word "Devil" is here meant the imaginary super-human being who figures so conspicuously in fire-and-brimstone theology? If so, what historical evidence is there to show that the early Christians were ever imprisoned by such a being? There is, indeed, abundant evidence to prove that they were thus treated by the Pagan authorities of the Roman Empire; and as the prisons were under their guardianship, and not that of an invisible fiend, it is not difficult to perceive that the term "devil" is applied collectively to all those who were the means of imprisoning or killing the disciples of Apostolic times. Confirmation of this view is found in the fact that the word rendered "adversary" means an opponent at law, of which illustrations are to be found in Matt. v. 25 and Luke xviii. 3.

5th.—PREY. After what has been already advanced, it is hardly necessary to say much about the nature of the prey which is devoured by the lion-roaring Devil. The prey devoured by the Babylonish lion was the Israelitish nation, which is appropriately alluded to as a flock of sheep: "*My flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field*" (Ezek. xxxiv. 8). The "beasts of the field" which preyed upon the Israelitish sheep were their enemies, the surrounding nations: "*They shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies*" (2 Kings xxi. 14). These figurative wild beasts were the instruments by which God punished His disobedient "flock," for He said: "*I will be unto them as a lion . . . I will devour them like a lion; the wild beast shall tear them*" (Hos. xiii. 7, 8). Such has been the condition of the Jews for the last eighteen centuries or more; they have been like a flock of sheep

devoured by wild beasts; the devil as embodied in the Gentile rulers of the world, has roared against, and devoured, them like a lion. But this is not always to be their condition; a time is coming when the scales will be turned. Instead of being a prey to the Gentile lions, the Gentiles will become a prey to them: "*All they that devour thee, shall be devoured . . . all they that prey upon thee, will I give for a prey*" (Jer. xxx. 16); "*I will save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey*" (Ezek. xxxiv. 22). Instead of being like sheep amid wild beasts, they will be like a lion among sheep: "*The remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among flocks of sheep; who, if he go through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver*" (Mic. v. 8). These words plainly teach that the Jews are to be exalted to a position of power far superior to the Gentiles, when they will be used as God's instrument to punish those nations which have persecuted them, or which refuse to submit to the authority of their king: "*Thou (Israel) art my battle-axe and weapons of war; for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms*" (Jer. li. 20). Israel has not yet acted as a lion toward the Gentiles, nor been used as God's battle-axe to destroy kingdoms, but a time is coming when this will be the case. Instead of the Gentiles roaring and devouring God's sheep like a lion, they will be devoured by "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. v. 5), in accordance with the following prediction of Isaiah: "*Like as the lion and the young lion roared on his prey . . . so shall the Lord of Hosts come down to fight for Mount Zion*" (Isa. xxxi. 4). The devil-lion will then cease to roar, and will be superseded by the Christ-lion, who will be assisted not only by Israel after the flesh, but also by Israel after the Spirit. For the last twelve centuries the latter have been persecuted and devoured by the Papal-devil, who is described in the Revelation as "the woman drunken with the blood of the saints" (Rev. xvii. 6). The Great Apostacy, of which Rome is the head-quarters, is but a fulfilment of Paul's prediction to the Ephesian elders: "*After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock*" (Acts

xx. 29). If Paul can call men "wolves," is there any incongruity in Peter comparing men to a "lion"? The men referred to by Peter are of the same class as those whom Paul predicted would become "false accusers" or devils. Unfortunately these "grievous wolves" have increased in number and power from Paul's day to the present; they have devoured Christ's "little flock" in every possible way; they have put some to death for bearing testimony to "the faith once delivered to the saints"; and others they have enticed out of the fold "by good words and fair speeches"; and, by turning the truth of God into fables, have, like the false prophets of old, "devoured souls." But before very long the saints will be delivered from these dangerous adversaries; and, like the Jews, will be endowed with power to pour out vengeance on these enemies, as predicted by the Psalmist: "Let the saints be joyful in glory . . . and a two-edged sword in their hands; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people, to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: *this honour have all his saints*" (Psa. cxlix. 5-9). When these events have taken place, then will be fulfilled that vision of John's in which he saw an angel who laid hold on the Devil, "and bound him a thousand years" (Rev. xx. 1-2). The word "devil" is here used to describe, in a figurative manner, all "the powers that be," whether political or ecclesiastical, which oppose God's chosen people, the Jews, or those who hold His truth in its simplicity. To bind the devil is the same thing as "to bind the kings with chains and the nobles with fetters of iron." In other words, the devil will cease to roar and devour like a lion. The wild beasts also will be deprived of their ferocity: "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock" (Isa. lxv. 25). Thus both the literal and the figurative lions of the earth will be tamed. They will all be subject to the control of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, who will exercise supreme dominion over the whole earth.

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"HE THAT IS FIRST IN HIS OWN CAUSE SEEKETH JUSTI, BUT HIS NEIGHBOUR COMETH AND SEARCHETH HIM" (Prov. xviii. 17). 'PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD' (1 Thess. v. 21).

"EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT."*

THE verse from which the above words are taken, states, in a very concise form, the respective destinies of the "righteous" and the "wicked," and therefore constitutes an appropriate conclusion to Jesus Christ's description of the Day of Judgment. Few phrases are more frequently quoted to prove the commonly received doctrine of eternal torments, and on account of the authority of the personage who uttered the words, great stress is very properly laid upon them. They are, therefore, entitled to most careful and critical examination. The meaning of "life" and "punishment" first demand attention.

1st.—LIFE AND PUNISHMENT. These two words are intended to define the great contrast between the destinies of two classes: "eternal life" for the just, "everlasting punishment" for the unjust. The fact that "punishment" is placed in opposition to "life," affords presumptive evidence that the former does not include the latter; that is to say, that the "wicked" are not to be endowed with "eternal life." This being so, it would necessarily follow that the

"wicked" are not destined to live for ever, and, as a consequence, that they cannot endure eternal torments; because a life which will never end is absolutely essential to such a destiny. This conclusion is amply confirmed by the promises and threats in other parts of Scripture. "Life," or "eternal life," is frequently promised to the "righteous," but never to the wicked:—"Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have LIFE" (John v. 40); "I GIVE unto them (my sheep) ETERNAL LIFE" (John x. 28); "God sent his only begotten Son into the world, *that we might LIVE through him*" (1 John iv. 9). These passages are but a sample of what might be adduced to show that *life*, and not merely happiness superadded to life, constitutes the reward of the faithful. It is not mortal life, such as we have at present, but a life which will never end. And this life can only be obtained through Jesus Christ; hence all men are not naturally endowed with unending life. Christ will not give it to the wicked; therefore they cannot live for ever, and, as a consequence, cannot suffer eternal torments. The destiny threatened against the wicked is death, not life,—two words which are as opposite in their meanings as light and darkness. Just as life signifies existence, so does death signify non-existence. No being can at the same time be the subject of physical life and physical death: they are as wide apart as is the east from the west. Death is the result of sin:—"By one man sin entered into the world, *and death by sin*" (Rom. v. 12); "the wages of sin is *death*" (ch. vi. 23). These passages do not state that the punishment for sin consists of eternal torments. If such were their teaching, then eternal life would be as necessary for transgressors as for the obedient. The passages quoted distinctly affirm that death, or non-existence, is the penalty of sin. It is, therefore, reasonable (to say the least) to conclude that "everlasting punishment" does not comprise everlasting life. But it is not only reasonable: it is also Scriptural; as will be seen from the passages to be adduced under the next head.

2nd.—PUNISHMENT. The notion that this passage teaches eternal torments is based upon the fallacy that punishment and torment are synonymous terms. That they are not necessarily so is apparent to anyone who understands them. Torment of necessity includes conscious suffering; but pun-

ishment, though often producing conscious suffering, by no means necessitates it in every case. Punishment may consist merely of the deprivation of a blessing, as in the case of a murderer, who is punished by being deprived of the blessing of life. In a case of this kind, the conscious suffering incident to the taking away of life is of very short duration; while the deprivation of life, which is the real punishment, lasts for ever. From the time that the life of a culprit is taken away, he is destitute of feeling, and yet he is (although unconscious) a subject of punishment. This is precisely the punishment to be awarded to the wicked, namely, to pass out of existence. Writing about the future appearing of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul says that, at that time, those "who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall be *punished with everlasting destruction* from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power" (2 Thes. i. 8, 9). Here is apostolic testimony of an emphatic character, defining the punishment of the wicked as "everlasting destruction." Thus Paul confirms the conclusion already arrived at, that the punishment threatened does not comprise life, for destruction and death both define a condition in which there is no consciousness. Jesus and Paul were both inspired by the same Spirit, and consequently would not contradict each other. When, therefore, Jesus said "everlasting punishment," he did not mean eternal torment, but "everlasting destruction." Evidence to prove this is to be found in his own words, "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that *leadeth to destruction*," . . . and "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which *leadeth unto life*" (Matt. vii. 13, 14). Jesus here draws a contrast, similar to that in the passage under consideration, in regard to the destinies of the righteous and unrighteous. The way of the former "leadeth unto life;" that is, eternal life, not happiness only; and the way of the latter "leadeth to destruction" or "everlasting punishment," not eternal torments. The Apostle Peter uses, if anything, more forcible language than the foregoing, when, in writing about false teachers he says, "These as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed . . . shall *utterly perish in their own corruption*" (2 Peter ii. 12). Perverters of the truth are so despicable in the sight of God, that they are worthy only of

being compared to brute beasts, and fit only for the same doom,—that of being “destroyed,” or “utterly perishing in their own corruption.” This declaration of the Apostle Peter cannot refer to that state of corruption to which all men are reduced at death; for that is a condition upon which the righteous as well as the wicked enter; a condition, however, from which the former are to be released, for they are to be “delivered from the bondage of corruption” (Rom. viii. 21). It can only have reference to a summary punishment ending in a state of “corruption” from which there will be no deliverance. This consummation is appropriately described as “the second death” (Rev. xxi. 8), an event which takes place after the resurrection; for there is to be a resurrection of the “unjust” as well as of the “just” (Acts xxiv. 15). Both classes are brought forth from a state of corruption, but only the latter are endowed with unending life: the former being resurrected for the purpose of suffering according to their deeds; which suffering will end in a return to that corruption from which they temporarily emerged, and from which they will never again be released. Thus will they “go away into everlasting punishment,” and not be permitted to “see life, the wrath of God abiding on them”! (John iii. 36).

This definition of the doom threatened against the “wicked” is fully confirmed by the meaning of the word translated “punishment,” which is as follows: “To prune, retrench; metaphorically, to hold in check, keep in, confine; also to chastise, correct, punish” (Liddell and Scott’s *Greek Lexicon*). It will be seen that the primary meaning of this word is “to prune,” a process which consists of cutting off superfluous branches. In the parable of the vine, Jesus compares his faithful disciples to fruitful branches, and the unfaithful to unfruitful branches, respecting which he says: “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned” (John xv. 6). Just as withered branches, cut off from a tree, are of no other use than to be burnt up, so the unjust are fit for nothing but to be cut off from eternal life, and to be consigned to a state of everlasting “corruption” or death. The Psalmist says of them: “*Evil doers shall be cut off*; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth” (Psa. xxxvii. 9). Only

those who “inherit the earth,” or, as Jesus expresses it, “inherit the kingdom prepared” for them (Matt. xxv. 34), will be of that class who will be permitted to enter “into eternal life”; which phrases are simply different terms for expressing the same thing. The rest will be punished by being “cut off” from the earth, the Kingdom, and eternal life.

3rd.—EVERLASTING. If, after the evidence already adduced, anyone still persists in maintaining that the “punishment” to which Jesus referred, consists of conscious sufferings, it will be necessary for him, in order to base upon this passage the doctrine of eternal torments, to prove that such conscious sufferings is to be unending. It is true that the punishment is described as “everlasting,” a word which, in the English language, usually means unending. But in a case of this kind, the question must be decided, not by the English translation, but by the language from which it is translated. The word “everlasting” is, of course, an adjective; so also is the word *aionian*, of which it is a translation. The latter is derived from a noun, *aion*, and, like all adjectives so formed, is dependent for its meaning on that noun, which is defined as follows: “A space or period of time, a life-time, life, one’s time of life, age, an age, generation, definite period, a long space of time, eternity” (Liddell and Scott’s *Greek Lexicon*). Everyone must see that a word possessing a meaning such as this, is of a very elastic nature. It may be used for either a definite or an indefinite period of time, an age which will end, or ages which will never end. The length of time which it represents can only be determined by the nature of the object to which it is applied. It does not, of itself, define whether that period will or will not come to an end. When, for instance, it is applied to God, as “the King *eternal*” (1 Tim. i. 17), it, of course, means unending because God is a Being who will live for ever. But when Paul says to Philemon, “Perhaps he (Onesimus) therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for *ever*” (Philemon v. 15), it evidently means a limited period. The same word which, in the previous passage, is translated “eternal,” is, in this, translated “for ever;” the difference being that in the latter it is in the singular number, while in the former it is in the plural. In writing to Philemon, Paul

used it in the sense of a "lifetime;" it is as if he had said, "that thou shouldest receive him for the rest of thy life." Assuming, therefore, for the sake of argument, that the "punishment" of the wicked is conscious torment, the foregoing definition and illustrations clearly show that the word translated "everlasting" does not define the *length* of that torment. This must be ascertained from other sources. It depends, in fact, upon the nature of the beings who are the subjects of the punishment. If they possessed a life which would never end, then they would endure unending torment. But as they do not possess such a life, and as it will never be given to them, the conscious suffering will last only for a limited period of time, namely, as long as they live. It will terminate when they die the "second death," or "utterly perish in their own corruption." Consequently the suffering can only be said to be everlasting in a relative sense, that is, in relation to them. As far as their knowledge of time goes, it will be to them everlasting, but in the absolute sense it will only last for a "definite period," namely, during the "lifetime" of the wicked, which, as already seen, is terminated by "destruction."

An objection is frequently raised against this conclusion, to the following effect: "The word translated 'everlasting,' and applied to the punishment of the wicked, is precisely the same as that translated 'eternal,' and applied to the life of the righteous; if, therefore, the former can come to an end, there is no guarantee that the latter will not also terminate." This is an objection which is deserving of careful consideration. Although at first sight it may appear insuperable, the apparent difficulty vanishes when the meaning of the word translated "everlasting" and "eternal" is rightly understood. In giving the definition of this word, the answer to this objection has been to some extent anticipated. Being a word which can be used for a limited or an unlimited period of time, it is impossible that it can define the length of time during which any being, to whom it is applied, will live; this must be determined by other evidence. It cannot, of itself, define the duration of the life to be given to the righteous. There is, however, such indisputable testimony in other portions of the Scriptures, that no room is left for doubt on this point. Thus Jesus, in his argument with the Sadducees, says, "They which shall be

accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels" (Luke xx. 35, 36). If there were no other passage in the Bible, this would be quite sufficient to prove that the righteous are to be endowed with a life which will never end, for nothing could be more explicit than to say that they cannot "die any more." Paul asserts the same truth when he says, "The Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. iii. 20, 21). Whatever be the present nature of Jesus, the righteous are to possess a nature of the same kind. No one who believes in the Bible can for a moment doubt that he is immortal. Paul declares this, when he says, "*death hath no more dominion over him*" (Rom. vi. 9). It being the destiny of the faithful to possess bodies like unto Christ's glorious body, or as John concisely says, to "be like him" (1 John iii. 2), they must necessarily be endowed with a life which will prevent death having any more dominion over them. When, therefore, it is said that they are to have "eternal life," the word translated "eternal" must be used in the sense of unlimited duration; for the simple reason that it is, in such a connection, applied to beings whose existence is never to come to an end. On the other hand, when applied to the wicked, it is evidently used in the sense of limited duration, because the wicked are doomed inevitably to extinction of being; to be, in fact, "as though they had not been" (Obad. v. 16).

4th.—**TORMENT.** When anyone attempts to disprove the doctrine of eternal torments, some persons rashly conclude that all conscious suffering for the wicked is denied. This is a mistake. It is not a question of eternal torment or no torment at all; it is a question as to the duration of that torment. That there will be conscious suffering, both mental and physical, there can be no doubt. This is clearly indicated by the expression of Jesus, that "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xxv. 30), and by his speaking of some being beaten with "many stripes," and others with "few stripes;" language which clearly shows that there are to be degrees of suffering according to the demerits of each individual transgressor. This is a

feature in the Bible doctrine of punishment, which is seldom found in the commonly received doctrine of eternal torments. According to that doctrine, all the unrighteous, whatever be the degree of their guilt, are to be consigned to the same unending torment for the sins of a long or a short life. Not so, however, according to the teaching of Jesus. He regulates the degree of suffering in proportion to the degree of guilt. And he plainly teaches that such suffering will come to an end; for he compares the wicked to tares which are bound into bundles to be burnt (Matt. xiii. 30); to a tree which brings not forth good fruit, and is therefore hewn down, and cast into the fire (Matt. vii. 19); and says that he will "grind to powder" those on whom his vengeance falls (Matt. xxi. 44). He does not, however, as commonly supposed, teach that the suffering of the wicked commences at death. As previously stated, the words at the head of this paper are represented as being uttered at the Day of Judgment. The punishment they describe will not, therefore, be inflicted until that momentous event; which cannot take place until the Second Appearing of Jesus Christ, as shown by the words with which the passage opens:—"When the Son of Man shall come in his glory . . . then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations" (Matt. xxv. 31, 32).

It is thus seen that popular teaching in regard to the punishment of the wicked is opposed to the teaching of the Word of God, both as to the duration of the punishment, and the time of its commencement. It having been demonstrated that neither of the words "everlasting" and "punishment" convey the meaning usually attached to them, both these supposed supports to the popular theory fall to the ground; in fact, instead of this passage upholding the popular doctrine on the subject, it teaches the very reverse.

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"THE SPIRITS IN PRISON."*

THE passage in Peter's first epistle containing the above phrase is sometimes referred to in proof of the prevalent belief in the existence of "disembodied spirits." This arises from a misconception of the sense in which the words "spirits" and prison are used.

1st.—SPIRITS. That this word is not intended to signify disembodied or immaterial spirits is proved by the application made of it by the apostle John in the following injunction:—"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God" (1 John iv. 1-3). It is surely not necessary to ask if this warning was directed against the erroneous doctrines of disembodied or immaterial spirits. Should anyone hold such an absurd notion, the internal evidence of the passage would be sufficient to refute it. That evidence is to be found in the reason for which the injunction was given:—"Because many false prophets are gone out into the world." The "false prophets" to which the apostle John alludes were, of course, the false teachers who had sprung up in the early church, and who, at the time John wrote his epistle, had become a very numerous class: they professed to teach the

*(1 Pet. iii. 18-21.)

truth as it is in Jesus, but, instead of so doing, taught adulterated truth. It became necessary, therefore, to warn the simple-minded against them: this John does by the injunction to "try the spirits," or, in other words, to examine or question all who profess to teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Here, then, is an instance in which the word "spirits" is applied to living men in a flesh and blood condition. If it can be so used by John, there is nothing to prevent its being used in the same way by Peter. Solomon, in referring to beasts and men says, "They have all one breath" (Eccles. iii. 19). The word translated "breath" in this passage is precisely the same as that which is rendered "spirits" in Num. xxvii. 16, and "spirit" in other portions of the Scriptures. It is sometimes translated "wind;" in which case it frequently expresses the evanescence of human nature, as, for instance, when the Psalmist says, "He remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away and cometh not again" (Ps. lxxviii. 39). So far, therefore, from the word "spirit" necessarily meaning that which is imperishable, it may be so used as to indicate quite the reverse. It sometimes denotes the breath of life which supports all flesh, whether of men or animals: from this its meaning has been extended to include the whole man; it is in this sense that Peter uses it in the plural number in the passage under consideration. It has also been adopted in ordinary conversation; as, for instance, when persons of the same taste, pursuit, or disposition, are denominated "kindred spirits."

2nd.—PARSON. The Spirit of God, speaking through Isaiah, addresses the Saviour of men in the following words:—"I the Lord have called thee in righteousness . . . to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house" (Isa. xlii. 6, 7); "I will give thee for a covenant of the people . . . that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves" (Isa. xlix. 8, 9); the same prophet represents Jesus Christ as saying, "The Lord hath anointed me . . . to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa. lxi. 1); the prophet Zechariah prophetically describes the release of these captives in the following language:—"By the blood of thy covenant, I have

them, although their present condition is defined as being "destruction," and their abode as "the land of forgetfulness." Could the Psalmist have used more forcible language to show the utter absence of all thought, feeling, consciousness, and life in the death-state? "The dead know not anything," said one endowed with Divine wisdom—(Eccles. ix. 5): of what use, then, would it have been to preach to those incapable of receiving mental impressions? The "spirits" were not preached to while in the prison-house of death, but while under sentence of death. They were sentenced to a premature death one hundred and twenty years before the penalty was carried into execution, and during that period may be said to have been in the condemned cell, but with the chance of a reprieve if they repented of their wickedness. They did not repent and accordingly came under the operation of the penalty at the appointed time, since which event they have always been "spirits in prison."

5th.—THE DAYS OF NOAH AND THE DAYS OF CHRIST'S SECOND APPEARING.—The "spirits" to whom Noah preached are described as being "disobedient." They doubtless scoffed at Noah when he warned them of their impending doom. Instead of attending to matters pertaining to another life, they were exclusively occupied with the fleeting things of this world. So was it with the generation living in the "last days" of the Mosaic covenant. Certain Jews who had been led to believe in Jesus Christ lost their first faith, and scoffingly asked, "Where is the promise of his coming?"—(2 Peter iii. 4). The forty-second generation from Abraham was as rebellious as were the antediluvians. Therefore the apostle reminds them, by way of warning, of the fate of the disobedient "spirits" before the flood. Peter was not the first inspired preacher who had drawn a moral from the just retribution with which God visited the first great apostacy. Peter's Lord and Master had himself directed attention to the event as an illustration of things future:—"As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" "For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be" (Matt. xxiv.

37-39). This prediction, although receiving a fulfilment in the days preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, is quite in harmony with the state of the world at the present time. The great majority of mankind are almost wholly occupied with the cares of this life, and in seeking after transitory riches, instead of searching for the "pearl of great price." And so will it continue until "the Son of Man shall come in his glory." The antediluvian wicked "spirits" were punished for disobedience; and the wicked "spirits" of this generation will be punished for the same sin; for Paul testifies that "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thes. i. 7, 8). There are many such in the present day, who ridicule the idea of Christ coming again to this earth for the purpose of reigning on it. They imitate the disobedient "spirits" who scoffed at Noah when he was building the ark, by despising the predictions concerning Christ's coming, and its attendant judgments. They refuse to avail themselves of the ark of safety which is provided as a means of deliverance from the coming storm. That ark is Jesus Christ, into whose name it is necessary to be introduced by means of immersion in water:—"As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ"—(Gal. iii. 27). Just as Noah and his family were "saved by water," so, says Peter, "baptism doth also now save us." Of the large number of persons then inhabiting the earth, Peter testifies that but a "few, that is eight souls were saved." All the rest perished by water, and thereby became "spirits" in a prison which will hold them in bondage for ever. A similar unending punishment will be inflicted on the disobedient "spirits" of this generation. Only those "spirits" who, like Noah, are willing to enter the ark of safety provided for them, will be numbered among the prisoners who are to be brought out of the prison, and to be "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. viii. 21).

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The Christadelphian Shield,

OR

Papers explanatory of the passages of Scripture usually urged in support of popular theology in opposition to the doctrines believed by Christadelphians.

BY J. J. ANDREW, LONDON.

"HE THAT IS FIRST IN HIS OWN CAUSE SEEMETH JUST, BUT HIS NEIGHBOUR COMETH AND SEARCHETH HIM" (PROV. xviii. 17). "PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD" (1 THESS. v. 21).

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.*

THE above passage constitutes one of the great strongholds behind which the "orthodox" entrench themselves, in support of the immortality and immateriality of the soul, the conscious state of the dead, the instant translation at death of the righteous and the wicked to their respective places of reward and punishment, and the eternal torment of the latter. A critical examination of the passage in question, in the light of Scripture, will show that the defence is weak, and that it cannot resist the two-edged sword of the Spirit.

IS IT NOT A PARABLE? Before any person is competent to define the meaning of this passage, he must ascertain whether it is a literal narrative or a parable. If the former, there must have been a real "beggar" who actually died and was actually carried when really dead, by real agents to Abraham's literal bosom. It also would necessitate the existence of a real "rich man," who actually died, and was actually buried, and while in Hades, or the grave, lifted up his literal eyes, being actually in torment, and actually saw Abraham afar off. If, on the other hand, it be a parable, it must be interpreted accordingly. A parable teaches something which is unknown, or not on the surface, by comparing it with something which is well known; it may be defined to

* (Luke xvi. 19-31.)

be an enigmatical representation of a reality designed to convey a moral lesson. The late Archbishop Whately, in writing on this subject, with special reference to the passage under consideration, says:—"The only truth that is essential in a parable, is the truth of the moral or doctrine conveyed by it. Many accordingly of our Lord's parables are not—though many are—exactly correspondent with facts which actually occur. It is enough for the object of the parable, that it is conceivable they might take place; and that we should be able to derive instruction from considering how men would be likely to act, or how they ought to act, supposing such circumstances should actually occur." That the passage concerning the Rich Man and Lazarus really is a parable, is inferentially evident from the fact that it is part of a discourse in which it is preceded by four other parables; namely, the lost sheep, the ten pieces of silver, the prodigal son, and the rich man's steward. It will not be denied that all these are parables; and yet the Evangelist only describes the first as such. Two of them commence in a precisely similar manner to that of the Rich Man and the Beggar; for the third is introduced by saying, "A certain man had two sons" (chap. xv. 11); and the fourth, "There was a certain rich man which had a steward" (chap. xvi. 1). The person and incidents here described are evidently not real; they are supposititious cases based upon the realities of every-day life, constructed for the purpose of conveying some moral truth. This definition equally applies to the case of Dives and Lazarus. Its parabolic nature is further confirmed by the fact that it was addressed to the Pharisees, of whom it is written, "Without a parable spake he not unto them" (Matt. xiii. 34). These parables were afterwards explained privately to a few: "When they were alone he expounded all things to his disciples" (Mark iv. 34). This excited surprise in their minds, and accordingly they asked him the following question:—"Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" (Matt. xiii. 10). He answered by saying "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others in parables; that seeing THEY MIGHT NOT SEE, and hearing THEY MIGHT NOT UNDERSTAND" (Luke

viii. 10). The "others" to whom Jesus spoke in parables professed to be enlightened, but were in intense darkness, and as they loved darkness rather than light, he opened his mouth to them in "dark sayings" (Ps. lxxviii. 2), "or parables," that their blindness might lead them into that retribution which, on account of their unrighteous conduct, they so richly deserved.

For these reasons, there should be no hesitation in defining the Rich Man and Lazarus to be a parable. It must be treated on the same principle as all other parables, and be, therefore, expounded in harmony with the rest of the Scripture. It is a fundamental axiom that any interpretation of a parable, symbol, or difficult passage, which subverts truth plainly taught in other parts of the Bible, must be rejected. On this ground, the popular interpretation is inadmissible; for it is subversive of revealed truth concerning (1) the death state, (2) the resurrection, (3) the judgment, and (4) the inheritance promised to the Hebrew fathers.

1st.—THE STATE OF THE DEAD. The testimony on this point is so clear and emphatic that it is surprising that professed believers in the Bible should propound theories diametrically opposite. Referring to man in death, David says, "He returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Ps. cxlvi. 4). This passage demonstrates that at death man ceases to think, and that, consequently, he is totally unconscious in the death-state. It has been suggested that David only meant that man ceased to retain his thoughts pertaining to his life, and at death entered upon a career of thought relating to another life. This suggestion is, however, completely excluded by the following plain statement from the same source: "In death there is no remembrance of thee" (Ps. vi. 5). If man in death be destitute of all remembrance of God, it is obvious that he cannot think in any way whatever; and, as a consequence, is not conscious. To use the words of another inspired writer, "The dead know not anything" (Eccles. ix. 5). According to the popular interpretation of the parable under consideration, all the righteous and wicked, while in a state of death, are able both to think and speak. If this is the case, these passages

the inspired Psalmist as a reliable authority, it must be admitted that the dead are not now in a conscious state, and, as a consequence, that the parable of the Rich Man and the Beggar cannot possibly teach anything to the contrary.

2nd.—THE RESURRECTION. It is not strange that religious people should overlook the antagonism which exists between the doctrine of the resurrection and the theory of man's conscious existence in death, for that doctrine is generally misunderstood in our age. It is generally supposed that resurrection consists of the rising of the natural body, and its reunion with an immaterial soul. But from Genesis to Revelation, there is not a single passage to be found affirming such a tenet. When the resurrection is mentioned, it is the raising of man as a whole being, and not simply a part of him. Thus Paul, in his masterly argument on this subject, says, "If the dead rise not . . . then they *which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished*" (1 Cor. xv. 16-18). He writes of them in their entirety, and says "the dead," not "the bodies of the dead," and, on the supposition that they are not to be raised, he says they "are perished." But if the most valuable part were still in existence, this would be false. If the dead be now endowed with a life which will never end, the omission to raise their dead bodies would not interfere with that life, so as to cause them to perish, or cease to exist; and yet Paul says that if they are not raised they will perish. Consequently, resurrection is absolutely necessary to prevent any who have died from perishing for ever, and to enable them to obtain a life beyond the present. This apostolic argument sufficiently proves, even if there were no other evidence, that the parable of the Rich Man cannot possibly teach the conscious existence of the dead between death and the resurrection.

3rd.—THE JUDGMENT. It is by no means uncommon, in the present day, to teach that, when a man dies, he immediately appears before the bar of God to be judged. This idea is altogether unscriptural. Neither Jesus nor the Apostles teach that any man is judged at death. They point to a period yet future, namely—the second appearing of Christ, as the Day of Judgment. Thus Jesus himself says, "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his

"angels, and *then* he shall reward every man according to his works" (Matt. xvi. 27). The word "reward" is here used in the two-fold sense of blessing and punishing; for that was its meaning when the Bible was translated. Jesus has not yet "come in the glory of his father;" consequently, neither the good nor the bad have been judged and rewarded according to their works. The 25th chapter of Matthew contains a description of this momentous event, in which the righteous and the wicked are represented as sheep and goats brought before the Son of Man, as the Judge of quick and dead, when sitting upon the throne of his glory. The destinies of the two classes are summed up in the following words: "These (the wicked) *shall go away* into everlasting punishment, but "the righteous (shall go away) into life eternal" (verse 46). If, as some assert, the Judgment is merely for the purpose of confirming a sentence previously pronounced and executed, Jesus could not have said that at his coming the righteous and wicked "shall go away" into their respective rewards. On that supposition, it would have been more appropriate to say they shall continue in the state into which they have already entered. But the fact that their entrance upon "punishment" and "life" respectively is represented as taking place after the Second Advent, and the Judgment shows that these conditions are unknown to either class previously. It is therefore impossible that the parable in question can teach that they have been entered upon by the Rich Man and the Beggar, or by the classes which they respectively represent; for it is inadmissible that Jesus by parable taught any doctrine that would contradict his other statements. If this parable then be designed to represent the future destinies of the just and unjust, it must depict a scene subsequent to the resurrection and the judgment, when the sentence of condemnation shall have been pronounced upon those unworthy of eternal life; at which time the following prediction of Jesus will be fulfilled:—"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke xiii. 28). Here is described a state of things precisely similar to that in the parable of the Rich Man, the only difference

being that the former is depicted in narrative style, and the latter is clothed in parable. The Rich Man may be taken as the representative of those Scribes and Pharisees who will be thrust out of the promised Kingdom of God when the "King of the Jews" comes to establish it; to whom, when sitting on the Judgment seat, he will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed" (Matt. xxv. 41). The Beggar may be considered as the representative of the faithful Jews, who, with the Prophets, will then be admitted into the Kingdom of God. In their lifetime the class represented by the Rich Man received "good things," while the class represented by the Beggar received "evil things." After the Resurrection and Judgment, their positions will be reversed; the class represented by Lazarus will be "comforted," and the class represented by Dives "tormented." Then will be fulfilled the words of Jesus, that "there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last" (Luke xiii. 30). The Scribes and Pharisees were "first" in their lifetime, but, in the state beyond the resurrection, they will be "last"; whereas the disciples of Jesus, who were "last" at his appearance in humiliation, will be "first" when he appears in glory. This consummation will be the result of the former class disbelieving, and the latter class believing, the writings of Moses and the Prophets (Luke xvi. 31).

4th.—THE INHERITANCE PROMISED TO THE HEBREW FATHERS. The passages adduced under the last two heads are amply sufficient to prove that the fathers of the Jewish nation have not yet obtained possession of the inheritance promised to them. This fact will be more fully established by a glance at the nature of that inheritance. Paul says that "Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. xi. 8). A reference to the 15th chapter of Genesis shows that the land out of which Abraham was called was the land of the Chaldees, and that the land into which he came was the "land of promise," extending from the "river of Egypt" to the "river Euphrates." There is conclusive evidence, from many sources, that he never

possessed this land. It is sufficient, however, on this occasion, to quote the testimony of Paul, who states that Abraham "sojourned in the land of promise, as in a *strange country*" (Heb. xi. 9), and who, in alluding to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others, says, "These all died in faith, *not having received the promises*, but having seen *them afar off*" (verse 13). The promise that Abraham should possess the land of Canaan as an inheritance, was equal to the promise that he should obtain a future life. Abraham cannot enter into that everlasting inheritance until he obtains eternal life; for, as already shown, that eternal life will not be bestowed until the second appearing of the Lord Jesus in glory: therefore Abraham will not receive his reward until then. This excludes the theory, based upon the popular interpretation of this parable, that Abraham is at present inheriting an imaginary "land of promise" in the skies. And it also renders impossible any interpretation of the parable which represents *any other righteous man* to be in possession of his inheritance between death and the resurrection; for the inheritance promised to all the faithful is the same as that promised to Abraham; whatever he inherits, they will share in the same. Earth, not heaven, is their promised abode, as well as the place of punishment for the wicked: "The righteous shall be recompensed *in the earth*; *much more* the wicked and the *sinner*" (Prov. xi. 31). If, therefore, the popular interpretation of the parable be correct, we should actually see at the present time the righteous rejoicing in their reward and the wicked undergoing their punishment on the earth.

THE BASIS OF THE PARABLE. It having already been shown that the popular interpretation of this parable is subversive of four fundamental Scripture truths, the question naturally arises—Upon what is it based? An answer to this question is to be found in a theory or belief held by the Pharisees, which very remarkably resembles the various incidents introduced by Jesus into the Parable. That theory is given at the end of the works of Josephus, who was himself a Pharisee, in a treatise concerning Hades, which he describes as a place "wherein the souls of the righteous and the unrighteous are detained;

“a place in the world not regularly finished; a subterranean region where the light of this world does not shine . . . a place of custody for souls; in which angels are appointed as guardians to them.” Respecting the righteous “souls,” he says: “The just are guided to the right hand . . . unto a region of light, in which the just have dwelt from the beginning of the world; . . . the countenance of the *fathers* and of the just, which they see, always smiles upon them, whilst they wait for that rest and eternal new life in heaven which is to succeed this region. This place we call ‘*The Bosom of Abraham.*’ The condition of the unrighteous ‘souls’ is described thus: ‘But as to the unjust, they are dragged by force to the left hand, by the angels allotted for punishment . . . into the neighbourhood of hell itself . . . (that they may) continually hear the voice of it; . . . and not only so, but where they see the place of the *fathers* and of the just, even hereby are they punished; for a *chaos deep and large is between them*; insomuch that a just man that hath compassion upon them, cannot be admitted, nor can one that is unjust, if he were bold enough to attempt it, pass over it.’” The foregoing extracts are sufficient to show how exact a counterpart existed between the Pharisaic theory of an intermediate state and the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. In both the theory and the parable, the righteous and unrighteous are represented as going to one place; that place is divided into two compartments, and its occupants are described as being within sight and speaking distance of each other. In the former there is a “chaos deep and large” separating the two classes, and in the latter a “great gulf” for the same purpose. Angels are provided in each case to convey them to their respective localities; and in both, the receptacle of the righteous is described as “the Bosom of Abraham.” It is thus quite evident that Jesus made use of the Pharisaic theory for the purpose of constructing this parable. He did so to convey a moral lesson. His object was to reprove the Pharisees by means of the testimony of Abraham. They regarded him as their father; and because they were descended from

him, they concluded that they were necessarily right. It is true they were his children according to the flesh, but not in point of character; hence on one occasion Jesus said to them: “If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham” (John viii. 39). Though professing to believe the writings of Moses and the Prophets, they rendered them of none effect by their traditions. Jesus, wishing to reprove them for this, made use of their own theory. The advantage of this was, that it enabled him to put into Abraham’s mouth the following words: — “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.” This reproof is the great point of the parable. Its truthfulness is very forcibly illustrated in the actual conduct of the Pharisees. When Lazarus was raised from the dead, they would not accept it as a proof that Jesus was the Messiah; they tried to hide it from the people, and took counsel how they might seize both Jesus and Lazarus and put them to death. Had they believed Moses and the Prophets, they would never have acted thus. Then, too, when Jesus rose from the dead, they told falsehoods to prevent the tidings of the fact spreading, and thus influencing the people to acknowledge him as their Messiah. This was owing to their not believing Moses and the Prophets, who predicted that these things would come to pass.

It will probably be suggested, that the fact of Jesus having based this Parable on the Pharisaic theory is a proof of its truthfulness. This, however, does not follow. Jesus several times made use of language respecting the customs and beliefs of that time, without sanctioning them. For instance, on one occasion, the Pharisees accused him of casting out devils “by Beelzebub the prince of devils,” — the name of a heathen deity, the god of flies. Jesus answered them by saying, “If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?” (Matt. xii. 27); an answer which by no means proves that Jesus sanctioned the belief in such a god as Beelzebub, or that devils were cast out by invoking his name. On another occasion he spoke a parable in which he compared the Kingdom of Heaven to a certain King who commanded

one of his servants, who was his debtor for ten thousand talents, and unable to pay, "to be sold, and his wife and "children, and all that he had, and payment to be made" (Matt. xviii. 25). Such an act as this would be nothing less than slavery; but it would be unwarrantable to conclude that its introduction into this parable was a proof that Jesus sanctioned slavery. Neither does the construction by Jesus of the Parable of the Rich Man prove that he believed in the Pharisaic theory concerning Hades. That theory was undoubtedly a part of "the leaven of the "Pharisees," against which Jesus warned his disciples to "beware" (Matt. xvi. 6, 12). He could not, therefore, consistently sanction it. The Parable of the Debtor and that of the Rich Man are alike in one respect; the former rested upon a prevalent, but unrighteous custom, and the latter on a current, but erroneous belief. But even those who hold the "orthodox" belief concerning the condition and place of abode of the righteous and the wicked after death, certainly cannot consistently uphold the Pharisaic theory as embodied in this parable; for the former is irreconcilable with the latter. The latter represents the righteous and the wicked entering at death into "a "subterranean region" in which they are so close together as to be able to see and hear each other; whereas the former represents the just as at once going to a place up in the skies, and the unjust as going to hell, a place supposed to be down below the earth. These two theories are so diametrically opposed the one to the other, that they cannot both be correct. If the Pharisaic theory as embodied in the parable is right, the "orthodox" belief is undoubtedly wrong. On the other hand, if the popular belief of the present day is correct, this parable can afford no support to it.

Bearing in mind Archbishop Whately's definition of a parable, already quoted, it is not difficult to perceive that it was constructed for the purpose of showing how the representative individuals, therein introduced, would be likely to act, supposing such circumstances should actually occur. It may, in fact, be defined as a supposititious conversation between the dead, for the purpose of showing

to the living the necessity of making use of their present opportunities, in order to avoid the fate of those who, in their lifetime, have neglected their privileges. A similar supposed conversation is described in the 14th chapter of Isaiah, where "the King of Babylon" is represented as being addressed by other Kings in the following words:—"Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become "like unto us? thy pomp is brought down to the grave, "and the noise of thy viols; the worm is spread under "thee, and the worms cover thee" (verses 10, 11). The mention here made of "the grave" and "worms" clearly indicates that the state referred to is one of corruption, not incorruption; it is the depository of all that remains of man when dead, not the receptacle of immortal souls. The words of these Kings were never actually uttered by them; they were merely intended to predict the ultimate destiny of the "King of Babylon"; they were written by Isaiah at least one hundred years before Nebuchadnezzar began to reign. They are, therefore, a prophetic and figurative description of the condition to which the "King of Babylon" would be reduced. So also with the Rich Man and Lazarus; it is a prophetic, not a historical parable.

In 2 Kings xiv. 9, a thistle is represented as speaking; and in Judges ix. 8 to 15, the trees are described as going forth to "anoint a King over them," in the course of which pursuit the olive tree, the fig tree, the vine, and the bramble, give expression to their minds. If we were to form our ideas of trees from these passages, we should conclude that they had the powers of thought and speech, and thus we should be led astray. But as we are all well aware that trees do not possess any such faculties, we treat them as parables, and are thus saved from forming absurd and erroneous conclusions. On the same principle, those who take the passage about the Rich Man and Lazarus as a literal narrative are sure to fall into serious mistakes, and thereby to expose their ignorance of the Scriptural teaching concerning the state of the dead. Whereas they who are perfectly familiar with that teaching can read the Saviour's illustrative lesson in its true

light, and derive from it the benefit for which it was designed.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL. Neither soul nor spirit is mentioned in the parable from beginning to end. There is nothing in it to teach either the alleged immateriality or immortality of the soul. Even if, for the sake of argument, it be granted that it teaches the consciousness of souls after death, it would yet remain to be proved that those souls are immortal. If any conclusion at all is to be drawn from it respecting the supposed consciousness of the dead, it is, that their material bodies continue to exist; for it says that "the Beggar died, and *was carried* by the angels." On the Platonic theory, it is difficult to understand what need there is for such a statement; because immaterial spirits are said to be able to wing their flight through space by their own volition, without the aid of angels to carry them. "The Rich Man also died, and was buried, and in hell he lift "up his eyes." The word translated "hell" being *hades* means, not a place of torment, but the unseen, and is therefore appropriately used for the grave, which covers the dead out of sight. Hence the Rich Man is represented as lifting up his eyes while buried in the grave, a place to which material bodies, not immaterial souls, are consigned. We further read of the Beggar having a material "finger" and the Rich Man a material "tongue," to cool which he asked Abraham to send Lazarus with real "water": statements which suggest the question as to whether immortal souls have fingers and tongues. Another difficulty is presented in the fact that "a great gulf" was fixed between the two, which prevented either of them passing to the other. On the supposition that they were in a material bodily condition, this is intelligible, but on the theory that they were in an immaterial spirit state it is not; for in the latter case, according to the imaginary descriptions of theologians, they would have been able to cross over a "great gulf" without any difficulty. Whately, writing on this point, very appropriately says:—"The very "circumstance of the torturing *flames* implies, literally, the "presence of the *body*; and therefore cannot be literally true "of a state in which the soul is *separate* from the body."

Not only is there an absence of any evidence in support of immaterial-soulism, but there is one truth introduced which cuts at the very root of that theory. This is contained in the concluding words, put into the mouth of Abraham:—"Though one rose from the dead." Here is a feature which is generally overlooked. Why should Dives ask for one to be sent unto his brethren *from the dead*? Why should Abraham tell him that if they did not make use of what they already had, it would be perfectly useless for one to rise from the dead? How can immortal souls be said to rise from the dead? Having been liberated at death from "this mortal coil," why should they be again encumbered with a gross material body by its being raised from the dead? Had an ancient Pharisee or a modern "divine" constructed this parable, it would probably have represented Abraham as saying, "neither will they be "persuaded though an immaterial spirit be sent from the "unseen world." But as Jesus neither taught the existence of immortal souls nor immaterial spirits, he said nothing of the kind. On the contrary, he taught that resurrection was absolutely necessary to enable any dead person to act as an intellectual and moral messenger to the living or to exercise the functions of life in any way whatever, and therefore he here spoke not only in harmony with himself, but with the whole tenor of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation.

ETERNAL TORMENTS. Because of the statement that the Rich Man was "in torments" it is often concluded that the wicked are to be tormented throughout eternity. This is a most unwarrantable conclusion, for although the parable speaks of "torments" it does not describe them as eternal or unending. That the wicked are destined to endure conscious suffering, no one who understands the Bible would deny. Jesus himself says they shall endure "weeping, wailing, and "gnashing of teeth," and be beaten with many or few stripes; and Paul affirms that God will render "indignation and "wrath, tribulation, and anguish, upon every soul of man "that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile" (Rom. ii. 8-9). The question as to the duration of the suffering is quite distinct from the fact that suffering is to be endured. In this case, as in that of the immortality of the soul, the theory is first invented, and then the parable adduced in support of it. It is an illustration of the proverb "the wish is father to the thought." People wish the parable to support their belief, and, therefore, they think it does.

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE. After reading the foregoing evidence, showing what the parable does not mean, the reader will probably be inclined to ask: What then is its signification? Several attempts have been made to solve the problem, by showing the analogy existing between its various features and certain Biblical truths. Some of them are noted more for their ingenuity than their probability. It is unnecessary, therefore, to give each of them a place here.

The following is, to our mind, the most probable solution, taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case. In introducing it we would remind the reader that, in the interpretation of a parable, it is absolutely necessary that the prominent features should have their counterpart in the subject-matter it is designed to illustrate, but that it is not necessary that every incident should have its parallel; because some of them merely constitute the drapery by which the leading figures are clothed. In order to exhibit the various points of the parable, we present it in the form of a paraphrase, distinguishing the words of the parable from the explanatory sentences by printing the former in italics.

Ver. 19. *There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; representative of the Scribes and Pharisees—part of the audience addressed by Jesus Christ on the occasion (Luke xv. 2, xvi. 14)—who sat in Moses' seat "loved the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and sought greetings in the markets."* They were "covetous," serving "mammon" instead of God (Luke xvi. 13, 14), "devouring widows' houses," and being "full of extortion and excess" (Matt. xxiii. 14, 25). They were rich in "that which is highly esteemed among men," but "is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke xvi. 1, 5). They were, therefore, of that "rich" class whom Jesus Christ "sent empty away" (Luke i. 53). They had for their head the Chief Priest, whose garments were composed of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen (Exod. xxviii. 4, 5).

Vers. 20, 21. *And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus—signifying the help of God—which was laid at the rich man's gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.* The poor Jews, many of whom afterwards became the disciples of Jesus Christ, were borne down to the earth by the oppression of the Scribes and Pharisees, who, instead of being to them good shepherds were hirelings, thieves, and robbers (John x. 1, 12). Although the poor sheep were "desiring to

"be fed" with spiritual food, these "lords over God's heritage" had "taken away the key of knowledge," or the bread of life, and gave them nothing but husks to eat. But when "the good Shepherd" came, he "filled the hungry with good things" (Luke i. 53); "the poor had the Gospel "preached to them," and thus those of "low degree" who hungered and thirsted after righteousness were fed. So shamefully was the symbolic beggar treated by his ecclesiastical and social superiors, that he was full of bruises: and the only relief afforded was by the dogs, who, acting the part of the true Samaritans, *came and licked his sores.*

Ver. 22. *And it came to pass that the beggar died—the whole man, not a part of him merely—and was carried—HE, not his body merely—by the Angels into Abraham's bosom: that is, after the resurrection the angels who will accompany Jesus Christ on his return to the earth (2 Thess. i. 7) will convey the symbolic beggar into the land promised to Abraham; for all who are Christ's are heirs of the Abrahamic promise (Gal. iii. 29).*

Ver. 23. *The rich man also died and was buried, and in hell—after resurrection and condemnation at the judgment seat—he lifted up his eyes, being in torments—the many or the few stripes with which the unfaithful stewards are to be beaten (Luke xii. 47, 48).*

And the symbolic rich man, while in torment, saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; for it had been said to those whom he represented, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and you yourself thrust out" (Luke xiii. 28).

Ver. 24. *And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame—"the fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv. 41)—i.e., for the slanderer and his messengers, into which the rich man class are to be cast.*

Ver. 25. *But Abraham said, Son—a term which, together with the expression "Father Abraham," indicates that the "rich man" represents certain fleshly descendants of Abraham—remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented; thus showing that there are future rewards and punishments based upon actions in this life—a truth which the Sadducees denied.*

Ver. 26. *And besides all this, continued Abraham, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed—the material*

space and the difference of nature and destiny which will separate the righteous and the wicked after the day of judgment—so wide that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence; a statement which shows the fixedness of the respective destinies of each class, the one being the subject of God's final wrath, and the other being the recipients of a life and blessings of which they will never be deprived.

Vers. 27, 28. *Then the rich man said, I pray thee, therefore, father Abraham, that thou wouldst send Lazarus to my father's house—the house of Israel—for I have five brethren—the ten tribes—that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.*

Vers. 29, 30. *Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead—that is, of course, after resurrection they will repent; a request similar to that made by the unbelieving Scribes and Pharisees when they said, "Master, we would see a "sign from thee" (Matt. xii. 38).*

Ver. 31. *And Abraham said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead; an announcement that the Ten Tribes must manifest faith in the Old Testament Writings in order to enjoy the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant, on the principle that "without faith it is impossible to "please God" (Heb. xi. 6); it was also a rebuke to the faithless Tribes and Pharisees for making the Mosaic commandments of none effect, and disbelieving the Prophets, for "it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than one "tittle to fail" of the law and the prophets (Luke xvi. 16, 17).*

We trust that the reader will now be able to perceive what this oft-quoted parable does, and what it does not, teach; and be ready also to admit that its apparent sanction to popular theology is a religious delusion. If so, we would urge him to examine more fully the truths which have been brought under his notice in these pages, in order that he may not only obtain a knowledge of God's purposes in relation to the human race, but place himself in that position whereby he will have a prospect of being amongst the Lazarus class who are to be "comforted" when Abraham is raised from the dead, and Jesus Christ comes from heaven to punish the ancient and modern Pharisees who have disregarded Moses and the Prophets.

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BY J. J. ANDREW, LONDON.

"HE THAT IS FIRST IN HIS OWN CAUSE SERMETH JUST, BUT HIS NEIGHBOUR COMETH AND SEARCHETH HIM" (PROV. xviii. 17). "PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD" (1 THESS. v. 21).

STEPHEN'S DYING PRAYER.*

THE noble spirit of Stephen, in boldly charging his fellow countrymen with having murdered their Messiah, has been admired, for the last eighteen centuries, by all readers of the Acts of the Apostles. He was the first disciple of Jesus Christ who suffered martyrdom subsequent to the Crucifixion. Many others endured a similar fate amidst the persecutions which followed the spread of the gospel throughout the Roman Empire, and in some cases, no doubt, the martyrdom was as much unsought as in the case of Stephen. But when the early churches began to degenerate, as predicted by the Apostles, martyrdom, so far from being unsought, was eagerly coveted by many, under the erroneous impression that such a mode of death atoned for past sins. At the same time many of the professed disciples of Christ began to imbibe the Pagan theories of the immortality of the soul, and the translation of good souls, at death, to realms of bliss. Those who thus combined Apostolic doctrines with the teaching of Pagan philosophers gradually gained the ascendancy, and in the end succeeded in establishing what is now known as the Church of Rome. Things gradually grew from bad to worse, until at length the gross abuses of which this Church became full led to that great historical development known as the Reformation. The leaders and sup-

* Acts vii. 59.

porters of this movement brought upon themselves severe persecution, which in many instances ended in a violent death. Their martyrdom is evidence of their fidelity to conscience, but is no proof of their being saved; for salvation does not depend upon the mode of a man's death, but on his faith and the mode of his life.* The question to be decided, therefore, is, did these martyrs to Protestantism hold the true faith? It is true that they "protested" against some of the errors of the Church of Rome—which fact is the origin of the word "Protestant"—but this is no proof that they contended for the truth in its purity. So far from doing this they brought with them many of the false doctrines of that Church, amongst which was that of the translation to heaven at death of the alleged immortal souls of the righteous. Hence numerous martyrs, when burning at the stake, made use of Stephen's dying prayer, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," under the false notion that Stephen, in uttering this request, expected to enter into glory immediately after his decease. But that such was not his meaning will be shown by the following evidence:—

1st.—STEPHEN'S FAITH. Before being put to death, Stephen gave a summary of the history of the Jewish nation from the time of Abraham, containing statements which show that he held the same faith as the "father" of the faithful. He commences by referring to the fact that God appeared to Abraham in Mesopotamia, and told him to depart into a land which He would show him, namely, the land of Canaan; and then says: "He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet He promised that He would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child" (Acts vii. 5). Stephen here states that God promised to Abraham the land of Canaan for a possession, but that he has not yet inherited it; a statement fully borne out by the record of Abraham's life by Moses, and by the comments thereon by the Apostle Paul. In the

* "Martyr" is a word transferred from the Greek language, and simply means a witness. It does not define the nature of that to which a person bears witness. It may be applied to one who witnesses either for truth or error. Hence persons holding faiths diametrically opposite, who have suffered death on account of what they believed, are all denominated *martyrs*.

12th chapter of Genesis, Moses relates how Abraham, in accordance with the Lord's command, departed from his father's house into the land of Canaan, and how the Lord there appeared unto him and said, "*Unto thy seed will I give this land*" (Genesis xii. 7). In the 13th chapter it is recorded that on a subsequent occasion he was addressed in the following words: "Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for *I will give it unto thee*" (v. 17). Paul defines Abraham's position while in that land, when he says: "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise" (Heb. xi. 9). Thus, although Canaan was "the land of promise," it was to Abraham, while dwelling in it, "a strange country." That Abraham was only an heir, and not an actual possessor, is proved by the fact that Isaac and Jacob are said to have been "heirs with him." Furthermore, we read "These all died in faith, *not having received the promises*" (v. 13); that is, "not having received" their fulfilment. These promises were believed by Abraham; "therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 21, 22). Thus the faith for which Abraham was counted a righteous man consisted of a belief in God's promise that he should possess the land of Canaan. This was tantamount to promising him resurrection and a future life, because the promise was not fulfilled before his death. No promise was ever made to Abraham that he should go to heaven, either at death or at any other time. This is a most important point, because the faith which was counted unto Abraham for righteousness is part of the "one faith" by which alone either Jews or Gentiles in the present dispensation can be justified. Paul demonstrates this very clearly in the 4th chapter of his epistle to the Romans, where he says that the inheritance is of faith, "to the end the promise might be sure to *all the seed*; not to that only which is of the law, but to *that also which is of the faith of Abraham*" (v. 16). Hence Abraham is described as "the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, *that righteousness might be imputed unto them also*" (v. 11). If a person does not believe the promise made to Abraham that he shall possess the land of Canaan, he does not possess "the faith of Abraham," and as a consequence,

will not have righteousness imputed to him. The significance of this truth will be evident when another item in Abraham's faith is comprehended. Both Moses and Stephen declare, in the passages already quoted, that the inheritance was promised not to Abraham only, but also to his "seed." There is no room for doubt as to what is meant by the term "seed," for we have the authoritative definition of an inspired Apostle on the point: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many: but as of one, *And to thy seed, WHICH IS CHRIST*" (Gal. iii. 16). The "seed," then, promised to Abraham as a joint inheritor, is no other than Christ. Every Bible-reader knows that the Saviour of mankind has never yet possessed this inheritance. Therefore he must return from heaven to inherit it, and Abraham must be raised from the dead to share it with him. But Abraham and his seed, the Christ, are not destined to be the exclusive inheritors of the promised land. The inheritance is to be shared by the "children of God," who are described by Paul as "joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. viii. 17). Whatever, therefore, Christ is to possess, his disciples will also enjoy. Being in Christ, they are reckoned as part of the seed of Abraham, and as such are entitled to inherit the land promised to Abraham and his seed. Hence Paul says: "*If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise*" (Gal. iii. 29). Stephen being a child of God, is included in Abraham's seed, and is therefore an heir of the promise made to Abraham. His reference to that promise shows that he possessed "the faith of Abraham," which was equal to a belief in resurrection to eternal life to be enjoyed upon this earth. This is strong presumptive evidence that he did not believe in going to heaven: a thing which was never promised to any one but Jesus Christ. Stephen was probably one of those who, on the day of Pentecost, heard Peter declare that David was "both dead and buried," and that he had "not ascended into the heavens" (Acts ii. 29, 34); and as he, like the Apostles, was endowed with the Holy Spirit (Acts vi. 5, 10), he would believe and speak the same truths as did Peter. How improbable, then, to say the least, that Stephen should have expected to realise at death a blessing which he knew had not been granted to the dead King of Israel! Holding, as he did,

the apostle's doctrine, he believed that the same Jesus who was taken up into heaven would return (Acts i. 11), to sit upon the throne of David (Acts ii. 30). Stephen will then be one of those described by John: "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev. xx. 4). That this reigning will be on the earth (not in heaven) is proved by John representing the whole of the redeemed as singing: "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign *on the earth*" (Rev. v. 10).

2nd.—STEPHEN'S SPIRIT. Professors of religion have become so accustomed to regard the word "spirit," when applied to man, as necessarily meaning an immortal and immaterial entity, that they can scarcely be persuaded to think otherwise. Its primary meaning is simply that of wind, or breath, and is so used by James when he says, "The body without the spirit is dead" (Jas. ii. 26). In the margin of all reference Bibles the word "breath" is here substituted for "spirit." If it had been so rendered in the text, it would read, "The body without the breath is dead." This is the same breath which was given to man in the first instance, when God, having formed him from the dust of the ground, "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (Gen. ii. 7). And it is the same breath as that given to the rest of the animal creation, for Moses, in writing of all the fowls, cattle, beasts, creeping things, and men, which were destroyed by the flood, says: "*All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died*" (Gen. vii. 22). To prevent any dispute about man possessing a different breath from that with which the brute creation is endowed, it is only necessary to quote the following testimony:—"That which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, *they have all ONE BREATH*" (Eccles. iii. 19). The word which, in the foregoing passages, is translated "breath," is precisely the same as that which, in other parts, is rendered "spirit." If, therefore, its application to man, without any adjective to qualify it, necessarily proves that he has, or is, an immortal and immaterial entity, the same conclusions must logically follow from its application to brutes: if the argument be good in the one case it is equally good

in the other. Seeing, however, that in no case is the word "spirit" qualified by either of the words "immortal and immaterial," it is an unwarrantable assumption to say that man is endowed with an immortal and immaterial spirit. It is equally an assumption to say that Stephen expected his spirit to go to Jesus as a separate conscious entity. Jesus did receive his "spirit" in Stephen's sense of the words. His "spirit" or life returned to God in the same way that lives or "spirits of *all flesh*" (Num. xvi. 22) return to God who gave them. In many cases spirit means the disposition, but as used by Stephen it had reference to his life. The spirit or breath in man, being the means by which his life is sustained, has come to be regarded as the life itself. Hence the word which Stephen uses for "spirit" is translated "life" in Rev. xiii. 15:—"He had power to give *life* unto the image of the beast." In the margin, "breath" is substituted for "life;" so that "spirit," "breath," and "life" are used to express one and the same thing; and, in being so used, they signify the present life, which every one knows is terminable, and therefore not immortal. When Stephen said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," he not only expressed his resignation at the prospect of a violent death for having borne witness of Jesus, but he showed his entire confidence in that Jesus whom his fellow-countrymen denounced, by resigning his life into his hands; and with good reason, for he well knew that Jesus was "the resurrection and the life" (John xi. 25). As a disciple of Jesus, he believed his Master when he said, "This is the will of Him that sent me, that everyone that seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and *I will raise him up at the last day*" (John vi. 40). Jesus having made no promise to anyone of going to heaven, Stephen had no expectation of going there. His hopes were fixed on the resurrection. He looked forward to being one of those whom Christ will "raise up" (not bring down) at the last day; hoping then to see "Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the kingdom of God" (Luke xiii. 28), to share with them the possession of the land of Canaan, and reign with Christ "on the earth." Future life, he was well aware, was obtainable only through Christ, who plainly said to the Jews: "*I am come that they (my sheep) might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*" (John x. 10).

He did not, therefore, look upon himself as already in possession of that life, which would necessarily have been the case if he had possessed an immortal spirit. He understood the truth expressed by Paul, in writing to the Colossians: "*Your life is hid with Christ in God*." When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, *then shall ye also appear with him in glory*" (Col. iii. 3, 4).

3rd.—STEPHEN'S SLEEP. In describing the martyrdom of those who have suffered death at the hands of Romanist or Protestant persecutors, it is customary to accompany the record of their decease with a few high-flown sentences stating that their immortal spirits or souls have winged their flight to realms of glory above. Thus, in Foxe's Book of Martyrs, it is said of John Huss: "The flames soon put an end to his mortal life, and wafted his undying spirit, which no fire on earth could subdue, or touch, to the regions of everlasting glory." No such language as this is employed in the narrative of Stephen's martyrdom; he is not said to have had an "undying spirit," and no mention is made of anything being "wafted to the regions of everlasting glory." It is simply and concisely recorded that "*He fell asleep*." The signification of this sleep is clearly defined by Jesus when at the tomb of Lazarus. He first said: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth" (John xi. 11); but seeing that his disciples did not understand his meaning, he explained himself by saying "unto them plainly, *Lazarus is dead*" (v. 13, 14). On the basis of this authoritative definition we are fully justified in defining Stephen's sleep to be death. Had that happened to Stephen which Foxe states of John Huss, he never could have entered upon the sleep of death: he would simply have been translated from earth to heaven. In answer to this it will be said that it was only the body of Stephen that died or went to sleep. But the writer of the Acts of the Apostles does not say so; he speaks of the man Stephen as a whole: "*He fell asleep*" (or he died), and appropriately adds that "devout men carried *Stephen* (not 'his body') to his burial." Daniel writes in the same style when describing the resurrection: "*Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake: some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt*" (Dan. xii. 2); Daniel does not say that the bodies of those who are to be

saved sleep in the dust, but speaks of them *as a whole*: "Many of them that sleep in the dust." Indeed to say otherwise is to beg the very question at issue. The dust is the only abode of those who are in the sleep of death. Hence the Holy Spirit in Isaiah, in predicting their resurrection, thus addresses them: "Awake and sing, *ye that dwell in the dust*; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isaiah xxvi. 19). If popular theology be true, it would have been more appropriate to say, "Awake and sing, ye whose immortal souls dwell in heaven, but whose bodies are slumbering in the dust." On the contrary, the dead *as a whole* are said to "dwell in the dust"—not a part of them in one place, and another part in some other place; and in the dust will they remain until the present intense spiritual darkness is dissipated by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, on the resurrection morn; for the present time is the night of the world's history, during which the dead saints are asleep. They will be awakened by the "Lord both of the dead and living; and among the number will be Stephen, who will then receive 'a crown of life' for having been 'faithful unto death'" (Rev. ii. 10). Then, and not till then, will he find that life which Jesus promised to those who were willing to lose their present lives for his sake (Matt. x. 39).

If the reader desire further reading in the same direction, let him write to the address below, enclosing stamps, for any of the following works, which cannot be obtained of any bookseller:—

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"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME
UNTO ME."*

The words of Jesus above quoted have been used by many as a basis on which to construct the theory of infant salvation. Carried away probably, by their philanthropy, the upholders of this theory fail to perceive that it is entirely subversive of the very principles on which the plan of salvation is based. In explanation of their true meaning, let us consider,—

1st.—THE EFFECT OF ADAM'S FALL. When Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden, he was told that he might freely eat of every tree except one:—"Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof *thou shalt surely die*" (Gen. ii. 17). By partaking of this forbidden tree, Adam transgressed, and thereby came under the threatened condemnation, that he should "surely die." Accordingly, he was turned out of the garden, "lest he put forth his hand,

*Mark x. 14.

and take also of the tree of life, and *eat and live for ever*" (Gen. iii. 22). The sentence of death was pronounced upon him in the following words: "*Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*" (Gen. iii. 19). These quotations proved two points:—1st, That man was not originally constituted an immortal being; for he was driven out of the garden that he might not eat of the Tree of Life, and so obtain immortality; 2nd, that the penalty of Adam's transgression was death—a dissolution of his being, or a cessation of life. Having been made of the dust of the ground, he was condemned to return to the dust. But this result of Adam's transgression was by no means limited to himself: it involved all his descendants in the same fate. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;" "By one man's offence, death reigned by one;" "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation" (Rom. v. 12, 17, 18). If, therefore, this law of sin and death had been permitted to operate unchecked by Divine interposition, it would have resulted in the entire destruction of all the descendants of Adam, who would have become "as though they had not been" (Obad. 16).

2nd.—THE OBJECT OF JESUS CHRIST'S MISSION. Soon after the Fall, God gave a promise that a certain Deliverer should be raised up, styled the "seed" of "the woman." This "seed" was Jesus Christ, who defined his mission in the following words:—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever believeth in him should not perish*, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). It is thus evident that Christ's mission is not to save the whole human race; for the "everlasting life" promised through him, is only to be given to those who "believe in him." This is a condition which precludes the salvation of any who, from whatever cause, have had no opportunity of exercising faith in him; which class of course comprises infants; for it is manifestly impossible that the undeveloped mind of an infant can "believe" in God's "only begotten Son." Belief, however, is not the only condition on which salvation is promised: obedience is equally requisite. On one occasion Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"

(John xv. 13). This is precisely what Jesus did; but it is only his "friends" who can reap the benefit thereof. In the next verse he defines who they are:—"Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" (v. 14). Infants are as incapable of obedience as of belief, and consequently they cannot derive any benefit from Jesus Christ's death. To assert to the contrary is, in effect, to pervert the Saviour's mission as set forth in Paul's declaration that Jesus Christ is "*the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him*" (Heb. v. 9). On the theory of "infant salvation" this and similar passages have no meaning; for, if infants be saved, Jesus is the "author of salvation," not only to those who do, but also to others who do not, and cannot possibly, "obey him."

3rd.—THE DESTINY OF INFANTS. Having shown, by the above quotations from holy writ, that the conditions of salvation wholly preclude the salvation of infants, the question naturally arises, What will be their eternal destiny? If they do not obtain happiness for ever, will they be consigned to torment for ever? If the prevalent theory, that all the descendants of Adam are naturally immortal, were true, this must be the case. But Scriptural evidence has already been adduced which clearly proves that man is not immortal. Therefore there is no necessity for the conclusion that infants will suffer torment throughout eternity. It is only immortal-soulism, that parent of nearly all the religious follies of Christendom, which represents eternal torments to be the destiny of all the unsaved. It is, in fact, the desire to relieve infants from this imaginary and dire calamity that has given rise to the theory of their salvation; for every humane mind instantly revolts from such an idea. The Almighty is too just and merciful to condemn them to such a terrible doom.

Bearing in mind the principles already elucidated, it is not difficult to determine the future of infants. We have seen that Adam and all his descendants were condemned, in consequence of the first man's sin, to die, and that only those who believe what the Scriptures teach about Jesus Christ, and obey his commandments, will be redeemed from death. Infants cannot fulfil these conditions; therefore they belong to that class which, at death, passes for ever out of existence. It is no fault of theirs that they thus cease to live; neither

is it any loss, as far as their actual knowledge of the future is concerned; for they are in total ignorance of any life beyond the present. Rather is it their misfortune that they are born the members of a sinful race already condemned to death. Man is, in fact, born to die; and it is only by growing up to maturity and fulfilling God's requirements that he can by any possibility be rescued from death, and live for ever. The mere fact of human beings dying in infancy is a proof that they are part and parcel of a sinful race; for all disease and death result from transgression in some form or other, either on the part of the sufferers themselves or their ancestors. In a state of perfect sinlessness, such things would never occur, and in proportion to the diminution of sin, disease and death decrease. An illustration of this truth is to be found in the following words of Isaiah:—"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for *the child shall die an hundred years old*; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed" (Isa. lxx. 20). This prediction relates to a time when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. xi. 9). At that time righteousness will be the rule and sin the exception; as a consequence, disease and death will be greatly diminished, and the duration of human life will be very much prolonged, it may be, to the longevity of the patriarchs.

But not only are there general principles which enable us to determine the destiny of those dying in infancy: there is also explicit testimony on the point. Thus Job, at the commencement of his sufferings, asks the following questions:—"Why died I not from the womb? Why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?" (Job iii. 11, 12). In almost the same breath he gives his reasons for asking them:—"For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest, with kings and counsellors of the earth, which build desolate places for themselves . . . or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light" (v. 13 to 16). Job's meaning is very plain:—If he had been born, and immediately "given up the ghost," he would have been like a still-born infant. Subsequently he is, if anything, more explicit:—"Wherefore, then, hast thou brought me forth out of the

womb? *Oh that I had given up the ghost*, and no eye had seen me. *I should have been as though I had not been*; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave" (Job x. 18, 19). In expressing a wish that he had "given up the ghost," it is clear that Job supposes his having been born in a state of life; for if never possessed of life he could not have "given up the ghost." If immediately after birth life had passed away, he "*would have been as though he had not been.*" Words of a more emphatic character could scarcely be used. Carried to their logical conclusion, they necessitate, on the supposition that infants live after death, that they also live before they are born; for if Job would live after becoming as though he had not been, he must have lived *before his birth*, and if this was the case with him, it must be so with all infants:—a conclusion which the most ardent supporter of infant salvation will hardly be prepared to accept.

Such then is the merciful provision God has made for infants—to become "as though they had not been"—and not for infants only, but for all others—heathens, idiots, &c.—who, by reason of their ignorance of, or inability to comprehend, God's revealed will, are irresponsible for their actions. They all come under the same category: they are not actual transgressors, and, therefore, are not amenable to the punishment which God has threatened against such, for "Where no law is there is no transgression" (Rom. iv. 15). But, being members of a sinful race, they cannot escape the sentence passed upon that race. It is worse than useless, nay, it is mischievous, to adopt the theological jargon current in some religious circles about God's "uncovenanted mercies," and to imagine that infants are to be saved by exceptional rules, unrevealed purposes, or on principles at variance with those contained in the Scriptures. To speak of "uncovenanted mercies" as being known to any human being is, on the face of it, absurd; for even if there be such mercies, how can any one know what they are? It is, to say the least, presumptuous for any one to use such language, as though they knew the secrets of the Almighty, and were wise above what is written. Even if there be such things as uncovenanted mercies, they must be in harmony with revealed mercies, and this principle excludes the theory in question.

God has made a full revelation of His purposes with regard to various classes of mankind ; He is no respecter of persons, and therefore applies the same principles to all. He does not save some by faith and obedience, and others without these requisites ; He does not give salvation to human beings simply because they are flesh and blood, or, as some vainly suppose, "immortal souls." He offers it only to such as subject their will, thoughts, and actions, entirely to Him. Those who have no opportunity of fulfilling these conditions cannot obtain the promised blessings. If infants were saved, far better would it be were every human being to die in infancy ; they would then be certain of salvation ; whereas, by growing up to maturity, they lose that alleged certainty for uncertainty.

4th.—CHILDREN OF GOD. The object for which Jesus used the words at the head of this paper, was to show the necessity of manifesting a child-like disposition in order to obtain salvation. His disciples had just been rebuking those who brought young children to him. Being displeased at them, he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God." If the latter clause proves what the supporters of the theory under consideration affirm it does, it proves too much ; viz., that not only are infants saved, but that the Kingdom of God is composed *solely* of "little children ;" for if the Kingdom consists of such, it cannot comprise any others. This is such an absurd conclusion that no sensible person would adopt it. Absurd though it be, however, it is the necessary corollary of the theory, that in this passage Christ taught the salvation of infants. Had he said no more, there might have been some little doubt as to his meaning. But he explains himself in the following verse :—"Verily I say unto you, *Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a LITTLE CHILD*, he shall not enter therein" (Mark x. 15). The salvation of infants cannot be harmonised with this passage : "to receive the Kingdom of God," is to believe in "the gospel of the Kingdom of God" preached by Jesus (Mark i. 14) ; to "receive" it "as a little child" is to believe what God has revealed concerning it, with the humility and confidence with which "a little child" believes what its parents say. Infants cannot believe these glad

tidings ; therefore they cannot "enter therein," and as a consequence, cannot be saved ; for there is no salvation outside that Kingdom. The requisites for entrance therein are defined by Jesus, in the following words :—"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (John iii. 5). Only those can be "born of water" (or scripturally, immersed) who have believed the gospel of the kingdom ; and only those can be "born of the spirit" (or changed from a mortal to an immortal nature), who, subsequently to their birth of water, have walked worthy of their high calling. Such as are thus "born of water" are styled by Jesus "little ones which believe in me" (Matt. xviii. 6), because they have manifested a child-like disposition in believing what is revealed concerning Jesus Christ. Having done this, they have hereby become "children of the kingdom" (Matt. xiii. 38), or "children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26), and are in the same position as the twelve Apostles, whom Jesus addressed as "little children" (John xiii. 33). They are the "babes" to whom the Father has revealed His purposes (Matt. xi. 25)—or the "babes in Christ," who need to be "fed with milk" (1 Cor. iii. 1, 2). Those who never advance beyond a knowledge of the first principles of the plan of salvation are always in this infantile condition, requiring food in a very diluted form : they are "such as have need of milk and not of strong meat ; for every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness ; for he is a babe" (Heb. v. 12, 13). Growth is only possible by following Peter's injunction :—"As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter iii. 2). The "sincere milk of the word" is very scarce amid the present dearth of unadulterated spiritual food. Only those can obtain it who have believed the glad tidings concerning the Kingdom which God will establish upon the earth at the second appearing of Jesus Christ. It cannot be obtained by money, social position, or ancestry. It is offered to all men on the same terms :—"Come ye and buy, and eat ; yea, come, *buy wine and milk without money and without price*" (Isaiah lv. 1). Those terms necessitate our becoming, in the sight of God, as little children ; such as do this are introduced into His family, of which Jesus Christ is the

eldest Son. All who are members of this family have one common Father, and are therefore brethren of each other; they are brethren of Jesus Christ, or Christadelphians. In consequence of the present very imperfect condition of humanity, this family is composed of both obedient and disobedient children, variously described as good and bad fish, wheat and tares, or faithful and unfaithful stewards. But in the age to come this family will comprise only obedient children, the disobedient ones will then have been weeded out. Of all who are "born of water," only those who continue to manifest a child-like disposition to the end of their probation will be permitted to be "born of Spirit," and so become "children of the resurrection" (Luke xx. 36).

The foregoing illustrations from the utterances of Jesus and his Apostles show clearly that when Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of God being composed of children, he referred, not to the children of men according to the flesh, but children of God according to the Spirit; not to literal, but to figurative, children; not to infants who die a premature death, but to adults who have become "babes in Christ," and manifest a disposition like that of good children, in being meek, humble, confiding, and obedient, thereby entitling them to a second birth—a birth of Spirit—after the resurrection.

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"HE THAT IS FIRST IN HIS OWN CAUSE SEEMETH JUST, BUT HIS NEIGHBOUR COMETH AND SEARCHETH HIM" (Prov. xviii. 17). "PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD" (1 Thess. v. 21).

"BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED."*

The incident from which the above words are taken has always been one of great interest to New Testament readers. Paul's answer to the Philippian jailer is commonly quoted as a statement which embodies all the conditions necessary to salvation. Especially is this the case at "revival" meetings, where the phrase "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" is seldom out of the lips of the leaders, who by the aid of stentorian lungs, manage to make a transitory impression on the minds of their excited hearers. If this answer of Paul's were understood in the Scriptural sense, or as it was used by the Apostle when a prisoner at Philippi, this application of it would be perfectly correct; but, unfortunately, such is not the case, and hence a very improper use is made of it.

The conditions of salvation are so scattered in different parts of the Bible, and are couched in phraseology so varied, that it is unsafe to rely exclusively on any one passage. In order to obtain a correct knowledge of what the conditions of salvation really comprise, it is necessary to take both the general and specific teaching of the Bible

(*Acts xvi. 31.)

as a whole. Take the following passages as illustrations. Thus, in writing to the Romans (viii. 24), Paul says, "*We are saved by hope*;" to the Corinthians (1 Epis. xv. 2), "I declare unto you *the gospel by which ye are saved*;" to the Ephesians (ii. 5), "*By grace ye are saved*;" to Titus (iii. 5), that God "*saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit*;" to Timothy (1 Epis. iv. 16), "*In doing this (continuing in the doctrine) thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee*;" to the Romans (v. 1), "*Being justified by faith, we have peace with God*;" and in the same epistle (x. 13), that "*whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*." The Apostle Peter also, in writing about the children of Israel passing through the Red Sea, declared that "*Baptism doth also now save us*" (1 Pet. iii. 21); and James, after asking whether faith without works can save a man, says, "*By works a man is justified, and not by faith only*" (ii. 14, 24).

Does the reader suppose that all these phrases express so many different modes of salvation? Was one class of the early Christians saved simply by "hope," another by "the gospel," a third by "grace," a fourth by "baptism," or "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit," a fifth by "continuing in the Apostles' doctrine," a sixth by "faith," a seventh by "works," and an eighth simply by "calling upon the name of the Lord?" Such a supposition is totally inadmissible. The various phrases employed set forth different aspects of the way of salvation, each item having its proper place, and collectively they form one harmonious whole. The way of salvation is a manifestation of God's "grace," or favour; it embodies certain promises in which it is necessary to have "faith;" hence their fulfilment becomes a matter of "hope;" these promises are frequently denominated the "gospel," a belief in which must be accompanied by submission to the ordinance of "baptism," to enable a person to be "justified by faith;" he is then required to bring forth "works" in harmony with his "faith," and to "continue" in the Apostle's doctrine, so that by patient continuance in well-doing he may obtain "glory, honour, and immortality" (Rom. ii. 7). These conditions were made known by "the receiving of the Holy Spirit" on the day of Pentecost, on

which occasion repentance, baptism, and remission of sins, were preached, *for the first time*, "in the name of Jesus Christ;" hence a recognition of the things preached, and obedience thereto, was denominated by Paul, "calling upon the name of the Lord." He did not mean by this that a person would be saved by simply saying "I believe in Jesus Christ." The sense in which he used the above phrase is shown by the context; for he declares the preaching of the gospel to be the only instrumentality for producing faith: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel"—(Rom. x. 16). For anyone, therefore, to "call upon the name of the Lord, in Paul's sense, it is absolutely necessary that he believe and obey the gospel.

ISL.—TO BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST IS TO BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST. The word "Christ," which signifies "anointed," used so frequently in the New Testament, is synonymous with the Hebrew word "Messiah," which means precisely the same thing. The woman at the well of Samaria showed that she understood these two names to have the same meaning, when she said to Jesus, "I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things"—(John iv. 25). This statement embodies the belief well known to have been current among the Jews at that time,—namely, the appearance in the midst of a Great Deliverer who should release them from their enemies, and restore their nation to its former position of exaltation and power. This great personage they styled their "Messiah," the name given to him in Dan. ix. 25, and they expected that he would reign over them as a king like David and Solomon.

When Jesus, according to prophetic intimation, appeared in the midst of the Hebrew nation, he did not tell them that their expectations were devoid of all foundation and totally erroneous. On the contrary, he confirmed those very expectations, as will hereafter be shown, proclaiming the kingdom for which they were looking, and declaring himself to be its king. Only a few accepted him as their Messiah; the many rejected him and, in consequence of his claiming to fill this kingly office, they crucified him. After his resurrection, he corrected the ideas of his own disciples as to the time when he would enter upon his kingly functions. They thought

that he would exercise those functions immediately, but Jesus showed them that this would not be the case. Accordingly, after his ascension, they proclaimed him to their kinsmen as the Messiah who would at some future time reign over them. And this they did whenever they announced that Jesus was the Christ.

The first instance recorded of their following this practice occurred on the day of Pentecost, when Peter—that same Apostle who, on a former occasion, had received the blessing of Jesus for having said, "*Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God*" (Matt. xvi. 16)—stood up and charged the Jews with having wickedly "crucified and slain" Jesus of Nazareth. Nevertheless he showed that their object had been defeated by God raising him from the dead, for the purpose of sitting on David's throne—(Acts ii. 30, 31). This reference to the covenant with David, together with the miraculous signs they witnessed through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, convinced many of those present of the truth of Peter's statement that "God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ"—(v. 36). This was equivalent to saying that the crucified Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah predicted by all their prophets.

Paul, who for a time refused to believe this truth, after his conversion endeavoured to persuade the Jews to accept it:—"And straightway *he preached Christ* in the synagogues, that "he is the Son of God"—(Acts ix. 20); "And Saul increased "the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt "at Damascus, *proving that this is very Christ*"—(v. 22). When at Thessalonica "*Paul, as his manner was*, went in "unto them (the Jews), and three Sabbath days reasoned "with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that "Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the "dead; and *that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ*"—(Acts xvii. 2, 3). The expression "as his manner was" shows that it was Paul's *custom* thus to speak to the Jews. Another illustration of his "manner" is to be found in the next chapter which states that, when at Corinth, Paul "testified to the Jews that "*Jesus was the Christ*"—(Acts xviii. 5).

These testimonies are amply sufficient to show the mode of argument adopted by Paul in preaching to his kinsmen.

Had he pursued any other course, his preaching would have produced little or no effect. Had he proclaimed to them a Saviour who was not destined to be their future king, he would have failed to convince a single Jew who believed the writings of Moses and the prophets; for these writings are full of predictions respecting a promised Deliver, like unto Moses, who should be raised up from among their brethren to be their Ruler. Paul had too much regard for the prophetic writings to teach anything not in strict harmony with them. When before Agrippa, he affirmed that he taught "*none other things than those which Moses and the prophets did say should come*"—(Acts xxvi. 22), and declared that his hope was identical with that of all other Jews:—"I stand and am judged "*for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers* ; "unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving "God day and night, hope to come: for which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews"—(Acts xxvi. 6-7). When at Rome, he said to the Jews there, "*for the "hope of Israel am I bound with this chain*"—(Acts xxviii. 20).

Such was Paul's mode of preaching Jesus to the Jews. It was equivalent to announcing that Jesus would, at some future day, occupy the throne of his father David at Jerusalem, and there (not on an imaginary throne in the skies) rule as a king as literally as did David in the days of old. Such is not the manner of preaching Jesus in the present day. Perhaps it may be suggested that it is not necessary for Gentiles to believe the same things as Jews; but this is excluded by the fact that Paul preached the same truth to both Jews and Gentiles. Thus at Antioch, when the Jews rejected his message he delivered it to the Gentiles. And inasmuch as "the word of God" (Acts xiii. 46), addressed to the former comprised the covenant with David, so must "the word of the Lord" (v. 48, 49), spoken to the latter. Hence salvation is offered alike both to Jews and Gentiles; neither class can obtain this blessing, unless they believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised "seed," destined to sit on David's throne. Both in effect deny this. The Jews believe in the covenant made with David, but they deny that Jesus is the "seed"

referred to in that covenant. The Gentiles believe that Jesus is a Saviour, but deny that he will actually sit on David's throne, by affirming that his kingship consists not of regal power over the Jews restored to their own land, but of spiritual power over his own disciples, while sitting at the right hand of God; which is tantamount to a denial that Jesus is the Christ, or the Messiah of the Jews. Respecting all such, the Apostle John says, "*Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?*"—(1 John ii. 22). Of the opposite class he writes "*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God*"—(1 John v. 1). It was for the purpose of convincing men of this truth, that the same Apostle wrote his gospel:—"These are written that ye might believe that *Jesus is the Christ, and that believing ye might have life through his name*"—(John xx. 31).

2nd—TO BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST IS TO BELIEVE THE GOSPEL. Readers of the New Testament will remember the incident which led Paul to go into Macedonia, of which Philippi was a chief city. The Apostle had a vision, in which he saw a man of Macedonia, who said, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." Accordingly, says the writer of the Acts, "after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, *assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them*"—(Acts xvi. 10). This fact must be borne in mind; the object for which Paul went to Philippi was to "preach the gospel." To understand its full import, it is necessary to examine what is taught respecting the gospel in other parts of the New Testament.

Writing to the Ephesians, Paul says, "In whom (Christ) ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, *the gospel of your salvation*"—(i. 13). The church to which this was written was established by Paul during a residence of three years at Ephesus. Before taking his final farewell, he called together the elders of the church, and delivered a farewell address, in the course of which he said, "I know that ye all, among whom I have gone *preaching the kingdom of God*, shall see my face no more;" also, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God"—(Acts xx. 25, 27). From

this we learn that the gospel which Paul preached to the Ephesians was "the kingdom of God," that it was a part of "all the counsel of God," and that it was "the gospel of their salvation." Without hearing and believing the gospel, they could not have been introduced within the pale of salvation; for the same apostle says, "*The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation* to everyone that believeth"—(Rom. i. 16.) By "the gospel of Christ" he means not good news about the crucifixion of Christ, but the gospel preached by Christ. Writing to the Hebrews, he styles this gospel a "great salvation," and in effect says that if they did not believe in it they could not be saved:—"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?"—(Heb. ii. 3.) The four Evangelists give such full accounts of what Jesus said and did, that no one need be in any doubt as to "the great salvation" spoken by him during his public ministry. "Now after that John was put in prison, *Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God*"—(Mark i. 14). Thus, at the very commencement, Jesus preached precisely the same gospel as that preached by Paul at Ephesus, namely, "the kingdom of God." This was the special object for which he was sent to the Jews, as he himself states on one occasion: "*I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also; for therefore am I sent*"—(Luke iv. 43.) He associated with himself in this great work twelve chosen men called Apostles; and of these it is written, "*he sent them to preach the kingdom of God*"—(Luke ix. 2.) As evidence that they fulfilled this commission, it is recorded that "they departed and went through the towns, *preaching the gospel*"—(v. 6.) Jesus sent them to preach "the kingdom of God," and Luke describes them as preaching "the gospel;" thus affording another proof that the gospel is good news about a certain kingdom, and is not, as many persons vainly imagine, confined to matters pertaining to the crucifixion. But did not the twelve disciples preach about the cross of Christ when they preached "the gospel of the kingdom of God?" Certainly not prior to the death of Jesus. This was impossible; they themselves neither knew nor believed it, as the following testimony proves. On one occasion Jesus "took unto him

“the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets, concerning *the Son of Man*, shall be accomplished; for he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on, *and they shall scourge him, and put him to death*, and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things; *and this saying was hid from them*, neither knew they the things which were spoken”—(Luke xviii. 31 to 34.) Thus in the eighteenth chapter of Luke it is recorded that “the twelve” disciples understood none of the things spoken to them about Jesus being put to death; and yet, in the ninth chapter of Luke, which necessarily relates to a previous period in their lives, they are described as preaching the gospel! How, then, could the burden of their preaching have consisted of the Crucifixion! These facts clearly demonstrate that “the gospel” preached by the Apostles during the lifetime of Jesus had relation to something distinct from his death on the cross. And that it was not afterwards superseded by teaching concerning the crucifixion is proved by Paul’s words, already quoted, that the “great salvation” preached by Jesus was not to be neglected at the time he was writing.

The question now to be decided is: Did Paul preach “the gospel of the kingdom of God” to the Philippian jailer? The foregoing testimony should be sufficient to supply an affirmative answer to this important question; for Paul was extremely particular in the fulfilment of his apostolic mission, as shewn by his saying to the Galatians, “*Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed*” (Gal. i. 8). He did not preach one gospel at one place, and another at some other place. He would not preach “the kingdom of God” to the Ephesians, and omit to preach it to the Philippian jailer; had he done so, he would have failed in his duty to make known to the jailer “all the counsel of God,” and would have left him ignorant of the “great salvation” spoken by the Lord Jesus. There is, therefore, strong presumptive evidence that he did acquaint the jailer with “the gospel of the kingdom of God.” But there is even stronger evidence.

It is recorded that after telling the jailer to “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,” Paul and Silas “spake unto him *the word of the Lord*, and to all that were in his house” (Acts xvi. 32). True, the phrase “gospel of the kingdom of God” does not occur here; but this does not prove that the truth contained in the phrase was absent. Nothing is more common than for the inspired penmen to adopt different forms of expression when speaking of the same thing; it is so in this case. The “word of the Lord” is another term for “the gospel of the kingdom” preached by Jesus and designated by Paul, “The word of the truth of the gospel” (Col. i. 5). It is referred to by Peter in a similar manner when making known, for the first time, the way of salvation to the Gentiles:—“*The word which God sent unto the children of Israel* preaching peace by Jesus Christ; that word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judæa and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached” (Acts x. 36, 37). If it was necessary for Peter on this occasion to speak to Gentiles about “the word” preached by Jesus to the Jews, it must have been equally necessary for Paul to make the same “word” known to the Gentile jailer. It is called by Jesus “the word of the kingdom” (Matt. xiii. 19); to the twelve apostles he said, “*Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you*” (Jno. xv. 3); and to the unbelieving Jews, “*The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day*” (Jno. xii. 48). It becomes all important, therefore, for everyone who desires to share in the salvation promised through Christ, to understand, believe, and obey this “word,” as did the Philippian jailer.

3rd.—TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST IS TO BELIEVE IN THE THINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST.

After the martyrdom of Stephen, “they that were scattered abroad went everywhere *preaching the word*” (Acts viii 4); that is, “the word of the Lord,” or the gospel preached by Jesus. Among these was one Philip, of whom it is said that he “went down to the city of Samaria, *and preached Christ unto them*” (v. 5). The phrase, to “preach Christ” is such a favourite one, and so common among a certain class of religious people, that it cannot but be of great advantage to

have an instance illustrative of the manner in which it was used in Apostolic times. The chapter from which the above verse is taken furnishes this desideratum. It is recorded in v. 12, that "when they (the Samaritans) believed *Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ*, they were baptised both men and women." The manner in which "preaching Christ" is generally carried on differs in nearly every particular from the mode set forth in the above passage. It is customary, in this nineteenth century, to dwell almost exclusively on Christ's crucifixion; not so in the first century. The subject matter of Philip's preaching is summarised under two heads: 1st, The things concerning the kingdom of God; and 2nd, The things concerning the name of Jesus Christ. The details of these "things" are not here given, nor is it necessary; for they are to be found, in some aspect or other, in every book of the Bible.

Respecting the first item, it has already been shown that the kingdom of God was the gospel preached by Jesus and his Apostles before the Crucifixion; and also that the latter continued to preach it after that event. But it has not been shown of what the kingdom of God consists. This knowledge is essential before any one can believe the glad tidings concerning it; for it is all important to have neither vague nor erroneous ideas concerning the kingdom. Although it was not the custom of Jesus or his Apostles to give definitions of the phrases they used, yet their sayings are not wanting in evidence as to what they meant by the phrase "kingdom of God." On one occasion Jesus spake a parable in which he represented God as a householder, the Israelitish nation as a vineyard, the priests and rulers as the husbandmen to whom the vineyard was let out, and the prophets as the servants of the householder, who were sent to reap the fruits of it; but instead of receiving any fruit, they were stoned and killed by the husbandmen. At its conclusion, Jesus asked his hearers what ought to be done with the husbandmen; to which they replied by saying that they ought to be destroyed, and the vineyard let out to other husbandmen, who would render the fruit of it. Whereupon Jesus rejoined, "Therefore *the kingdom of God shall be taken from you*, and given "to a nation

bringing forth the fruit thereof" (Matt. xxi. 43). To whom was Jesus speaking? This is made known both at the commencement and end of his discourse; in v. 23 it is recorded that while in the temple teaching, "the chief priests and elders of the people came unto him;" and in v. 45, it is said that "when *the chief priests and Pharisees* had heard his parables, they *perceived that he spake of them*." From these verses we learn that when Jesus said "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you," he meant that it should be taken from the "chief priests," "Pharisees," and "elders of the people," and that moreover they "perceived he spake of them." This fact furnishes valuable data for ascertaining what is meant by the phrase, "the kingdom of God." At that time the land of Palestine was a province of the Roman Power, of which government Herod and Pilate were the representatives. But the Romans did not take cognizance of questions relating to Jewish law; as long as they continued peaceable, and paid their tribute-money exacted of them, the Roman authorities were satisfied; they did not attempt to interfere in ecclesiastical matters, and the guidance and supervision of the Jews in relation to religion was left to their priests. But this power was grossly misused; they cruelly oppressed the poor, taught the people mere human traditions, and substituted the commandments of men for God's laws. For this abuse of power, Jesus said they should be deprived of it, and the same power be given to others. Has such a transference yet been made? The Jews, at the destruction of their capital and temple, were scattered among the various non-Jewish nations of the earth, and the chief priests were then deprived of ecclesiastical rulership over them, whereby the first part of the prediction was fulfilled, but it has never yet been transferred to those to whom Jesus declared it should be given. This is evident at a glance, when it is known who are referred to in the promise. Jesus describes them as "a nation," without defining of whom it consists. The desired information is supplied by a statement made by him on another occasion:—"Fear not, *little flock*, for *it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*" (Luke xii. 32). This was addressed to "his disciples" generally (v. 22); hence it follows that they constitute "the nation" to whom

the kingdom of God is to be given. There is nothing incongruous in denominating them "a nation," seeing that they comprise the whole body of the redeemed, "a multitude which no man can number" (Rev. vii. 9), whom Peter says "are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (i. Pet. ii. 9). To the twelve disciples a special position in the kingdom was promised: "*I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging (or ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel*" (Luke xxii. 29, 30). This clear statement leaves no room for doubt as to the nature of the kingdom promised to the Apostles and the other disciples; it consists of rulership over the twelve tribes of Israel, the very thing which Jesus declared should be taken from the chief priests and Pharisees.

It is not surprising that with such a promise as this in their mind, the Apostles should have been so anxious for the kingdom of Israel to be re-established as to ask the following question:—"Wilt thou at this time *restore again the kingdom to Israel?*" (Acts i. 6). Jesus answered it by saying that it was not for them to know the time. He did not tell them that the kingdom would never be restored, as so-called modern "divines" teach; and therefore they did not cease to believe and teach it. As already shown, both Peter and Paul taught it in declaring that Jesus was the "seed" who should occupy David's throne. In fact, they taught this doctrine whenever they preached the kingdom of God; and they preached this in preaching the Gospel. The difference between their mode of preaching before and after the Crucifixion was, that previously they simply taught the kingdom of God without any reference to Christ's sacrificial death; whereas afterwards, they added "the things concerning the name of Jesus Christ," which comprise the facts of his death and resurrection, and the doctrines pertaining thereto. This was the course which Paul adopted when at Rome, where "he expounded and testified *the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening*"—(Acts xxviii. 23). This proclamation he continued for two whole years, "*preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the*

Lord Jesus Christ"—(v. 31). This being the manner in which Paul preached the "gospel of Christ," when at Rome, it may safely be concluded that he did the same when he preached the gospel, or "word of the Lord" anywhere else; and amongst these other places was Philippi. If it were necessary for the Romans to believe in "the kingdom of God" as well as in "those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ," it must have been equally necessary for the Philippians to believe the same testimony; among whom where the jailer and his household; and equally necessary must it be for all, in the present day, who desire to be saved, also to believe the same truth.

In the case of the jailer there is an incident which is generally overlooked; it is as follows:—he "*was baptised, he and all his straightway*"—(Acts xxvi. 33). It will be remembered that the same fact was recorded of those to whom Philip preached; after they believed what he preached "*they were baptised both men and women*." Thus the parallel between the two cases is complete, in regard both or what was believed and what was obeyed. The fact of the jailer being baptised is in itself sufficient to show that he was taught and believed "the gospel of the kingdom of God," because the ordinance of immersion was instituted only for such. Proof of this is to be found in the commission which Jesus gave to the twelve Apostles after his resurrection:—"Go ye into all the world, *and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned*"—(Mark xvi. 15, 16). After what has been already presented to the reader, it is scarcely necessary to point out that "the Gospel" is the same as the "gospel of the kingdom," or glad tidings of the restoration of the kingdom again to Israel. The apostles were to preach it, and they who heard were enjoined to believe it; after believing they were commanded to obey:—"He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." That the baptism here commanded necessitates the use of water, is shown by the record that, when Philip subjected the Ethiopian eunuch to this ordinance, *they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptised him*"

—(Acts viii. 38). And that baptism consists of immersion, and not of sprinkling, is made clear by Paul comparing the ordinance to a burial:—“*We are buried with him by baptism into death*”—(Rom. vi. 4). Just as a person by burial in the ground is covered with earth, so by baptism he is, for the time being, covered with water.

Bearing in mind the manner in which the Apostles fulfilled this commission, the statement of Jesus, when amplified in accordance therewith, would read as follows: “He that believeth the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, and is baptised in water, shall be saved.” No additions having since been made, and nothing having been taken therefrom, this decree is equally as binding now as it was in Apostolic days. Only by complying with it in its fulness can a person scripturally “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,” and “be saved.”

From the fact that the jailer is said to have washed the stripes of Paul and Silas in the same hour that he heard “the word of the Lord,” and then to have been baptised, it is sometimes supposed that the whole of these transactions took place in the twenty-fourth part of a modern day; that the instruction given to the jailer, and his conversion occupied a somewhat less space of time; and that therefore it is reasonable to expect equally instantaneous conversions in the present day. But this conclusion is based:—1st, on a pardonable assumption; 2nd, on inattention to the narrative; and 3rd, on a disregard of the exceptional circumstances attending the case. 1st. It is true that the word translated “hour” generally signifies the twenty-fourth part of a day, but it also means a season or indefinite period of time, and may comprise several hours. The probability is that it did so in this case, and that Paul and Silas were occupied with the jailer and his household most of the night. 2nd. The record does not say that all these transactions occupied only an hour; it says that the washing of stripes took place in the same hour, and then narrates the jailer’s immersion. How long the instruction in the “word of the Lord” lasted we are not told; but it is quite certain that Paul would not baptise them until they were fully enlightened in the “things concerning the kingdom of

God and the name of Jesus Christ.” 3rd. The jailer was doubtless to some extent acquainted with the teaching of Paul and Silas; for it had created so much noise during the “certain days” they had abode at Philippi, that they had been charged before the magistrates with exceedingly troubling the city” by “teaching customs not lawful for Romans to observe,” and this led to their being cast into prison. The jailer would necessarily learn the cause of their being committed into his care, and thereby his mind would be somewhat prepared. He also had the advantage of witnessing a miracle which attested the divine mission of his prisoners—namely, an earthquake which opened all the prison doors and loosed all the prisoner’s bonds without any of them escaping; and it cannot be doubted that these extraordinary events would quicken his conviction of the truth of the words spoken by Paul and Silas.

When a case analagous to this occurs, there may be some hope of persons being converted to “the gospel of the kingdom” in as short a space of time as was the Philippian jailer. But until the miraculous power of God is again manifested among men, the work of turning them from the darkness of tradition to the light of truth will always continue, as it is now the most difficult work under the sun.

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THE HOUSE OF MANY MANSIONS.*

This oft-quoted passage forms part of a consolatory address given by Jesus to his twelve disciples shortly before his crucifixion. He had just been telling them of his approaching departure, which doubtless caused them sorrow at heart; whereupon he comforted them by the announcement that in his Father's house there were many mansions, that he was going to prepare a place for them, and that when he came again he would receive them unto himself. These words are generally viewed as a promise that the Apostles should go to heaven; and hence it is concluded that heaven above is the home provided for all the faithful. The heading of the chapter, which says, "Christ comforteth his disciples with hope of heaven," it is scarcely necessary to observe, forms no part of the inspired word. If the Scriptures in other passages countenance the general belief, there might be some show of reason for adducing this one as an illustration. But as neither the Old, nor the New, Testament contains any such promise to the faithful as that of heaven-going either at death or at any other time, it is, to say the least, extremely unwise to lay such stress on it as do many who eagerly devour religious works of imagination like "Heaven our Home." In endeavouring

* John v. 2, 3.

to ascertain the exact meaning of Christ's words, it should be remembered that he who uttered them, and they who heard them, were all Jews; and that they were well acquainted with the promises contained in the writings of the Hebrew prophets, as well as with the peculiar style of language in which those promises were clothed. This passage is based entirely upon those writings, and therefore it is necessary carefully to examine their language in order to understand its real meaning.

1st.—THE FATHER'S HOUSE. Nothing is more common than for the inspired writers to denominate a community of people "a house." Thus, the seventy souls who went into Egypt to Joseph are called "the house of Jacob" (Gen. xli. 27); and the descendants of Jacob's brother, "the house of Esau" (Obad. v. 18). The same term is also applicable to the individual tribes descended from Jacob's sons; hence we read of "the house of Joseph" (Judges i. 35), "the house of Levi" (Ps. cxxxv. 20), and "the house of Aaron" (v. 19). From the fact that the whole Jewish nation has descended from Jacob, that nation is regarded as constituting his house. Hence the Psalmist, in referring to the deliverance of the Jewish nation from Egypt, writes in the following manner:—"When Israel went out of Egypt, *the house of Jacob* from a people of strange language" (Ps. cxiv. 1). Throughout the whole of their subsequent career, the same style of language is applied to them, but as Jacob's name was changed to "Israel" the terms "house of Israel" and "house of Jacob" are used interchangeably. When the Israelites were afterwards divided into two nations, the one composed of ten tribes, and the other of two, they were styled respectively "the house of Israel" and "the house of Judah" (Ezek. iv. 4, 6).

To understand the full significance of the word "house" as applied to the twelve tribes of Israel, it is necessary to bear in mind that they constituted a nation or kingdom separate and distinct from all the other nations of the earth. The throne on which their kings sat is styled "the throne of the Lord" (1 Chron. xxxix. 23), because those who sat thereon were specially appointed by Jehovah (1 Sam. viii. 22). By this means they became God's kingdom, and accordingly those tribes which remained loyal to the dynasty appointed by Jehovah are called "the kingdom of the Lord" (2

Chron. xiii. 8). They were therefore both the Lord's kingdom and the Lord's house: names which no other nation could claim. And as they were Jehovah's "son," even His "firstborn" (Exod. iv. 22), he was to them a Father, the Head of the house: "I am a Father to Israel" (Jer. xxxi. 9). They are further represented as a vineyard planted by Jehovah: The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is "*the house of Israel*" (Isa. v. 7); on which passage is no doubt based the parable of Jesus, respecting "a certain *householder* which planted a vineyard" (Matt. xxi. 33). As the "householder," Jehovah sent "His servants," the prophets, to receive from the "husbandmen" the fruits of the vineyard; but without the desired result. Therefore, He delivered the following prediction: "I will cause to cease *the kingdom of the house of Israel*" (Hos. i. 4); and, in view of its fulfilment, He said: "I have forsaken *mine house*, I have left *mine heritage*" (Jer. xii. 7). Before, however, this sentence was fully carried into effect, the Owner of the vineyard sent His Son "unto the lost sheep *of the house of Israel*" (Matt. xv. 24) to afford the husbandmen a final opportunity of reforming their conduct. But even his exhortations had little or no effect on them. Therefore, he was constrained to say, when near the close of his ministry: "Behold, *your house* is left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. xxiii. 38-39).

The intimation given by Jesus, that a time will come when "the house of Israel" will receive him with joy, is based upon explicit predictions in other parts of Holy Writ, that that "house" will be re-constituted, and that he will rule over it. Thus the angel announced at his birth that "*He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever*; and of his Kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i. 32-33); and the Spirit, speaking through the Prophet Jeremiah, says: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with *the house of Israel*, and with *the house of Judah*: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt: which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that

I will make with the *house of Israel*; after these days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and *they shall be my people*" (Jer. xxxi. 31-33). The same prophet predicts that this "new covenant" will result, not only in the return of the houses of Israel and Judah to Jehovah, but in their being re-united together as one house: "In those days *the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel*, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers" (Jer. iii. 18). When all the elements necessary to the re-constitution of the Kingdom of the house of Israel have been gathered together, the Twelve Tribes will again, as in former times, be the "kingdom," or "house" of the Deity.

This is not the only "house" God will have in the future. There will be one of a much higher character, consisting, not of mortal beings, but of immortal spirits, not the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, but the children of Abraham by faith; in short, those redeemed by God out of every kindred and tongue, on the principle of faith and obedience. They are even in their probationary state, styled "the temple (or house) of the living God" (2 Cor. vi. 16; 1 Cor. iii. 16); also "the *household of God*," which is described as "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into a *holy temple in the Lord*: in whom ye also are builded together for a *habitation of God*, through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 19-22).

Seeing that believers are thus described in their present imperfection, how much more will such language be applicable to them in their perfected state, when physically as well as mentally, habitations of God through the Spirit. All who attain to immortality will have a position in this incorruptible house, which will bear the same relation to the "kingdom of the house of Israel" that the English royal house does to the English nation; and they will realise the great honour promised by Jesus, when he said, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in *my Father's Kingdom*" [or house] (Matt. xxvi. 29).

2nd.—THE MANY MANSIONS. The "house" of Christ's Father being thus proved to be the restored Kingdom of Israel, the many mansions in that "house" or Kingdom must be the place of abode for the righteous who enter therein. The marginal rendering for "mansions" in the revised version is "abiding-places." The position to be occupied by the twelve apostles is defined by Jesus as follows:—"I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging [or ruling] the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke xxii. 29, 30). The position of the general body of the disciples, although not so minutely predicted, is, nevertheless, not left for speculation. Jesus says: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. iii. 21). To sit with Jesus on his throne, is to "reign with him" (2 Tim. ii. 12) "on the earth" (Rev. v. 10). The precise extent of ruling power which they will severally exercise will vary according to the manner in which each has used the talents entrusted to him. To one it will be said, "Have thou authority over ten cities," and to another, "Be thou also over five cities" (Luke xix. 17, 10). When these promises are fulfilled, there will be between the rulers and the ruled a great difference of nature. The latter will be mortal, possessing only natural bodies, as at present; while the former will be immortal, endowed with spiritual bodies. The immortal life of the rulers is now "hid with Christ in God:" but when he who is their "life" shall appear then shall they also appear with him in "glory" (Col. iii. 3, 4). It was to this time that Jesus referred when he said, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the *kingdom of their father*" (Mat. xiii. 43). The twelve apostles will be among this number when sitting on thrones ruling the twelve tribes of Israel, and thus will they dwell in the mansions of the Father's Kingdom, promised to them by Jesus.

3rd.—PREPARING A PLACE. In saying, "I go to prepare a place for you," it by no means follows that Jesus intended to convey the impression that the place he was about to prepare was in heaven above, which is described as "a far country" (Luke xix. 12), not a home; and, when

viewed in the light of passages already quoted, it is certain that such was not his meaning. For Jesus to have taught such a notion would have been inconsistent, not only with his own promises to the disciples, but also with the following statement he had only just made to them: "*Whither I go ye cannot come*" (John xiii. 33).

To comprehend his meaning, it is necessary to consider what are the functions Jesus now performs. Comparing him to Moses, who "was faithful in all his house," Paul says, "This man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as *he who hath builded the house* hath more honour than the house" (Heb. iii. 2, 3). Moses was for a time the head of the house of Israel after the flesh; but Jesus is the head of the house of Israel after the spirit. Hence the same inspired writer describes Christ "a son over his own house, *whose house are we* [his disciples] if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. iii. 6). Jesus Christ is the builder of this house in the sense that the salvation of all its members is based upon the work of redemption effected by him. He is now "a high priest *over the house of God*" (Heb. x. 21), and "makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. viii. 27). By this means their temporal and spiritual wants are provided for, and thus Jesus takes part in preparing a people ready to receive him at his second appearing. This is a very important element in the process of preparing a place: for "the household of God" cannot be "builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit" (Eph. ii. 22) until all the "lively stones" (1 Pet. ii. 5) have been carved, polished, and fitted for their place. The Israelitish quarry did not contain enough of the right material for extracting the requisite number of "stones" with which to erect "a spiritual house" (1 Pet. ii. 5), or "an holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. ii. 21); therefore, "He that built all things" (Heb. iii. 4) extended his operations to the Gentile quarry. These facts are portrayed by Jesus in the parable of the king's marriage feast, wherein God is represented as a king providing a marriage for His son, and sending forth His servants to invite a number of guests; but they made "light of it," maltreated the messengers, and "would not come;" whereupon the

king "destroyed" them, and "burnt up their city." He then commanded His servants to go "into the highways," and gather as many as would accept the invitation, until "the wedding feast was furnished with guests" (Matt. xxii. 1-10). Until this process is completed, it will be impossible for the virgins who have been espoused to Christ, to be "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. xxi. 2); and it will be equally useless for the bridegroom to come to his marriage.

There are also other things which it was necessary should come to pass before the preparation of the "place" could be completed; for instance, the destruction of Jerusalem and dispersion of the Jews to undergo their allotted term of punishment; the overthrow of Paganism; the development of "the mystery of iniquity" into the "man of sin," whom the Lord is to destroy at His future Advent; the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, and its division into ten kingdoms, symbolised by Daniel as the "fourth beast" with "ten horns;" the establishment of the Mohammedan Power, based upon the unity of God, to punish the idolaters of Europe, and the subsequent decline of the Turkish Empire, symbolised as the drying up of the river Euphrates; the filling up by Babylon the Great, or the Papacy, of the measure of her iniquity: the activity and supremacy of France in European politics, symbolised by "three unclean spirits like frogs" going forth out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet; the running out of the times of the Gentiles; the spread of general knowledge; the advancement of civilisation; and the revival of God's witnesses to the truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom; together with all the other events symbolically portrayed in the Apocalypse, from the departure of Jesus until his return.

It cannot be supposed that Jesus is an uninterested spectator of all these predicted events. Having, as yet, only realised a part of "the joy that was set before him," he doubtless watches with keen interest the development of his Father's purposes in human affairs which necessarily precedes the transformation of "the kingdoms of this world" into "the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ" (Rev. xi. 15). And probably, also, he takes a part in directing them by his unseen hand, in order to bring about

that crisis in which he is to appear as "a stone cut out without hands," to overthrow all the kingdoms of the world, and "set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. ii. 34, 44). In this way he is "preparing a place" for his disciples. By means of the Spirit of God, which fills all space, it is as easy for Jesus to prepare a place on earth as in heaven. distance is no obstacle to the operation of the Almighty power. In the purpose of God, His "house" or "kingdom" has been "prepared from the foundation of the world" (Matt. xxv. 34), but as a matter of fact, it is not yet in existence; nor, indeed, can it be until the promise of Jesus is fulfilled. "*I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also*" This portion of the passage is generally overlooked. People's minds are so full of ideas about "mansions in the skies," which are as imaginary as "castles in the air," that they are constantly thinking about going to Jesus, instead of his coming from his temporary sojourn in a "far country" to take up his abode here, but although it is plainly declared that he will appear on this earth a second time, nowhere in the Bible is there any intimation of his going to heaven a second time. When he does so come, it will be to receive his disciples, and give them a "house from heaven" (2 Cor. v. 2), to re-construct and reunite the desolate houses of Israel and Judah, to "reign over the house of Jacob," and so re-build his Father's fallen "house," for the purpose of manifesting the inconceivable things which "God [in his purpose] hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. ii. 9)

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"HE THAT IS FIRST IN HIS OWN CAUSE SEEMETH JUST, BUT HIS NEIGHBOUR COMETH
 AND SEARCHETH HIM" (Prov. xviii. 17) "PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT
 WHICH IS GOOD" (1 Thess. v. 21).

"CHARITY."

AMONG the many charges brought against the Christadelphians, that of want of Charity is by far the most frequent. In support thereof, their opponents rely on the words of the Apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, their impression being that the conduct of Christadelphians is, in this particular, quite contrary to the apostolic injunctions. This charge shows, on the part of those who utter it, a total disregard of the object for which the epistle was written, the persons to whom it was addressed, and the teaching of the apostle in numerous other passages of his writings.

To understand the Apostle's meaning, it is in the first place absolutely necessary to ascertain the precise import of this word "charity," as used by him on this occasion. As frequently spoken among ourselves, it signifies nothing more than liberality in alms-giving. But that this was not the sense in which the Apostle used the word, is perfectly clear, from his saying "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (v. 3). He would not, therefore, have applied the term to such men as GEORGE PEABODY, simply on

*1 Cor. xiii.

account of their great liberality to the poor. Neither did he mean that the Corinthians were to manifest "charity" to every one else, in the sense of recognising all who *professed* to be Christians, however erroneous their faith. If so, he would have acted in a manner quite contrary to his plain injunctions to others occupying the same position as the Corinthians. The Apostle was not one of those who would endorse the couplet,

" For forms of faith let senseless bigots fight ;
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

He was very particular about "forms of faith," or rather the form of the "one faith," and did not recognise the life of any to be "in the right" if it were defective on this point. And, moreover, as the "life" of a true follower of Christ requires him to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude v. 3), ignorance of which "faith" is an obvious disqualification for such contention—it is manifest that a man's "life" cannot be "in the right" unless he holds and "fights" for that "form of faith" revealed in the Scriptures. In this respect the Apostle Paul has set a good example; but though he fought earnestly for it with "the sword of the spirit," he was far from being a "senseless bigot." He exhorted Timothy to "*hold fast the FORM OF SOUND WORDS, which,*" says he, "*thou hast heard of me*" (2 Tim. i. 13), and expressed his thankfulness that the Roman Christians had "obeyed from the heart *that form of doctrine* which was delivered" them (Rom. vi. 17). He further said, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences *contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and AVOID THEM*" (ch. xvi. 17).

Paul was not one of those who declare that it was a matter of little or no importance what doctrine a man believes. As a true disciple of Jesus, who had warned the twelve to "Beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matt. xvi. 12), he imitated his Master by exhorting the early Christians to continue to hold fast the doctrines they had learned from himself and his associates, and to have no fellowship with those who taught doctrines contrary thereto. Thus, he told Titus that "a bishop *must hold fast the faithful word*

as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by *sound doctrine*, to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (ch. i. 9). The same Apostle exhorts Timothy to "*give attendance . . . to doctrine,*" and to "*take heed unto the doctrine . . . for in so doing,*" says he, "*thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee*" (1 Tim. iv. 13, 16). This is the positive side of the picture, showing the importance, nay, the absolute necessity, of attending to the Apostolic doctrine in order to be saved. In presenting the negative side, he enjoins Timothy to "*charge some [at Ephesus] that they teach no other doctrine*" (ch. i. 3), and declares that "*if any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to Godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing.*" The Apostle does not say of such as these, that if they are sincere and well-meaning, although applying a wrong "interpretation" to "the words of our Lord," they are to be treated with that "charity" which would fellowship them as true disciples, because they *profess* to "love the Lord Jesus;" no, his words are concise, emphatic, and imperative: "*FROM SUCH WITHDRAW THYSELF*" (1 Tim. vi. 3-5). The Apostle John follows in the same strain in his second epistle: "If there come any unto you, and *bring not this doctrine* [the doctrine of Christ], *receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is PARTAKER OF HIS EVIL DEEDS*" (v. 10, 11). That such injunctions as these are intended to apply to those who had perverted the true doctrine, is evident from Paul's command to the Thessalonian Christians: "*Withdraw yourselves from every BROTHER that walketh disorderly, and not after the traditions received of us*" (2 Thess. iii. 6).

There were many such "false brethren" (Gal. ii. 4) in the first century, who taught things contrary to the Apostolic "traditions." Paul predicted that false teachers would arise in the Ephesian Church: "*Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them*" (Acts xx. 30). The same state of things arose in all the Apostolic churches. These false teachers were of two kinds: "1st, Judaizing children of Abraham; 2nd, Philosophizing Greeks and Romans. The former endeavoured to enforce certain Mosaic ceremonies, such as circumcision, and of such Paul says, "*Beware of dogs, beware of evil*

workers, beware of the concision" (Phil. iii. 2). The latter, by teaching the immortality of the soul and translation at death to realms of bliss, rendered the resurrection unnecessary, thereby making void the true faith and hope concerning a future life. Of this class, doubtless, were "Hymenæus and Philetus, who, concerning truth," says Paul, "have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim. ii. 18). The Apostle John, writing at a later period, warns the beloved disciples by saying, "Believe not every spirit, but *try the spirits*, [i.e., the teachers] whether they are of God, *because many false prophets are gone out into the world*" (1 John iv. 1). Many in that day took no heed to these admonitions, and hence the influence of these "false prophets" spread rapidly and became very great. It was on this account that John was commissioned to address the epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia in which they were threatened with severe punishments unless they repented of their evil works, forsook their spiritual adultery, and ceased to believe "the doctrine of Balaam," and "the doctrine of Nicolaitanes." &c. (see Rev. ii. and iii.). These warnings appear to have produced little or no effect. The early churches rapidly grew from bad to worse, thereby fulfilling Paul's prediction that "the mystery of iniquity," which did "already work" in his day, would increase and develop into a great system of apostacy, to be destroyed at the second appearing of Jesus Christ (2 Thess. ii. 7, 8).

Christadelphians believe that what are commonly called the Churches of Christendom, whether Romanist or Protestant, constitute in the aggregate this Great Apostacy, styled "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. xvii. 5). They further believe that the teachers of these churches do precisely the same as did the false teachers eighteen hundred years ago, namely, "pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. i. 7), or preach "another gospel," and "another Jesus," and inculcate "another spirit" (2 Cor. xi. 4) than those which the Apostles preached. And if this belief be correct, these teachers come under the curse pronounced by Paul when he said, "*Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, LET HIM BE ACCURSED*" (Gal. i. 8). Christadelphians also

believe that if the Apostle Paul were now personally present, he would use precisely similar language respecting the religious teachers of this age, and would condemn them as "blind leaders of the blind." Believing these things, then, Christadelphians are compelled to act as they do in refusing to recognise as true disciples of Christ all who teach what they believe to be a spurious gospel, or false doctrines. To act otherwise would be inconsistent: it would be admitting that to be true which they believe to be false; it would convict them of being unfaithful to "the truth," and of departing from Apostolic injunction and practice. Before they can alter their conduct, they must be shown from the inspired "Word of Truth" that the doctrines they believe are false, and that those believed by their opponents are true. There is no middle position: compromise is out of the question; if the former be right, the latter are assuredly wrong; and if the latter be correct, the former are unmistakably false. "What communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. vi. 14). *Their opponents, therefore, though denying the truth of what Christadelphians believe, must admit the consistency of the latter in carrying out their belief to its logical issue.* Indeed, if their opponents were themselves consistent, they would not extend this so-called charity to others who hold a different belief from their own (Christadelphians included). But as they themselves disobey Apostolic precepts in this respect, it is no marvel that they wish others to do the same.

The Apostle Paul, in enumerating some of the characteristics of true charity, says, "Charity rejoiceth in the truth" (1 Cor. xiii. 6). This definition shows that the "charity" which he is writing about is based on "the truth," otherwise it could not "rejoice" in it. None, therefore, but those who possess "the truth" can manifest the "charity" which he inculcates. Nothing is more clear than that "the truth" is that by which men are either saved or lost; it is, in fact, another term for "the way of salvation." Thus Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, says, "God has from the beginning *chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*," and he declares that there were some who "*received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.*" Therefore (he continues) they all shall be "*damned who believe not the truth*" (2 Thess. ii. 10-13). To

the Romans he says that God will render "unto them that do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish" (Rom. ii. 8, 9).

It may seem a very harsh judgment to apply these passages to such sincere, "good," learned men, as are many of the professing "Christians" of the day. But, if true, as Christadelphians firmly believe it to be, and as they can establish by the Word of God, it is perfectly justifiable to make such an application; nay, more, it is a matter of duty to do so; otherwise they would be guilty of neglecting to comply with the Apostolic injunctions to "*earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*" (Jude v. 3), and to "*have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*" (Eph. v. 11). Moreover, it is an act of kindness on their part, to point out to their fellow-men errors of such a vital character. "Open rebuke is better than secret love; faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Prov. xxvii. 5, 6). Christadelphians believe that so-called Christians are being led blindfolded into a ditch from which there will be no escape. They therefore act the part of true friends in pointing out to such their danger, and showing them how it may be avoided. They are the better fitted for doing this, because most of them have themselves, in time past, been under the same delusion of believing they were in the straight and narrow way, when in reality they were walking in the broad way of destruction. They know from experience what it is, not only to be mentally blind, but to have their eyes opened, and to be turned from darkness to light. Having realised in their own cases this great deliverance, by which the Bible has been made so clear and intelligible as to appear like a new book, they are anxious that their fellow-men should share in the same great joy, and possess the same glorious hope of salvation. Their efforts to disabuse the minds of honest-hearted but mistaken professors of religion, is an act of love and duty on their part, involving a considerable sacrifice of time, money, and popular favour.

It is altogether wide of the mark to say that the belief of Christadelphians must be wrong, because of the fruits it produces, in disturbing the peace of existing religious organizations and family circles. Their reply to this is that the

peace which now exists in the religious world is a false peace, because based upon error. "They cry Peace, Peace, when there is no peace." No peace is worth anything unless it is based upon "the truth." There must first be "the unity of the Spirit" which "is truth," before there can be "the bond of peace" (Eph. iv. 3). "The wisdom that is from above is *FIRST pure, THEN peaceable . . . without partiality and without hypocrisy* (Jas. iii. 17). Instead of the religious warfare produced by the doctrines contended for by Christadelphians being an argument against their truthfulness, it is a strong argument in their favour; for it fulfils the words of Jesus when he said, "*I come not to send peace, but a sword*; for I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and *a man's foes shall be they of his own household*" (Matt. x. 34-36). Although styled "the Prince of Peace" it was not the mission of Jesus at his first appearing to bring peace on earth. He came to preach "the truth;" for "*grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*" (Jno. i. 17). As the result of his preaching, a few came out of darkness into light, between whom and the great majority who remained in the darkness there was created a division which produced "variance," strife, and controversy. The preaching of "the truth" has precisely the same effect now that it had eighteen centuries ago, in disturbing the false peace which lulls the world to sleep. And so it will continue until the Prince of Peace returns to the earth to dissipate the theological fogs which at present mystify the people, and introduce the cloudless day of universal religious light.

It is rather unfortunate that the word used by Paul in his admonition to the Corinthians has been rendered "charity" in the authorised version. The Revised version and other translations have substituted the word "love," which is undoubtedly the correct rendering. Out of about 250 times that the original word occurs in the New Testament, it is translated "love" about 220, and "charity" only 28 times, nine of which occur in the chapter under consideration. It is the word used by Jesus Christ when inculcating love to his Father and himself. The Apostle is enforcing an important duty, that "brethren in Christ"

should love one another. Writing to the Romans, he defines love to be "the fulfilling of the law" (ch. xiii. 10), and exhorts them to "be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love" (ch. xii. 10). To others of the same faith he writes, "By love serve one another" (Gal. v. 13), and "Let brotherly love continue" (Heb. xiii. 1). The Apostle John makes this love a test of true discipleship, saying, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, BECAUSE WE LOVE THE BRETHREN; he that loveth not his brother abideth in death (1 Jno. iii. 14); and therefore he exhorts those to whom he is writing to "love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God" (ch. iv. 7). Christadelphians, believing that they occupy a similar position to those addressed in these epistles, endeavour to carry out these exhortations by loving each other, not in word merely, but in deed and in truth. They endeavour to manifest this virtue towards all who love "the truth as it is in Jesus" in sincerity, and "walk in the truth," as it becomes disciples of him who gave up his life for his "friends." If their opponents knew and loved the truth, they would love Christadelphians, and instead of being their accusers and traducers, would manifest toward them that "charity" or love inculcated by the inspired Apostle. But, so long as they continue ignorant of "the truth," it is impossible for them to practise that "charity" or love which "rejoices in the truth."

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THE BURNING UP OF THE EARTH.*

Every now and then the credulous portion of the public is alarmed by a report that on a certain day the earth is to be burned up. Some speculative astronomer having discovered that this globe is about to come in close proximity to an enormous comet—perhaps by passing through its tail—broaches the theory that this event will be the termination of all things terrestrial. The newspapers, ever ready to make capital out of public curiosity and wonder, eagerly propagate the rumour. Among the superstitious and fearful it readily finds credence, producing a state of mind akin to that which is manifested by certain uncivilized nations at the sight of an eclipse or of other extraordinary phenomena. That the ignorant should be thus terrified is not a cause for wonder; it has been so in all ages. Jeremiah makes allusion to it in chap. x. 2:—"Learn not the way of the heathen and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them." But of the educated better things might be expected. And yet, among this class—both secular and religious—the theory of world-burning finds considerable favour. Indeed, to the countenance they give it may be traced much of the superstitious awe manifested by the unenlightened. The poets especially, from Shakespeare to hymn-writers, appear to delight in giving pictures of this globe in flames. England's great dramatic poet thus depicts the dissolution of the sphere on which we live:

*II. Pet. iii. 10—13

"Like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind."

The Tempest, Act 4, Scene 1

The belief of the religious world finds expression in its hymns, of which the following, from Wesley's collection, is a specimen:—

"We, while the stars from heaven fall,
And mountains are on mountains hurled,
Shall stand unmoved amidst them all,
And smile to see a burning world.
The earth and all the works therein,
Dissolve, by raging flames destroy'd;
While we survey the awful scene,
And mount above the fiery void."

Pictures such as this are not confined to one denomination. Similar extracts could be given from the hymns of Doddridge, Montgomery, Olivers, Cennick, and Watts. It is presumable that they are published and sung solely because they are deemed to be Scriptural. The best way, therefore, to test their truthfulness, is to examine the evidence on which they are supposed to be based.

1st.—THE EARTH, NOT HEAVEN, THE FUTURE ABODE OF THE SAINTS. To the prevalent religious theory embodied in the phrase "Heaven is our home" may be attributed in no small measure the burning up of this globe. And in this there is some amount of consistency; for if the children of God are to be translated to heaven, it is obvious that they will no longer need this earth as a place of abode. Hence they are represented as looking with composure and joy upon the globe in flames:—

"Nothing hath the just to lose,
By worlds on worlds destroy'd;
Far beneath his feet he views
With smiles the flaming void." *Wesley's Collection.*

We would suggest the advisability before endorsing the sentiment contained in this verse, of ascertaining whether God has not some higher destiny in store for the earth than that of making it into a bonfire. For even if the

disciples of John Wesley have no desire to inhabit it after this life, it is possible that God may intend it to be the abode of some other portion of the human race. The prophet Isaiah declares that "God himself formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, *he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited*"—(Isa. xlv. 18). Can it be supposed that this end has been attained by the present state of things? Did God form the earth simply to be inhabited by the race of men—for the most part wicked—who have lived since the Fall? Surely not, in view of the prophet's words that "He created it not in vain." If "formed to be inhabited," it is not unreasonable to conclude that it was destined to be the abode of beings in whom God would take delight. The "first man Adam" forfeited by transgression the "dominion" given to him. That "dominion" pertained to this earth, not to heaven. The very fact that a Redeemer styled "the last Adam" (1 Cor. xv. 45), has been provided to repair the evil effects of the first Adam's conduct, would indicate that the lost dominion is to be restored by the "last Adam" becoming the possessor of the earth. The matter is placed beyond the region of doubt by the words of Jehovah spoken through the Psalmist, to the Messiah: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts OF THE EARTH for thy possession"—(Psa. ii. 8). As the result of this promise, all the children of God (who are styled "joint-heirs with Christ"—Rom. viii. 17) have been made heirs of the earth. This truth is to be found in both Old and New Testaments. The Psalmist declares that "Those that wait upon the Lord shall INHERIT THE EARTH"—(Ps. xxxvii. 9); and Jesus says, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit THE EARTH"—(Matt. v. 5). Paul confirms these utterances by styling Abraham "the heir of the world" (Rom. iv. 13), and by writing to the Corinthians in the following manner:—"All things are yours; whether THE WORLD, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come"—(1 Cor. iii. 21, 22). And lastly, John describes the glorified redeemed as saying, "We shall reign on the EARTH"—(Rev. v. 10). From these testimonies, it is evident that the earth is the *future* inheritance of Jesus and the saints; for, as yet, none of them have enjoyed its possession; neither can they do so until the present occupiers of the soil have been dispossessed of it—an event which

cannot take place until He who is at God's right hand appears a second time. God has distinctly promised the earth, not heaven, as the inheritance of the saints. It is vain, therefore, to look for an ascension to the starry firmament. The prevalent belief in heaven-going is based upon a few passages which on the surface appear to support it, but in reality do not; for they are capable of being completely reconciled with those that teach the future abode of the saints to be on the earth; whereas it is utterly impossible in any way to reconcile with the theory of heaven-going such passages as those quoted, which emphatically teach, beyond the possibility of contradiction, that the earth is to be the habitation of the righteous.

2nd.—THE OVERFLOWING OF THE WORLD WITH WATER. The Apostle Peter prefaces the prediction on which the earth-burning theory is principally based, by a reference to the Deluge. He says, "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (2 Pet. iii. 6). This language affords a basis for understanding the disputed passage which follows. When the Apostle says that the antediluvian "world perished" he does not, of course, mean that *the earth* "that then was" ceased to be. He simply means that the flood caused the destruction of Noah's contemporaries. He then contrasts "the world that then was" with something in existence when he was writing:—"But the heavens and the earth *which are now*, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (v. 7). The literal "heavens and earth" existing in Peter's day were precisely the same as those which were in being while Noah was preparing the ark. The contrast cannot, therefore, apply to two distinct *literal* "heavens and earth" at different epochs. Hence we must look to some other interpretation for a solution. This may be found in regarding the phrase "heavens and earth" as referring to the *human constitution of things existing on earth* at the particular periods referred to. The generation contemporary with the "preacher of righteousness" was destroyed by water, but the generation of which Peter wrote was to be destroyed by fire. Thus the parallel and the contrast are complete.

3rd.—THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE OF THE BIBLE. The Apostle Peter, writing of Paul's Epistles, says-

there are in them "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable do wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction"—(2 Pet. iii. 16). The same may be affirmed, though in a less degree, of Peter's Epistles. The passage under consideration is "hard to be understood" by those who are "unlearned" in the style in which the Bible is written. As a rule, sufficient recognition is not taken of the fact that the Bible is an Eastern Book, and therefore written in the highly figurative and symbolic style pertaining to the East. It is judged too much by the modes of thought and expression prevalent in modern times, in the Western World. The consequence is that, although there is much spiritualizing of inspired language, there is a want of discernment in elucidating that which is really figurative and symbolic. In fact, the figurative is literalised and the literal is spiritualised: and thus people "wrest the Scriptures unto their own destruction."

He who studies the style of the inspired writers cannot fail to observe that the spirit of God has made use of nearly the whole of the phenomena of nature for the purpose of teaching and illustrating spiritual truths. Thus "light" and "darkness" are used for knowledge and ignorance (Isa. viii. 20; Acts xxvi. 18); "rain," for doctrine (Deut. xxxii. 2); "clouds," for multitudes of men (Jer. iv. 13; Ezek. xxxviii. 9, 16); "mountains," for kingdoms (Jer. li. 24, 25); "rivers" for an army (Isa. viii. 7); "waters," for nations (Isa. xvii. 13; Rev. vii. 1, 15); and "trees," for men (Dan. iv. 20, 22; John iv. 4); while empty words are compared to "wind" (Job vi. 26); and mankind is described as "grass" (Isa. xl. 6, 7).

From the fact that the sun and the moon were made to "rule" the day and the night (Gen. i. 16) the heavens and the luminaries they contain are used for the ruling powers among mankind; the sun is used for kings, the moon for ecclesiastical systems and the stars for princes and governors of inferior grades. These luminaries all bear the same relation to the earth that political and ecclesiastical rulers do to the rank and file of humanity. Hence the subjects, or people governed, are represented by "the earth," as in Ps. lxxvi. 8:—"The earth feared"; Ps. lxxix. 1:—"Let the earth rejoice"; Isa. xiv. 16:—"Is this the man that made the

earth to tremble?" ; and many other passages. Of the use of these figures or symbols numerous instances could be given, but a few must suffice here. The nation which sprang from Jacob is represented by the prophets as having a sun and moon of its own :—" *Her sun is gone down while it was yet day*" (Jer. xv. 9) ; "*Thy sun shall no more go down, nor thy moon withdraw itself*"—(Isa. lx. 20). From the explanations already given there will be no difficulty in understanding these passages. The setting of the Israelitish sun was the overthrow of the throne of David, and the withdrawing of the Jewish Moon the abolition of the Mosaic priesthood and ritual. In predicting the fall of the Babylonian Empire, the prophet Isaiah makes use of the following language :—" *The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.*" "*I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place*"—(Isa. xliii. 10, 13). The overthrow of Babylon is past, but there is no record of the literal sun, moon, and stars, ceasing to shine on that occasion. Yet no one will deny that the luminaries of the Babylonian world ceased to shed forth light. The rulers were dethroned and the subjects transferred to the Medo-Persian empire. Thus the symbolic heavens were shaken, and the symbolic earth was dislodged. When language such as this is applied to the Babylonian empire, it can not be unwarrantable to interpret on the same figurative similar phraseology in other passages. Then, too, Isaiah's prediction about Idumea is written in the same figurative style :—" *All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their hosts shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven; behold it shall come down upon Idumea and upon the people of my curse to judgment*"—(Isa. xxxiv. 4, 5). According to the principle of Hebrew parallelisms adopted in the prophetic Scriptures, the bathing of Jehovah's sword in heaven is here explained to mean His judgments on Idumea, Hence the rolling together of the heavens as a scroll, and the dissolution of all "the host of heaven" can have reference only to the same events. Without further quotation, these two passages are sufficient to warrant a figurative interpretation of Peter's prediction.

4th.—THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH. In commencing the chapter which contains the prediction under consideration, the Apostle Peter exhorts his brethren in Christ to "be mindful of the *worlds which were spoken before by the holy prophets*"—(v. 2). A more needful admonition could not be given. It is especially necessary to the understanding of the remaining portion of the chapter. In v. 13, after describing the abolition of the existing heavens and earth, the apostle says, "Nevertheless, we, *according to His promise*, look for new heavens and new earth, *wherein dwelleth righteousness.*" These words give rise to two observations: 1st, In order to understand what are the "new heavens and earth" for which Peter looked, we must ascertain what the promise is to which he refers; 2nd, If we can ascertain what these "new heavens and new earth" are, we shall have a clue to the understanding of the "heavens and earth" whose destruction Peter predicted.

The "promise" on which the Apostolic hopes were based is to be found in Isa. lxi. 17 :—"Behold I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Having given the promise the Spirit in Isaiah proceeds to the next verse to explain its meaning :—"But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold I CREATE JERUSALEM A REJOICING AND HER PEOPLE A JOY" (v. 18). Seeing that the "new heavens and earth" here predicted by Isaiah are to consist of a state of things in and around Jerusalem, we have no difficulty in understanding that when Jehovah creates them, He will not need to turn this globe and the whole astronomical system into a huge furnace. Were this to be the case, neither Jerusalem nor her people would be left to be created "a rejoicing" and "a joy."

Respecting the future of the Jewish people there can be no doubt. The prophets have predicted that they are to be gathered from all parts of the earth (Isa. xliiii. 5, 6; Jer. xxiii. 7, 8); that they shall be reconstituted a kingdom (Ezek. xxxvii. 25); that their throne, on which David sat shall be re-established (Jer. xxiii. 5; Ps. lxxxix. 28, 29); that their ancient capital shall again be "the throne of the Lord" and become the metropolis of the whole earth, to which all nations will flock—(Jer. iii. 17; Zech. xiv. 16). In describing this desirable state of things through the

mouth of the prophet Ezekiel, Jehovah says of the children of Israel, "So shall they be my people, and I will be their God" (Ezek. xxxvii. 23), and in addressing His Son Jesus through the mouth of Isaiah, he said: I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, *that I may plant the heavens and lay the foundations of the earth, and say UNTO ZION Thou art my people*—(Isa. li. 16). Of this time it has been said, "His (Israel's) heaven shall drop down dew"—(Deut. xxxiii. 28).

It will thus be seen that the "new heaven and the new earth" have special relation to the future of the Jewish nation. To carry out the figure, there must be a symbolic sun. This is provided for in "the Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. iv. 2); a name which is given to Jesus of Nazareth because he is "the Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 6) who is to sit on the throne of David (Luke i. 32) as the future "king over all the earth" (Zec. xiv. 9; Rev. xi. 15) and be the only source of life-giving spiritual light for all the human race. The prophet Isaiah, addressing his countrymen prospectively, thus speaks of the symbolic sun:—"Arise, shine: for *thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall rise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee*" (Isa. lx. 1-2). It cannot be denied that spiritual darkness now covers the greater part of the earth. Consequently, the "light" of Israel, or "sun" of the "new heavens" has not yet arisen: and the day which he is to "rule" has not yet commenced.

When the "Sun of Righteousness" thus rises to dissipate the darkness now covering the earth, he will be accompanied by other symbolic satellites, of whom it is said, they shall "shine forth as the sun is the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. xiii. 43); "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever"—(Dan. xii. 3). By their instrumentality "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"—(Hab. ii. 14). So completely different will be the rules and people of the earth from what they are now, that it may then truly be said there exist "new heavens and a new earth *wherein dwelleth righteousness.*" This feature evidently did not characterise the "heavens" and

philosophy, or religion. The Spirit of God applies it to the first principles of the Mosaic Covenant:—"We are in bondage under *the elements of the world*"; "How turn ye again to the weak and *beggarly elements?*" (Gal. iv. 3, 9); "If ye be dead with Christ, from the *rudiments* (marg. '*elements*') *of the world*, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?"—(Col. ii. 20). These words were addressed to Jews who professed to have renounced the abrogated law of Moses, and to have embraced "the truth as it is in Jesus"; if such language could be used to describe their former condition, of course it would be as appropriately applied to the *then* condition of Jews who had not renounced the law of Moses; and inasmuch as the greater part of the Jews were still in this position when Peter was writing, the "elements" of that "world" were still in existence. For these things "the wrath of God" was about to come on "the children of disobedience" (Col. iii. 6) to the uttermost.

The following prediction of this event illustrates the figurative language under consideration:—"Therefore thus saith the Lord God: *Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore, I will gather you in the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it, so will I gather you in mine anger, and in my fury, and I will have you there and melt you. Yea, I will gather you and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof.* As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you"—(Ezek. xxii. 19-22). Thus the disobedient children of Israel are represented as base metals, and their punishment compared to the subjection of silver, brass, iron, lead, and tin, to intense heat. On this account we see the appropriateness of Peter's language when he says, "The elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." At the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, only the base portion of the nation was gathered in the city. The disciples of Christ, in accordance with his injunction (Matt. xxiv. 15-21), fled to the city of Pella, in the mountains, at the approach of the predicted "abomination of desolation,"

leaving the "dross" behind to be melted in the furnace of a fire, which, in the language of Jeremiah, was "not quenched"—(Jer. xvii. 27).

Having shown from the use of figurative language in the Bible, that the terms "heavens" and "earth" often signify constitutions of human society, that the destruction of the world by the flood simply affected the beings living on the earth, that the "new heavens and new earth" are a newly organized state of human affairs, that the destruction of the "old heavens and earth" by fire was the levelling of Jerusalem and its temple to the ground, that the earth is to be the abode of the glorified righteous, and that therefore it cannot be destined to be burnt up—it remains only to point out the importance and significance of this Scriptural truth.

The "kingdom of God," in which the righteous are to "shine as the sun," is to supersede and occupy the place of the present "kingdoms of the world"—(Rev. xi. 15). Of this "kingdom" it is recorded that it "shall never be destroyed" (Dan. ii. 44), that it "shall not pass away" (Dan. vii. 14), and that it shall have "no end" (Luke i. 33); and its throne is to continue as long as the sun—(Ps. lxxxix. 34). When once established it will be as enduring as Jehovah himself. Undoubtedly it will undergo a change, as predicted by Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 24, at the "end" of one thousand years, when sin and death will be abolished; but this change, so far from weakening or terminating it, will be the occasion for a large augmentation of its incorruptible element. All those who have conducted themselves in a way pleasing to God during the thousand years' reign, will then be immortalized, and at the same time all the opposite class will be destroyed. The "kingdom" will thereby cease to be composed of mortal subject and immortal rulers, and will be transformed into a Divine constitution comprising incorruptible spirit-beings only. All creatures liable to sin, or subject to death, having been effaced from the earth, "the last enemy" will have been "destroyed" (1 Cor. xv.), there will be "no more curse" (Rev. xxii. 3), and this globe will be the everlasting inheritance of all who will have been gathered, during a period of seven thousand years, from the Adamic race, and immortalized.

The Christadelphian Shield,

OR

Papers explanatory of the passages of Scripture usually urged in support of popular theology, in opposition to the doctrines believed by Christadelphians.

BY J. J. ANDREW, LONDON.

"HE THAT IS FIRST IN HIS OWN CAUSE SEEMETH JUST, BUT HIS NEIGHBOUR COMETH AND SEARCHETH HIM" (PROV. XXIII. 17). "PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD" (1 THESS. V. 21).

"NOT ABLE TO KILL THE SOUL."*

AMONG the few passages in the Gospel supposed to support the popular belief in the existence of an immaterial, immortal soul, distinct from the body, the verse from which the above words are taken occupies a prominent place. Misapprehension as to the use of the word "soul" is the sole cause of its being quoted for this purpose; it will be well, therefore, to consider its Biblical meaning in order to understand the warning of Jesus Christ; for no one who has any respect for the Divine sayings of Him who "spake as never man spake" can consistently refuse to weigh carefully the leading words of each sentence in order to comprehend their exact significance.

1st.—THE MEANING OF SOUL. In creating the first member of our race, "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7). Man is, thus, a "a living soul." Moses does not say that an immortal, immaterial soul was put into a framework of dust, in order to animate it; but that "the breath of life" was infused into a "man" made of dust, and the result was that the earth-formed man "became a living soul"; not an everlasting, or immortal soul, but a soul possessed of life. As long as "the breath of life" remained in man he continued to be "a

*Matt. x. 28.

"living soul," but when that vital element left him, he became a dead soul. The proof that a dead man is a dead soul is to be found in the following, among other, passages:—"There were certain men who were defiled by the dead *body* of a man" (Num. ix. 6); "If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead *body*" (Num. ix. 10); "Neither shall he go in to any dead *body*" (Lev. xxi. 11); "If one that is unclean by a dead *body* touch any of these" (Hag. ii. 13). In each of these verses the word for "body" is the same as that rendered "soul" in Gen. ii. 7: from which fact it is clear that "soul" in Hebrew does not necessarily mean an entity capable of existing apart from the body, and that it does not define something by nature immortal; otherwise it could not be used for a body devoid of life, nor would it be necessary to qualify it with the adjective "living," in order to designate a soul in a living condition. That the Apostle Paul understood the above use of the word translated "soul" is evident from 1 Cor. xv. 44, 45, wherein he uses the phrases "natural body" and "living soul" interchangeably. To prove the existence of such a thing as a "natural body" he quotes the statement, "The first man Adam was made a *living soul*," thereby showing to a demonstration that the two things are synonymous—that a flesh and blood body is a soul.

This conclusion will naturally give rise to the question, To what does the term "soul" apply when used to designate something apparently distinct from the body? To answer this question it is necessary to state that *Nephesh*, the Hebrew word translated "soul," has no absolute meaning; the sense in which it is used must in each case be determined by the context. This will be at once apparent when it is known that it is rendered by such widely different words as "soul," "person," "living creature," "mind," "appetite," "desire," "heart," "life," &c. The explanation is simply this: *Nephesh* is derived from a verb meaning to breathe; hence it is used primarily for all creatures which live by breathing, whether man, birds, beasts, fishes, or creeping things,—a fact in itself sufficient to show that it does not necessarily contain the idea of immortality; to be used in this sense it must be qualified by some other word. Of the 700 times in which it is to be found in the Old Testa-

ment, about 150 of them are translated "life" or "living"; the following will serve as examples:—The angel said to Lot, "Escape for thy *life*; look not behind thee" (Gen. xix. 17); "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (Jacob)—Gen. xxxii. 30; Jehovah said to Moses, "Go return into Egypt; for all the men are dead which sought thy *life*" (Exod. iv. 19); "Deliver our *lives* from death" (Jos. ii. 13); "All that a man hath will he give for his life" (Job. ii. 4). The reason why the translators of the Bible rendered *Nephesh* by *life* in these passages is obvious: they all have reference to the vital element which sustains man in being, and not to something of an immortal nature capable of existing apart from the body. This will more readily be seen by substituting the phrase "immortal soul" for "life." If this were done we should have the anomaly of immortal souls being preserved from human violence, and delivered from death. On the theory that souls are incorruptible they ought not to be liable to either of these calamities.

Turning to the New Testament we find that the Greek word *psuche*, translated "soul," contains the same meaning as the Hebrew word *Nephesh*, viz., *life*. The chapter from which the words at the head of this paper are taken, contains an illustration of this. In Matt. x. 39, Jesus is recorded to have said, "He that findeth his *life* shall lose it; and he that loseth his *life* for my sake shall find it;" the word "life" here represents precisely the same Greek word as "soul" does in v. 28. If, therefore, it can have the former meaning in the one case, it is surely reasonable to conclude that the meaning is not very different in the other. A moment's reflection will show why the translators rendered it "life" in v. 39. To have given "soul" would, according to popular ideas of it, have presented a strange paradox. On the supposition that man is an "immortal soul" it is impossible to talk about a man finding his "soul" and then losing it; or losing his "immortal soul" for Christ's sake, and then finding it; for if, as is said, *the soul is the man* and *neither can die* he can no more be said to lose and find his soul than he can be said during his present life to lose and find his body. The passage in hand would be more in harmony with

the common theory were it to speak about a man losing and finding his *body*; losing it now for Christ's sake and finding it glorified at the resurrection. When the word is viewed as meaning "life" the sense is apparent. And as the two verses (*v.* 28 and 39) are intimately connected with each other—having reference to the same subject—is it not clear that the import of the word in question is identical in each? On these grounds the candid reader will be prepared to admit the following to be a more correct, or consistent, rendering:—"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill (or destroy) the life; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both body and life in hell."

2nd.—THE SOUL WHICH MEN CANNOT KILL. With the foregoing explanation before us the question arises, What "life" is it that men cannot take? This is answered by Paul in addressing the sons of God at Colosse:—*Your LIFE "is hid with Christ in God"* (Col. iii. 3). The same writer in penning a letter to Timothy styles it "*the promise of LIFE "which is IN CHRIST JESUS"*" (2 Tim. i. 1). The Apostle John on the same subject says, "This is the record, that God has given to us *eternal life, and this LIFE is in his Son*" (1 John v. 11). From these testimonies we learn there is a life promised to believers, which they do not now possess. Hence they are called "*HEIRS according to the hope of eternal life*" (1it. iii. 7); a term which proves that they are not now actually *possessors* of that life. "*When Christ "who is OUR LIFE shall appear, THEN shall we also appear "with him in glory"*" (Col. iii. 4). That "life" is now "hid with Christ," or "in Jesus Christ." It is, therefore, out of all human reach. It is the "hidden manna" (Rev. ii. 17) promised to those who overcome this world by faith; and it is synonymous with the "treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matt. vi. 20); a "treasure" which is not to be enjoyed by the saints in heaven, but is to be brought to them from heaven. It will only be given to those whose "names are written in heaven," and "have not been blotted out of the book of life."

Among the names that have been thus enrolled, there are two classes:—1st. Those who have feared "them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" or destroy

the "life hid with Christ;" and 2nd. Those who have rather feared Him who is able to take away both the present life, and that which is to come, by destruction in "hell." The former, having found or preserved their present life at the expense of the truth, will lose the life to come, whereas the latter, having lost their lives for Christ's sake will receive Eternal Life at the Day of Judgment. Among this class may be mentioned Stephen, several of the Apostles, and some disciples who lived subsequent to the apostolic age. Of the last it is recorded that "they loved not their *lives* unto death" (Rev. xii. 11). If "souls" had been given instead of "lives,"—a substitution quite allowable, seeing that the original word is the same—it would have represented these Christian martyrs as "loving not their *souls* unto death"; a form of expression utterly irreconcilable with the theory that "souls" are necessarily *deathless*, but in perfect harmony with the teaching of the Bible, that the "souls" of even the righteous dead are now under the power of death and the grave and will so remain until the resurrection:—"God will *redeem* my soul from the *power of the grave*," says the Psalmist—(xlix. 15); and in a prophetic representation of its fulfilment he adds, "Thou hast *BROUGHT UP* my *soul* from the *grave*" (xxx. 3); "Thou hast *delivered* my *soul* from *DEATH*" (cxvi. 8). All descendants of Adam who are to be raised from the dead will then have restored to them the same kind of "soul" or life which they possessed before death; and after judgment the righteous portion will receive the "life" now "hid with Christ," which is the equivalent of the "soul" men cannot kill. Among the rejected will be many who were once "heirs" of that life, but who, through fearing man more than God, lost the title to this Divine boon.

3rd.—THE DESTRUCTION OF BODY AND SOUL BY GOD. The statement of Jesus Christ that his Father "is able to destroy both body and soul," does not of itself prove that the "soul" is either mortal or immortal. In either case, as a question of ability, God could destroy it; because whatever He has created He can put out of existence. The question, however, is not one of absolute power, but of intention and declaration. Has Jehovah, or has He not, announced to mankind that wicked souls shall be destroyed? If the

words "die" and "death" were properly understood, the following inspired utterances would decisively settle the question, "*The SOUL that sinneth it shall DIE*" (Ezek. xviii. 4). But an attempt is made to evade the force of these words by saying that it is not physical, or literal, but spiritual, death which is intended. On the hypothesis that the "soul" is deathless, this explanation is a logical necessity. All that we ask of its advocates is, that they be consistent, and apply the same rule in every other case. It is very plausible to say that the death of wicked "souls" is spiritual, or a state of separation from God; but what about the death of good "souls"? Can that be defined in the same manner? From passages which have already been adduced from the Psalms it will have been seen that the "souls" of *righteous* ones are to be delivered by resurrection from the power of death and the grave. It will not surely be contended that the death in this case is spiritual; and yet to be consistent, it ought to be done. If the death of wicked "souls" be spiritual, why is not the death of righteous "souls" spiritual also? And if the death of obedient "souls" be physical, what objection can there be to defining the death of disobedient ones by the same term? Whichever be preferred, and consistently applied to both classes of souls, the believer in the deathlessness of the soul is involved in a dilemma; by the adoption of the one he represents the righteous as being separate from God; and by the other, he makes the punishment of the wicked literal death, thus in effect affirming that deathless souls literally die.

The extinction of those whose wisdom is not based upon the "fear of the Lord" is so emphatically taught in the Bible that there ought to be no doubt on the point. Thus the Psalmist declares that "transgressors shall be *des'troyed*" (Ps. xxxvii. 38); "All the wicked will He (God) *destroy*" (Ps. cxv. 20); and the Apostle to the Gentiles, following in the same strain, says that they "shall be *punished with everlasting DESTRUCTION* from the presence of the Lord" (2 Thess. i. 9).

A reference to the meaning of the original words of Jesus will amply confirm these Old Testament utterances. The meaning of the Greek word translated "kill" is "to kill, "slay, to condemn to death, to put to death"; and the

primary meaning of the word rendered "destroy," is "to destroy utterly, kill, slay, to demolish, to lay waste" (Liddell and Scott's Lexicon). Numerous examples could be given from the New Testament to show that the inspired writers used those words to indicate absolute extinction, not eternal existence; but the lexicographical definition just given must suffice here. It is deserving of notice that these two words are used by Jesus synonymously; both words are applied to the "body," which all men admit is corruptible. Therefore the *destruction* of the body by God is equivalent to the *killing* of the body by man. It is admitted that the latter results in its absolute extinction; and it will scarcely be contended that the end in the former case is appreciably different. These premises necessarily lead to the conclusion that the destruction of the soul by God is as effectual as the destruction of the body by man, or his Creator; for it cannot logically be contended that "to destroy the soul" is to keep it in existence, if "to destroy the body" is to put the "body" out of existence. The use of the same verb to each shows that the action to which they are subject is identical in both cases. If, after "soul and body" have been "destroyed" the former lives for ever, it ought consistently to be admitted that the latter enjoys the same period of existence; but if, on the other hand, it be contended, as it is, that the "body" is deprived of all life, the inevitable conclusion is, according to the correct use of language, that the "soul" becomes at the same time equally defunct; and that consequently no soul doomed to destruction is destined to live for ever.

4th.—THE HELL IN WHICH BOTH BODY AND SOUL ARE TO BE DESTROYED—The word here translated "hell" is *Gehenna*, a compound of two Greek words signifying the earth, and Hinnom, and has reference to the Valley of Hinnom, which lay to the south-east of Jerusalem. Into this place the carcasses of animals and human beings were thrown, together with all manner of rubbish; and fires were always kept burning to consume this mass of corruption, and prevent disease breeding and spreading. It constituted, therefore, an appropriate illustration of the future consumption of those who fear not God. To the Jews Christ's allusion would have great force. Although the fires were kept con-

stantly burning, the material on which it operated did not exist continuously; it was utterly consumed. Its object was not preservation, but corruption; not the heating of incorruptible materials, but the entire destruction of perishable things. As a representation, therefore, of future punishment it could not convey the idea of endless burning.

In predicting the time when "all flesh" shall come up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord, the prophet Isaiah says, "And they shall go forth, and look upon *the carcases of men that have transgressed against me*: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh" (Isaiah lxvi. 24). We learn from this passage that the fires of the "hell" in which Jehovah will "destroy both body and soul" have not yet begun to burn; for "all flesh" do not now go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord as they will do, "when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously" (Isa. xxiv. 23). At that time the "Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth" (Isa. xxiv. 21). Thus the place where the wicked are to be punished is not subterraneous but "upon the earth." This is confirmed by Solomon, who says, "The righteous shall be recompensed *in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner*;"—(Prov. xi. 31). After suffering "tribulation and anguish" (Rom ii. 9), they will be "destroyed both body and soul," and so be finally "cut off" from life, that the earth may become the peaceful inheritance of "the meek."—(Ps. xxxvii. 11).

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The Christadelphian Shield

OR

Papers explanatory of the passages of Scripture usually urged in support of popular theology, in opposition to the doctrines believed by Christadelphians.

BY J. J. ANDREW, LONDON.

"HE THAT IS FIRST IN HIS OWN CAUSE SEEMETH JUST, BUT HIS NEIGHBOUR COMETH AND SEARCHETH HIM" (Prov. xviii. 17). "PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD" (1 Thess. v. 21).

"CHRIST SENT ME NOT TO BAPTIZE."*

FROM the fact that the apostle Paul uses the above language in writing to the Corinthians, it has been inferred that he considered baptism to be of little or no importance. Such a conclusion can only be entertained by ignoring what is written elsewhere by the same apostle, and other inspired writers. The general teaching of the Scriptures must be borne in mind, and also the facts which gave rise to these words. The Corinthian believers were evidently split up into several factions, each claiming a separate head—Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or Christ. Thereupon Paul indignantly asks whether he were crucified for them, or whether they were baptised in his name; thereby assuming that baptism had been administered, not to a part only, but to all of them. He then expresses his thankfulness that he had been the administrator of this ordinance in but a few cases:—"I thank God that I baptised none of you but Crispus and Gaius—also the household of Stephanus—*lest any one should say that I had baptised in mine own name.*" The latter phrase is most important; it gives the apostle's reason for thanking God that he had baptised so few at Corinth. Seeing that some of the Corinthian believers so far forgot their obligations to Jesus Christ, the "head" of the "body," as to boast that they were "of Paul," they might, if immersed by him, have said that Paul baptised in his own name. It was the misuse, not the right use, of

*(1 Cor. i. 16.)

baptism which led the apostle to write in the strain he did. If the Corinthians had not attempted to put Paul in the place of Christ, the former would not have expressed his thankfulness that he had baptised so few of them. We do not find him writing in this manner to any other of the apostolic believers. To the Romans (ch. vi. 3, 4) and to the Galatians (ch. iii. 27) he points out the doctrinal effect of their immersion; and as it is only by understanding the objects of this ordinance that its necessity can be clearly seen, we cannot do better than place before the reader the New Testament teaching concerning it.

1st.—BAPTISM A COMMAND, AND THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF BELIEF. When the apostle Paul says, "Christ sent me not to baptise, but to 'preach the Gospel,'" we are not warranted in inferring that he was to preach the Gospel and say nothing about baptism. To believe and teach the necessity of immersion, it is not needful to administer the ordinance. If Paul inculcated it as an essential sequel to the belief of the Gospel, leaving it in many cases to be administered by others, he performed the object of his apostleship. It is recorded that "Jesus baptised not, but his disciples" (John iv. 2), and yet he both submitted to it and commanded it. The terms of his commission to the apostles are, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. *He that BELIEVETH, AND IS BAPTISED, shall be saved*; but he that believeth not shall be damned"—(Mark xvi. 15, 16). It will be seen from these words that belief of the Gospel and baptism are the conditions on which salvation is predicated. If the apostles had left out one of the conditions, simply preaching the Gospel and omitting to inculcate baptism, they would have failed to fulfil their important embassy. It is sometimes said that the mention of unbelief only, in the case of those who are lost, is a proof that baptism is not an integral element of the way of salvation; it is contended that, if it had been, Jesus would have said, "He that believeth not and is not baptised, shall be damned." But a little consideration will show that this argument is fallacious. From the way in which Jesus states the conditions, it is obvious that belief must precede baptism; the latter can have no efficacy without the former; if there be no belief there can be no valid baptism; the one is the necessary precursor of the other; consequently, there was no need to

mention the absence of baptism in defining who would be lost. The absence of belief would be evidence that there was no Scriptural immersion. It is admitted on all hands that belief in the Gospel is an indispensable element in the way of life; he who so declared it also commanded the administration of baptism; both rest upon the same authority, and they are coupled together: why, then, should they be separated, one being retained and the other being left to individual choice?

The few instances of immersion recorded in the Acts of the Apostles confirm the above conclusion, that this ordinance was considered indispensable to give effect to belief. On the day of Pentecost, Peter exhorted his brethren to "repent and be baptised in the name of Jesus"—(Acts ii. 38). And when the same apostle first preached to the Gentiles, "he commanded them to be baptised in the name 'of the Lord' (Acts ii. 38), after evidence of their belief, and God's approval thereof. In answer to the Eunuch's question, "What doth hinder me to be baptised?" Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest": accordingly, after a satisfactory confession of belief, Philip "baptised him"—(Acts viii. 37, 38). At Thyatira Lydia "was baptised" after giving evidence that she received "the things which were spoken of Paul"—(Acts xvi. 14, 15). It is recorded in a subsequent chapter (xviii. 8) that "many 'of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptised;" some, no doubt, by the apostle Paul, who was living at Corinth at that time. The well-known instance of the Philippian jailor, in which the same apostle was concerned, is familiar to New Testament readers; after believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, he "was baptised, he and all his straightway"—(Acts xvi. 33). And lastly, we find in the conversion of Paul, that in answer to his question, "What shall I do, Lord?" Jesus Christ told him to go to Damascus, and there it would be told him all things appointed for him to do. Paul did as he was commanded, and on arriving at Damascus was told by "Ananias, a devout man," to "Arise, and be baptised . . . calling on the name of the Lord"—(Acts xxii. 10-16). In all these cases it will be seen that baptism is associated with a repentant or believing state of mind—undeniable proof that it was not administered to children.

If it be admitted that the apostles acted upon Divine

authority, the reason for not following their example becomes more inexplicable. It is tantamount, in those who occupy this position, to a confession of wilful disobedience to a divine command. But there are some who, while submitting to the ordinance themselves, excuse the neglect of it in others. To do so is to lessen the force of God's Word, and compromise "the truth." Of each class it may be said that they overlook or ignore the Scriptural requirements in regard to God's commands. The words of Jesus are very explicit on this point:—"Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven"—(Matt. vii. : 1).—See also (Rev. xxii. 14, and 1 John ii. 17). Baptism being admittedly a part of God's will, it necessarily comes within the scope of this divine law. And as doing the will of the Almighty is essential to salvation, it follows that submission to the ordinance of immersion is indispensable. It is the ceremony by which a lover of the truth (Rev. ii. 4) is "espoused to Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 2), and is as necessary to give practical effect to that love as is the marriage tie to unite in wedlock two loving hearts of the opposite sex. Love implies obedience: "If a man love me he will keep my sayings," said Jesus.

2nd.—BAPTISM NECESSARY TO REMISSION OF SINS. When the apostle Peter delivered his first discourse after the crucifixion, he said, "*Repent and be baptised*, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins"—(Acts ii. 38). Repentance is universally acknowledged to be essential to salvation; on what grounds, then, can baptism be dispensed with? They are linked together; if the latter be superfluous, so must the former; and if the former be essential, the latter must be equally so. Words similar to these were addressed by Ananias to Paul: "Arise and be baptised and wash away thy sins"—(Acts. xxii. 16). From these testimonies it is clear that there are certain "sins" which are remitted by the ordinance of baptism—sin inherited from our first parents, and that committed in days of ignorance. The ceremony which effects this purification, at the same time transfers the believer out of the "first man Adam," by whom came death, into the "last Adam," by whom came "resurrection of the dead"—(1 Cor. xv. 21, 45); "For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ"—(Gal. iii. 27).

'But,' it may be asked, 'does the water used at immersion in itself wash away sins?' By no means: it is the relationship of the ceremony to other things that renders it efficacious. It is a symbol of what has been done to take away sin. It is a representation of Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, as declared by the apostle Paul: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death. . . . For if we have been planted together in THE LIKENESS OF HIS DEATH, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. vi. 3-5). If this language has any meaning, it must signify that "IF" they had not been planted in the likeness of the death of Christ they would not be planted in the likeness of his resurrection, and consequently would not receive salvation. Baptism is thus a burial in water and a resurrection therefrom in token of Christ having "died unto sin once" (Rom. vi. 10), and been "raised again for" the "justification" of the faithful—(Rom. iv. 25). By this act a believer practically confesses his sinful condition, his condemnation to death, and his dependence on the death and resurrection of Christ for salvation.

The apostle to the circumcision is quite in harmony with the apostle to the uncircumcision. Writing of the flood he says, "The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few—that is, eight—souls were saved by water; the like figure whereunto even BAPTISM DOTHS ALSO NOW SAVE US (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"—(1 Pet. iii. 20, 21). The purport of this passage is, that as Noah and his family were saved in the ark by water, so baptism now saves believers through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If Noah had not taken refuge in the ark he would have been lost; in like manner believers who do not submit to baptism can have no title to salvation through Christ. Peter carefully guards against the idea that there is any efficacy in the water of itself, by saying parenthetically, "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God;" from which it would appear that he would not have endorsed the doctrine of baptismal regeneration so prevalent in the present day. But he

doos not, as alleged by some, say that baptism is not necessary: to affirm this is to represent the apostle as contradicting himself. Having said, "baptism doth now 'also save us," he could not consistently proceed immediately to affirm that it might be dispensed with. Scriptural teaching on the subject is a medium between the two extremes of the present day—viz., that which says that baptism without belief is sufficient, and that which says that belief without baptism will suffice.

3rd.—BAPTISM ESSENTIAL TO BEING BORN AGAIN. The words of Jesus on this point are very explicit:—"Except a man be born of WATER and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jno. iii. 5). It is usual to lay great stress on the birth of Spirit; this, however, should not be done to the disparaging of the birth of water; neither one nor the other can be taken away without depriving the divine declaration of a vital element. To say that the birth of the spirit is necessary to entrance into the kingdom of God, and that the birth of water is not, is to play fast and loose with the words of God's beloved son.

The use of the word "water" shows that some action in connection with this liquid is requisite to an entrance into God's kingdom. It cannot have reference to infantile birth, or to any other process of nature; because Jesus says, "Except a man be born of water, &c.": the "man" must first exist before he can be subject to this aqueous birth. This is evidently the sense in which the words were understood by Nicodemus, who said, "How can a 'man be born when he is old?" The mode in which the water is used must be ascertained from other portions of the Scriptures. On this point there is no lack of evidence. The New Testament not only inculcates baptism: it shows clearly how, and in what medium, it is to be performed. When Jesus was baptised "*he went up straightway out of the water*" (Matt. iii. 16); a clear proof that he had gone down into it. When "a man of Ethiopia" was baptised by Philip, "*they went down both INTO THE WATER, both Philip and the Eunuch*"—(Acts viii. 38). And previous to baptising Cornelius and other Gentiles, Peter said, "*Can any man forbid WATER that these should not be baptised?*" (Acts x. 47). Each of these instances shows that water is necessary to the performance of baptism;

and the first two clearly indicate, not that the subjects were sprinkled with a few drops of water, but submerged in it; for what need would there have been for either the baptiser or the baptised to have gone down into the water in order to sprinkle a handful on the latter's face? When to this is added the testimony already adduced, which compares baptism to a burial, the conclusion is logically irresistible that Scriptural baptism can only be administered by submersion in water. In view, then, of this fact, that baptism is the New Testament ceremony or ordinance which requires the use of water, is it not reasonable, to say the least, to understand the phrase "born of water" as another appellation for water immersion? It is in harmony with the words of an apostle when he said that 'Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he 'might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water "by the word"—(Eph. v. 26); and also with Heb. x. 22.

By some it is contended that Scriptural baptism consists of receiving the Holy Spirit. The principal passage on which it is based is Acts i. 5:—"John truly baptised "with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit "not many days hence." This promise was fulfilled to those disciples who were "with one accord in one place" on the day of Pentecost, "when suddenly there came a "sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it "filled all the house where they were sitting"—(Acts ii. 2); so that they were necessarily immersed in it. The fact that the promise was made 1,800 years ago, to certain Jews who realised its fulfilment, is no reason for appropriating it to Gentiles of this age, who have never been the subjects of a similar Spirit immersion. Besides, supposing, for the sake of argument, that a baptism or an outpouring of the Spirit were essential, this would not render unnecessary baptism in water; for when the believing Gentiles in the house of Cornelius had become recipients of the Spirit, though not immersed in it, Peter said, "Can "any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, "which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?"—(Acts x. 47). When it is considered that Peter was sent to Cornelius to tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved (Acts xi. 14), it cannot surely be contended that Peter asked an idle question, or that the command he gave to baptise these Gentiles was superfluous.

It may be asked, "Why is baptism spoken of as a birth of water?" This is a proper question, and not difficult of explanation. It is a term perfectly in harmony with the style of language adopted throughout the New Testament. The process of conversion is represented as a begetting, the operating power being "the word of truth"—(Jas. i. 18), or "the Gospel." A man is begotten when he has become a believer of the Gospel. To carry out this figurative style of speech there should be a stage analogous to birth. This is supplied in the act following belief, viz., immersion. By this ceremony the believer, who has been "begotten" by the Gospel, is enveloped in water, and then emerges from it, and thus he is "born of water." The process which begins with begetting and ends with birth constitutes him a "babe in Christ"—(1 Cor. iii. 1), and a "Son of God."

The importance of being "born again" to become a child of God is made clear by the following statement:—"The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: and if children then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ"—(Rom. viii. 16, 17). The inheritance of which Christ is heir, "being the uttermost parts of the earth"—(Ps. ii. 8) those who are joint-heirs with him are destined to share the glories of that time when "he shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth"—(Ps. lxxii. 8). But to be an "heir of God," or a "joint-heir with Christ," is dependent on being a child of God; and to be a child of God, it is necessary to be "born of water." Thus, if there be no new birth there can be no childhood; if no childhood, no sonship; if no sonship, no heirship; if no heirship, no inheritance; if no inheritance, no salvation.

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IS THE HOLY SPIRIT A PERSON?

The affirmative of the above question is considered by many persons a cardinal point of New Testament theology—especially by those who subscribe to everything contained in the Athanasian creed, which teaches that "there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost." So tenaciously is it held by some, that its denial is considered to jeopardise a man's salvation. And yet, when evidence in support of it is asked for and produced, it is found to be of the most shadowy character. In this, as in many other controversies, assertion and indignation unfortunately take the place of proof. To bring the arguments *pro* and *con.* into a concise form, we will consider the subject negatively and positively.

1st.—THE HOLY SPIRIT NOT A PERSON DISTINCT FROM THE DEITY.—The principal support of the personality theory consists of the fact that the words "he" and "Comforter" are applied to the Holy Spirit in John xiv. 16, 17; xvi. 7, 8, 13. In regard to the pronoun "he," it is surely unwise to make it the basis of a theory deemed so important. The same argument would prove that "wisdom" is a woman, because spoken of as "she" (Prov. viii. 2); and that "sin" and "righteousness" are individuals, because spoken of as having "servants"—(Rom. vi. 17, 18). Other instances of impersonal things being personified will readily occur to the

reader familiar with the Scriptures; all of which suggest the possibility of the Holy Spirit being added to the category. Although Jesus used a masculine pronoun in reference to it, we find the Apostle to the circumcision employing the neuter pronoun "it" (1 Pet. i. 11). If the Holy Spirit be a person, on what recognised principle can this apparent grammatical discrepancy be explained? It is customary to personify impersonal things, and, therefore, both personal and neuter pronouns may sometimes be applied to them, as in the case of the sun and moon, which are spoken of interchangeably as "he" and "she" or "it." But it has not yet become a usage to impersonalise individuals except in a collective capacity, as, for instance, the "world," which is referred to as "it" (Jno. xv. 18). The reason why Jesus uses "he" and Peter "it" in speaking of the Holy Spirit is simply this: the Greek word for "comforter" is masculine, and therefore requires a pronoun of the same gender as a substitute; whereas the Greek word for "Spirit" is neuter, and is, therefore, correctly represented by a neuter pronoun. If Jesus had used the term "Spirit" instead of "Comforter," the translators would doubtless have given "it" instead of "he."

Here the question is suggested, why did Jesus use the word "Comforter?" The answer is to be found in the circumstances of the occasion. Jesus was about to undergo crucifixion and take his departure. Of these events, and the reasons for them, the Apostles were ignorant. They had looked up to Jesus for upwards of three years as their guide, counsellor, master, and friend. They trusted that he would at that time redeem Israel (Luke xxiv. 21; Acts i. 6), and place them on thrones to rule the Twelve Tribes of Israel—(Luke xxii. 30). On hearing that Jesus was about to leave them, and that they could not follow him (Jno. xiii. 33), they were naturally "troubled" in mind—(Jno. xiv. 1). Jesus therefore appropriately spoke to them certain words of comfort to assuage their grief. Amongst these is the promise of another "Comforter," which was to abide with them for "ever," or more correctly "for the age," that is, for the remainder of the Mosaic age (Jno. xvi. 16), and guide them into all truth—(Jno. xiv. 13). There was wisdom in thus personifying that which was to take place as an instructor and guide. Jesus acted on the principle of speaking to them as they were able to bear it—

(Jno. xvi. 12). They were not in a fit mental condition to be addressed plainly. So Jesus spoke unto them in "proverbs," or "parables," as the margin gives it—(Jno. xvi. 25). This style of speech admits of the personification of impersonal things; and, therefore, we are quite warranted in concluding that on this occasion Jesus was using the figurative style of the East, so common with the inspired writers.

So much for presumptive evidence. Now let us look at the facts of the case; for this is the best way of ascertaining the meaning of Jesus Christ's words. When his promise was fulfilled, did a person visit the Apostles? The sacred historian says that on "the day of Pentecost" they were all with one accord in one place; and there "came a sound from heaven as of a *rushing mighty wind*, and it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared unto them *cloven tongues like as of fire*: and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the "Holy Ghost."—(Acts ii. 1—4). In this way was fulfilled the promise that they should be "baptised with the Holy Ghost"—(Acts i. 5). They were immersed in it; for it "filled all the house" in which they were sitting; and they themselves were "filled" with it; moreover, it assumed the form of "cloven tongues as of fire." Manifestations such as these can scarcely be considered as harmonising with the personality theory. If Jesus promised a person, we should naturally have expected an individual being to have appeared to the Apostles. Instead of this, we find that something like a wind visited them. There is no cause for wonder here in view of the fact that the primary meaning of the word translated "Spirit" and "Ghost" is *wind, air, breath*. The translators appear to have been guided by no rule in rendering it; for they have used the words "Spirit" and "Ghost" in an arbitrary manner. Thus in Matt. x. 20, Jesus is represented as promising the Apostles "the *Spirit* of your Father," whereas in Mark xiii. 11, he calls it "the *Holy Ghost*," according to the common version, although the original word in the two passages is precisely the same. There is no doubt that this old English word "Ghost" has contributed in no small degree to the prevailing belief on this subject. If "Spirit" had been uniformly given by King James's Biblical linguists, much misconception would have been prevented. The

phrase used by Jesus Christ, "the Spirit of your Father," conveys in a concise form the truth on this subject. It shows that the "Spirit" is something emanating from God. This is also conveyed by the words which Peter quotes from the prophet Joel to account for the Pentecostal effusion: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, 'And it shall come to pass, in the last days, saith "God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh'"—(Acts ii. 16, 17). The words, "of my Spirit," indicate that part of something belonging to God was to be poured out.

The Apostle to the Gentiles incidentally explains this subject when writing about "the things which God has prepared for them that love Him":—"God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him? even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now, we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; which things also we speak; not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth"—(1 Cor. ii. 9—13). This important passage teaches us several truths respecting the Spirit of God:—1st. That we are indebted to it for all that we know respecting the things which are unseen and eternal; 2nd. That it is the same as "the Holy Ghost;" 3rd. That it bears the same relation to God that "the spirit of a man" bears to the man himself; and 4th. That it is opposed to "spirit of the world." Neither the "spirit of man," nor the "spirit of the world" is a person distinct from the individual or individuals who manifest it; it is but the operation of their mental power. In the same way the Spirit of God is the manifestation of Jehovah's mind.

That the Holy Spirit is subordinate to the Deity and under his control is clear from the following facts:—In the angelic announcement of Jesus Christ's birth it is called "the power of the Highest" (Luke i. 35); it was promised by God (Luke xxiv. 49; Acts i. 4); it is called the "gift of God" (Acts viii. 20; xv. 8); and it was sent by Him from heaven (1 Pet. i. 2). It was promised, for instance, to His Beloved Son, through the prophet Isaiah:—"I have put my Spirit upon him" (Isa. xlii. 1); "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him"—(Isa. xi. 2). Matthew records that

it rested upon him in the form of "a dove," an incident which has, strange to say, been adduced to prove that the Holy spirit is a person; if anything, it proves the reverse. After its occurrence Jesus could say, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek" (Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18).

The Apostle Peter refers to it in similar language:—"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power"—(Acts x. 38). That this incident was typified by the anointing of the Aaronic priesthood and kings of Israel with oil is generally admitted. Viewing the Spirit as an impersonal power which could at the same time both fill and envelope the servants of God, the appropriateness of typifying it by such a fluid as oil is at once apparent. But when it is represented as a personal entity, the harmony usually existing between type and antitype disappears. And furthermore, there is introduced the incongruity of one person being anointed with another person.

2nd—WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT? If the Holy Spirit be devoid of personal qualities, the reader may be disposed to ask why it is represented as exercising a will (Acts xvi. 6; xxi. 11), being liable to grief (Eph. iv. 30), and capable of being blasphemed—(Matt. xii. 31). If its connection with the Almighty were denied it would be impossible to give a satisfactory answer to this question. But it has already been pointed out that the Holy Spirit is a power proceeding from God, and is directed by Him. Hence the same things are attributed alike to both. Thus in Heb. i. 1, 2, it is declared that God spake unto the "fathers" "by the Prophets": whereas Peter affirms that the Prophets "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. i. 21). And Paul, in writing about the "diversities of gifts," says they are from the "same Spirit" and the "same God" (1 Cor. xii. 4, 6). From this evidence we learn that God has revealed His will and manifested His miraculous power by means of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, to "grieve the Holy Spirit" is equivalent to grieving God; and when the Holy Spirit commands or forbids anything (Acts xxi. 11; xvi. 6), the injunction comes from the Almighty; likewise to "resist the Holy Ghost" (Acts vii. 51) is to resist Jehovah.

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is illustrated in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. Peter first asked the former, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to *the Holy Ghost?*" and then said to him, "Thou hast not lied 'unto men, but *unto God*' (Acts v. 4). The Apostle being endowed with the Holy Spirit, to tell a lie to him was equivalent to speaking falsely to God. On the same principle, to blaspheme the Holy Spirit was to speak that which was blasphemous to Jesus Christ, because he was filled with the measureless power of the Spirit (Jno. iii. 34) the Father dwelt in him, spake through him, and worked through him (Jno. xiv. 10) by means of the Holy Spirit—(Jno. vi. 63; Acts ii. 22; x. 38). The Pharisees, to whom Jesus uttered this anathema, had just spoken blasphemy. They admitted the cure of the demoniac effected by Jesus was miraculous, but they attributed it to Beelzebub instead of to a power of God—(Matt. xii. 27-28). In this lay their sin, which was blasphemy against the Holy Spirit or God. It is worthy of note, that according to Luke's account of this incident Jesus said "If I with *the finger of God* cast out devils"—(demons)—(Luke xi. 20); thereby showing that the Holy Spirit bears a similar relationship to God, that the finger or arm does to man.

The word "Spirit" is used in such a variety of senses in the Bible that, unless they be recognised, misapprehension will be sure to ensue. It is applied in the first place to designate the power by which the Creator has brought all things into existence, and by which he now sustains them—(Job xxvi. 13; Ps. xxxiii. 6; civ. 30). It is described by David as existing everywhere: "Whither shall I go *from thy Spirit?* Whither shall I flee from *thy Presence?* 'If I ascend up into heaven thou art there: If I make my 'bed in hell (the grave) behold thou art there' (Ps. cxxxix. 7, 8). From these words we see that David recognised the truth already demonstrated, that Jehovah and his Spirit are one: for he uses the expressions "thy Spirit" and "thy presence" synonymously. In the light of this passage it is not difficult to understand the Pauline declaration on Mars' Hill:—In Him we live and move and have our "being" (Acts xvii. 28). We exist and move in God because His Spirit is universal. At the same time the Scriptures teach that the unmanifested Deity dwells in

a certain centre. This is called by Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple, "Heaven":—"Hear thou 'in heaven thy dwelling place' (1 Kings viii. 30) Paul "speaks of it as the light which no man can approach unto" (1 Tim. vi. 16).

The question may reasonably be asked, What is the difference, if any, between Spirit and Holy Spirit. In essence there is none: it is only in relationship. The word "Holy" means *separated* or *set apart*. It is applied to things which are appointed for a specified work, generally of a religious character. Thus all materials and utensils used in the Mosaic Tabernacle and Ritual were "holy" not that they were essentially different in their constitution from other things of the same class, but because they were set apart for Divine Worship, and the land of Canaan is called "the holy land" (Zech. ii. 12), because it has been set apart by God for a special purpose. In like manner, when the Spirit of God is focalised for miraculous or inspirational work, it is frequently designated "holy." It is the same Spirit as that by which the earth was brought out of chaos (Gen. i. 2), but it occupies a different relationship; its operations are those of a higher order, being mental rather than material. By the former, the will of the Almighty has been revealed in all ages, and the way of salvation made known to man. The words of inspiration are, therefore, the words of the Spirit. On this account they are sometimes spoken of comprehensively as "the Spirit." Thus to be "elect through sanctification of the Spirit" (1 Pet. i. 2) is to be chosen by the separation of the Spirit through the power of God's revealed truth: to "walk 'after the Spirit,'" to be "spiritually-minded," and to "be 'led by the Spirit of God' (Rom. viii. 4, 6, 14), are but different phrases expressive of submission to the teaching of the Spirit as contained in the Prophetic and Apostolic writings; for that which sanctifies a man is the "truth" (John xvii. 17). Indeed, John says, "The Spirit is truth" (1 John v. 6). When a man believes "the truth," he is taught by the Spirit; if that belief be followed by obedience, he is "led by the Spirit"; and if his thoughts and actions be constantly influenced by Divine teaching, he will bring forth the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. v. 22). He who does this is said to "sow to the Spirit," the object being, that "of the spirit" he may "reap life everlasting"

(Gal. vi. 8). To "reap life of the Spirit," is to be "born of the Spirit."

He who is subject to this birth, says Jesus, "IS SPIRIT" (John iii. 6); that is, he is of Spirit nature. He can appear or disappear at pleasure, as Jesus Christ did after his resurrection, for he then had had his flesh and blood organisation changed into a "spiritual body" or body of Spirit (1 Cor. xv. 44): being made at the same time "both "Lord and Christ" (Acts ii. 36), he is now called "the "Lord, the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 17-18, see margin), and is exalted to "the right hand of God," where he "maketh intercession" (Rom. viii. 34). When, therefore, it says, "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be "uttered" (Rom. viii. 26), it must be evident that he who has been made a "quickening spirit" (1 Cor. xv. 45) is meant, and not an imaginary "third person of the Trinity" called "the Holy Ghost." For nothing is more clearly laid down in the New Testament than that there is but "one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. ii. 5). To say that the Holy Spirit is a person which fills the office of an intercessor is to deny this cardinal truth concerning "the "Apostle and High Priest of our profession" (Heb. iii. 1). Even to affirm that it has a distinct personality from God, is to detract from the Majesty of Jehovah, who has said, "Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God, I know "not any" (Isa. xlv. 8). Truly it may be asked how such a declaration as this, and others like it, can be reconciled with the theory that the Holy Spirit is a person distinct from God? Does not this dogma contravene, either in spirit or word, the first of the Ten Mosaic Commandments? And if so, how can those who endorse it escape the charge of idolatry?

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