

**THE
REAL
CHRIST**

(Formerly "Jesus Christ and Him Crucified")

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Foreword

FIRST issued over three-quarters of a century ago, under the title "Jesus Christ and him crucified," this work (by the late J. J. Andrew) is now, after several editions, republished by request.

There have been thousands of books written about the Lord Jesus Christ—his character, his teachings, his sufferings, and his second coming. We say without fear of contradiction, however, that "The Real Christ" is unsurpassed as a clear and Scriptural exposition of that One "to whom give all the prophets witness."

It may startle the majority of readers to find how different is the real Christ from that represented in and by the various orthodox schools of thought.

That this book may prove an incentive to a greater study and understanding of the Bible is the sincere desire and prayer of those who are responsible for its publication.

MAURICE JOSLIN,

Editor, "The Dawn."

January, 1948.

Popular Views of Jesus Christ

AMONG those who have played an important part on the world's stage, no one has exerted such a mighty influence on the subsequent course of human affairs, as he who is known by the name of JESUS CHRIST.

Whether we look into the domain of politics, religion, literature, or art, we see a complete change since the brief career on this earth of him who "spoke as never man spake". When he was manifested to mankind, the Jews were living in their own land as a separate nation, though in a degenerate condition, and partly under the Gentile yoke; but, shortly after his crucifixion, which was affected at their instigation, they were punished for thus rejecting him, by the destruction of their capital, and their dispersion among the other nations of the earth; and in this condition they have continued to the present day.

But, though despised by his own countrymen, the name of Jesus Christ was received with gladness by multitudes of Gentiles. At that time the whole Gentile world was in a state of idolatry; paganism reigned supreme, alike among savage barbarians and the most refined classes of Greece and Rome. Scarcely three centuries, however, had elapsed, before the temples devoted to the worship of gods of wood and stone were either transformed into avowedly Christian temples, or abolished, and their space supplied by buildings professedly designed for the worship of the Father of Jesus Christ.

A humble Jew.

The state-religion of the Roman empire was changed, by decree, from paganism to what was supposed to be the religion of Jesus. And when that empire was broken up, its religious institutions were transferred

to the several kingdoms into which it was divided, and have continued to exist in connection with those kingdoms down to the present time. So that for upwards of fifteen centuries the greater portion of the continent of Europe has professed allegiance in some form or other to this humble Jew, who suffered an ignominious death with the sanction of that power which afterwards paid homage to him.

During that time he has afforded a theme, on innumerable occasions, for the eloquence of the orator, the panegyric of the poet, the imagination of the painter, the song of the musician, the admiration of the moralist, the exhortation of the preacher, the study of the philosopher, the guidance of the statesmen, the narrative of the historian, the description of the biographer, and the discussions of theologians. Avowedly on his behalf wars have been waged, kings overthrown, subjects oppressed, and multitudes of persons put to death.

Traditional Reverence.

The whole of the civilised world is so thoroughly imbued with the traditional reverence of his name, that it is impossible to draw a line of demarcation as to where his influence begins and ends. Especially is this the case with those speaking the English tongue, among whom his name is not only the basis of nearly every religion, but where his moral precepts influence, to some extent, the education, legislation and literature of the day. The immense circulation which has been given to the Scriptures during the last two centuries has, in fact, rendered the name of Jesus Christ a household word.

The great majority of people, looking at these facts, rush to the conclusion that they prove the existence of an equally extensive acquaintance with the scheme of salvation of which Jesus is the corner-stone; that because the name of Jesus Christ is so familiar, and so much regard apparently manifested towards him, the work of

redemption effected by him, and the religion which he taught, are universally understood and believed. The mere fact of being born in what is called a Christian land, or of living in what Shakespeare describes as "a Christian climate", is in itself almost supposed to confer a right to the title "Christian" or disciple of Christ.

Mistaken views.

Never was a greater mistake made. By far the greater portion of the existing knowledge about him is of the most superficial kind; and the remainder is largely adulterated with the most erroneous views respecting both his teaching and his mission. Even among those who devote their whole time to the office of public teachers professedly on his behalf, there exist totally antagonistic ideas as to who he was, and why he appeared amongst mankind. Hence it becomes a matter of importance that all who would have an accurate conception of Jesus Christ, should study the matter for themselves, with an independent and impartial mind, unbiassed by pre-conceived notions inculcated from childhood. There being now no inspired men upon the earth, to whom to apply for an infallible decision, the only mode by which this can be done is to search and examine the writings which inspired men have left us.

Thanks to God, those writings are now to be had in such a compact and cheap form, that they can be consulted and studied by every one able to read his mother tongue. They contain predictions concerning Jesus which were given previous to his birth, a record of his sayings and doings while upon earth, and promises of what he will do in the future. They are as complete as is necessary to give to any one a comprehensive and exact knowledge of the mission of Jesus Christ, and a share in the blessings he is destined to bestow. This knowledge cannot, however, be obtained by an occasional glance at the writings of the prophets and apostles;

or by listening to two or three chapters and one or two sermons once a week; or even by reading a chapter every day, if such reading be not accompanied with an intelligent apprehension thereof. It is necessary to imitate the example of the Bereans of old, who, not content with the statements even of an inspired apostle, "searched the Scriptures daily" to see "whether these things were so"—(Acts 17, 11).

Orthodox allegiance.

Since the commencement of the last century, there has been a gradually increasing desire to adopt this course, which has manifested itself in the establishment and rapid growth of numerous religious organisations dissenting more or less from "the church by law established", either as to its teachings or constitution. But the majority of people have been so long accustomed to trusting others for religious guidance and instruction, whereby they have been confined in certain grooves of thought marked out for them by their leaders, that they have found it extremely difficult to release themselves, to any appreciable extent, from the trammels of long-established and universally-revered traditions, popularly designated "orthodoxy". Hence they have failed to re-establish the teaching and practice prevalent in apostolic times.

Jesus Christ is regarded by both Protestants and Roman Catholics, and very justly so, as the Alpha and Omega of God's plan of salvation. For this reason he is constantly held up by the religious teachers of the day as the sole object of faith, hope, and love, to those who wish to find favour with the Almighty. He is supposed, and correctly so, to be the only being through whom salvation can be obtained; a truth stated by Peter when he declared that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"—(Acts 4, 12). Accordingly the people are told to look only to him. But, unfortunately, the way in which this

is to be done is not so clearly pointed out. This is like telling a man to look at a distant object, beyond the ordinary range of vision, without providing him with a telescope. And even when a telescope is provided, it contains such dim or creed-coloured glasses, as to present it in a very distorted form; so that "another Jesus" is seen (2 Cor. 11, 4), instead of him who is "the way, the truth, and the life"—(Jno. 14, 6).

Knowing Jesus.

People are constantly exhorted to have "faith in Jesus", to "hope in Jesus", "trust in Jesus", "believe in Jesus", "come to Jesus", and "love Jesus"; but little or nothing is said about *knowing Jesus*. And yet this is a most essential element of the things required. The above exhortations are very good in their place; but in order to be carried into effect, they must be preceded by knowledge. A person must know really and truly who and what Jesus is, before he can manifest solid faith, hope, trust, belief, or love, towards him. Knowledge is the primary requisite to the exercise of all the faculties of the human mind, whether in things temporal or in things spiritual. Hence Jesus says, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, *the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*"—(Jno. 17, 3). To know a human being is not simply to know that a person of such and such a name exists, but to know something of his position and character. And so, in like manner to know God and Jesus Christ is not simply to be aware of their existence, but to know the attributes and purposes of the former, and the nature, character, and mission of the latter.

It is quite evident that Jesus did not share in the ideas of those who look upon knowledge as of little importance in religious matters, or of those who denounce it as positively dangerous, and, in support thereof, improperly quote Paul's statement, that "know-

ledge puffeth up" (1 Cor. 8, 1); for Jesus expressly states that eternal life is predicated upon a knowledge of "the only true God and Jesus Christ".

Head and heart.

Without entering upon the question as to what kind of knowledge Paul refers to in the above quotation, it is sufficient to observe that he could have meant only a knowledge of revealed truth; for he tells the Ephesians that unbelieving Gentiles were "*alienated from the life of God through the IGNORANCE that is in them*" (Eph. 4, 18), and he prays that the Colossians might be "*filled with the KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WILL in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*"—(Col. 1, 9). This knowledge of God's will and of Jesus Christ, is of course limited by that which has been revealed. It therefore behoves all who desire to obtain eternal life, to study that revelation, that they may learn of what that knowledge really consists. Religion is not, as supposed by many people, a matter only of the heart or affections; it has to do with both the head and the heart; the latter must be reached through the former; the intellect must first be enlightened before the affections can be directed into the proper channel. It is just as likely for Gentiles in the twentieth century to have a "zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" (Rom. 10, 2), as it was for the Jews in the first century.

Meaning of the names.

The superficiality of the existing knowledge regarding Jesus Christ is strikingly illustrated by the ignorance there is, even among those who profess to be his followers, respecting the meaning of his names; and the widespread misconception as to the nature of his mission is shown by the erroneous notions prevalent concerning the reasons for giving him those names.

The names "Jesus" and "Christ" were not, as is the general impression, given simply to distinguish him

who bears them from other beings. They have a far higher signification; each has been given on account of some distinctive feature in his character or mission.

“Jesus” is synonymous with “Joshua,” which means a powerful one, or saviour, and was bestowed upon the child of the virgin because he was destined to fulfil the character of a powerful Saviour: “Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins” —(Matt. 1, 21).

The word “Christ” is not derived from the English language, but from the Greek. Instead of being translated it has merely been transferred, in an anglicised form, from the original manuscripts to the English version. Had it been translated, it would have been rendered *Anointed*. Evidence of this will be found by comparison of Ps. 2, 2 with Acts 4, 26. In the psalm David speaks of Jesus as God’s “anointed”; but in the Acts, where the passage is quoted by Peter, Jesus is denominated God’s “Christ”. Dr. John Pye Smith, writing on this subject, in his *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, after showing that the name originated from the ancient custom of using oil to anoint great personages, or special objects designed for religious purposes, says:

“Such was the origin, and such the primary signification of the sacred appellation *Anointed*; which, in its Hebrew and Greek forms Messiah and Christ, has been adopted into most other languages” —(vol. 1, p. 202).

The anointing of Jesus took place when he was thirty years of age, at his baptism by John — God *anointed* Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power” —(Acts 10, 38). It will be observed that it does not say ‘God anointed Jesus Christ’; to do so would be tautological; it would be like saying ‘God anointed Jesus anointed’, or ‘God Christed Jesus Christ’.

Jesus the Saviour.

To know the mere verbal definition of these names is of no practical use to anyone, unless he understands the special reasons for which they were given. It is impossible to comprehend Jesus as the Saviour, unless the nature of the salvation effected by him is understood. In the announcement already quoted, it is defined to be that of "saving his people *from their sins*". All believers of the Bible will accept this statement, because it is a Scriptural phrase. But by going to the root of the matter, by asking what the consequence of sin is, answers totally antagonistic will be obtained. The majority of theologians will tell us that it is eternal torments, *i.e.* endless life in misery; while a few will say that it is death, *i.e.* a cessation of all life. It is obvious that both these answers cannot be correct; if one be right the other must be wrong. And, whichever be the right one, the holding of the wrong one must produce a distorted and false conception of the character of Jesus as a Saviour, and of the nature of the salvation which is to be obtained through him; for if the punishment from which he saves is misapprehended, the deliverance which he effects must also be misunderstood.

Some professed followers of Jesus teach that this deliverance or salvation consists merely of happiness superadded to a never-ending life which all men are supposed to possess; while others contend that it consists of life itself. Is it, or is it not, important to know which of these is correct; as to whether Jesus is a Saviour to give men eternal happiness, or to give unending life conjoined with happiness? If the thoughtful reader appreciates the importance of such knowledge, he is invited to consider another question. Can those who hold ideas so diametrically opposite be considered at one and the same time to be Scriptural disciples of Jesus? If not prepared to say that they cannot, we ask his careful and impartial attention to the evidence and arguments about to be adduced.

“Anointed.”

The character of Jesus as an anointed personage, *i.e.* as the Christ, is no less important than that of his office as a Saviour. It will, indeed, be found that the former includes the latter in all its aspects. It is not, therefore, surprising that the prevailing ideas respecting the objects for which Jesus was anointed, are quite as conflicting as are those concerning the deliverance he effects as a Saviour.

In the extract given from Dr. Pye Smith, it will have been seen that the New Testament word “Christ” is synonymous with the Old Testament name “Messiah” both of which mean *anointed*. By the latter name the Hebrew prophets predicted his appearance; and it is recognised as the Scriptural appellation of Jesus of Nazareth, by Christians of all shades. They all agree also that it is indicative of Jesus being a king. But there exist among them differences of belief as to the nature of that kingship. Some believe that Jesus is a king simply to rule over his disciples in this life; others view him as a king simply to rule the redeemed in heaven, and hence they describe him as possessing “kingdoms in the skies”; while a third class assert that his kingship consists entirely of personal rulership over the earth at a future day. These three views cannot all be correct; whichever be Scriptural, the other two must be without any foundation; and consequently, those who hold either of the erroneous views must be ignorant of the Christship or Messiahship of Jesus. The questions which have been already asked with reference to those who hold diametrically opposite ideas respecting Jesus as a Saviour, are equally applicable to those who hold views so wide apart in relation to his kingship. Is it necessary, or is it not, to have correct ideas as to that office? If it is, are those who are in error on this point entitled to be called “Christians”?

Threefold office.

To fulfil the office of a king was not the only object for which Jesus was anointed. Like Elisha (1 Kings 19, 16), he was anointed to be a prophet; like Aaron (Exod. 40, 13), he was anointed to be a priest; like Saul (1 Sam. 15, 1), and David (1 Sam. 16, 1-12), he was anointed to be a king. Unlike them, however, he was not anointed with oil, but with its antitype, the Holy Spirit; thereby indicating that the functions which he would have to perform would be far superior to theirs. That Jesus was to fill these three offices was clearly foretold by Moses and the prophets, and was believed by faithful Jews, before his appearance. The writer already quoted, makes the following pertinent observation:—

“ That from the earliest time an expectation prevailed of a great personage to rise at some future period, and to be the Deliverer and Saviour of mankind from their mortal and natural miseries, is a fact well known to all who have studied primeval history, and is generally received by believers in revelation. This expected benefactor was the Messiah described in the Hebrew sacred books; who should unite in his own person the dignities of prophet, priest, and king, that he might confer salvation on our fallen world ”—(*Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, by Dr. J. Pyc Smith, vol. 1, p. 203).

The New Testament having confirmed these predictions, it is customary to look upon Jesus as occupying this three-fold position. And hence, when the question is asked, “ What is the sense in which persons desirous of salvation are to believe in Jesus? ” an answer is sometimes given to the effect that they must believe in him as a prophet, priest, and king. But, seeing that there exist very diversified views of the way in which Jesus filled, or is to fill, these offices, it must be evident to any thoughtful mind that the only value of such a belief consists in a person having a Scriptural knowledge of the functions performed by Jesus in each of these capacities: of the truths he taught as a prophet; of the sacrifice he offered up as a priest; and of the ruling he is to exercise as a king.

An Unscriptural Creed.

If the leaders of that portion of the religious world which appropriates to itself the name of "The Orthodox" be applied to for a definition of the character and mission of Jesus, they will reply in some such terms as the following:—

"Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, who always existed, and always will exist—being co-equal with the Father; he died to reconcile an angry God to sinful man, and thus save immortal souls from eternal torments, that at death they may be translated to heaven to reign with him in the skies."

This, it will be acknowledged, is the substance of what is preached by ministers of all denominations, both in State Church and Dissent; and it is what they require to be believed by those who desire to join their religious communities. It is true they do not all enforce it by subscription to the formal creed; for in some cases such a thing does not exist. But it cannot be denied that it is a correct summary of what is constantly taught from the pulpit. And, as the members of the various churches are mostly drawn from the congregations, it is tacitly understood that they believe the most prominent doctrines inculcated by their religious teachers. The absence of any formal subscription to these doctrines is no proof that a belief in them is not required. The absence of any objection to them is considered sufficient in itself to constitute assent. Hence, when one of their members begins to disavow his belief in any of them, he is almost invariably looked upon as a "dangerous man", and perhaps stigmatised as a "heretic", or an "infidel". This is owing to the fact that they regard a belief in them as necessary for salvation.

Thus, although they are so fond of defining saving faith by the phrase, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16, 31), they in practice very often require more than is contained in a *surface view* of these words—that there is such a person as Jesus Christ who is able to save men. They do not profess

to derive these additional items from Paul's answer to the Philippian jailor, but from other parts of the Scriptures. Believing implicitly that these doctrines are taught in God's revealed Word, they think themselves justified in requiring others also to believe them.

On the supposition that such is the case, it must be admitted that they are perfectly justified, not only in acting in this manner, but in looking suspiciously upon, or even withdrawing from fellowship with, anyone who repudiates them in whole or in part. For, if true, it is not only important, but necessary, that they should be believed, to enable anyone "to know Jesus Christ" as a prophet, priest, and king; and so to obtain salvation through him. On the other hand, if they are unscriptural, it becomes a duty not only to reject them but to substitute for them those truths which are taught in the inspired oracles of God. What those truths are will be seen from the following pages.

PART I.

Jesus Christ as a Prophet

That the great deliverer promised to the Jews should appear to them in the character of a prophet was predicted at a very early stage in the history of that nation.

During their journey from Egypt to Canaan, their leader, Moses, was addressed by the God of Abraham in the following language:—"I will raise them (the Jews) up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him" (Deut. 18, 18-19).

The Jews were not left in doubt as to the character of the "prophet" who was to be "raised up from among their brethren"; they were told he was to be "like unto" him to whom the prediction was uttered. They would, therefore, look for one who should fulfil similar functions to those of their leader in the wilderness. In addition to discharging the functions of a "prophet" (Deut. 34, 10), Moses filled the office of a "mediator" (Deut. 5, 5; Gal. 3, 19), a lawgiver (Exodus 19, 3), and a "king" or ruler (Deut. 33, 4-5). It would, therefore, be but reasonable for the twelve tribes of Israel to indulge in the expectation that the promised prophet like unto Moses, should also be a mediator, lawgiver, and king.

A marvellous discovery.

That Jesus Christ is the only one in whom this expectation can be realised, is proved by Peter's quoting the foregoing prediction (see Acts 3, 20-23), and expressly

applying it to him who was crucified by the Jews. Many, indeed, when he appeared among them, recognised him as a great prophet.

Thus, Philip, when he had found Nathaniel, said, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth" (John 1, 45); the Samaritan woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet" (John 4, 19); the multitude who witnessed the miracle of the five loaves and two fishes were constrained to say, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world" (John 6, 14); the man who was born blind and restored to sight by Jesus, when asked who cured him, replied, "He is a prophet" (John 9, 17). When Jesus entered Jerusalem on an ass the people who accompanied him, in reply to the question "Who is this?" answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, of Galilee" (Matt. 21, 11); at the raising of the widow's son at Nain, those present declared "that a great prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited his people" (Luke 7, 16); and after his own resurrection the two disciples whom Jesus met on the road to Emmaus, spoke of him as "a prophet mighty in deed and word"—(Luke 24, 19).

In all these cases Jesus was declared to be a prophet on account of either the wonderful miracles he wrought, or the marvellous words he spoke. The Jews had been accustomed to see their prophets perform miracles from the time of Moses onwards. Hence the statement of Nicodemus—"Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him"—(John 3, 2). The object for which they were performed was, of course, to furnish proof that the words he spoke were not his own, but those of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; in accordance with the prediction given by Jehovah through Moses:—"I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

Its remarkable effect.

With those whose ears were not dull of hearing, and whose eyes were not closed, the miracles he wrought had the desired effect. Indeed, even apart from his miracles, his words were so marvellous as to convince many that he was no ordinary personage. The people who listened to his sermon on the mount, unattended as it was by any miraculous power, "were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7, 28-29); the inhabitants of Capernaum also were "astonished at his doctrine, for his word was with power" (Luke 4, 32); and even the officers of that class which derided and persecuted him—"the chief priests and Pharisees"—could not forbear to say, "Never man spake like this man"—(John 7, 46).

The Gentiles of the present day have not the advantage possessed by the Jews who lived contemporarily with Jesus Christ, of witnessing his mighty deeds, or listening to his wonderful words. But they possess the privilege of being able to read the records of those deeds and words. With the majority of people this is sufficient to produce the conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was a "teacher from God." For such only is this treatise designed. It were well if it could be said that an understanding and belief of the truths taught by him were as widespread as is the recognition of his claim to be a prophet. It is not denied that those who recognise him as a prophet sent from God, think that they believe his teaching, and that they are very earnest and sincere in what they believe. But it must be obvious that sincerity and earnestness are not alone sufficient; they may be manifested quite as effectually in propagating error, as in the spread of truth. The truth or falseness of their belief can only be tested by an appeal to the words actually uttered by Jesus.

Correct belief essential.

It is no unimportant matter to know and believe what the prophet like unto Moses taught. A correct belief in this matter, is indeed, absolutely necessary to anyone to enter within the pale of salvation. No amount of belief in Jesus as a person, or in the goodness of his character, can be of any avail unless accompanied by a belief in his teaching; not simply an acquiescence in his moral precepts, but an intelligent understanding of the doctrines he enunciated. The truth is declared by himself in the following words:—"He that rejecteth me, and *receiveth not my words*, hath one that judgeth him; *THE WORD THAT I HAVE SPOKEN the same shall judge him in the last day*; for I have not spoken of myself; but *the Father which sent me*, he gave me a commandment, *what I should say, and what I should speak*" (Jno. 12, 48-49). Jesus here teaches, not only that his hearers will be condemned for rejecting him, but for not receiving the words which he uttered in the days of his flesh; and he furthermore gives the reason, namely, that he had spoken that which his Father had commanded him to speak. Hence, to reject his teachings is to disbelieve God. And "he that believeth not God hath made him a liar"—(1 Jno. 5, 10).

How can anyone reasonably expect to find favour with God if he denies or even abstains from believing the words of truth which He has caused to be uttered through the mouth of Jesus? In the departments of literature, science, and art, it is not customary to reckon as disciples of a great man any but those who not merely make a profession of attachment to him, but who really and truly believe the theories or principles which he has promulgated. How, then, can any but those who truly believe with an understanding mind the great truths taught by the Son of God, be entitled to be called disciples of Jesus Christ? Few, probably, will demur to this proposition when stated in general terms. To put

their assent to the test, therefore, it is necessary to enter into particulars. For this purpose it is proposed to expound in order the great fundamental truths taught by Jesus Christ in the capacity of a prophet.

I—Gospel of the Kingdom of God

The career of Jesus Christ as a prophet commenced immediately after his baptism by John, and his temptation in the wilderness. It is described by Mark in the following clear and concise manner:—"After that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, *preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God*, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel"—(Mark I, 14-15).

Few words occupy a more prominent position in the religious language of the day than does the word "gospel". It is used as a short and convenient term to comprise the whole plan of salvation. It is generally held that a belief in the gospel is necessary to salvation; and, in view of Paul's statement that *the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation* to "every one that believeth" (Rom. I, 16), it is impossible to come to any other conclusion.

The next question to be determined is, Of what does the gospel consist? If an answer were to be given in accordance with the teaching of those who are called "Evangelical Christians", the gospel would be defined as good news concerning Christ's death. That it relates to Jesus Christ there can be no doubt; for Paul expressly denominates it "the gospel of Christ". But to say that it relates only to his death, is to give an unscriptural definition of it. It is called by the Evangelists, "The gospel of the kingdom of God." This identifies it as having reference to a certain kingdom.

Therefore, if it be necessary to believe the gospel in order to be saved, it is indispensable to understand "the

kingdom of God", for the gospel is "glad tidings of the kingdom of God" — (Luke 8, 1). Hence the exhortation of Jesus, in his sermon on the mount, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God*"—Matt. 6, 33). Not only did he exhort men to seek this "kingdom"; he showed them the way by which they might find it. This, indeed, was the very object for which he was sent as a prophet to the Jews. He himself declared it at the commencement of his ministry: — "I must PREACH *the kingdom of God* to other cities also; for THEREFORE AM I SENT"—(Luke 4, 43). No one believing Jesus to be a teacher sent by God to the Jews can fail to perceive that the message he was commissioned to deliver to them must be a very important one. It was recognised as such by Paul when he said, "How shall we escape if we neglect so GREAT SALVATION, *which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord*"?—(Heb. 2, 3).

A great salvation.

The significance of this question lies in the fact that it was written after the departure of Jesus to heaven, and during a dispensation in which no alteration has been made in the conditions necessary to salvation. The apostle denominates the message spoken by Jesus "a great salvation", and asks how any can escape who neglect it. Applying the testimony from Jesus' own lips already adduced, this is equal to saying, "How can we escape if we neglect the gospel of the kingdom of God, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?" It being fatal to the salvation of anyone in the apostles' days to neglect the "gospel of the kingdom", it is equally dangerous to disregard it now. How suicidal, then, for anyone who, knowing this, fails to make himself acquainted with the nature of that "kingdom"!

The idea of a kingdom pertaining to God was not new to the Jewish people when Jesus appeared among them as a prophet. They had been familiar with it from their very birth as a nation. Soon after their departure

out of Egypt they were told, through Moses, that if they obeyed God's voice, and kept His covenant, they should be unto Him "*a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation*"—Exod. 19, 6). In order to enable them to obtain this blessing, God provided them with a law, and appointed judges and priests to instruct and govern them: Moses discharging the former functions and Aaron the latter. It was enacted that Aaron's office should be filled by his descendants after his death; but no such provision was made in the case of Moses. His immediate successor was Joshua, after whose decease "the Lord raised them up judges"—(Judges 2, 18).

But ere long they grew tired of this form of government; they were ambitious of being like their neighbours, and therefore said to Samuel, "make us a king to judge us like all the nations"—(1 Sam. 8, 5). Samuel was displeased at this, and made it the subject of prayer to the Lord, who replied: "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but *they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them*. Hearken unto their voice, and *make them a king*"—(1 Sam. 8, 7-22).

The Kingdom of old.

Thus, in despising the judges whom God had raised up to rule and lead them, they in effect rejected him. Nevertheless, he was willing to grant their request, and so instructed Samuel to select one of their number to reign over them. The choice, by God's direction, fell upon Saul, who was anointed with oil by Samuel, to fill the office of a king—(1 Sam. 9, 16-17). In like manner David, the son of Jesse, was appointed to be his successor; an event subsequently referred to by the Lord in addressing David through Nathan, as follows:—"I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, *to be ruler over my people, over Israel*"—(2 Sam. 7, 8). At his death he was succeeded by his son Solomon, of whom

it is said, "Then *Solomon sat on THE THRONE OF THE LORD as king* instead of David his father"—(1 Chron. 29, 23). The children of Israel being God's chosen people, and their kings being appointed by Him, the seat of authority occupied by the latter, is appropriately called "the throne of the Lord", thereby distinguishing the kingdom of Israel from all other kingdoms of the earth.

Thus far the Israelites continued to be a united kingdom. But at Solomon's death a change came over the scene. Instead of having one immediate successor, he had two—Rehoboam and Jeroboam. The two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, remained faithful to the rightful heir, Rehoboam; but the other ten revolted, and gave their allegiance to Jeroboam, who was succeeded by a long line of kings. The establishment of a second kingdom was an act of rebellion against the line of kings appointed by God. The throne of the Lord still continued at Jerusalem; and the two tribes were still viewed as constituting God's kingdom. Hence Abijah, the successor of Rehoboam in the rulership of that kingdom, addressed Jeroboam, the head of the revolutionary tribes, in the following language: "And now ye think to withstand the *kingdom of the Lord*" (2 Chron. 13, 8).

The throne overturned.

From the time of this division until now, the twelve tribes have never been united as one kingdom under one king. The ten revolting tribes were subsequently carried by the Assyrians into a captivity from which they have never returned. And afterwards the two tribes suffered a similar fate at the hands of the Babylonians. At the end of seventy years, they were allowed to return; but they never afterwards existed as an independent kingdom, with a king appointed by God, and entirely free from the Gentile yoke, as in the days of Solomon. For, before the king of Babylon overthrew the kingdom, the prophet Ezekiel made the following announcement

respecting their king Zedekiah: — “Thou profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end—Thus saith the Lord God, *Remove the diadem and take off the crown*; this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and *it shall be no more until he come whose right it is, and a will give it him*”—Ezek. 21, 25 to 27).

This prediction shows how it is the Jews have never since been able to establish themselves as an independent kingdom; it has been decreed by the Almighty that such should not be the case. Furthermore, it indicates that there will be a time when that throne will be re-established:—“*It shall be no more until he come, whose right it is*”. The first part of the prediction having been fulfilled, no one ought to have any difficulty in believing that the latter portion will be fulfilled in an equally literal manner. The throne or kingdom which has been overturned is the same which is to be re-built when “he comes, whose right it is”.

The foregoing prediction was not the only intimation given to the Jewish nation of the future restoration of the throne and kingdom. The same prophet who foretold the doom of Zedekiah uttered the following unmistakable language:—“Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, *I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen*, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, *and bring them into their own land; and I will make them ONE NATION* in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and *ONE KING shall be king to them all*; and they shall be no more two nations, *neither shall they be divided into TWO KINGDOMS any more at all*”—(Ezek, 37, 21-22).

Regathering of Jews assured.

After what has been already said respecting certain prominent incidents in the history of the Jewish people,

it is scarcely necessary to point out the significance of this prediction. The fact that the twelve tribes have existed as "two kingdoms", is expressly alluded to. But a time is described when this will no longer be the case; when "the children of Israel", instead of being scattered "among the heathen", or Gentiles, shall be gathered together "into their own land," and exist as "one nation", with only "one king" to rule over them. In no way can this prediction be interpreted as having been already fulfilled; the language is too clear to enable anyone to find its counterpart in the history of the Jews since its utterance. It cannot have reference to any time preceding the destruction of Jerusalem; for after the captivity of the ten tribes, the whole twelve never again lived together in "their own land".

Only two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, were allowed to re-settle in the land of Canaan, and even they did not exist as an independent kingdom, with a king appointed by Jehovah. From the time of their return until their final dispersion, they were constantly under the yoke of various Gentile powers. And for several hundred years before the destruction of Jerusalem, they were deprived of Jehovah's presence in the temple, and had no prophets to guide and instruct them. This being the state of things previous to the destruction of Jerusalem, it is manifestly impossible that Ezekiel's prediction could have had any fulfilment before that event. Nay, that disastrous episode is in itself a proof that this prediction was not fulfilled previous to the destruction of Jerusalem; for the inspired utterance continues: "*Neither shall they defile themselves ANY MORE with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with ANY of their transgressions*" (v. 23); but "shall walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes" (v. 24).

Jerusalem was compassed with armies and desolated, and the Jews were led captive into all nations (Luke 21, 20-24), on account of their "transgressions" in disobey-

ing the Mosaic law, and crucifying the Messiah, and for the same reason they have continued in their present state of dispersion for nearly nine centuries. At the present day they still cling to the abrogated Mosaic law, and refuse to believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the prophet like unto Moses. It cannot, therefore, be said that they have no more *defiled* themselves with *any* of "their transgressions": from which it follows that the prediction has not been fulfilled since the destruction of their city. The conclusion, then, is inevitable, that they have yet to be gathered into the land of Palestine, to exist as an undivided nation, with one king to rule over them.

A standing miracle.

If necessary, abundant other testimony of like import could be adduced. The writings of the Hebrew prophets abound with glowing predictions respecting the time when the children of Israel will enjoy peace, power, happiness and prosperity unequalled by anything in the past. They all enunciate, but in more elaborate language, the concise and emphatic statement of Jeremiah:—"HE THAT SCATTERED ISRAEL WILL GATHER HIM, and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock"—(Jer-31, 10). There is no difficulty in understanding what is meant by Israel being "scattered"; the result of it is to be seen in every land where Jews are to be found. Their present condition is a standing miracle, attesting the truth of Old Testament prophecy; it is sometimes adduced, and properly so, to prove the truth of the religion of Jesus Christ. Equally strong proof does it afford of the future restoration of the twelve tribes from among the Gentiles; for the same God who has "scattered" them, has also said that they shall be "gathered". The gathering process will be precisely the reverse of the scattering. If there be one thing more clearly revealed in the Bible than another, it is this: the re-gathering of the Jews to the land of Canaan.

It was to a people possessing hopes in accordance with these promises, and to no other people, that Jesus came as a prophet:—"I am not sent," said he, "but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel"—(Matt. 15, 24). Can it be for one moment supposed that he would teach anything which would contradict what other prophets before him had predicted? Would God speak one thing "unto the fathers by the prophets", and speak something quite the reverse "by His Son"?—(Heb. 1, 1-2). The wisdom and consistency of the Almighty require that an emphatic negative be given to this question. There is, therefore *prima facie* evidence that Jesus did not proclaim anything which would render the re-establishment of Israel's kingdom unnecessary. On the contrary, evidence is furnished by several incidents in the course of his prophetic career which show that, in preaching the kingdom of God, he actually confirmed Jewish hopes on that point.

Jerusalem, the future world capital.

On one occasion, he "spake a parable *because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear*"—(Luke 19, 11). The throne of the kingdom of Israel had always been at Jerusalem; and it was predicted that the same city should be the capital of that kingdom when reconstituted: — "*The kingdom shall come to the daughter of JERUSALEM*"—(Micah 4, 8); "*The Lord shall inherit Judah . . . and shall choose Jerusalem again*"—(Zech. 2, 12). It was, therefore, very natural that those who had heard Jesus confirm the predictions of the Hebrew prophets, and who accompanied him in this journey to Jerusalem, should conclude that he was about, there and then, to reconstitute that kingdom. He did not destroy their hopes; he merely corrected them. He spake a parable to show them that the kingdom for which they were looking would not "immediately

appear". The purport of it was that he, as the heir, before taking possession of that kingdom, must go into "a far country", and then "return"; a parabolic prediction which has been partially fulfilled by his going to heaven, where he now is. He has not yet returned, however, and therefore the kingdom of God has not yet appeared.

In the course of one of his discourses addressed to "the chief priests and the elders of the people."—(Matt. 21, 23), Jesus gave utterance to the following significant prediction:—"THE KINGDOM OF GOD *shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof*"—(v. 43). After what has been already written, it is scarcely necessary to do more than point out how thoroughly is this passage in harmony with the language of the Old Testament writers. "The kingdom of God" to be "taken from the chief priests and elders of the people," could be no other than rulership over the Jews. True, they did not then exist as a perfect kingdom; they had no king of their own, being under the Roman yoke; but they still possessed a considerable amount of independence in religious matters, which gave the "chief priests" great power and influence. It was to this which Jesus referred, and it is evident that those to whom it was spoken understood his language in this light; for it is recorded that "when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, *they perceived that he spake of them*" (v. 45).

A "holy nation."

That they were to be deprived of ruling power was not the only thing Jesus predicted. As in the case of Ezekiel's prediction respecting the throne on which Zedekiah sat, the thing taken away is precisely the same as the thing to be given; and this is the point wherein lies the whole force of the passage. The "nation" to whom the kingdom of God is to be given consists of

all his faithful disciples, a portion of whom were addressed by him on one occasion, as follows:—"Fear not, little flock, for *it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*"—(Luke 12, 32). In the aggregate, the "little flock" comprises the whole number who are to be redeemed at Christ's second appearing; a community described by the apostle John as a "great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues"—(Rev. 7, 9), and therefore appropriately denominated "*an holy nation*"—(1 Peter 2, 9). To them will be given the kingdom of God, or rulership over the twelve tribes of Israel; but it will then be in a condition much more perfect than when it was taken from "the chief priests and Pharisees".

To the twelve apostles a special mission was assigned in this kingdom, defined by Jesus in the following words:—"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 the twelve tribes of Israel"—(Luke 22, 29-30). There can be no mistaking this language. Jesus does not simply speak about "a kingdom"; he furthermore defines it, and says that it consists of "judging (or ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel". Such a scene as this has never yet been witnessed. Instead of acknowledging the twelve apostles as rulers, the Jews persecuted them, and put some of them to death. But a time is coming when a very different state of things will be witnessed; when instead of being treated with contempt by their kinsmen, they will share with Jesus the rulership of the kingdom which has been given to him by the Father.

Premature hopes.

After receiving such clear and glorious promises as these, it is not surprising that the apostles should have been anxious for the time to come when they would realise them. They gave expression to their anxiety on

more than one occasion. The mother of two of them, who possessed the same hopes as her sons, being desirous that they should be specially honoured, made the following request to Jesus:—"Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom"—(Matt. 20, 21). If the hopes which had been created in the minds of the apostles were erroneous, this would have been a most fitting opportunity to correct them. But Jesus does not do anything of the kind. He rather confirms them by taking for granted that there will be such a kingdom as they expected, at the same time saying that it was not in his power to bestow this special honour:—"To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father*"—(v. 23).

A somewhat similar incident occurred after Christ's resurrection, and before his ascension to heaven. Between these two events a period of forty days elapsed, during which he appeared unto the apostles and spoke "of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."—(Acts 1, 3). This instruction stimulated the desires which Jesus had previously created in the minds of the apostles to "sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel"; and hence they were led to ask the question, "Lord, wilt thou at *this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*" (v. 6); thereby showing that "the kingdom of God" of which Jesus had been speaking was another name for the restored kingdom of Israel. To say, as some do, that the apostles misunderstood him, and continued in a state of ignorance respecting the very nature of the kingdom, even after Christ had been teaching them, more or less, during a period of forty days, is unreasonable and contrary to fact. Indeed, it is evident that they must have understood the nature of the kingdom even before the crucifixion.

Preaching the kingdom.

This was not the first time they had listened to him on this subject. They had frequently received from him, in private, clear explanations of what he had, to the outside public, taught in the more enigmatical form of parables. And therefore they, of all others, may be presumed, by the end of three years during which they accompanied him, to have had their ideas brought into conformity with his own, on this most important subject of his teaching. They had also themselves preached about it. It is recorded by Luke that Jesus "called his twelve disciples together," and "*sent them to preach the kingdom of God*"—(Luke 9, 1-2). Is it probable, or even possible, that Jesus would send any twelve men to preach about that of which they were ignorant, or respecting which they were vitally in error?

This question being, of course, answered in the negative, no other conclusion can be arrived at than that the apostles correctly understood the nature of "the kingdom of God", before Jesus sent them to preach about it. Their question to him, after his resurrection, had reference, not to the nature of the kingdom, but to the time for its establishment. Accordingly, Jesus, in his answer, confined himself to that point, thereby, in effect, confirming their belief that the kingdom of Israel would be restored at some future time. They, therefore, continued to hold the same belief after his departure to heaven and their enlightenment by the Holy Spirit.

Abundant evidence of this could be adduced, but the following statement of Peter's respecting Jesus Christ must suffice:—"Whom the heaven must receive until *the times of restitution of all things*, which God hath spoken by the mouth of *all his holy prophets* since the world began"—(Acts 3, 21). The word "restitution" denotes a *restoration* or *re-establishment* of something which has been overthrown, and not the establishment of a state of things which never previously existed.

Moreover, the "restitution" here spoken of is something predicted by the prophets. Now as the only restitution foretold by the prophets has relation to things Jewish, there is no escape from the conclusion that the event here referred to by Peter is the re-establishment of the kingdom of Israel.

What God's "holy prophets" have spoken respecting "the times of restitution of all things" has already been made clear by some samples from their writings. It has relation to that time when the children of Israel will be no more scattered among the Gentiles, nor be divided into two kingdoms, but have one king to rule over them all; a day in which God "will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen" and "build it *as in the days of old*"—(Amos 9, 11; Acts 15, 16).

Crucifixion not the whole gospel.

There is a prevalent impression in the religious world that the gospel which Jesus and the apostles preached before the crucifixion comprised instruction concerning the death on the cross. No greater mistake than this could possibly be made; and, where it exists, it is proof that the gospel necessary to be believed for salvation is not understood. Jesus did not publicly proclaim his death before its occurrence. He only gave enigmatical intimations of it even to the twelve: and they did not understand him. On one occasion, after talking to them about going to Jerusalem to "be delivered unto the Gentiles", who, he said, should "put him to death" it is recorded that "*they understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken*"—(Luke 18, 34).

Previous to this event, as already seen, Jesus had "sent them to preach the kingdom of God." The same chapter records that "they departed, and went through the towns *preaching the gospel*"—(Luke 9, 6). Thus

they went about Palestine "preaching the gospel" at a time when they were ignorant about Jesus having to suffer death. How, then, could the gospel which they preached comprise 'the crucifixion? It is obvious that it could not. It was because of their ignorance of, and unpreparedness for, this event that, when it drew near, "all the disciples forsook him and fled"—(Matt. 26, 56); and that two of them were led to express such disappointment when it had occurred, and before they knew of his resurrection, by saying, "*We trusted that it had been he which should have REDEEMED ISRAEL*"—(Luke 24, 21).

What the apostles preached.

The subject-matter of apostolic preaching before the crucifixion, as has already been shown, was "the kingdom of God". The apostles, as well as Jesus, preached "the gospel of the kingdom of God," which Jesus exhorted men to "seek", and which Paul called a "great salvation". It was not until after the crucifixion that they preached anything about Christ's death as a sacrifice. And even then they did not discontinue preaching the "gospel of the kingdom". Before his departure Jesus gave them express injunctions as to their duty in this matter:—"Go ye into all the world, and *preach the gospel* to every creature"—(Mark 16, 15). He further defined the conditions of salvation, saying, "*He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*" (v. 16).

The "gospel" to be believed was the "gospel of the kingdom of God", which they had hitherto been preaching. If, after what has been already adduced, this should be doubted, the following prediction of him who gave to the apostles their commission should entirely remove it:—"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come"—(Matt. 24, 14).

That this prediction was fulfilled by the apostles is evident from the narrative of their labours, and the epistles written by them. Paul expressly states that the "hope of the gospel . . . was preached to every creature which is under heaven"—(Col. 1, 23).

The difference between their preaching before and their preaching after the crucifixion was, that at the commencement of the latter period they added certain particulars respecting that event, of which they were previously ignorant. Thus Peter, on the day of Pentecost declared that *Jesus was the fruit of David's loins destined to sit upon David's throne*, and that although he had been crucified at the hands of wicked men, their purpose had been frustrated by his resurrection, and that God had made him Lord and Christ. Therefore, he exhorted his kinsmen to "*Repent and be baptised . . . in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins*"—(Acts 2, 22-38).

The evangelist Philip, when he "preached Christ" to the Samaritans, made known to them "*the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ*"—(Acts 8, 12). Peter, in his first discourse to the Gentiles, in the house of Cornelius, reminded his hearers of "*the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ . . . throughout all Judea,*" and then declared that, although Jesus had been slain and hanged on a tree by the Jews, God had raised him from the dead, and enacted that "*through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*"—(Acts 10, 34-43).

Remission of sins.

The discourse of Peter on the day of Pentecost was the first occasion on which remission of sins, through the name of Jesus Christ, was preached to Jews, and the address in the house of Cornelius was the first occasion on which this great truth was proclaimed to Gentiles.

That this did not render unnecessary the proclamation and belief of the "kingdom of God", is apparent from Peter's allusion to the throne of that kingdom, and his reference to "the word" preached by Jesus, which, as already shown, was "the gospel of the kingdom of God." In the record of Philip's preaching, it is styled "*the things concerning the kingdom of God*". In like manner it is said of Paul that, when in Rome, "*he expounded and testified*" THE KINGDOM OF GOD, persuading them concerning Jesus both "*out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets*"—(Acts 28, 23).

To Gentiles such a statement as this must be particularly interesting, because Paul was commissioned to preach especially to them. It shows that they, as well as Jews, must believe in the "kingdom of God," or the restoration of the kingdom of Israel, as set forth in the writings of "Moses and the prophets", in addition to the facts and doctrines pertaining to the death of Jesus Christ. These two items having been joined together by God, cannot be parted asunder, except with the certainty of losing eternal life. Both Jews and Gentiles commit this suicidal act. The former believe in the restoration of Israel's kingdom, but deny that Jesus of Nazareth is their Saviour and the anointed king of that kingdom; while the latter believe that Jesus is the Saviour of men, and a king in some sense, but deny that his kingdom is to be a restoration of God's kingdom in the past. Before either class can be in harmony with apostolic teaching, they must repair their defective belief by adding that item which is deficient. Until they do this, they do not believe the gospel which the apostles preached; and as a consequence, come under the anathema of 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. 1, 8).

Salvation and the kingdom.

To anyone whose attention has not been previously called to this subject the question may naturally occur, What connection is there between the "kingdom of God" and "salvation"? The scriptural answer is, that salvation is only to be enjoyed through means of that kingdom: those who enter it will obtain eternal life, but those who do not will not obtain eternal life. The "kingdom" and "life" are sometimes used interchangeably:— "*It is better for thee to enter halt INTO LIFE than having two feet to be cast into hell*"—(Mark 9, 45); "*It is better for thee TO ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD with one eye*", etc. (v. 47). Thus, to "enter into life" is "to enter into the kingdom". This important event is referred to by Jesus in his description of the day of judgment. He represents the Judge as saying to the righteous, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, *inherit the kingdom* prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25, 34); and subsequently, in defining their destiny, he says, "The righteous (shall go) *into life eternal*"—(v. 46). Those who "inherit the kingdom" are the same class as those who go "into life eternal".

Speaking on another occasion to some of those who will be excluded therefrom, Jesus said, "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. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall *sit down in the kingdom of God*"—Luke 13, 28-29). Let all who are anxious to obtain eternal life and to be included among those who will go from the east and west and north and south parts of the earth, to the Holy Land, and be with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets, in the "kingdom of God", prepare themselves for this high destiny by believing in the glad

tidings concerning that kingdom which were proclaimed by Jesus Christ in his prophetic capacity.

II—The Second Appearing of Jesus Christ

The future advent of Jesus has, until recent years, been almost wholly ignored by both Church and Dissent. And even now it is very seldom that a sermon is preached about it in the places of worship of either class. When it does happen to be "referred" to, it is done in such a manner as to convey the impression that it is a matter rather of curiosity or speculation, than one which is an integral part of the Divine plan of salvation. Religious teachers of all denominations are very fond of dwelling upon the appearance of Jesus Christ as "a man of sorrows" but they have comparatively little to say respecting his manifestation as "the King of Glory". And yet the latter cannot be a matter of insignificance, as it occupies a much more prominent position in the Scriptures than does the former. The principal features of his second appearing are quite as clearly foretold as were the incidents connected with his first appearing before that appearing took place. Neither of them must occupy a too prominent position at the expense of the other; both have their place, and are equally necessary to a comprehension of the plan of salvation. The one is the foundation, and the other is the superstructure. Without the former the latter could not exist; and without the latter the former would be utterly useless.

Among his various sayings, Jesus did not fail to give intimations of his departure from the earth, and of his subsequent return; albeit they were not understood at the time they were uttered. On one occasion, speaking of himself as a bridegroom, he said, "The days will come when *the bridegroom shall be taken away* from them (his disciples), and then shall they fast"

—(Mark 2, 20). Adopting the same figurative language, clothed in the form of a parable, he represents his future return as a bridegroom coming to a wedding:—“Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him” (Matt. 25, 6). The lesson taught by the parable is subsequently given in the following exhortation:—“Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein *the Son of man cometh*”—(v. 13).

A personal return.

In predicting his departure from the earth, he told both the Jews and his disciples that they could not follow him:—“Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and, *as I said unto the Jews, WHITHER I GO YE CANNOT COME, so now I say to you*”—(Jno. 13, 33). This intimation, which excludes the notion that any of the apostles have followed their Master to heaven, made the twelve very sad; whereupon Jesus proceeded to comfort them, saying, “Let not your heart be troubled; . . . If I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again and receive you unto myself*, that where I am there ye may be also”—(Jno. 14, 1-3). Notwithstanding this plain consolatory promise, the apostles were still in ignorance as to his true meaning; and not until after his departure were they able to realise it. On that memorable occasion “when a cloud received Jesus out of their sight”, their amazement was manifested by their looking “steadfastly toward heaven as he went up”. But, while thus gazing, two men stood by them in white apparel, who said, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? *This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven*”—(Acts 1, 9-11).

With such an explicit declaration as this, it is impossible to doubt that the same Jesus who was on this earth nineteen centuries ago, will yet at some future day return

to it; and that the coming here referred to is to be a personal one is clearly shown by the use of the phrase, "*in like manner*". When that event occurs, it will not be for the purpose of burning it up, and then returning to heaven; for frequent as are the promises that he will come back to this earth, nowhere is it even hinted at that he will ever again leave it. He comes to receive all his faithful disciples to himself, that they may realise the promise which he gave in his sermon on the mount:— "*Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth*" —(Matt. 5, 5).

The purpose of his coming.

Jesus did not, during his prophetic career, content himself with merely announcing the fact that he was to come again in power and glory. He further showed some of the objects of that coming. Among these, the most important to such as form part of the Bride waiting for the Bridegroom, is undoubtedly the Judgment. The utterances of Jesus on this topic are neither few nor uncertain; and are clothed in both literal and parabolic language. Using the name which he usually applied to himself, he declares that "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., 16, 27). Jesus Christ has not yet appeared in glory, consequently he has not yet "rewarded every man according to his works".

Previous to the bestowal of either reward or punishment, he will judge those who are then brought before him, for the purpose of deciding what destiny each one deserves. The course of procedure on this occasion is illustrated by the parable of the nobleman who went into a far country, and who, on his return, called together his servants, to receive an account from them as to the use they had made, during his absence, of certain property previously committed to their care. Those

who had used it to advantage were blessed and rewarded, but he who had made no use of it was censured and punished—(Luke 19, 11-25). In the same way when Jesus returns from heaven he will arraign before him all who have professed the “one faith”, to evoke from their own mouths a confession of their conduct during their probationary career; whereupon he will give the faithful authority over a certain number of “cities” in the “kingdom of God”, according to their different degrees of merit, while the unfaithful will be cast into outer darkness.

Separating sheep and goats.

The same event is similarly described by Jesus on another occasion, when the righteous and the wicked are represented by sheep and goats. They are to be brought before him, “*when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him*”—(Matt. 25, 31). “He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats”—(v. 32). After addressing each class separately upon their respective merits and demerits, and having received their replies thereto, he gives permission to the former to enter the “kingdom”, and bestows on them eternal life; but the latter he consigns to a fire which will burn until they are utterly consumed. It is of such as will be included in the latter class that Jesus speaks when he says, “Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, *of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels*”—(Mark 8, 38).

Seeing that Jesus has not yet returned from the “far country”, it is obvious that none of his servants, faithful or unfaithful, has been either rewarded or punished. Consequently, those who teach that the righteous and the wicked enter upon their eternal destiny at death,

affirm that which is contrary to what Jesus taught. He pointed not to death, but to his second appearing, as the time when each class would enter upon their everlasting weal or woe. And it is because this truth is lost sight of, that the importance and significance of Christ's future advent are so little understood. In this respect there is an immense difference between so-called Christians of today and the disciples of Christ in the first century. Paul, in writing to some of the latter, says, "Ye turned unto God from idols to serve the living and the true God, and *to wait for his Son from Heaven*"—(1 Thes. 1, 9-10). The hope of the Thessalonian Christians was not to go to heaven at death, but to be rewarded when God's Son returns from heaven.

Heaven going illogical.

The same may truthfully be said of all the other faithful in apostolic times; of which abundant evidence could be adduced from the New Testament; but the above must suffice here. Believing, as they did, Paul's statement that "*Unto them that look for him (Christ) shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation*"—(Heb. 9, 28), they set all their affections on that glorious event as their only hope; for they knew that if they were not then looking for him, his appearance would not to them be "unto salvation". It is quite as necessary to adopt the same course in the present day as it was then. Those who believe in going to heaven at death cannot be said to do this, and therefore they will not be included among those to whom Jesus "will appear a second time unto salvation". It is useless for anyone to flatter himself that he can consistently believe both; the two doctrines are as antagonistic to each other as are light and darkness; the one cannot be believed without nullifying the other.

In order that the second appearing of Jesus may be the "one hope", and be longed for as the most desired

of all events, the idea of heaven-going at death must be discarded as a false hope, based on the traditions of an apostate church. Jesus never taught it; nor did his apostles. Neither did he nor they teach the modified form of that notion which is rapidly gaining ground at the present time, that the righteous and the wicked enter at death on a partial reward or punishment, each of which is supposed to be increased to its full intensity after the great day of Judgment. To affirm this dogma is to render the doctrine of the Judgment of none effect, and reduce the work of judgment at the future advent of Jesus to an unmeaning ceremony.

It matters not whether they be supposed to enter at death upon a partial or a full manifestation of God's favour or anger; in either case their eternal destiny is fixed, and all necessity for any further judgment entirely removed. To represent them as going to heaven or to hell-fire at death, and then being brought out at a future day to appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, is to charge God with first consigning them to their eternal place of abode, and then bringing them out to ascertain whether they ought to have gone there or not; which is equal to saying that he manifests less justice and wisdom in His dealings with man, than does man himself towards his fellow-mortals.

Wholesale conversion excluded.

Among the various false ideas prevalent respecting Christ's future advent, there are none more delusive and injurious than that which is known as the post-millennial view. Those who profess this, teach that by means of the various religious and philanthropic agencies of the day, the world will be gradually converted, until all the inhabitants of the earth acknowledge the one God, and believe the Gospel; and that then His Son will come from heaven for the purpose of burning up this globe, and taking back with him all who are entitled to live

with him for ever. According to this view, the numbers of those holding the true faith at the time of Christ's future advent must comprise nearly the whole population then living on the earth. As if to provide against such a false idea as this, Jesus asks the significant question, "*When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith (or, the faith) on the earth?*" — (Luke 18, 8), thereby indicating that when he comes, the "one faith" will be very scarce; a state of things which certainly could not exist if all the earth were to be converted and made righteous before his second appearing.

The intimation conveyed in this question is more fully and clearly stated in subsequent parts of the New Testament. The apostles predicted a great falling away from the faith, which would grow worse and worse until it developed into an organised apostasy; and when its cup of iniquity was full, Jesus would abolish it. Paul described this falling away as "the mystery of iniquity", which he said was already at work, and predicted that after all hindrances to its progress were removed, "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom *the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming*"—(2 Thess. 2, 7-8). Anyone acquainted with ecclesiastical history knows that the former part of this prediction has been amply verified; and those who have taken the trouble to examine the leading features of this and other predictions of like import, have no difficulty in identifying the Papacy as being the development of "the mystery of iniquity" which, as the Great Apostacy, overshadows all Christendom. And it is but necessary to look at current events in order to see that it is ripening for that destruction which is to take place when the Lord Jesus comes in power and glory.

On the post-millennial theory, the exhortations of Jesus to his disciples to watch, that they may be ready for his return, lose all their force and meaning. So also

do the exhortations of the apostles, which are of like import. For, if a thousand years must necessarily intervene before Jesus returns to this earth, it is impossible that he can come during the lifetime of those who live in the dispensation that precedes it; and, as a consequence, it is utterly useless for them to look for the occurrence of that event before their death.

Signs of the advent.

When Jesus was manifested to the Jews, he rebuked some of them because they did "not discern the signs of the times"—(Matt. 16, 3). This proves that there were signs to indicate his first appearing; and thereby enable those who were attentive to be prepared for him. For the same purpose he has given signs to point out to his disciples the epoch in the world's history when he will appear a second time.

The Apocalypse, commonly styled "The Revelation of St. John," is almost full of these signs. It was given by Jesus "to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass"; and he sent and signified it (that is, made it known by signs) "by his angel unto his servant John"—(Rev. 1, 1). It is not intended here to show what these signs are. Sufficient is it to point out that a blessing is pronounced on those who study them:—"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein"—(v. 3). Many are the intimations given in this prophecy of his coming again. Perhaps the most significant is that which says, "Behold, I come as a thief" (ch. 16, 15); that is, unexpectedly, in the nighttime of the world's history, when mankind are slumbering in ignorance, superstition, and tradition.

This intimation is immediately followed by a blessing and a warning pregnant with meaning:—"Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame"—(v. 15).

Only such as believe that Jesus will come before the millennium can comply with his exhortation, by watching the signs of the times, and walking worthy of their high calling, in order that they may be found "unblameable in holiness . . . at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"—(1 Thess. 3, 13). None other can, in response to the closing statement of Jesus, "Surely I come quickly", say, with the apostle John, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus"—(Rev. 22, 20).

III—The Reward Promised to the Righteous

Not the least important of the many offices which Jesus claims to fill is that defined in the phrase, "I am the Resurrection and the Life"—(Jno. 11, 25). Its meaning is somewhat elucidated by a statement made by him on another occasion:—"I am come that they (the Jews) *might have* LIFE, and that they might have it more abundantly"—(Jno. 10, 10). There is no antagonism between this passage and that already quoted, in which he says that he came to "preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 4, 43). He came to preach "the gospel of the kingdom", that the Jews, by believing it, might obtain eternal life and enjoy it in that kingdom. Believing him to be an impostor, they would not seek life through him, and hence he was led to say to them, "Ye will not come to me, *that ye might have* LIFE"—(Jno. 5, 40). But of the opposite class, whom he styles his "sheep", who "hear his voice", he says, "*I give unto them eternal life*"—(Jno. 10, 28).

Religious people are so accustomed to hearing and repeating Bible phrases, without exercising their understandings to ascertain their meaning, that it is necessary to point out the import of the above quotations. The "life" which Jesus offered to the Jews is not, of course, natural life, such as men now enjoy: it is something

higher and far superior. Jesus styles it "eternal life". He says he gives this to a certain class who hear him, or, in other words, believe and obey him. It is, therefore, a gift bestowed on certain conditions; and, as all men do not comply with such conditions, it is something which all men cannot possess.

These conclusions will receive general assent until it is shown to what they logically lead. This arises from the widespread custom of interpreting "eternal life" to be merely happiness. By this means Jesus is reduced from the high position of a life-giver, to that of a mere bestower of happiness. For this there is no warrant whatever. To show the fallacy of this system of interpretation, it is but necessary to observe that if "life" meant happiness, it would be impossible to speak of a happy life for the righteous or of a miserable life for the wicked; the former would be tantamount to a *happy happiness*, and the latter to *miserable happiness*; which would be absurd. Jesus does not say that he came simply to give happiness; he came to give "life" itself which, as a matter of course, will be accompanied with happiness.

"Immortality of the soul" a pagan idea.

Respecting those who do not comply with the conditions imposed, he says they "*shall not see LIFE*"—(John 3, 36). These declarations cut at the root of the doctrine of man's natural immortality by proving that men do not by nature possess a life which will never end, but that only a certain portion will ultimately become the recipients of this great gift. So far, therefore, from Jesus being, as some people suppose, a supporter of the pagan doctrine of the immortality of the soul, he taught truths which prove it to be a part of "the wisdom of this world", which "is destined to come to nought"—(1 Cor. 2, 6).

A careful examination will necessitate the same conclusion with regard to all that God has revealed respecting the nature of man, Moses records that the first man was originally made "a living soul"—(Gen. 2, 7), a term applied to beasts as well as to man; that he was threatened, as a punishment for eating of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil", with death (Gen. 2, 17), a thing as opposite to life as darkness is to light; and that when he transgressed, the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden . . . *lest he* put forth his hand and *take also of the tree of life, and eat, AND LIVE FOR EVER*"—Gen. 3, 22-23).

Such an action as this on the part of the Almighty is only possible on the hypothesis that Adam did not by nature possess the power to "live for ever", or, in other words, was not endowed with immortality. All his descendants being of the same nature, they also have no inherent immortality; they all died as he died. It may be said of each of them, as it was said of him, "*Dust THOU art, and unto dust shalt THOU return*"—(Gen. 3, 19). They all return to the ground from whence they were taken; and were no further action taken in regard to them, they would remain there for ever, and "be as though they had not been"—Obad. v. 16).

The way of life.

But God has graciously provided another "tree of life", to replace that of which Adam was not permitted to partake. That "tree" is Jesus Christ who calls himself "the true vine"—(John 15, 1), and says, through the apostle John "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life"—(Rev. 22, 14). Hence Jesus said, "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me"—(John 6, 57). Before this promise can be fulfilled, those who have died must become the subjects of a change; they must be brought from the death-state in which "there is no remem-

brance of God" (Ps. 6, 5),—for "the dead know not anything" (Eccles. 9, 5)—into a state of life; a process which is termed in the Scriptures "resurrection". Jesus looked forward to this event when he said, "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and *shall come forth*: they that have done good, *unto the resurrection of life*; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation"—(Jno. 5, 28-29).

The enjoyment of "life", it will be observed, does not take place until the dead have come forth from the grave, where there is no work, nor device, nor "knowledge, nor wisdom"—Eccles. 9, 10). The reward of the righteous, therefore, cannot be realised until the resurrection. Jesus has removed all room for doubt or controversy on this point by saying, "*Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just*"—(Luke 14, 14). And, having also declared that he will reward man when he "comes in his glory", it follows that the resurrection will take place at the second appearing of Jesus Christ. Not until then can he perform the functions implied in his title, "The Resurrection and the Life", nor until then can any of those who have eaten of him now, by digesting his "wholesome words", be permitted to eat of "the tree of life" and live for ever.

IV—The Punishment of the Wicked

The truth proclaimed by Jesus, already dwelt upon, that none can obtain life everlasting except through him, affords sufficient data on which to determine, to some extent, the nature of the punishment to which the wicked will be consigned. It proves that they cannot live for ever in a state of either bliss or woe; and thus supplies a principle which renders the doctrine of eternal torments an impossibility.

All men being under sentence of death by reason of their first parents' transgression, and only the righteous

being entitled to unending life, the wicked must inevitably be consigned to unending death, that is, to be blotted out of existence for ever. Were it not that men's eyes are blinded with the fable of man's natural immortality, they would see this truth in such statements as the following:—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him *should not perish* but have everlasting life"—(Jno. 3, 16). Only by assuming that all men live for ever in either happiness or misery, and perverting language from its ordinary and correct meaning, can such words as "perish" be interpreted to mean everlasting life in a state of torment. Take away the immortality of the soul as anti-scriptural, and that religious bugbear, the eternal torment of the wicked, vanishes like a myth. It was never taught either by Jesus or his apostles.

Wicked to be extinguished.

The "prophet like unto Moses," instead of teaching the necessity for preserving the wicked throughout all eternity either to inflict a punishment upon them out of all proportion to the sins of a short life, or to appease the wrath of an offending God — represents them as being so utterly worthless as to be fit only to be blotted out of existence. He compares them to a "tree that bringeth not forth good fruit", and which is therefore hewn down and "*cast into the fire*" (Matt. 7, 17-19); to "tares" which the reapers will gather together and "bind in bundles *to burn*" (Matt. 13, 30) and to the withered "branches" of a tree which men gather and "*cast into the fire, and they are burned*"—(Jno. 15, 6). On the supposition that the wicked are to be cast into a fire which will be continually burning them, but never consume them, these similitudes can have no force or meaning; for fruitless trees, tares, and withered branches, are all corruptible substances which cannot resist the action of fire. Had the wicked been repre-

sented by such durable substances as "gold, silver, or precious stones", there might have been some ground for concluding that they would not be naturally influenced by the action of fire; but as they are symbolised by "tares", and withered "branches", it is contrary to all reason and experience to suppose that they will be ever burning, but never burnt. It is true they are to be cast "into the fire that never shall be quenched" (Mark 9, 43); but this so far from confirming the idea that the wicked are to be preserved for ever, affords evidence against it; for, when a fire is not quenched, it is allowed to burn until all the fuel with which it has been supplied is consumed.

This will be the fate of the wicked; the fire will be allowed to burn until they are utterly consumed. The city of Jerusalem has already been subjected to the operation of a fire which is described in precisely similar terms by Jeremiah:—"It shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and *it shall not be quenched*"—(Jer. 17, 27). The fire in this case was allowed to operate until all that was combustible was burnt up. Thus will it be with the wicked: to be cast into unquenchable fire is a proof that there will be no reprieve from the punishment threatened; that the fire, instead of being prematurely extinguished, will be allowed to burn until its work is completely accomplished. Well, therefore, might Jesus warn his disciples to "*fear him who is able to DESTROY both soul and body in hell*"—(Matt. 10, 28).

"The second death."

The question as to when this consuming fire will operate has already been determined; namely, not at death, but after the Judgment, which is to take place at the second appearing of Jesus Christ. Then it is that "they who have done evil" come forth "unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jno. v, 29); then it is that they are "cast into the furnace of fire", where "there

shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13, 50); in which they will suffer "many stripes", or "few stripes", according to their several degrees of guilt—(Luke 12, 47-48). Then will all who are so unworthy as to be included in this category, realise the prediction of Jesus that "on whomsoever it (the stone which the builders rejected) shall fall, it will *grind him to powder*" (Matt. 21, 44); thereby crushing out all life, and mercifully preventing them from living for ever in an uninterrupted state of sin and misery. This will be to them the termination of that "broad way" which "leadeth to *destruction*" (Matt. 7, 13)—not to eternal torments. To all who will be subjects of "the resurrection of damnation", it will be the second time they will have been deprived of life. It is, therefore, appropriately termed "*the second death*"—(Rev. 21, 8).

But between the two deaths there will have been this difference. The former will, in most cases, have been a natural death, such as is common to all mankind generally, whereas the latter will be a violent death, preceded by intense mental and physical suffering, inflicted because of individual and wilful disobedience. The former will have been interrupted by a restoration to life (the resurrection of the "unjust"); but the latter will never be interrupted by any resurrection whatever: it will continue through the countless ages of eternity, with no hope whatever that those who are held in its iron grip will ever be disturbed from their "perpetual sleep" (Jer. 51, 57). It will thus be to them the most effectual "everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25, 46) which the Almighty could have devised; for it will deprive them of all possible hope or chance of securing that "everlasting life" which was offered to them, and which they had the opportunity of securing; a privilege of which they failed to make a proper use.

V—Obedience to Christ

Amongst the conditions of salvation taught by Jesus, not one of them occupies a more prominent position than that of obedience. It has already been shown that a belief of what Jesus taught is indispensable to enable anyone to obtain "eternal life", and enter the "kingdom of God". Equally necessary is it to obey what he commanded. No prophet or apostle enunciates this with greater emphasis than does "the Prophet like unto Moses." In answer to one having great possessions, who asked him what he must do to obtain eternal life, Jesus said, "*If thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS*"—(Matt. 19, 17). To his twelve disciples he said, "*Ye are my friends, IF ye do whatsoever I command you*" (Jno. 15, 14); a statement which is rendered more significant by being associated with the preceding verse:—"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for *his friends*"—(v. 13). The truth thus abstractly stated is an accurate definition of what Jesus did; he "laid down his life for his friends", that is, for those who do whatsoever he commands, and for none others. Thus none but those who are obedient to what God has commanded through Jesus Christ, can participate in the efficacy of his atoning blood, enjoy eternal life, and enter the "kingdom of God".

Love and obedience.

To these general conclusions most religious people will assent. But to stop here is not sufficient; generalities are the bane of the religious world; they perpetuate the prevalent dislike to precise definitions based on divine testimony. It is very common to make great professions of love for Jesus; a boast is made by some that they "love all who love the Lord Jesus"; but they seldom attempt to test that love by the definition Jesus himself gives in addressing his twelve disciples:—

“ If ye love me, keep my commandments ”; “ He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me ”; “ *If a man love me he will keep my words* ”; “ He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings ”—(Jno. 14, 15, 21, 23, 24). If this test were applied to the multitudes who profess to love Jesus, it would be found that all but an infinitesimal portion do so in word only, not in deed. All such empty profession, however loudly proclaimed, is not acceptable to God, and therefore not sufficient to entitle anyone to the name of a disciple of Jesus Christ. The terms *love* and *obedience* are in the Scriptures synonymous; love manifests itself, not in words, but in actions, in man submitting his will to the will of God.

The commandments of Jesus, as everyone familiar with his discourses is aware, are very numerous. One of the first which he gave was “ Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness ”—(Matt. 6, 33). The importance of attending to this has already been shown under the heading, “ The Gospel of the kingdom of God ”. The next most important command is one of those which, between Jesus Christ’s resurrection and ascension, “ he through the Holy Spirit has given unto the apostles ”—(Acts 1, 2). It is contained in their commission to “ preach the gospel ”:—“ He that believeth (the gospel) *and is baptised*, shall be saved ” — (Mark 16, 16).

Baptism imperative.

The meaning and importance of this command cannot be better shown than by the mode in which the apostles carried it out. That they preached the gospel wherever they went in the civilised world, is apparent from the narratives contained in the “ Acts of the Apostles ”. Equally clear is it that whenever they did so preach, they enjoined baptism as an ordinance which must accompany belief of the Gospel in order to make

that belief efficacious. They did not, as is the custom now-a-days, tell their hearers that compliance with it was a matter of choice, and must be left to the conscience of each individual. On the contrary, they enforced it as a necessary preliminary to either Jews or Pagans becoming Christians. Such a thing was not known among the apostolic churches as that of admitting an unbaptised believer. Why, then, can such a thing be possible in the twentieth century, seeing that no change has since been made in the conditions upon which salvation is offered?

On the day of Pentecost, Peter said to the Jews, "Repent *and be baptised every one of you*, in the name of Jesus Christ"—(Acts 2, 38). In this way did he commence the fulfilment of the prediction of Jesus, "that *repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name*, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem"—(Luke 24, 47). Never before had this doctrine been proclaimed to the Jews. Previously they had been required to believe the "gospel of the kingdom", and that Jesus was the Messiah, and then submit to the baptism of John. But after Christ had fulfilled the mission pertaining to his first appearing, it was necessary to believe "the things concerning the kingdom of God *and the name of Jesus Christ*", and be baptised into the name of Jesus.

The same truths were proclaimed by Peter when the gospel was preached for the first time to Gentiles. As soon as their belief had been attested by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which enabled them to "speak with tongues", Peter "*commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord*"—Acts 10, 48). The same course was pursued on all subsequent occasions when the apostles preached the gospel to the Gentiles. Paul, the specially-appointed apostle to the non-Jewish world—who, immediately after conversion, submitted to the ordinance of baptism, that he might "wash

away" his "sins" (Acts 22, 16)—is recorded to have baptised Lydia and her household in the city of Philippi (Acts 16, 15), the jailor and his household in the same city (v. 33), and some of the believers at Corinth—(Acts 18, 8). He even went so far, while at Ephesus, as to require about twelve men who had only submitted to John's baptism (Acts 19, 1-7), to be re-baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Immersion the appointed way.

That the ordinance of baptism cannot be performed without water is evident from the question asked by Peter in the house of Cornelius, "*Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised?*"—(Acts 10, 47). That it consists of *immersion in water* is shown by the fact that Philip and the eunuch "went down both *into the water . . . and he baptised him*" (Acts 8, 38); and by Paul's comparing it to a burial (Rom. 6, 4). That it is not a baptism of Spirit is proved by Peter's commanding the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius to be baptised with water *after* they had received the Holy Spirit—(Acts 10, 45-47). That it is not designed for infants, is apparent from its association with belief of the gospel. Infants cannot believe, and therefore they are not fit subjects for baptism, that is, immersion; for sprinkling is the mere invention of an apostate church. And the absolute necessity of submitting to this ordinance is forcibly stated by Jesus in his conversation with Nicodemus:—" *Except a man be born of water and of the spirit HE CANNOT ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD*"—(John 3, 5).

To be "born of water" is not simply to be sprinkled with water; it can only be effected by a person being immersed in water, and then emerging from it. But before such a birth can be scripturally accomplished the individual must be begotten. The apostle James shows how the begettal is effected, when he says that God

“begat us with the word of truth” (Jas. 1, 18); and Paul enunciates the same thing in other words, when he says to the Corinthians, “I have begotten you through the gospel”—(1 Cor. 4, 15). A person having been begotten by a belief of the gospel, is in a condition to be immersed, by which he is “born of water”. The necessity for belief preceding this ordinance is clearly shown by Jesus placing the former before the latter:—“He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved”. But care must be taken that the belief comprises “the gospel of the kingdom of God” preached by Jesus. Any immersion which is not accompanied by a correct belief is utterly worthless, being no better in the sight of God than an ordinary bath.

Was your baptism valid?

If the reader be one of those who have been submerged in water by any existing religious denomination, he will be able to perceive, from what has already been adduced respecting the “kingdom of God”, whether he possessed, at that time, a belief such as Jesus requires. If he did not, the sooner he rectifies his defective faith, and becomes scripturally immersed, the better it will be for his present hopes and future well-being; for the Prophet like unto Moses has said, “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 which is in heaven”.—(Matt. 7, 21).

It will be seen that the principles elaborated in this section, when logically applied, wholly preclude the salvation of infants and the heathen. Salvation is only offered to those who believe and obey. Infants are incapable of doing either, and the heathen, on account of ignorance, are in the same unfortunate condition; therefore they cannot be saved. It must not be supposed that those oft-quoted words of Jesus have been overlooked:—“Suffer little children to come unto me, and

forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God".—(Mark 10, 14). There is nothing here which contradicts what Jesus enunciated on other occasions. In fact, it may be laid down as an axiom, that he never uttered anything which in any way contravened the broad principles on which his Father deals with mankind. It would be absurd to interpret these words in a strictly literal sense because it would lead to the conclusion that the "Kingdom of God" is to be composed of none but infants.

Their meaning is explained by the verse which immediately follows:— "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. This means to believe in child-like simplicity "the gospel of the kingdom." Infants cannot do this; therefore they cannot be saved. To become as a little child, is to manifest humility and simplicity in believing whatever God has promised. It is of such as do this, that the "kingdom of God" is to be composed. All others, whether infants, idiots, or heathens, will be excluded therefrom; and, as a consequence, will not enjoy salvation. What, then, it will be asked, will be their destiny? Will they be consigned to eternal torments? If the theory of man's natural immortality were true, such must be the case. But as it has already been shown that this is totally false, there is no need to adopt such a barbarous conclusion. Their destiny has been settled on more just and merciful principles. it is unmistakably indicated by the words of Job, when he says "Wherefore 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 10, 18-19). On another occasion, he says that if he had died as soon as he was born, he would have been as "infants which never saw light"—(ch. 3, 11-16).

* See page 64.

The destiny of the heathen is stated in equally explicit terms by the prophet Obadiah:—"THE HEATHEN SHALL BE AS THOUGH THEY HAD NOT BEEN"—(Obad., v. 16). Thus, being creatures of the dust, they simply return to the dust of which they are made. Not being in the position in which they can believe and obey God's word, the Deity is unable to give them salvation and at the same time be consistent with His eternal principles, one of which is that "flesh profiteth nothing"—(Jno. 6, 63). On the other hand, He cannot punish them for disobedience; he therefore, allows the law of sin and death, under which they are born, to operate without the infliction of any special suffering.

VI—The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

No truth was more firmly planted in the Jewish mind, through the teaching of their prophets, than the absolute and essential unity of the Deity. Hence, when Jesus, quoting from Moses, affirmed the same truth, it received the prompt approval of the Scribe to whom it was addressed. In answer to his question as to which was the first commandment, Jesus said, "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, *the Lord our God is ONE LORD*"; to which the Scribe responded, "Well, Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is ONE GOD, *and there is none other but He*"—(Mark 12, 29-32). So jealous was Jesus of this great foundation truth, that, on another occasion, when addressed as "Good Master", he administered a reproof by saying, "Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is God*" ((Matt. 19, 17); thereby showing, not that the Deity is the only being possessing any goodness, but that none have essential, underived goodness but He.

The One God.

Respecting the attributes of the "one God", Jesus said little for with these the Jews were tolerably familiar.

They knew that He was omnipresent; for He had said, by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah, "Do not I fill heaven and earth?"—(Jer. 23, 24). They knew that he was omniscient; for their wisest man had said:—"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good"—(Prov. 15, 3). They knew that He was powerful; for they had witnessed or read of numerous miracles performed by Him on behalf of their nation; and further, they knew that He was *all*-powerful, for he had revealed himself to the fathers of their nation — Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — as "God Almighty"—(Ex. 6, 3).

They knew that He was their creator, for their "sweet psalmist" had said, "It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves"—(Ps. 100, 3). They knew that he had had no beginning, and would have no end; for he was described in their law as "the eternal God" (Deut. 33, 27); and David their king had addressed him in the words, "Even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God"—(Ps. 90, 2). They knew that he was wise; for he had given them laws and instruction which were admirably adapted for promoting their physical and moral well-being. They knew that he was immutable; for he had said through one of their prophets:—"I am the Lord, I change not"—(Mal. 3, 6).

They knew that He was just, because of the impartial decrees which He had from time to time promulgated among them. They knew that He was jealous of His revealed will; for He had frequently reproved them for disregarding it, or for teaching things which were contrary to it. They knew that He was holy, and abhorred sin; for He had frequently punished them, both individually and nationally, for their transgressions. They knew that He was merciful and long-suffering; for He had oftentimes pardoned their iniquities. They knew that He was spirit; for *as spirit* He had manifested himself to them in the wilderness, and in the

temple. And they knew that He was invisible to human eyes; for they had never seen Him, and He had said to Moses, "There shall no man see me, and live"—(Ex. 33, 20).

Jesus did not teach a "Trinity."

Jesus did not teach anything which tended to undermine their knowledge of these things. The very reverse: he confirmed them. He endorsed God's declaration as to his omnipotence, by saying "With God all things are possible"—(Matt. 19, 26). He declared that the miracles he worked were by the power of the Deity; and that the wisdom he uttered came from the Deity. His forerunner, John the Baptist, confirmed the Divine statement to Moses, by saying, "no man hath seen God at any time" (John 1, 18); and Jesus taught them that in seeing himself they saw the manifestation of the Father—(John 14, 9). He taught them that the Father whom he represented required implicit obedience to merit His blessing, and that He would not spare the guilty; but that He was ready to receive back with open arms the sheep who had strayed from the fold, provided they sought admittance by the door.

If Jesus had proclaimed to the Jews the doctrine of the Trinity as taught in the Athanasian creed, he would not have made the slightest impression upon them. Their belief in the absolute unity of God, founded as it was on the teachings of their inspired prophets, was too strong to allow of their accepting such an incomprehensible and paradoxical dogma. Even at the present day, the doctrine of the Trinity is one of the greatest impediments to Jews believing that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah.

Although Jesus did not teach *the Trinity*, yet he taught the existence of a Father, a Son, and a Holy Spirit. But nowhere does he declare that these are "three persons, co-equal and co-eternal". He taught the personality of the Father, and of the Son, but not

of the Holy Spirit. A certain section of human theology, on the contrary, ever prone to "change the truth of God into a lie", denies that the Father is a person, and affirms the personality of the "Holy Spirit".

The Holy Spirit.

It is unfortunate that the word "ghost" should be used at all; it is an obsolete Saxon word, which conveys the idea of an invisible person. It would be better, and quite correct, if, in all cases, the word "spirit" were substituted. The idea of its being a person receives its chief support from the fact that Jesus calls it "another Comforter", and that it is spoken of as "he". If this idea be correct, we should reasonably expect to find that when the Spirit came to the apostles as a "Comforter", a personal being visited them. But such is not the case: the narrative describing this event says that "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a *rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house* where they were sitting"—(Acts 2, 2). The idea conveyed by this passage is that the Spirit is similar to wind, and is invisible. It can however, be rendered visible; for on this occasion it appeared as "cloven tongues like as of fire" (v. 3); and at the baptism of Jesus it descended upon him in the form of "a dove"—(Matt. 3, 16). If it had been a person, it is scarcely likely that it would have assumed such forms as these.

The use of the personal pronoun "he" in reference to the Spirit, is explained by the fact that the word translated "Comforter" as a masculine noun. In 1 Pet. 1, 11, the Greek word for Spirit—a neuter noun—is represented by the pronoun "it".

The Spirit is, undoubtedly, something which is under the power or control of God for, in giving the promise to the apostles, Jesus said "I will pray *the Father and He shall give you another Comforter*" (Jno. 14, 16); and in a subsequent part of the same discourse,

he defines it to be "the Spirit of truth which *proceedeth from the Father*"—(Jno. 15, 26). Hence, in speaking of the time when this prediction would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "It is not ye that speak, but *the Spirit of your Father* which speaketh in you"—(Matt. 10, 20). Although in a parallel passage in Mark 13, 11, it is styled "the Holy Ghost", yet here, it will be observed, it is rendered "Spirit", showing that the word so frequently translated "Ghost" might, with equal accuracy, be translated "Spirit" in other passages. The same Spirit which was in the apostles was also given to the prophets; for Peter says that prophecy came by "holy men of God" who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"—(2 Peter 1, 21). Paul, in describing the same thing, declares that "God . . . spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets"—(Heb. 1, 1). There is no contradiction here; the two statements are perfectly harmonious: they do not teach that God spake through some prophets, and the Holy Spirit through others; but that God spake through all the prophets by means of the Holy Spirit. It is the medium by which He makes known His will to man. Hence, "whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost" speaketh against God; a sin which "shall not be forgiven" either in this world or "the world to come"—(Matt. 12, 32).

The Spirit is an unseen power emanating from the Deity, filling all space, and by which He is everywhere present: hence David's question, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?" (Ps. 139, 7), and Paul's declaration, "In him we live, and move, and have our being"—(Acts 17, 28). It is the medium by which God creates all things:—"By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens" (Job 26, 13), and the power by which he upholds the whole creation:—"If he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh shall perish together"—(Job 34, 14-15). In these operations it is called "the Spirit of God" (Gen. 1, 2), or "his Spirit"

(Job 26, 13); but, when set apart for certain purposes in connection with the scheme of redemption, it is called "the Holy Spirit", after the manner in which the various articles and materials used for the ceremonials of the Mosaic law became "holy" when thus set apart for religious purposes. It is generally called "Holy Spirit" when spoken of as the instrument by which God has made known His will to man through the prophets, Jesus, and the apostles.

On this account it is frequently used to signify the revealed word of God. "*The Spirit is truth,*" writes the Apostle John—(1 Jno. 5, 6). Jesus, in addressing the Jews, said, "*The words that I speak unto you they are Spirit*"—(Jno. 6, 63). Hence, the "Spirit", the "Truth", and the "Word" are used interchangeably. The last two are the spoken or written utterances of the first. To say that believers are "elect . . . through sanctification of the Spirit" (1 Pet. 1, 2), is the same as to say that they are sanctified through "the truth" or "the word of God". Accordingly Jesus, in praying to his Father about his apostles, said "*Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth*"—(Jno. 17, 17).

The Spirit in operation.

A knowledge of this important fact will enable Bible-readers to understand many portions of the New Testament speaking of "the Spirit", which otherwise appear to teach that the Holy Spirit, as given to the apostles, is absolutely necessary to all believers of the gospel. Among the passages adduced in support of this erroneous idea is that in which Jesus is recorded to have said, "When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth"—(John 16, 13). Those who quote these words for the purpose mentioned overlook the fact that they were addressed exclusively to the twelve apostles of Jesus. The Holy Spirit was necessary to them in order to instruct them more perfectly in

God's purposes, and so equip them for carrying out their commission. It was given to teach them all things, and bring to their "remembrance" those things which Jesus had spoken to them, but which they had either forgotten or misapprehended—(Jno. 14, 26).

For instance, Jesus had told them that he should be crucified; but they neither believed nor understood him. When, however, "the Spirit of truth" came, it enlightened them on this point, and so enabled them to preach the things concerning the name of Jesus Christ. They were led "into all truth" that they might lead others into the same truth—"the truth as it is in Jesus". Having themselves received the key of knowledge, they were able to unlock its treasures to others. Those to whom they spoke or wrote about that truth were able to understand what they meant, without the possession of the Holy Spirit. Why, then, cannot Gentiles in the present age be led into the same truth by simply studying the record of the speeches and writings of the apostles given nineteen centuries ago? To say that it is necessary to have the Holy Spirit in order to understand the words of the Spirit, is derogatory to God's word. It is equivalent to charging Him with having given to man a revelation of His will which it is impossible for anyone unassisted to understand. It also contravenes Paul's statement, that "*Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*"—(Rom. 10, 17).

The conviction of faith.

It is wholly incorrect to say, as do some, that faith is the gift of God. It is the salvation resulting "through faith" that is God's gift:—"The gift of God is eternal life"—(Rom. 6, 23). Faith is an operation of the mind, a belief in that which cannot be seen by the natural eye. It can only be produced when sufficient evidence is presented to convince the mind that the unseen things spoken about are true. With this end in view, God has,

at various times, attested His spoken word by evidence of an extraordinary character. He did this when he caused "a smoking furnace and a burning lamp" to pass between the pieces into which Abraham had divided certain animals—(Gen. 15, 17). By this means Abraham's faith in God's promises was made stronger.

The Deity did a similar thing when, on the day of Pentecost, He enabled the disciples, by means of the Spirit, to speak in tongues which they had not previously learned. By this means a large number of Jews became convinced that what Peter spake was true, and so they manifested faith in his words. This was one of the principal objects for which the Spirit was given to the apostles, viz., to attest the truth of what they uttered. In introducing a new dispensation, some such extraordinary effusion of power was absolutely necessary. Without it neither Jews nor Pagans would have believed that the apostles were messengers from the only true God. Through its instrumentality, large numbers of both classes were led to embrace the truth preached by them; and then they became recipients of this gift, at the hands of the apostles, to enable them to prophesy, speak with tongues, cure diseases, work miracles, &c., so that they in their turn might convince others that they held the truth of God.

Holy Spirit not possessed now.

But, in course of time, it came to pass that these supernatural gifts were abused; whereupon they were withdrawn. Since that time they have never been re-bestowed; though it is highly probable that they will be given in the next dispensation. If the Holy Spirit were now possessed by any, we should be able to see miracles quite as wonderful as those performed nineteen centuries ago; we should also find that those who possessed the Holy Spirit believed the truths taught by Jesus and his apostles. Notwithstanding the loud profession of

some religious denominations that they possess the Holy Spirit, it is quite clear that they do not:—*First*, Because they teach things which are diametrically opposed to each other; and *second*, Because they teach doctrines which flatly contradict what has been revealed by that Spirit in the word of truth. The Spirit being truth, it is quite certain that God would not reveal one thing in His word in the first century, and something in opposition to it through men in the present day.

Jesus did not pre-exist.

The Son of God differs from the Spirit of God in two things: the latter is eternal, but is not a person; whereas the former is a person, but is not eternal; that is, he has not existed from all eternity. The falseness of the dogma of eternal sonship is clearly demonstrated by the angelic announcement respecting the birth of Jesus: “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; THEREFORE, also *that HOLY THING which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God*”—(Luke I, 35). If Jesus were God’s Son from all eternity, or at any time previous to his birth of Mary, such language as this could have no meaning.

It is recorded that “*Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man*” (Luke 2, 52), thereby showing the wisdom he displayed was acquired gradually, and that the progress he made met with his Father’s approval. On arriving at the age of thirty years, this approbation was publicly expressed at his baptism, by “a voice from heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*”—(Matt. 3, 17). It was in consequence of his having manifested perfect obedience during the whole of his previous life that he was, on this occasion, publicly acknowledged as God’s beloved Son, and endowed with authority and power to work miracles, and communicate God’s will to the chil-

dren of Israel; a fact inferentially stated by Peter when he spoke of Jesus as "*a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders, and signs, which God did by him*" — (Acts 2, 22). Addressing the Gentiles on another occasion, the same apostle declared that "*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power*"—(Acts 10, 38).

The difference between Jesus in the days of his flesh, and the Holy Spirit, is shown by his saying that "*Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him*"—(Matt. 12, 32). To speak against the Son of man was simply to speak against the "man approved of God"; but to speak against the Holy Ghost was equivalent to speaking against God himself, whose name is sometimes used interchangeably with that of the Holy Spirit.

God manifest in flesh.

It is on this principle that many of the difficult sayings of Jesus are to be explained. Thus, when he said, "*The Father dwelleth in me*"—(Jno. 14, 10), he meant that God was in him by means of His Spirit, enabling him to speak the words and do the works of his Father, in accordance with the Mosaic prediction (Deut. 18, 18), that he should speak the words which Jehovah would put in his mouth. Hence Jesus would say, "*My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me*"—(Jno. 7, 16). He could say, "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*"—(Jno. 14, 9). Jesus was the manifestation of the Father by means of his Spirit: *first*, in his birth; and *second*, in his anointing. For this reason he was styled "*Emmanuel*", or "*God with us*"—(Matt. 1, 23). It was the Father in him that said "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*"—(Jno. 2, 19). "*The temple of his body,*" which, like Solomon's temple, was constituted the dwelling place of Jehovah,

was destroyed, and in three days was rebuilt by the power of the Deity, as declared by Paul when writing to the Romans:—"Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father" (ch. 6, 4); the Spirit of God "raised up Christ from the dead" (ch. 8, 11). It was the Spirit of God in Jesus which said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven"—(Jno. 6, 51), and "Before Abraham was I am"—(Jno. 8, 58). The Jews, to whom Jesus said, "Ye judge after the flesh" (Jno. 8, 15), did not understand these sayings. Equally impossible is it for Gentiles in the present day to comprehend them if they "judge after the flesh".

No Trinitarian would affirm that the fleshly body of Jesus was in existence before Abraham, and came down from heaven; but they would affirm this of the supposed "eternal Son". It has, however, been shown that "the Son of God" only came into existence when the virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus, and that subsequently the power in that Son was the Spirit "of the Father". In the words of Paul, "God was in Christ"—(2 Cor. 5, 19). It was not, therefore, as Trinitarianism construes it, an eternal Spirit-Son in a fleshly-Son, but the Father in the Son. The use of the expression, "The Father dwelleth in me", destroys the theory that "God the Son" dwelt in Jesus. The Father, or His Spirit, existed from all eternity, but the Son did not come into existence until born of woman. Jesus Christ was, therefore, not the Son of God manifested in a human body, but the Father manifested in a human body, by means of Spirit, the result being a Son.

Without being thus endowed with Spirit, Jesus would have been powerless to work any miracles, or reveal God's will to man. He was extremely careful to make this known. Not only did he say, "*My Father is greater than I*" (Jno. 14, 28), but, to be more explicit, "*I can of mine own self do nothing*"—(Jno. 5, 30).

Subject to the Father.

The subjection of the "Son of man" to the Father is shown not only by his words, but also by his deeds, such as that of offering up prayer to God, saying, "*I thank thee, O Father*" (Matt. 11, 25), and, "*O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt*"—(Matt. 26, 39). The fact of his addressing God as his "Father" is rendered more significant by what he said to Mary after his resurrection: "*I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God*" (John 20, 17); thereby showing that the supreme Being was his "God" and "Father" as well as Mary's. If Jesus Christ were "very God", how could he call the Father "*my God*"?

Then again, it is written that "God cannot be tempted with evil" (Jas. 1, 13); but Jesus was tempted. Therefore, when he was so tempted, he must have been distinct from his Father, and of an inferior nature. It is also written that "God knoweth all things" (1 John 3, 20); but, before the crucifixion, there were certain things which Jesus Christ did not know, such as the time for his second appearing:—"Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, NEITHER THE SON, but the Father"—(Mark 13, 32). If he had been the Deity, such a distinction as this between his own knowledge and that of his Father would have been impossible.

It is customary to evade the force of these facts and plain statements by saying that they refer only to the "humanity" of Jesus. But this reply is based upon a fallacy. It assumes that the divinity of Christ lay in an "eternal Son", incarnate in his body. It has been shown that the Divine power in Jesus was not an eternal or pre-existent Son, but the Father dwelling in him by means of His Spirit. This answer, therefore, falls to the ground. Of course no one would say that these statements are applicable to the Divine power of Jesus.

They are affirmed of Jesus himself, the child of Mary and Son of God, and evidence a limitation of knowledge inconsistent with the Trinitarian view of the case. Thus it will be seen that the truth on the subject neither admits of Trinitarian speculation on the one hand, nor Unitarian freethinking on the other. It is a medium between the two extremes.

Jesus was the child born of a virgin: he grew in wisdom and stature; and on arriving at manhood, he was "anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts 10, 38), whereby he became Jesus the Christ, or the anointed; from that time God worked through him in a way that He had not previously done, testifying by numerous miracles to his Divine origin and mission.

A teacher sent from God.

The position of Jesus as a prophet was correctly defined by Nicodemus, when he said to him, "Rabbi, we know that *thou art a teacher come from God*, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, *except God be with him*"—(Jno. 3, 2). And the truth of this statement is confirmed by Jesus himself, on another occasion, saying to the Jews, "Ye seek to kill me, *a man that hath told you the truth which I have heard of God*"—(Jno. 8, 40). The fact that Jesus is described as having "come from God", or, more frequently, as being "sent" from God, affords no proof that Jesus came from heaven to earth in a mechanical sense. John the Baptist is described as "a man sent from God" (John 1, 6); and God's servants, the prophets, are said to have been "sent" by Him—(Matt 21, 34). The great difference between them and Jesus was that he was brought into existence by the power that merely inspired the others, and was endowed with that power in an unlimited degree: — "*God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him*"—(Jno. 3, 34), as he had done to the prophets before him, and as he did to the apostles after him. But he was also superior to them in the character

which he manifested: they all sinned, but he committed no sin; he alone of all men could triumphantly say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?"—(John 8, 46). His whole career is an exemplification of the words he uttered in the garden of Gethsemane, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt". And it was in consequence of this strict obedience that he was released from death:—"It was not possible that he should be holden of it"—(Acts 2, 24).

"Son of God with power."

By means of resurrection Jesus became Son of God in a higher sense than he had ever been before; a truth taught by Paul in saying that Jesus was "declared to be *the Son of God with power*, according to the Spirit of holiness, *by the resurrection from the dead*"—(Rom. 1, 4). Previously, Jesus had been the Son of God by begetting, anointing, and character, but now he became "Son of God with power"; he was no longer of a weak, mortal nature. It is necessary to notice and remember this great fact—that Jesus was of a very different nature before crucifixion from that which he has possessed since resurrection.

The omission to recognise this is one of the chief causes of the prevalent misconceptions concerning Jesus Christ. Very often passages referring to his present and future functions are improperly quoted to prove that he possessed the attributes and nature of the Deity when preaching the gospel to the Jews. In this way a great mass of irrelevant matter is piled together, which, to those who have not examined the question, presents the appearance of an impregnable fortress. But to those who understand the difference between the two natures successively possessed by Jesus Christ in those two great epochs, it has the appearance only of a frail structure, very showy, but without any real strength or substance. The glory, honour, and power ascribed to Jesus since his elevation to heaven, have nothing to do with the ques-

tion as to his nature before death. These are all explainable by the fact that Jesus has been "perfected" (Luke 13, 32) by being changed from a human nature to the nature of his Father.

Crucified in weakness—raised to power.

Contrasting Jesus Christ's former with his present condition, Paul says, "He was *crucified through weakness*, yet he liveth by the power of God"—(2 Cor. 13, 4). The first clause of this passage is forcibly illustrated by the words Jesus uttered when on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—(Matt. 27, 46). At this period the Spirit which was given to him at his immersion was withdrawn from him; and thus he was left in all the weakness of a flesh-and-blood nature, and in the solitude of a Son deprived of the presence and support of his Father. His mission as a teacher sent from God to the Jewish nation had then ceased, so far as his first appearing was concerned. He had fully complied with the instructions he had received, by making known the will of Him that sent him, and he was just about to undergo the most important event in his career as a priest; an office which will be treated of in the next section.

Jesus is now of the same nature as God himself; but they are, nevertheless, distinct persons, and the former is still subordinate to the latter. Jesus now "*liveth by the power of God*", and still recognises the Deity as his God; for since ascending to heaven he has said through the apostle John, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of *my God* . . . and I will write upon him the name of *my God*"—(Rev. 3, 12). And it is predicted, in relation to the "kingdom of God", that when the last enemy, sin, is destroyed, "when all things shall be subdued unto him, *then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him*, that put all things under him, that God may be all in all"—(1 Cor. 15, 28).

His brethren to be like him.

The present position of Jesus, as Son of God, is both interesting and important, because he is "the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8, 29), all of whom are to be made "like him"—1 John 3, 2). True they are now called "sons of God" (v. 1); but at present they are only sons by "adoption"—(Eph. 1, 5; Gal. 4, 5). Of none of them can it be affirmed that they are sons of God by a miraculous birth, that they are of sinless character, or have been anointed with the Holy Spirit, as was Jesus in the days of the flesh. Nevertheless, they have the promise that they shall each become a son of God, such as he now is. This will be effected by what Jesus styles being "born again"—(John 3, 3). They become adopted sons in the days of their flesh, by being "born of water" (v. 5); but they will become real sons, by being "born of the Spirit", at the second appearing of their Elder Brother. Instead of being flesh-and-blood beings, as at present, weak, mortal, and corruptible, they will then be Spirit beings, powerful, immortal, and incorruptible; for "*that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*"—(v. 6).

They will then be "perfect in one" God, and will have realised the request made by Jesus when he prayed to their common Father, "that they may be one even as we are one"—(Jno. 17, 22-23). Having been "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God," they will all be, like Jesus, sons of God with power, and will constitute, in the aggregate, that which Paul calls "The manifestation of the sons of God"—(Rom. 8, 19-21). Only such as are now begotten with "the word of truth" (Jas. 1, 18) and are "born of water", will have any title to be "born of the Spirit" when "Christ our life shall appear" in his glory—(Col. 3, 4).

Opposition of modern theology.

The reader has now before him an outline of what Jesus taught in the capacity of a prophet. In each of its several elements it is opposed to the teaching and belief of the great majority of his professed followers. Their theology teaches that the "kingdom of God" consists simply of a reign of Jesus in the hearts of his disciples, or of a kingdom in the skies; that the gospel Jesus preached was good news about his death; that the second appearing of Jesus takes place in a figurative sense at conversion or death, or in a personal sense at the end of the millennium, when all the world has been converted by the religious agencies now in operation; that the righteous and the wicked are rewarded and punished at death, thereby rendering unnecessary the Resurrection and the Judgment; that the righteous go to heaven to be blessed with happiness, superadded to an immortality they are supposed already to possess; and the wicked to hell to endure eternal torment in a fire in which they will be always burning, but never burnt; that baptism is not necessary to salvation, and may be administered by sprinkling water on infants; and that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three persons all on an equality, each having existed from all eternity.

In opposition to these dogmas, Jesus taught that the Gospel to be believed was glad tidings concerning the restoration of the kingdom of Israel, otherwise called the "kingdom of God", to which the apostles have since added the facts and doctrines connected with his death; that his second appearing will take place at a time when the "one faith" is difficult to find on the earth, and, therefore, before the whole world has been converted; that at that time his disciples will be raised from the dead and judged; that the reward then to be given to the righteous will be "everlasting life", with rulership in the "kingdom of God" and the inheritance of the earth; that the punishment then to be awarded to

the wicked will be consignment to a fire which will utterly consume them like tares and withered branches; that one of the commands necessary to be obeyed by those who would be included in the former class is immersion in water, the ceremony by which they become adopted sons of God, and brethren of Jesus Christ; that the Father is the one Deity, who alone possesses underived power, wisdom, and goodness; that the Holy Spirit is a power proceeding from Him, by which He has made known His will to mankind; and that he himself, the Son, who became such in the first instance by his Divine begetting, and afterwards by his resurrection, derived all his power and teaching from the Father, without which he could do nothing.

An indisputable authority.

These two series of doctrines are so antagonistic to each other that it is utterly impossible to reconcile them. Those who hold the one cannot at the same time believe the other. The second series, therefore, being true, the first is necessarily false, and, as a consequence, those who hold the latter cannot be entitled to be called disciples of Jesus Christ. It is futile for any to delude themselves with the idea that such discipleship does not depend upon a belief of what Jesus taught. That point has been settled by an indisputable authority:—“*If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, EVEN THE WORDS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing . . . FROM SUCH WITHDRAW THYSELF*”—(I Tim. 6, 3-5).

It is but necessary for any intelligent person to examine the creeds of “Christendom” in the light of what Jesus taught to perceive at a glance how widely applicable is the above declaration and injunction. All who are included in this category will incur the penalty, threatened by the Lord through Moses, and quoted by

Peter :—“ It shall come to pass that *every soul which will not hear (i.e., believe and obey) that prophet, shall be destroyed* from among the people ” — (Acts 3, 23). If the reader be an independent thinker, searching for the truth and desirous of being delivered from the traditions of blind leaders who can only lead him into the ditch, let him put that injunction into practice at once by withdrawing religious fellowship from all who teach or believe that which is contrary to the “ wholesome words ” of Jesus Christ; and then let him become one of those who have always been despised and hated by the world because they have not been ashamed of the words of their Lord and Master. Only by adopting this course can he by any possibility be included among those of whom the “ Son of man ” will not “ be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of the Father, with the holy angels ”.

PART II.

Jesus Christ as a Priest

There are two orders of priests mentioned in the Old Testament, as having been instituted by the Almighty; 1st, the Melchizedec, and 2nd, the Aaronic.

Of the former there is but little information given. The only personage mentioned as being of that order lived during the time of Abraham, dwelt in Salem, and was called "King of Salem" and "priest of the most high God"—(Gen 14, 18). Jesus Christ was a member of this order of priesthood—(Heb. 5, 6).

Of the second order, the Aaronic, which existed contemporaneously with the Mosaic law, the particulars furnished are very full. The principal duties of the high priests of this order were to offer gifts and sacrifices; to bear before the Lord the names of the tribes of Israel; to enquire of God by the Urim and Thummim; to consecrate the Levites as priests; and to make an atonement in the Most Holy Place once a year. Of this priestly order Jesus Christ was not a member; it was, however, a type of him in the capacity of High Priest, as also were the various things connected with the administration of the Mosaic law, such as the altar, the animals sacrificed, the temple, etc. Jesus, therefore, united in his person the functions of a priest with the requirement of a sacrifice: a thing which has never been done by any person, before or since.

Introduction of sacrifice.

The necessity for either a priest or a sacrifice in any community is evidence of the existence of sin. Previous to the introduction of sin into this world, neither the one

nor the other were to be found. Adam and Eve, as long as they continued obedient to the Edenic law, were able to commune with their Maker without fear or shame. But when they had transgressed, they were no longer able to hold up their heads as one whose "conscience is void of offence toward God"; they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden—(Gen. 3, 8).

When placing them in the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it", the Lord God gave them permission to eat of every tree therein, excepting one, "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil". At the same time they were threatened with punishment in case of disobedience:—"In the day that thou eatest thereof *thou shalt surely die*"—(Gen. 2, 15-17). To understand the meaning of this threat, it is necessary to know of what nature Adam was made.

The Mosaic record of his creation is brief but clear: "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. 2, 7). Man himself, and not merely an outer framework, was "formed of the dust of the ground"; and, by having "breath of life"—the same breath which all animals possess (Gen. 7, 15 and 22) breathed into him—he became "a living soul," but not an ever-living soul, as frequently misinterpreted. If the phrase "living soul" proves man to be immortal, then the whole animal creation must be immortal; for the phrase is applied also to beasts, fowls, and creeping things in Gen. 1, 30—(see marginal rendering).

The first temptation.

Adam and Eve continued obedient until they were tempted by a serpent, which is described as being "more subtle than any beast of the field" (Gen. 3, 1); and which, from the fact of its being able to speak, must, like Balaam's ass, have been endowed with the faculty

of speech. As an inducement to our first parents to partake of the forbidden tree, it said, "*Ye shall not surely die*"; and further, told them that, by eating, their eyes should be opened, and they should know good and evil—(Gen. 3, 4-5).

This was the first religious lie ever told; and, like nearly all its successors, it was a mixture of truth and falsehood. The first part was false; it was the direct opposite of what had been spoken by the Lord God, who declared that if Adam and Eve had disobeyed His law, they should "surely die". The serpent denied this, by saying that they should "not surely die", which was, in effect, an affirmation that they were immortal; a theological fable which has existed, more or less, from that day to this: the doctrine of the natural immortality of man is but the propagation of the serpent's lie.

The second part of the serpent's statement was true, for, when turning Adam out of the garden, "The Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil" (Gen. 3, 22); and, in order to prevent him becoming immortal while in a sinful condition the Lord God mercifully "sent him forth from the garden of Eden, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever"—(v. 22, 23). If the serpent's statement had been true, such an action as this would have been utterly useless; for Adam would already have been able to "live for ever" without partaking of "the tree of life".

Definition of death.

Adam having originally come from the dust at his creation, his return to the dust would necessarily result in his ceasing to exist. Hence the Lord God addressed him in the following language: — "*Out of it (the ground) wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*"—(Gen. 3, 19). In this passage we have a definition of the death threatened against our first parents far clearer and more authoritative than any

of the mystifying and erroneous definitions given by the various schools of theology.

The principle upon which this punishment was inflicted on the first human pair is contained in the words of the apostle Paul, "*The wages of sin is death*"—(Rom. 6, 23). If their transgression had produced no other effect than that of bringing themselves under the operation of this penalty, it would have been comparatively unimportant. But unfortunately it did not end there; it brought upon their descendants both moral and physical results. By their sinful conduct the stream of human life was poisoned at its source. On the principle that "like produces like",—a principle that is embodied in the law of hereditary descent,—sinful parents could only beget children possessing a nature defiled through sin, and who, if subjected to temptation, would inevitably yield to the lusts of the flesh. The sentence or law which the Almighty passed upon the whole race in consequence of Adam's sin is variously stated by the inspired writer of the epistle to the Romans:—"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. 5, 12, 17, 18).

A universal law.

All men being of the same nature as Adam, they necessarily suffer the same kind of death, viz. : a return to the dust from whence they were taken. The universal application of the law of sin and death could therefore result in nothing less than the utter extinction of every human being; and if allowed to operate undisturbed throughout eternity, none of them could ever again enjoy life of any kind. Such was the prospective destiny of the human race at the time of the Fall. The question which had then to be solved was, How can such

a lamentable calamity be averted or mitigated without compromising the attributes or principles of the Deity? Adopting the language of Paul, How could He "be just and the justifier of him which believeth"—(Rom. 3, 26)?

Sin being the cause of death, it is obvious that before death could cease to operate, sin must be removed; and the Almighty being the one who had been disobeyed, He only possessed the prerogative of prescribing the conditions on which He would forgive sin, and remove its consequences. Those conditions constitute the means by which the breach created by sin between man and his Maker can be healed; a process which is commonly called *religion*, from the fact that that word signifies the re-binding of something which has been severed. Previous to the Fall, when there existed no breach, such a thing as religion was neither known or needed. Religion began when God made known to man the way by which sin might be destroyed, and, as a consequence, abolished. What that way is, will now be shown.

I—The Destruction of Sin

When Adam and Eve had sinned, their consciences became defiled; their eyes were opened to know evil as well as good, and for the first time "they knew that they were naked". Accordingly, "they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons", for the purpose of covering their nakedness—(Gen. 3, 7). But this mode of hiding their sinful nature was not acceptable to the Almighty; therefore He substituted other garments in the place of fig leaves:—"The Lord God made *coats of skins*, and clothed them" (Gen. 3, 21), an act necessitating the slaying of animals, or shedding of blood; from which incident may be learned this important, but much neglected, lesson—that it is utterly useless for a man to patch together garments of his own device for the

purpose of covering or removing his guilt. No system of religion can give a "garment of salvation", but that which has been instituted by the Divine Being Himself.

It is recorded of the two sons of Adam and Eve, that they brought offerings unto the Lord; the one bringing "fruit of the ground", and the other "firstlings of his flock". The latter was accepted, but the former was not:—"Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain"—(Heb. 11, 4). The explanation of this is partly to be found in the fact that Abel's offering, being a lamb, contained blood, which, on the life of the animal being taken away, would be poured out; whereas Cain's offering had no blood in it. Abel recognised the principle that "Without shedding of blood is no remission" of sin (Heb. 9, 22), but Cain did not.

Man's corruptible nature.

It is true there is no record of Abel or his parents having been instructed to present an offering containing blood; but from the fact that Abel did so, and that his offering was accepted, it may be inferred that such was the case. Moreover there must have been some special reason for ordinary sacrifices of this kind: they must have been appropriate for the purpose they were intended to serve. Man, although mentally and morally much superior to the animal creation, is physically on a par with it, by reason of possessing a corruptible nature. Both have been made from the dust of the ground:—"All are of the dust, and all turn to dust again"—(Eccles. 3, 20); both possess the "breath of life":—"They have all one breath" (v. 19); both are living souls (Gen. 1, 30; 2, 7); both derive their life from the same source:—"The life of the flesh is in the blood; *it is the life of ALL FLESH*" (Lev. 17, 11 and 14); and both are subject to the same death:—"That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts . . . *as the one dieth so dieth the other*"—(Eccles. 3, 19).

The meaning of sacrifices.

In view of these truths, it cannot but be admitted that the act of taking a life of an animal was well calculated to remind man of his own position: of the fact that he had sinned against his Maker; that in consequence of that sin he had been condemned to death; and that when subjected to this penalty he would become as unconscious and devoid of life as the animals he slew as sacrifices. It further taught him that he could only be delivered from this destiny by a more perfect sacrifice in the future, combined with his own obedience to God's commandments. On the supposition that the punishment which Adam brought upon himself and his descendants was eternal torment, sacrifices lose all their significance; for the animal sacrificed was not put through any process of suffering, but was simply deprived of life—an appropriate symbol of the death which man had incurred by sin.

Under the Mosaic law, sacrifices were offered up with more elaborate ceremonials and surroundings than at any previous period; but none of these things increased their efficacy. They could only cover or hide, for the time being, the sins of those on whose behalf they were offered: "Those sacrifices" could never make the comers thereunto perfect (Heb. 10, 1), "for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin"—(v. 4). It was necessary, however, that they should be offered up as types of that greater sacrifice, without which they would have no efficacy whatever. Animals are under no moral law; they have committed no transgression, they merely obey their natural instinct. Their offering up, therefore could not satisfy the eternal principles of justice on which the Almighty completely blots out transgression, removes its consequent penalty of death, and bestows immortality.

To do this, it is necessary that a member of the race which had sinned should manifest that perfect

obedience which Adam failed to render, and then have his blood or life poured out, that he might undergo the penalty of death brought into this world by sin, and triumph over death by being raised from the grave on account of his righteousness and thereby become the author of immortality to other members of the same race. These requirements are found in no other individual than Jesus Christ. Hence the apostolic statement that "He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"—(Heb. 9, 26).

An early promise.

The intention of God to remove sin from this world was made known at a very early stage in the disobedient career of Adam and Eve. Before they were turned out of the garden, the Lord God addressed to the serpent the following words:—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; *it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*"—(Gen. 3, 15). To modern eyes this may seem a very indefinite promise of a Divine plan for removing sin and its consequent penalty of death. Nevertheless it contains the germ of the scheme of salvation more fully elaborated in subsequent revelation. Whether it was or was not accompanied by further details omitted from the inspired narrative, we may rest assured that it contained sufficient to convey to the minds of Adam and Eve the prospect of a future deliverance from the effects of their transgression.

Having succumbed to temptation at the instigation of the serpent, they had, for the time being, come under its power. The promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, the most vital part of all organic creatures, would lead them to look forward to a time when one of their descendants, notwithstanding the infliction of a temporary wound in the heel at the hands of the seed of the serpent, would relieve them

from its influence and the attendant evils. Interpreted in the light of subsequent events and predictions, it teaches that the Saviour of mankind would suffer death on account of sin, at the hands of wicked men; but that he would be subjected to it only for a short time, then overcome it, and afterwards remove all traces of sin from the earth.

The destroyer of sin.

The mission of Jesus Christ, as the seed of the woman, and the destroyer of sin, is thus stated by the apostle Paul:—"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, *he also* himself likewise *took part of THE SAME, that THROUGH DEATH he might DESTROY HIM THAT HAD THE POWER OF DEATH, that is, THE DEVIL;* and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2, 14, 15); to which another apostle adds, "The Son of God was manifested that he might *destroy the works of the devil*"—(1 John 3, 8). Two more important verses than these it would be impossible to find in the New Testament; but, to be understood, they must be analysed, and examined in the light of parallel passages. They teach the following truths:—That as the children of God were made of flesh and blood, and through being under the power of the devil were subject to the fear of death, it was necessary for Jesus to be made of the same nature for the purpose of suffering death; that by means of his death he would destroy that which causes death; that death is under the power of "the devil"; and that, therefore, by passing through death, Jesus would destroy "the devil," together with all "the works of the devil."

It has already been seen, from the narrative of Luke, that Jesus, instead of having, like other members of the Adamic race, two human progenitors, had God for his father, and a woman for his mother. By means of the Holy Spirit, the Eternal Father caused Mary to conceive

and give birth to a Son. But, though Son of God, he possessed the nature of his mother:—"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one"—(Job 14, 4). Although begotten by the Spirit, he was nevertheless "*made of a woman*"—(Gal. 4, 4). The reason for supernatural power being employed in his begetting is to be found (1) in the necessity for showing unmistakably that the way of salvation is of Divine origin, and that without God's intervention man was utterly impotent to attain to an endless life; and (2) in the requirement that the Saviour of men should exhibit in his own conduct, as far as his position would admit, the character of Jehovah.

The one exception.

From the time of the Fall, no one had ever manifested perfect obedience: "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"—(Rom. 3, 23). If man had been left to himself, it would have been impossible for him to escape the endless consequences of the death penalty. Therefore God interposed in the above way, and produced one who manifested that perfect obedience which all others had failed to perform. From his youth Jesus walked in the affectionate fear of his heavenly Father, as illustrated by the recorded saying at twelve years of age: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"—(Luke 2, 49). And as he grew in years he "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man"—(v. 52). His *mind* was evidently susceptible, even in early life, and to an exceptional degree, to spiritual truths. To use the language of the prophet Isaiah, he was "of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord"—(ch. 11, 3).

In a very concise summary of the mission of Jesus Christ, the writer of the epistle to the Romans says, "God sent his own son *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, and for sin, *condemned sin in the flesh*"—(Rom. 8, 3).

God did not send His Son from heaven to earth possessed of an incorruptible spirit-nature, clothed in a body of clay, modelled in the image of sinful men. But He formed him of the flesh of a sinful race, and thus he was "in the likeness of sinful flesh"; not a different kind of flesh from that of mankind generally, but precisely "the same" (Heb. 2, 14); "That which is born of the flesh is flesh"—(Jno. 3, 6).

Jesus not immaculate.

Had he been of a nature superior to that of man's such as the angelic, he could not have fulfilled what was requisite in a perfect atoning sacrifice; he could not have been "in all points *tempted* like as we are" (Heb. 4, 15); he could not have "*tasted* DEATH for every man" (Heb. 2, 9); he could not have become "*perfect through sufferings*" (Heb. 2, 10); and God could not, through him, have "condemned sin in the flesh"—(Rom. 8, 3). Hence Paul says, "IN ALL THINGS *it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren*, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people"—(Heb. 2, 17). Accordingly, "Jesus was made a little lower than the angels" (v. 9), and subject to the same law of death as all other descendants of Adam. This is comprised in the statement that he was "like unto his brethren in all things". To meet the requirements of Eternal wisdom, it was necessary that the same nature which had transgressed should suffer the penalty of death in the person of one who was sinless.

The importance of this truth is made evident by the apostle John's injunction in his first epistle:—"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; and *this is that spirit of antichrist* whereof ye have heard that it should come"—(1 Jno. 4, 2-3). The Romish church makes void this truth, by affirming that the flesh

of Jesus was immaculate and different from that of all other men; thereby identifying itself as the "antichrist". Nearly all Protestant churches follow in the same strain, though in a more modified degree; thus proving that they are the daughters of the Romish "Mother of Harlots"; while a third class teach that Jesus Christ was born under precisely the same conditions as Adam before the Fall,—free from all effects of Edenic sin. Each of these dogmas nullifies the New Testament truth that Jesus Christ was "made like unto his brethren in ALL THINGS", and came in "THE SAME" flesh.

Resurrection the gate of life.

However necessary the death of Jesus was, his resurrection was equally essential to the destruction of sin; the one was the indispensable sequel to the other:—He "was delivered for our offences, and was *raised again for our justification*"—(Rom. 4, 25). To anyone unacquainted with the difference between his character and that of other descendants of Adam, the question would naturally arise: Why was Jesus favoured with such an exceptional privilege as that of being raised from the dead almost immediately after his death? The answer to this is, that he was without sin (Heb. 4, 15; Acts 2, 24). The principle on which this Divine act was based is obvious. Death is only inflicted as the result of sin; Jesus committed no sin; he was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2, 8); but, being a member of a race which was under condemnation of death, it was necessary that he on whom was "laid the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53, 6) should suffer "the wages of sin", which "is death". Although he came under the Adamic condemnation of death he was personally free from transgression, and therefore death could not hold him for more than a short space of time. Hence he who had laid down his life for the benefit of others was permitted to take it up again (John 10, 17); the "good shepherd" who, it was said, "giveth his life

for the sheep" (John 10, 11) received that life back again; for as the "Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given to the Son to have life in himself*"—(John 5, 26).

The life which he received after resurrection was much superior to that which he possessed before crucifixion: it was one which no longer subjected him to temptation, suffering or death. It could then be said of him, what it would have been impossible to declare in any previous part of his career, "*Death hath no more dominion over him*"—(Rom. 6, 9). Respecting no other member of Adam's race who has died has such a statement been made. Jesus is "the firstborn from the dead" (Col. 1, 18), and "the beginning of the (new) creation of God"—(Rev. 3, 14). Hence, it is "Jesus Christ who hath *abolished death*, and hath *brought life and immortality to light* through the gospel"—(2 Tim. 1, 10). He "abolished death" not universally, but in relation to himself, and "brought immortality to light" by illustrating it in his own person. At the resurrection and judgment these results will be realised by all who are then found worthy.

To say that man is naturally immortal, is to rob Christ of his glory in having obtained, through obedience, that precious gift; to make void his mission as the one who is ultimately to destroy "the last enemy", death; and to render useless his functions as the "good shepherd" who has promised to give eternal life unto his sheep.

The Abolisher of death.

In analysing Heb. 2, 14, it was found that Paul declared death to be under the power of "the devil". But in other portions of the Scriptures, death is described as being the result of sin, which is equivalent to saying that it is under the power of sin. Is death, then, under two powers,—one the principle of sin, and the other a wicked being supposed to be superhuman and immortal, commonly styled "the devil"?

According to popular religion, such must be the case; and, if so, Jesus must have overcome that personal being, as well as the principle of sin, before he could have been released from death, and endowed with immortality. On this supposition, what an anomalous position was Jesus placed in as the abolisher of death! Before he could effect this, he must destroy that which exercises "power over death", and that power, says Paul, is "the devil". If, however, "the devil" be immortal, he cannot be destroyed. Moreover, if "the devil" be stronger in might than man, a god of evil almost as omnipotent as the Deity himself, according to the representations of many preachers, what propriety could there possibly be in Jesus being made of a weaker nature in order to destroy him?

If "the devil" be of angelic nature, as he must be if a fallen angel, according to popular superstition, it would seem more appropriate, and indeed necessary, that Jesus should have been made of that nature in order to "destroy" him; but, so far from this being the case, we find that he was "made a little lower than the angels".

And lastly, in what way could Jesus "destroy" this supposed wicked angel "through death"? Would he not rather have required life to combat and overcome such an adversary? There is a suggestion, adopted by some who are easily deceived by "old wives' fables", that, between his death and resurrection, Jesus went down into "hell-fire", and had a fight with "his sooty majesty". But all who understand the Bible terms of "sin", "death", and "the devil", spurn such a fanciful legend as a base caricature of the mission of Jesus Christ, as a remnant of the mythology of superstitious pagans.

The Bible "devil."

By adopting the Bible meaning of the word "devil", all the foregoing difficulties at once vanish. The sense

in which it is used can easily be ascertained by comparing Paul's statement of Christ's mission in Heb. 2, 14, with other passages of like import. Thus, John the Baptist, on seeing Jesus coming to him, said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which *taketh away the sin of the world*" (John 1, 29); and Paul says that Jesus "appeared to *put away sin* by the sacrifice of himself"—(Heb. 9, 26). Coupling these passages with others which show that death results only from sin, it necessarily follows that Jesus was manifested to take away the cause of death.

Figuratively speaking, that which causes death is said to have "power" over it; for "the sting of death is sin" (1 Cor. 15, 56): that is to say, sin is the fatal sting which produces death. Therefore, to say that Jesus partook of flesh and blood that he might destroy "the devil", is precisely the same as to say that he appeared to "take away", or "put away" sin. Thus a belief in the true doctrine of Christ's death involves a knowledge of what "the devil" is. Ignorance in relation to the nature of "the devil" involves an imperfect conception of the mission of Jesus Christ, and of the way in which he accomplished it. No one believing "the devil" to be a personal being superior in nature and power to man, can see the absolute necessity of Jesus being of the same flesh and blood nature as that of fallen man.

The devil to be destroyed.

Jesus has not yet completely destroyed "the devil", or "put away sin". If he had, there would be no sinners in the world. But by means of resurrection, to which he became entitled through resisting all temptation to sin, the power of "the devil", or sin, was destroyed as far as he himself was concerned. In consequence of that victory, he has been endowed with authority to relieve all the faithful from the same power: this he will

do when he raises them from the dead and makes them immortal.

The next stage in the process will take place when he returns from heaven; but his mission as the destroyer of sin will not be fully consummated until the end of his reign over mortal men. "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet: the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death"—1 Cor. 15, 25-26). When death has been destroyed, sin will have been destroyed; for where there is no death, there can be no sin.

If an objection be raised that the term "devil" implies a person, an answer is furnished in the fact that various principles, such as wisdom, riches, etc., are personified in the Bible; and that among these is sin itself, which Paul alludes to figuratively as a master: "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, *his servants* ye are to whom ye obey, *whether of sin unto death*, or of obedience unto righteousness"; "ye were the *servants of sin*"—(Rom. 6, 16-17). It is quite as appropriate to apply the term "devil" to sin, as it is to speak of it as a master who is obeyed by "his servants". In itself, "devil" is not the name of one particular being, and it is only by usage that it conveys such an idea.

People are taught from early childhood that it is the name of a superhuman evil being, and hence whenever they meet with it they think that a person is spoken of. Its simple meaning is that of *slanderer* or *false accuser*. Both these words are to be found respectively in 1 Tim. 3, 11, and Titus 2, 3; where, in the original, the word is precisely the same as that which in other passages is rendered the "devil". Anyone who slanders or opposes God or His truth is, in scriptural language, a "devil". It was on this account that Jesus called Judas a "devil"—(John 6, 70).

The word translated "devil" is applied to sin because it is derived from a verb which means to cross

or pass over. When Adam sinned, he crossed over the line which divided the path of obedience from the path of disobedience; he was tempted, and then "drawn away of his own lust and enticed". His sin was his act of disobedience to God, and therefore it was sin which caused him to be transferred from a state of life to a state of death. By this means he became the "servant of sin", that tyrannical master who brings death upon all who serve him, and whom the Second Adam will in due time destroy.

The works of the devil.

The "works of the devil", which John says that Jesus was manifested to destroy, are the works of sinful flesh which fill the whole world. Paul gives a list of them in Gal. 5, 19-21; and it requires but a glance at the vices he enumerates, to enable anyone to perceive that they comprise all the evil actions which render this earth such a world of woe; so that there is no need for the operation of an invisible evil spirit to increase man's wickedness. "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life . . . is of the world"—(1 John 2, 16). And Jesus himself, speaking of the same thing, says, "*Out of the heart* proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies"—(Matt. 15, 19). This is equivalent to James's statement that "Every man is tempted when he is *drawn away of his own lust* and that, *when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin*"—(Jas. 1, 14-15). To all who desire to overcome the world, it is important that they should know this truth, in order that they may be on their guard against that by which they may be led into temptation. They will then know that the greatest enemy which man has to fear is himself, the lusts of his own flesh, and not an invisible evil fiend.

Satan.

The term "satan" simply means an adversary, and may be applied either to a good or a bad being. Instances of both kinds are to be found in the Scriptures. Thus, the angel which opposed Balaam was an "adversary" or *satan* to him—(Num. 22, 22). And Peter when he opposed his Master, was denominated "satan"—(Matt. 16, 23). More frequently it is applied to wicked adversaries, and, as it is used synonymously with "devil", it obviously often represents sin, the greatest adversary with which man has to contend. If these principles be applied to any of the passages in which either of the terms "devil" and "satan" occur, they will furnish a clue to their meaning. From the fact that these words are synonymous with sin, it must not be supposed that whenever they occur, the same manifestation of sin is referred to. They can be applied to sin in general, or to any exhibition of sin in human nature in one man or a multitude. Their precise signification in each particular case must, therefore, be ascertained from the context.

In view of the foregoing truths and facts, it would be well for the reader to ask, What aspect does the death of Jesus present, on the hypothesis that the punishment for sin is eternal torment? We have seen that the penalty with which Adam was threatened has since passed upon him and his descendants, and that in order to redeem any of them from its power, it was necessary that an obedient member of the race should, for a short time, suffer the same penalty. If, therefore, that penalty consisted of torment in hell-fire, Jesus must have "tasted" (Heb. 2, 9) the same torment between his crucifixion and resurrection. The advocates of the doctrine of unending suffering can only reject this conclusion by a display of inconsistency and unsound reasoning; for it is the inevitable result of their theory.

Beautiful harmony.

On the other hand, if the scriptural definition of death be accepted, all is beautiful harmony. Adam was threatened with death, a punishment defined by the Lord God to be a "return" to the dust of the ground. It is said of Jesus that he "was made a little lower than the angels *for the suffering of death . . .* that he . . . should *taste death for every man*"—(Heb. 2, 9). This was precisely what Jesus did: he suffered death. He was "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth"—(Matt. 12, 40). True, he was not resolved into dust; but that was merely because his body was not allowed to stop in the ground long enough. While it was there, he was as utterly devoid of life or consciousness as all other dead persons; for there is a general statement made respecting them, which is equally applicable to Jesus, that "*the dead know not anything*", and that "*there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave*"—(Eccles. 9, 5, 10). It is useless to suggest that Jesus might have had an immortal soul which escaped death: such a supposition cannot be entertained until it be proved that all men are immortal; for whatever be the nature of mankind generally, the nature of Jesus before his crucifixion must have been identical with it, or he could not have submitted to the same penalty as they were under.

Thus it will be seen that, on the scriptural principle of redemption, there is no necessity for the doctrine of "substitution", which is, that Jesus suffered the punishment due to sin instead of man. Jesus simply "tasted death for every man"; he underwent, for a brief space of time, the death common to all men; and so obtained the privilege of opening the gates of the grave, to liberate others from its bondage. He died, not to ensure to others exemption from death, as implied by "substitution", but to release from its power, whether actual or prospective, such as believe and obey God's word. It

was an event required, not for the appeasing of Jehovah's wrath, but for the vindication of His law, which had not only placed all the race under condemnation of Death, but had ordained that the seed of the woman (Christ) should be bruised in the heel (die) before the seed of the serpent (sin) should be bruised in the head (destroyed).

An echo of paganism.

No more erroneous and mischievous theory exists than that which represents the sacrificial death of Jesus as necessary to appease God's wrath. It had its origin in Paganism, which, in every form, inculcates the necessity of its votaries doing something uncommon to appease the wrath of the false gods they worship. In a more modified form it is to be found in all those religious systems of "Christendom" which teach their members that they must perform some extraordinary act of worship, self-denial, or benevolence, to ingratiate themselves into the favour of the Deity. It is on this principle that so much noise is made at revival meetings; that men and women immure themselves in convents; and that persons amass fortunes to be given away to charitable objects after their death. Instead of conduct such as this, all that is necessary is a compliance with the conditions which God has made known through His prophets and apostles.

The Deity's wrath against man was manifested when he passed sentence of death on Adam and his descendants. By the Fall, man became alienated from God. After that event, God's efforts were directed towards bringing man back to Him. It was man who required to be "reconciled" not God. Hence Paul declares that "*God was in Christ, RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF, not imputing their trespasses upon them*"—(2 Cor., 5, 19). The sacrificial death which Jesus underwent was undoubtedly the result of God's wrath against sin—the sinful conduct of others, not his

own—but the moving cause which provided him as the “Lamb of God” was love: “God so *loved* the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son” (Jno. 3, 16); God “loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins”—(1 Jno. 4, 10).

The two Adams.

The “first Adam” led man astray from his Maker, the second, or “last Adam” was raised up to bring him back again; “for *as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous*” — (Rom. 5, 19). These two Adams have each been constituted the federal head or representative of a large community: one on the basis of flesh; the other on the basis of spirit. In their relationship to these communities they exhibit a parallel; but in relation to each other, a contrast. Both were flesh and blood beings endowed with mental and moral capacities: one created by God, the other begotten by Him; the one commenced his existence unfettered by the trammels of sin and death, whereas the other was born when these enemies of man had been in operation for 4,000 years. They were subject to the same temptations, but one yielded, while the other overcame; the one disobeyed the only command given him, the other obeyed perfectly all the commandments of his Father; the one introduced sin, the other righteousness; the one brought death, the other life, so that “by man came death”, and “by man came also the resurrection of the dead”—(1 Cor. 15, 21).

The atoning blood.

One of the principles requiring recognition to enable anyone to participate in the salvation obtainable through Christ, is that on which his atoning sacrifice is based, viz.: that “without shedding of blood there is no remission” of sin. Jesus endorsed it when instituting the supper in commemoration thereof: “This is my blood

. . . which is shed for many, for the remission of sins"—(Matt. 26, 28). The apostles also understood and taught it after receiving "the Spirit of truth". Hence their references to Christ's blood as a means of forgiveness—"In whom (Christ) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins*" (Eph. 1, 7); "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . *but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot*"—(1 Peter 1, 18-19).

None but those who seek for remission of sins through the atoning blood of Jesus can reap and benefit from his mission; for all the redeemed are represented as ascribing glory "unto him that loved us and *washed us from our sins in his own blood*" (Rev. 1, 5), and as singing a new song to the Lamb:—"Thou wast slain, and *hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*"—(Rev. 5, 9). But a mere mental acquiescence in this truth is not sufficient. "Faith without works is dead".

Baptism—its necessity and meaning.

God has appointed a way by which a believer in this truth may give effect to his convictions, and personally realise the benefits accruing therefrom. He must put on the garment of righteousness provided in the person of Jesus Christ, in the same manner as did he who, on requesting John to baptise him, said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness"—(Matt. 3, 15). This is effected by a believer undergoing a symbolic death and burial; by becoming dead to the world, and being buried in water, that his sins may be washed away, and he may rise to newness of life. Hence the following statements of 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*; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even we

also should walk in newness of life. For *if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection*: knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin"—(Rom. 6, 3-6).

The ordinance of baptism being a symbol of Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, it is obvious that none can comprehend its full significance unless they understand the meaning of those all-important events. To do this, a person must know of what nature Jesus was made, the cause which rendered his death necessary, and the results which flow from his crucifixion and resurrection. This necessitates a belief that immortality can only be obtained through Christ, and that in the case of those who have died, resurrection is absolutely necessary to the enjoyment of a future life. The doctrine of man's natural immortality destroys these truths. Therefore a person must discard this dogma before he can fully appreciate the ordinance of baptism, and become a fit subject for its administration; for it is designed to enable believers to show in a practical manner that their only hope of a future life is based upon the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The absolute necessity of submitting to it is shown by the apostle making it a conditional preliminary to being planted in the likeness of Christ's resurrection:—
 "IF WE HAVE BEEN PLANTED TOGETHER IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS DEATH, WE SHALL BE ALSO IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS RESURRECTION". The logic of this proposition teaches that if we have not been planted in the likeness of Christ's death, by a burial with him in baptism, we shall not be planted in the likeness of his resurrection; and, if not planted in the likeness of his resurrection, there can be no immortality for us, because it is written, "*If the dead rise not . . . then they which are fallen asleep in Christ ARE PERISHED*"—(I Cor. 15, 16-18).

Having thus, by word and deed, acknowledged Christ's shed blood to be the only means of blotting out transgressions and obtaining release from death, that truth must be recognised by a weekly commemoration of the great event which happened on Calvary. This can only be done by assembling with others of the "one faith", and none else, to partake of the emblems ordained for that purpose. "This do", said Jesus, "in remembrance of me . . . for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come"—(1 Cor. 11, 24-26).

II—The Abolition of the Mosaic Covenant

A covenant is a contract, an agreement, or a bond of union between two or more persons, by which they engage to do certain things. The Bible contains several instances of such contracts. Thus, Abimelech entered into a covenant with Isaac for their mutual protection (Gen. 26, 28-29); "Jonathan and David made a 'covenant of affection' with each other" (1 Sam. 18, 3); and the ten tribes "made a covenant with the Assyrians", contrary to Jehovah's commandment—(Hos. 12, 1).

When the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai, the God of Abraham entered into a covenant with them, which, at a subsequent period, is referred to by Moses in the following manner:—"The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb (or Sinai): *the Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day*"—(Deut. 5, 2-3). The same event is also spoken of by the Spirit in Jeremiah: "*I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*"—(Jer. 34, 13). It is evident from the testimony of these two witnesses that a covenant was made with the Israelites in the wilderness,

which was not made with their fathers. It is necessary to remember this fact in order to understand the Bible teaching respecting Divine covenants.

Conditions of the covenant.

Owing to this covenant having been entered into through the instrumentality of Moses, it is generally called the Mosaic covenant; "It was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator"—(Gal. 3, 19). It was given to him by Jehovah on Mount Sinai, and, on descending he gave it to the children of Israel, who signified their approval by saying, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do"—(Exod. 19, 8). Its object was to make them "a peculiar treasure unto me (God) above all people", "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation"—(v. 5, 6). But to attain to this high position it was necessary for them to comply with the conditions, which, briefly described, consisted of the commandments of the Mosaic law: they were promised, if obedient, the blessings which are enumerated in Deut. 28, 2-14, comprising peace, plenty, prosperity, deliverance from their enemies, and permission to dwell in the land of Canaan; they were threatened, if disobedient, with the various curses enumerated in Deut. 28, 15-68, comprising distress, poverty, famine, pestilence, absence of rain, destruction by their enemies, and expulsion from the land, for the purpose of being scattered among other nations.

As long as the children of Israel continued to comply with the conditions of the covenant into which they had entered, they enjoyed the promised blessings. But when they failed, they suffered the threatened curses. They more frequently followed the latter course, and hence their chequered and troubled career. It was on this account that the ten tribes were carried into a captivity from which they have never returned:—"The King of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, . . . *because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but*

transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded"—(2 Kings 18, 11-12).

Result of neglect.

For the same reason, the other two tribes were taken captive by the King of Babylon. Among these was the prophet Jeremiah, who, in answer to the question, "Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great city?" says, "*Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God*, and worshipped other gods, and served them"—(Jer. 22, 8-9). After a period of seventy years, the two tribes were delivered from this yoke, and allowed to return to their own land. But although they did not relapse into the gross idolatry of their forefathers, the national disobedience was really as great after this captivity as before. In consequence, therefore, of their continued neglect to fulfil their part of the covenant, Jehovah determined to abolish it.

For this purpose, among others, Jesus Christ appeared in the "last days" (Heb. 1, 2) of the Mosaic covenant, otherwise styled "the end of the world"—(Heb. 9, 26). Being a Jew by birth he was "made under the law" (Gal. 4, 4), and therefore he was amenable throughout the whole of his life to all the requirements of that law. The ceremonies which were dependent on the action of others — such as circumcision — were as scrupulously attended to in his case as in the most rigid Jewish families; and every jot and tittle affecting his own voluntary conduct was afterwards perfectly complied with. He accomplished in fact that wherein every other Jew, through weakness of the flesh (Rom. 8, 3), has failed; he fulfilled the righteousness of the law.

Christ made "a curse."

But inasmuch as he appeared to fulfil it in antitype—"by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9, 26)—as well as in type, it was necessary before the close of his career to submit to that which brought him under its curse;

he was commanded by his Father not only to lay down his life (John 10, 18), but to lay it down by crucifixion, for he was "*obedient* unto death even the death of the cross"—(Phil. 2, 8). Now it had been written in the Mosaic law, "He that is hanged is accursed of God" (Deut. 21, 23); consequently in being hung on a tree or cross, Jesus was brought under this curse. That there may be no question as to the applicability of this enactment to him, reference should be made to the inspired exposition in Gal. 3, 13: "*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law* BEING MADE A CURSE for us; for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree'".

The value of this apostolic utterance lies in the fact that it not only affirms the curse of Christ by the law through hanging on a tree, but furthermore points out the object attained by it—the redemption of Paul and other Christian Jews in his day from the curse of the law. This is equivalent to saying that the redemption of all faithful Jews from its everlasting effects necessitated Jesus Christ suffering the same curse; this he did when he died, for the curse was death—(2 Cor. 3, 7). At the same time he suffered the condemnation of the Edenic law, in order to redeem all faithful sons of Adam from that sentence.

Jew and Gentile need redemption.

The Jews being under these two penalties required the removal of both before they could attain to immortality. Gentiles have never been under the Mosaic law, are free from its curse, and, therefore, are not so directly affected as are Jews by its removal; they are, however, by the existence of the Adamic condemnation, equally debarred from eternal life, and are consequently quite as vitally interested in the sacrificial death of the Lamb of God.

The same event was also the occasion of the *abolition* of the Mosaic law, which was signified by the "veil of the temple" being "rent in twain"—(Matt. 27, 51). This "veil" was designed for the purpose of hiding or screening the manifested glory of Jehovah in the Most Holy Place. The rending of the temple-veil is referred to by Paul as Jesus "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross"—(Col. 2, 14).

At that time the Mosaic covenant was reduced to the condition described by the same apostle when he says, "That which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away"—(Heb. 8, 13). But between its legal abolition and the infliction of its ultimate curses, a period of over thirty years elapsed. It was not until the destruction of Jerusalem that the Jews felt the full effect of their disobedience. Then it was that they realised that part of the threatened curses in which it was said that the Lord would bring against them "a nation of fierce countenance", "as swift as the eagle flieth", which should besiege all their gates throughout the land, resulting in their being *scattered* "among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other"—(Deut. 28, 49, 50, 52, 64).

A new covenant to be made.

Jesus predicted this event when telling his disciples that they should "see Jerusalem compassed with armies", and that the Jews should be "led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem be trodden down by the Gentiles *until* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"—(Luke 21, 20 and 24). The times of the Gentiles not yet having been fulfilled, Jerusalem is still trodden down by them, and the Jews are still in a state of captivity. Their present condition is the result of their breaking the Mosaic covenant. But this prediction of Jesus clearly intimates that when the Gentile times are fulfilled, Jeru-

salem will cease to be trodden down, and the Jews will cease to be dispersed captives.

When that time arrives, another covenant will be made between Jehovah and the Jewish nation of which Paul makes mention by saying, "If that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second; for, finding fault with them, he saith (through the prophet, Jeremiah), 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 when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt"—(Heb. 8, 7, 8, 9). By means of this covenant, they will again be recognised by Jehovah to His people for they will acknowledge him "whom they have pierced" (Zech. 12, 10) to be their Messiah, and will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23, 39).

Sabbatarianism.

Notwithstanding the irrefutable proofs of the abolition of the Mosaic covenant, the Jews still cling to it. And, strange to say, although it was given to the Jewish nation only, many Gentiles profess themselves under an obligation to obey one of its provisions, namely, the keeping of the Sabbath. In this respect they are on a level with those Judaizing Christians, who, in apostolic times, taught the necessity of being circumcised and keeping the law of Moses (Acts 15, 1 and 5), respecting which Paul says, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing"—(Gal. 5, 2). If there be any difference, Protestant Sabbatarians are worse than these Jews were, because the Mosaic covenant, of which the Sabbath formed a part, was at one time binding upon the Jews, but it was never given as a law to Gentiles.

It is but necessary to examine the injunctions given to the Jews respecting the mode in which the Sabbath

was to be kept, in order to see how erroneous are the present Gentile notions about keeping that institution. The Jews were not allowed to "do any work" (Ex. 20, 10), were to "kindle no fire" (Ex. 35, 3), and "no man" was to "go out of his place on the seventh day" —(Ex. 16, 29). Then, too, there was "the burnt offering of every Sabbath" (Num. 28, 9-10), consisting of two lambs, and two tenth deals of flour mingled with oil, which, like all other sacrifices could only be offered up in the tabernacle or temple erected for that purpose. Gentiles do not profess to do any of these things; for if they did, they would not ride to or from church or chapel, light fires, cook, or do any other work, on what they call the "Sabbath-day". Their boast of keeping it is, therefore, mere empty profession. The Sabbatarianism of the present age is as great a piece of Pharisaism as ever existed.

The Jews kept the Sabbath on the seventh day, but the Gentiles profess to keep it on the first day of the week. On what authority they have altered it from the seventh to the first day, they cannot show. Jesus did not alter it; neither did the apostles authorise such alteration. In all their epistles, not a word can be found which in any way favours the idea that the Sabbath was intended to be continued as a Gentile institution. And, if it be of as much importance as members of the Lord's-Day Observance Society and others contend, it is certain that the apostles would not have thus passed it over. On the contrary, Paul says, "Let no man judge you . . . in respect of a holy day . . . or of the Sabbath" (Col. 2, 16); his meaning evidently being that no one was to charge them with doing wrong because they omitted to keep these things. He further indicated the unimportance of attending to them at the period when he was writing, by saying in the next verse that these things "are a shadow of things to come".

The ten Commandments.

The ten commandments, called "the tables of the covenant" (Heb. 9, 4), formed a part of the covenant made at Sinai, and, as a consequence, none but the Jews was ever under any obligation to obey them:—"What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law" (Rom. 3, 19), and since the abolition of that covenant they have not been binding on either Jews or Gentiles. It is, therefore, extremely improper for the latter to profess allegiance to them, and to make such a formal parade of them as is done by the Church of England; they ought never to be enjoined or repeated in the form given in the Old Testament. All that they contain which believing Jews or Gentiles are now required to obey is to be found in the New Testament. In the gospels and epistles, nine of them are re-enacted; but of the fourth, which relates to the Sabbath, nothing is said:

- I. Matt. 19, 17; 1 Cor. 8, 5-6; Eph. 4, 6.
- II. 1 Cor. 10, 14; Eph. 5, 5; 1 Jno. 5, 21; Gal. 5, 20.
- III. 1 Tim. 6, 1; Matt. 5, 34.
- IV.
- V. Col. 3, 20; Eph. 6, 1-2.
- VI. 1 Pet. 4, 15; Rom. 13, 9; 1 Jno. 3, 15; Gal. 5, 21.
- VII. Matt. 5, 28; Heb. 13, 4; Rom. 13, 9; Gal. 5, 19.
- VIII. 1 Cor. 6, 10; Eph. 4, 28; Rom. 13, 9.
- IX. Tit. 3, 2; Eph. 4, 31; Rom. 13, 9.
- X. Luke 12, 15; Eph. 5, 3-5; Rom. 13, 9.

The foregoing remarks have, of course, no reference to the setting apart of a certain day for rest and religious exercises. If any nation or community mutually agree to suspend commercial operations for such purposes, there cannot be the least objection to it. They have, however, no right to compel, by law, any dissentients to adopt the same course, or to misname it "the Sabbath", and then assert that it is a God-appointed

institution. Those who truly understand the character of Jesus as a priest would never be guilty of such folly as this. But at the same time they would not fail to make use of a day set apart by custom or law for the purpose of attending to their religious duties, such as the commemoration of the sacrifice offered up by their High Priest.

Breaking of bread.

The early Christians met together for the purpose, on the first day of the week, doubtless because that was the day on which the Lord Jesus came forth from the grave. But there is no evidence that they suspended all business operations on that day, and devoted themselves wholly to religious pursuits. The only passage which affords any insight into their practice, records that "*Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread*, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and *continued his speech until midnight*"—(Acts 20, 7). From the fact that Paul's speech continued till midnight, it would appear that the disciples "met to break bread" in the evening of "the first day of the week"; for it is scarcely likely that the speech here referred to began in the early part of the day.

The probability is, that as the Sabbath was kept by the Jews until the destruction of Jerusalem — which would necessitate a considerable suspension of business operations on the seventh day, even on the part of those who did not profess to keep the Sabbath — the early Christians assembled on the first day, after their day's work was over to avoid the necessity of giving up their daily employment for two days in the week. Or, it may be that, as many of them were Jews, they reckoned the commencement of the first day from the termination of the Jewish Sabbath, which was six o'clock on Saturday evening, and that they met to attend to the Lord's supper in the evening of that day.

Although the Sabbath is not an institution of the present dispensation, it is, nevertheless, to be re-enacted during the world's Sabbatic Rest of a thousand years. The prophet Ezekiel, in giving predictions respecting the temple, priests, and worship of that period, says, "They (the Levites) shall *hallow my sabbaths*" (Ezek. 44, 24); and "the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the Lord, *in the sabbaths*, and in the new moons"—Ezek. 46, 3). But it would appear from the same prophet's prediction respecting certain burnt and peace offerings being offered on the "*eighth day and so forward*" (Ezek. 46, 3). But it would appear that the Sabbath is to be changed from the seventh to the "eighth day", which is, of course, the same as the first day.

III—The Confirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant

The most important covenant contained in the Bible is undoubtedly that which the Almighty made with Abraham. Its purport is contained in the words spoken to Abraham, when, after leaving his father's home and country, he had arrived in the land of Canaan:—"Unto thy seed will I give this land"—(Gen. 12, 7).

But this was not all: the covenant was of such a nature as to give to Abraham a personal interest in its fulfilment; for the "land", which was defined as extending "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates"—(Gen. 15, 18), was also promised to Abraham as a possession:—"All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever"—(Gen. 13, 15).

In a subsequent reference to it, the Lord spoke of these promises as "a covenant", saying, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee"—(Gen. 17, 7).

An ancient ceremony.

It was the custom in ancient times for a covenant to be confirmed by cutting an animal into two, and the parties thereto passing between the halves; an instance of which will be found in Jer. 34, 18-19. A similar ceremony was enacted in connection with the Abrahamic covenant. In answer to Abraham's question, "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? (the land)", the Lord God commanded him to take a heifer, a she-goat, and a ram, and divide them in the midst. "And it came to pass that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between those pieces"; a miraculous confirmation of the covenant which assured Abraham that it should duly be fulfilled—(Gen. 15, 8-17).

That Abraham has never yet enjoyed possession of the land covenanted to him is clearly and unmistakably proved by subsequent references to him and to the covenant. He did not have possession of it during his lifetime, because, when desiring to bury Sarah in it, he had to purchase from one of its occupiers a portion called "the field of Ephron" for that purpose (Gen. 23, 17); an incident which forcibly illustrates Stephen's statement that God "*gave him (Abraham) none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on*"—(Acts 7, 5). It was not possessed by Isaac and Jacob, because they were only "*heirs with him of the same promise*"; and if only heirs, they could not be actual inheritors; it is also recorded of the three that "these all died in faith, not having received the promises", that is, not having received their fulfilment—(Heb. 11, 9-13).

It could not have been fulfilled in the children of Israel being allowed temporarily to occupy it, because, upwards of a thousand years afterwards, and when the children of Israel had been dwelling thereon for several centuries, the prophet Micah made the following prediction respecting it:—"Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old"—(Mic. 7, 20).

It was quite distinct from the Mosaic covenant, and its blessings were never promised to the Jews by virtue of being under that law; "*For the promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith, for if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect*"—(Rom. 4, 13-14).

Not yet fulfilled.

No one understanding and believing these statements would for a moment entertain such an absurd notion as that the covenant with Abraham has already been fulfilled in any sense whatever. Therefore all who possess the faith of Abraham, who was "fully persuaded that what He (God) had promised He was able also to perform" (Rom. 4, 21), believe that Abraham will yet, at some future day, possess the land of Canaan for an inheritance.

He is now dead, lying in the dust of the ground; for he was told that he—not a part of him—should "be buried in a good old age"; and further that he should at the same time go to his "fathers in peace"—(Gen. 15, 15); now "Terah, the father of Abraham", was among those who "served other gods" (Josh. 24, 2)—an offence against the Almighty which would certainly preclude him from entrance into heaven at death; and as Abraham went to his "fathers" when he died, it is obvious that he neither went to heaven nor any other place of reward. Before Abraham can enjoy the inheritance promised to him, he must be raised from the dead. The covenant, therefore, in its necessary results, was a promise to him of a resurrection and a future life.

Not many, but one.

The general impression respecting the "seed" mentioned in the covenant with Abraham is that it is a multitude of individuals consisting of the fleshly descendants of Abraham. Not only is this idea contrary to the evidence already adduced, but it is inconsistent with what was said to Abraham on one occasion:—"Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" (Gen. 22,

17); a statement which clearly proves that the "seed" was a certain personage who should descend from Abraham.

All doubt on this point is removed by Paul's positive definition: "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. 3, 16). Interpreted in the light of the New Testament, the covenant with Abraham was therefore a promise that he and Jesus Christ should possess the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. Jesus has not yet enjoyed this inheritance; for, during the only time when he lived upon it he was an outcast from society, and he himself declared that he had "not where to lay his head"—(Matt. 8, 20). It remains, therefore, yet to be fulfilled, and before this can take place Jesus must appear on the earth a second time.

When the covenant was brought into force.

Necessary, however, as that event is, his first appearance was equally essential to the covenant being brought into force. The confirmation already described was but typical. A covenant which ensures a future life to human beings needs to be confirmed by something superior to heifers or rams. This requirement is found in the person of the "Lamb without blemish and without spot"—(1 Pet. 1, 19). The confirmation which Abraham witnessed bears the same relation to that effected by Jesus that the Mosaic sacrifices bear to "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ," on the cross—(Heb. 10, 10).

Writing on this subject, the apostle Paul says — "*The covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect*"—(Gal. 3, 17). The parenthetic allusion to the law being "four hundred and thirty years after" this covenant, identifies it as the one given to Abraham—a conclusion which is supported by its being described as "the promise". In another epistle the apostle speaks of the covenant as "the

promises to the fathers " Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, each of whom were parties thereto :—" Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision, for the truth of God, *to confirm the promises made unto the fathers* "—(Rom. 15, 8).

These promises not having been confirmed until the crucifixion, it is obvious that they could not have been fulfilled previously. Hence, that is a very erroneous system of theology which teaches that the patriarchs and other Old Testament saints entered at death upon the inheritance covenanted to them. The " land of promise " is not in the skies, but on earth; and, therefore, they have not even yet obtained possession of it : nor, indeed, can they until " the mediator of the new testament " (Heb. 9, 15) returns from heaven to " perform the mercy promised to the fathers " of the Jewish people—(Luke 1, 72).

Why Jesus died.

It was for the purpose of completely blotting out the transgressions of such as these, that Jesus, as the covenant-sacrifice, suffered death :—" He is the mediator of the new testament, that *by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance* " (Heb: 9, 15). By "first testament " is meant the Mosaic covenant, and by "new testament" the Abrahamic. The former, although given subsequently to the latter, is called " first," because it was the first to come into operation ; and the latter is called " new " because it does not come into force until after the abolition of the former. It was not for the transgressions of *all* Jews under the first or Mosaic covenant, that Jesus died : " For they are not all Israel which are of Israel "—(Rom. 9, 6). It will only prove efficacious for those who, like Abraham, were faithful to the " new " covenant ; for " all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant " (Ps. 25, 10) and to such only.

After enumerating a number of these Old Testament worthies who had kept the Abrahamic covenant,

Paul declares that "*These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect*" — (Heb. 11, 39-40). They will be made perfect when the "seed to whom the promise was made" — (Gal. 3, 19) comes to take possession of his inheritance; for the heirs thereto are all to be "glorified together" — (Rom. 8, 17).

The Lord's Supper.

Just before confirming the Abrahamic covenant by means of his death, Jesus instituted a supper to commemorate that event, at the same time saying, "*This is my blood of the new Testament (or covenant), which is shed for many for the remission of sins*" — (Matt. 26, 28). The "blood of the new covenant", being that by which sins are remitted, is, as a consequence, spoken of as the means by which those who participate in that remission will be released from death. Thus Zechariah, speaking prophetically, says, "By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water" — (Zech. 9, 11); a figurative description of "the resurrection of life" — (John 5, 29).

The apostolic Christians placed far more importance upon the commemoration of their Lord's death and resurrection than do those who, in the present day, falsely pretend to be their successors. This arose from their having a better understanding of its significance. They did not view the Lord's supper as memorialising an event by which their "immortal souls" might be delivered from eternal torments and translated at death to "mansions in the skies": they were not content with attending to it monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, or annually; neither did they believe the bread and the wine to be the real body and blood of the Lord. The gross manner in which this ordinance is perverted, and the indifference with which it is regarded in modern times, are but indications of the widespread ignorance and misconception, among both Roman Catholics and Protestants, in reference to the event it symbolises.

The early Christians viewed the Lord's supper as commemorative of an event by which they might be

released from death and endowed with immortality. They recognised in it not only a memorial of the past, but also a token of the future; for it was to be attended to "till he come" again, a feature which is seldom noticed in "orthodox" churches and chapels. It was therefore to them the connecting link between the two great epochs of the plan of salvation — the first and second appearings of Jesus Christ; between the time when he suffered on the cross, and the time when he will wear a crown; between his crucifixion for claiming to be King of the Jews, and his reigning as King over the whole earth; between the confirmation by him of the Abrahamic covenant and the bestowal by him of its blessings; between the abolition of the Mosaic covenant, and the establishing of a new covenant with the houses of Israel and Judah; between Jerusalem witnessing his humiliation, and the same city sharing in his glory; between his reception of immortality himself, and the bestowal of it upon his faithful followers: it was to them a token that the one set of events would as certainly be fulfilled as had the other.

The Father's House.

Forming, as it does, an arch which bridges over the space between these two great pillars of the temple of salvation, it reminded them that as surely as "the author and finisher" of their "faith" (Heb. 12, 2) had laid the foundation of his Father's house, so surely would he complete its erection. To Gentiles it is especially interesting, because it is ordained for that period of time during which God is taking "out of them a people for his name"—(Acts 15, 14); whereby an opportunity is afforded of ceasing to be "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise", and of becoming "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God", by being "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone".—(Eph. 2. 12, 19, 20).

The truth declared by Paul, that Jesus is the "seed" referred to in the Abrahamic covenant, is of more importance to the believer than at first sight

appears, having a direct reference to his future inheritance. On the principle that "the children of God" are "heirs of God, and *joint-heirs with Christ*" (Rom. 8, 17), it follows that whatever he is to inherit they will inherit; he being heir to the land of Canaan, they also are heirs to the same inheritance. Before any can be "joint-heirs with Christ", they must be introduced into his name, or united to him: to be "heirs of God through Christ" (Gal. 4, 7), they must be "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3, 26); they must "receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4, 5) that they may become "faithful brethren in Christ" (Col. 1, 2).

Baptism essential.

The ceremony by which this is effected is thus defined:—"As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3, 27); a passage which proves that only those who have been "baptised into Christ", by immersion in water, "have put on Christ": and, as a consequence, none others can share with Christ the inheritance covenanted to him and Abraham. This is, in effect, what the apostle immediately proceeds to say:—"If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE"—(v. 29).

Baptism is the seal by which believers accept the Abrahamic covenant, and agree to abide by its conditions, in the sure and certain hope that by "patient continuance in well-doing" (Rom. 2, 7) they will participate in its blessings. But in order that they may undergo this ceremony, they must have an intelligent acquaintance with the nature of that covenant. No sane man enters an agreement or contract without knowing what are the conditions he will have to comply with, and the blessings he will derive therefrom. The conditions imposed upon Abraham were faith and obedience: he had to believe God's promise that he and his future "seed", the Saviour of the world, should possess the land of Canaan, and he had to do what God commanded him. These conditions he fully complied with: "He staggered not at the promise of God

through unbelief, but was strong in faith ”; “ therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness ” (Rom. 4, 20-22): furthermore, “ faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect ” (Jas. 2, 22); in other words his faith was manifested in obedience. Similar conditions are required from all others who become parties to the same covenant. Though different in detail, they are identical in principle; for “ without faith it is impossible to please God ” (Heb. 11, 6), and only “ he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever ” —1 John 2, 17).

The Conditions.

If any one knew that under some particular will or covenant certain property and advantages were obtainable by a compliance with the conditions specified therein, such individual would anxiously and carefully examine each clause of it to ascertain the nature and extent of the property, and the conditions necessary to be complied with. And if so in the case of present possessions, how much more so should this be the case in regard to the covenant which God has made known to mankind, pertaining, as it does, to a future life! And yet how apathetic and ignorant are the majority of people respecting this covenant, although it is in almost everybody’s hands!

The great majority of Protestants in the present day hold that faith alone, without works, is sufficient for salvation. On the other hand, Roman Catholics and Unitarians assert that works alone, without faith, will suffice. The former class, in support of their view, adduce passages from the writings of Paul and others, to the effect that salvation is bestowed in consequence of faith; while the latter class quote certain passages from the writings of James, such as, “ By works a man is justified ” (James 2, 24), to show that salvation is merely the reward of works: both these views are extremes or half-truths, neither of them being wholly correct.

The truth lies in a combination of the two. Paul does not contradict James, neither does James say anything in opposition to Paul: the writings of the two

can be easily reconciled. Paul brings out more prominently one aspect of the truth, and James dwells more upon the other. This arose out of the necessities of the case—the different objects they had in writing their several epistles. Paul wrote to a great extent to those who denied the doctrine of justification by faith, and James wrote to those who denied the necessity of faith being made perfect by works; and so the tone of their epistles was such as suited the special circumstances which gave rise to them. But in neither of them is the truth ignored at the expense of the other. Paul believed in the necessity of works equally with James (Rom. 2, 7; 6, 19; Phil. 2, 12), and James believed in the necessity of faith as much as did Paul—(James 2, 22-24). It is an axiom, as applicable to this as to any other Scriptural doctrine, that a view which sets one inspired writer against another must be a false one; and therefore the only true doctrine on this point is that which recognises the necessity of both faith and works, and that either, without the other, is imperfect and insufficient.

What the faith is.

The "faith" to be manifested is defined as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11, 1): before faith can be directed towards something "hoped for", there must be a belief in that which is promised; to hope for that which is not promised is "a mockery, a delusion, and a snare". God has not promised that Abraham or anyone else shall go to heaven; but He has promised that the father of the faithful, and all who, like him, are "strong in faith" and believe the promises of God, shall inherit the land of promise; "for *the promise . . . to Abraham*", and "to his seed", was "*through the righteousness of faith*". Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, 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*, who is the father of us all"—(Rom. 4, 13-16).

To possess the faith of Abraham is to believe "the promises to the fathers", together with what has since been revealed in connection with them. In consequence of heirship to the land depending on faith, and not on subjection to the Mosaic law, Gentiles can become heirs now, and inheritors hereafter. All Gentiles who have not manifested the faith of Abraham are in the condition of the Ephesian Christians before conversion, which Paul describes in the following language:—"At that time ye were WITHOUT CHRIST, being *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*, and STRANGERS FROM THE COVENANTS OF PROMISE, *having no hope*, and WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD"—(Eph. 2, 12). The Abrahamic covenant being comprised in "the covenant of promise", to be ignorant of that covenant is to be "without Christ", "without God", and with "no hope".

Universal ignorance.

The universal ignorance respecting "the covenants of promise" shows how widely applicable in the present day is Paul's description of unbelieving Gentiles in his lifetime. Much is said about God's covenants by the religious teachers of "Christendom", but they seldom define what those covenants are. Definitions based on Scriptural evidence are very unfavourable to the theology of the twentieth century: hence its supporters do not like being brought to the test of "the law and the testimony".

To believe the promises made to Abraham is to believe the gospel. Anyone ignorant of the former is necessarily ignorant of the latter; for "the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, *preached before the GOSPEL unto Abraham*, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed"—(Gal. 3, 8). From this we see that the gospel preached in subsequent times was not a different gospel from that preached to Abraham; it does not say a gospel was preached to Abraham, leaving it open for the suggestion that it was another gospel, but "the gospel" was preached to Abraham—*i.e.*, the gospel preached by Paul, who wrote these words. The same writer

declares that "the gospel" was preached to the children of Israel in the wilderness:—"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them"—(Heb. 4, 2). And, in writing to the Roman Christians, he defines "the gospel" to be something which God had "promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures"—(Rom. 1, 2).

Gospel not exclusive to New Testament.

In the face of these testimonies, it is apparent that no more erroneous idea exists than that which supposes "the gospel" to pertain exclusively to that portion of the Bible called the New Testament. It is to be found in the writings of Moses and the prophets, as well as in the recorded teachings of Jesus and his apostles. Anyone who cannot point out "the gospel" in the former, cannot understand it as expounded in the latter. There is but *one gospel* by which a man can be saved; and therefore not to understand or believe "the gospel" preached to Abraham is to be deficient in a vital element of the faith which justifies. The promise that Abraham and Jesus should possess the land of Canaan is the basis or germ of all subsequent revelation; upon its fulfilment depends the completion of the scheme of redemption. It is on that territory that "the kingdom of God" which Jesus preached is to be established; and that great work can only be accomplished by Jesus having entire control and possession of that land.

As "the messenger of the covenant" (Mal. 3, 1), made with Abraham, Jesus appeared among "the lost sheep of Israel", to remind them of that covenant, and to proclaim a message of peace inviting them individually to share in its blessings. That his advent was looked upon by faithful Jews as a token that the Abrahamic covenant would be duly fulfilled, is evident from what was uttered by Zacharias, the father of John:—"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people . . . to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he sware to our father Abraham"—Luke 1, 68-73). Although they were mis-

taken in supposing that the blessings of the covenant would be immediately bestowed, they were not mistaken in believing that the covenant with Abraham had never been fulfilled, and that when it was, they would be delivered from the hand of all their enemies, that they might serve Jehovah without fear. Jesus undeceived them on the former point by simply *preaching* about the covenant; this he did whenever he preached about the kingdom of God.

The "gospel of the kingdom" is but the promise to Abraham in a more amplified form. The latter bears the same relation to the former that the outline of a picture bears to the picture when filled up in detail. Nothing was said to Abraham about the kingdom of God; but inasmuch as he was promised an inheritance of the land on which the kingdom is to be established, he will necessarily be in the kingdom. Hence Jesus referred to him in the following terms:—"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 13, 28).

God's Kingdom will be on earth.

If the kingdom of God were a kingdom in the skies, this prediction could not come to pass, because Abraham's promised inheritance is on the earth. The fact that Abraham is to have a place in the kingdom of God is therefore another proof that that kingdom is to be established upon the earth; and, as none but those included in that kingdom will enjoy salvation, it follows that this earth is the future abode of all who believe and obey the Gospel. Consequently they are called "*Heirs of the kingdom* which he (God) hath promised to them that love him" (Jas. 2, 5); a truth which is stated in another form by the Psalmist, when he says, "*The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever*"; "*Wait on the Lord and keep his way, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it*" —(Ps. 37, 29-34).

The earth will not always be in the possession of wicked men, as at present, neither is it destined to be burnt up; for it has been decreed that "*The meek shall inherit the earth*, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (v. 11); a promise which Jesus repeated in his sermon on the mount, when he said, "Blessed are *the meek*, for *they shall inherit the earth*"—(Matt. 5, 5). Abraham being the "HEIR OF THE WORLD", and his "seed" also being heir to the same inheritance (Rom. 4, 13), all who become children of Abraham by being incorporated into his "seed", the Christ, are necessarily heirs of the same extended inheritance. Thus Paul, in writing to the heirs residing at Corinth, says, "*All things are yours*, whether . . . THE WORLD, or life, or death . . . or *things to come*"—(I Cor. 3, 21-22).

The New Order.

In addition to the everlasting inheritance of the earth to be obtained through means of the Abrahamic covenant by those who, in past and present dispensations, are "heirs according to the promise", there are other blessings to be derived from it by mankind generally. These are comprised in the statement God made to Abraham, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12, 3); or, as given by Paul, "In thee shall all nations be blessed"—(Gal. 3, 8).

Anyone looking abroad on the surface of society, and witnessing the immense amount of suffering, privation, poverty, ignorance, intolerance, injustice, despotism, cruelty, crime, and superstition, which exist in the world, must perceive at a glance that the above prediction has not yet been fulfilled. Nor, indeed, can it be until the other parts of the covenant have come into operation: until Abraham has been raised from the dead; his "seed" the Christ, returned from heaven; and they, with all the righteous, have taken possession of the land promised to them. They will then use that territory as a basis of operations by which to gain possession of the whole earth, in order that the promise made by God to his Son Jesus may be realised:— "Ask

of me and I shall give thee the heathen (or nations) for thine inheritance, and *the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession* ”—(Ps. 2, 8).

The power thus gained will not be used for the mere personal gratification of the future inheritors of the earth, as is, for the most part, the case with its present possessors. It will be exercised for the benefit of all the human race then living. It will end in that “good time coming”, for which mankind is longing; when war shall cease, and unprecedented peace be established (Isa. 2, 2-4), when the proud “shall be humbled”, and the “Lord alone exalted” (v. 11); when the “mighty” shall be “put down” from their seats, and those of “low degree” exalted (Luke 1, 52); when the present inequalities of society will be levelled; when the Jews instead of rejecting Jesus, will acknowledge him as their King (Hos. 3, 5; Zech. 12, 10); when the Gentiles will no longer believe “lies” (Jer. 16, 19), but will worship and fear the true God (Mal. 1, 11); when wild beasts will be tamed (Isa. 65, 25), death greatly diminished (Isa. 65, 22); when the golden rule (Matt. 7, 12) will be universally acted upon, and God’s will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven (Matt. 6, 10); so that “the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” —Hab. 2, 14).

IV—The One Mediator

As a rule, Protestants recognise the apostolic truth that “the man Christ Jesus” is the “one mediator between God and man” (1 Tim. 2, 5); so far, so good. In this respect they are more correct than Roman Catholics, who acknowledge numerous mediators—the ghosts of dead men and women; but they are in error in regard to the persons for whom Jesus mediates; they teach that Jesus is a Mediator or High Priest for all men—good, bad, and indifferent. Not so the apostle Paul; his statement to Timothy is one of those passages which require to be elucidated by other parts of the inspired writings; for although, on a superficial,

view, it may appear to have reference to all men, it will be seen, on investigation, that this is not so, its meaning being limited by other Scriptural statements on the same subject.

In his epistle to the Romans Paul alludes to Christ as being "at the right hand of God", and says that it is he "who *maketh intercession for us*"—(Rom. 8, 34)—that is, for the apostle, the Roman believers and all in a like position; which is in harmony with what he says in v. 27, that the Lord the Spirit "*maketh intercession for the saints*, according to the will of God": to the Hebrews the same apostle writes that Jesus "*ever liveth to make intercession for them that come unto God by him*"—(Heb. 7, 25). Thus, the mediatorship of God's beloved Son is limited by the Divine will, the position of those who desire the benefit of his intercession, and the way in which they approach the Father; it must be through His Son only.

For whom the blood atones.

The apostle John, writing on this subject, says: "*If we walk in the light*, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the *blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin*"—(1 John 1, 7). "Light" being a figurative appellation for "the truth", it follows that if a person is not "in the truth" (2 John 1) he cannot have his sins cleansed by the blood of Jesus; neither can one in the truth who walks unworthy of his calling, so long as he remains impenitent. Consequently, none but those who have become true disciples of him who is "the way, the truth, and the life", can approach the "one God" through the "one Mediator"; and of these, only such as walk in the light of the truth can derive benefit from the Lamb of God's atoning blood.

The Scriptural mode of obtaining forgiveness for all sins committed previous to knowing "the truth as it is in Jesus" is defined by Peter in his Pentecostal address:—"Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, *for the remission of sins*"—(Acts 2, 38). To "repent" in Biblical language, is not simply to be sorry for sin; for godly sorrow

“ *worketh repentance.* ” (2 Cor. 7, 10), that is, sorrow produces repentance, or a change of mind and purpose, leading a person to believe and obey what God has commanded. Therefore sorrow and repentance, so far from being one and the same thing, sustain the relations of cause and effect. If the required conditions be not complied with, it is merely the “ sorrow of the world which worketh death ” (Cor. 7, 10), and not “ repentance unto life ”—(Acts 11, 18).

The Conditions.

The conditions which Peter prescribed to the Jews on the day of Pentecost were—to believe that the crucified Jesus was the Messiah for whom they had been looking, and then to be baptised in his name. This was the way in which Peter used one of “ the keys of the kingdom ” (Matt. 16, 19) entrusted to him by Jesus, to enable him to “ loose ” or “ remit ” sins—(John 20, 23). By following his instructions, his hearers would obtain remission of all their past sins, and would from that time commence a new life. This is the only means by which any unwashed sinners can have their sins remitted.

The conditions prescribed to the Gentiles by Peter when he used the other “ key of the kingdom ”, several years afterwards, were precisely the same. They were exhorted to believe “ that word which was *published throughout all Judea* ” by Jesus and his apostles, and then to be “ baptised in the name of the Lord ”—(Acts 10, 37-48). This also was the mode prescribed by Ananias to Paul after he had believed that Jesus was the Christ:—“ *Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins* ”—(Acts 22, 16). If the apostle to the Gentiles could not have his sins washed away without being immersed, even after he had been transformed from a persecutor of Jesus to an humble suppliant, saying, “ What shall I do, Lord? ”—it is quite certain that no Gentiles in this dispensation can have their sins forgiven without obeying the same ordinance.

In view of these truths, what a delusion it is for people to believe that their sins can be washed away

by simply believing that Jesus died for them; and how erroneous to exhort them to pray to God for forgiveness while still in an impenitent, unbelieving or disobedient state! None but those who have become "saints" have a right to approach unto God through Jesus Christ; and the only way to become a "saint" is to follow the apostle's injunctions. The conditions are precisely the same in the nineteenth as in the first century.

The Aaronic priesthood.

The present position of Jesus as a high priest is shown by the functions of the Aaronic priesthood, the latter being typical of the former. The high priest under the Mosaic law did not offer an atonement for, and intercede on behalf of, the whole world; he only did these things for the house of Israel, and it was only efficacious for them when they were obedient to the law; Jesus, being the antitype of the Jewish high priests, is described as "a high priest over the house of God" (Heb. 10, 21); that is, the spiritual house of Israel, composed of Jewish and Gentile "saints in Christ Jesus". The Aaronic priests had to offer sacrifices every time they interceded for the people: Jesus only did so once. They offered the blood of animals, which could not wash away sin; he offered his own blood. Hence it is said, "Neither by the blood of goats or calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption"—(Heb. 9, 12).

The Aaronic high priests entered, once every year, into the most holy place of a temple made with hands; but Jesus entered its antitype, even "heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (v. 24); that is, for the members of his household. Hence the apostle John was able to say, "If any man sin (that is, of those to whom he is writing), we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous", who is "the propitiation for our sins", that is, for the sins of the disciples to whom the epistle is addressed, and, "also for the sins of the whole world"—(1 John 2, 2). It must not be supposed that by the phrase "the whole

world", John means the whole human race. The word translated "world" simply means an arrangement or constitution of things. In modern speech, "world" is frequently used to represent certain sections of mankind, such as the religious world, the political world, the scientific world, the literary world. It requires, therefore, no great amount of discernment to see that "the whole world" of which John writes, is the whole world of the redeemed.

Individual Atonement.

Previous to offering a sacrifice on behalf of the Israelitish nation, Aaron was required to make an atonement for himself—(Lev. 9, 8; 16, 6). To this there is a counterpart in the priesthood of Jesus Christ, of which the following passage affords evidence:—"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for *this he did ONCE, when he offered up himself*"—(Heb. 7, 27). The Aaronic high priests offered sacrifice daily; Jesus only did it once: they offered sacrifice first for themselves and then for the people; this was done by Jesus in one act, "when he offered up himself".

In the case of these individual atonements there is an important distinction: Aaron's sacrifice was rendered necessary by his sinful nature and his personal transgressions; whereas Jesus Christ being morally undefiled, did not require cleansing from actual transgression. He was however, as "seed" of the "woman" and "son of David", a member of a sinful race, and as such inherited that nature which had been defiled by the introduction of sin into the world—for he was "*made like unto his brethren*" in "ALL THINGS" — (Heb. 2, 17): moreover, through obedience to his Father in submitting to crucifixion, he was brought under the curse of the law. From both these taints — neither of which detracted from his righteous character—he required to be cleansed, an object which was effected by the shedding of his own blood, the result being that he was freed from the Adamic condemnation under which he was born, and

the Mosaic curse under which he suffered death, and thereby a foundation was laid for liberating all faithful Jews and Gentiles from the same bondage.

When the high priest under the Mosaic law entered into the most holy place to present a sacrifice on behalf of the whole house of Israel, the people waited outside, and it was not until he had reappeared that they knew whether or not the offering of blood had been accepted, and their sins forgiven; if favourably received, the high priest blessed them in the form prescribed in Num. 6, 23-27. In this typical event we have a confirmation of the New Testament truth that none of the household of Christ can be rewarded until he reappears out of the anti-typical Holy of Holies. Then will he, as God's vicegerent, pronounce a blessing upon the worthy, and condemnation upon the unworthy. Not until this authoritative declaration will the effect of Jesus Christ's mediatorial office behind the veil be fully known.

Christ the "High Priest."

It is a matter of great consolation to Israel after the Spirit, to know that their "Great High Priest" has passed through the same ordeal as those for whom he has to intercede. In this fact they have the assurance that he knows by experience what kind of trials and temptations they have to undergo, and that consequently he has a fellow-feeling for them. This truth is portrayed in bold relief by the apostle Paul, when he says, "We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are" (Heb. 4, 15); a statement which shows not only the nature of Jesus Christ's temptations, but that he still retains a recollection of what he endured while passing through them.

It was not until Jesus had assumed his present position as a priest, that prayer could be offered up in his name. This explains how it is that the model prayer given by him to his disciples, commonly called "The Lord's Prayer", does not terminate with any clause stating that the requests it contains are made in the name of Jesus Christ. Shortly before taking his departure Jesus said to the twelve, "Hitherto have

ye asked nothing in my name " (John 16, 24). But he predicted a time when no longer speaking to them in parables, he would show them plainly of the Father; and he adds, " At that day ye shall ask in my name "; " Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name he will give it you "—(v. 26, 23). Hence, when he had entered the most holy place, and they had been guided into the truth concerning the things of his name by means of the Holy Spirit, the apostles offered up their prayers, praises, and thanksgivings in no other name than that of Jesus, and enjoined the same practice on the disciples generally.

As the anti-typical high priest, Jesus did not offer to the Father the prayers and praises of any but those who are members of the anti-typical house of Israel. Even in the days of his flesh, he prayed only for his disciples: " *I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me* "—(John 17, 9). He prayed for them because they had believed what he had taught, and obeyed that which he had commanded them. It is only from such as " love not the world, neither the things that are in the world "—(1 John 2, 15), that God cares to hear prayer; for " the prayer of the upright is his delight "—(Prov. 15, 8). " If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him " (1 John 2, 15), and consequently to him is applicable the Divine proverb, " *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord* "—(Prov. 15, 8). The only sacrifice required in the present dispensation is " the sacrifice of praise . . . that is, the fruit of our lips "—(Heb. 13, 15), the offering of prayer, and that " living sacrifice " (Rom. 12, 1) which consists in doing God's will; actions collectively denominanted " spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ "—(1 Peter 2, 5). Those only can offer them who are members of the high priest's house. In a spiritual sense, they are all priests now, and it depends upon the zeal and fidelity with which they attend to their priestly functions whether they will obtain the blessing of their intercessor when he comes out of the most holy place.

V—The Royal Priesthood of Jesus Christ

The priestly functions of Jesus are not to be confined to his present position "at the right hand of God": he is to continue to act as a priest after his return to this earth. This is predicted by the prophet Zechariah, who says, "Behold the man whose name is THE BRANCH, and he shall grow up out of his place, and *he shall build the temple of the Lord*; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and sit and rule upon his throne; and *he [shall] be a PRIEST upon his throne*" — (Zech. 6, 12-13). There can be no doubt as to who is "the man whose name is THE BRANCH", for Jesus has declared himself to be not only "the root", but also the offspring of David" (Rev. 22, 16): which is equivalent to saying that he is a branch or twig of the Davidic tree.

The Lord's Throne.

It is a mistake, however, to suppose, as is generally done, that "The Branch" is now "upon his throne". He himself declares otherwise;—"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. 3, 21). Jesus here makes a clear distinction between what he calls "my throne" and his Father's throne; his occupancy of the latter relates to the present, for it is situated in heaven; the former relates to the future, and is situated upon the earth. Its precise locality is defined by Isaiah, when he says that the "child born" and the "son given" to the Jewish nation, called, among other names, the "Prince of Peace", is to "sit upon the throne of David"—Isaiah 9, 6-7). David's throne was situated at Jerusalem, and, as Jesus is the only descendant of David who is entitled to succeed David as a king, that throne will become the throne of Jesus, and, as in the past, will also be located at Jerusalem. Hence it is said, "At that time they shall call *Jerusalem the throne of the Lord*"—(Jer. 3, 17).

A priesthood is only necessary where there are mortal, sinful men; there was no priest on the earth

previous to the introduction of sin, and there will be none after it has been abolished. Therefore the presence of Jesus on this globe, in the capacity of a priest, proves that when he sits on the throne of David at Jerusalem, there will be living on the earth sinful men under sentence of death.

A coming revival.

When the kingdom of Israel was in existence, there were not only priests, but sacrifices, connected with it. But it was predicted that "The children of Israel shall abide for many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice" (Hos. 3, 4). That prediction is now being fulfilled; the children of Israel are without either a king, a priest, or a sacrifice. Happily this state of things is rapidly drawing to an end: the prophet declares in the next verse that "Afterward shall the people of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king", that is, David II, "and shall fear the Lord, and his goodness in the latter days" (v. 5). When that time arrives, priests and sacrifices will be revived in such a form as will be compatible with the new "covenant".

The prophet Jeremiah predicts that not only shall David "never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel", but also that "*The priests, the Levites*", shall never "*want a man before me [God] to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually*"—(Jer. 33, 17-18). As surely, therefore, as the former will come to pass, so surely will the latter; they are to exist contemporaneously, when Israel's kingdom is restored. When that time arrives, Jehovah will no longer say, as he did when the Mosaic covenant was in force, "To what purposes is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? . . . I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats" (Isa. 1, 11); for "Then shall the *offering* of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, *as in the days of old, and as in former years*"—(Mal. 3, 4).

In the new temple.

The prophet Ezekiel, in the closing chapters of his writings, gives full and detailed descriptions of "The temple of the Lord" to be built by "The Branch"; a temple so different from any which have yet existed, that it must pertain to a future time. It is owing to this truth being ignored, or discarded as absurd, that the concluding chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy are so much misunderstood and perverted. After describing the temple, the prophet proceeds to speak of the altar therein, the priests who are to minister at it, and the sacrifices they are to offer; saying that "The priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok . . . shall stand before me, to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God"—(ch. 44, 15). And of another order of priests he says, "They shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them".—(v. 11).

At first sight these passages may seem very strange to Gentiles unaccustomed to a sacrificial ritual, and who are in the habit of looking upon blood offerings as having been abolished for ever, because only "a shadow of good things to come", and unable to "make the comers thereunto perfect" — (Heb. 10, 1). These having been superseded by the more perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ, many naturally look with suspicion and doubt on the conclusions which have been drawn from the foregoing verses. But a little consideration will soon show that there is no real cause for alarm that the death on the cross will thereby be made of none effect.

Memorials of the past.

The sacrifices offered previous to that all-important event were but types of the shed blood of the "Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1, 19); without it they could have had no efficacy whatever. Since that event the pouring out of Christ's blood unto death has been memorialised by bread and wine, the former the symbol of his broken body, and the latter of his shed blood. In themselves they have no purifying virtue; none but Roman Catholics and Ritualists

ever that they have. The sacrifices in the future age will occupy a precisely analogous position; instead of being prospective, as under the Mosaic covenant, they will be retrospective; instead of being types of the future, they will be memorials of the past. In themselves they will have no more efficacy than those which have been abolished: they will derive all their virtue from the great atonement effected nineteen centuries ago.

They must be intended to serve some useful object, or they would never be ordained. Their design will doubtless be to test the faith of mankind in that age; "Without faith it is impossible to please God"—(Heb. 11, 6). Faith will be as necessary when Jesus is personally upon the earth as it is now that he is in heaven, or as it was before he was born; and it will no doubt be directed towards promises not then fulfilled. The offering of sacrifices will be an effective means for the inhabitants of the earth to manifest their faith: to show that they recognise the principle that "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin; and that it is only by virtue of the shed blood of him who will then "sit as a priest upon his throne", that they can be redeemed from the power of death.

Jew and Gentile unite in worship.

This future ritual is not to be confined to the Jews. The Gentiles also are to take part in it; for it is predicted that "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and *in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering*: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts"—(Mal. 1, 11). Jehovah's name is not now great among "the heathen" or "Gentiles"; therefore the time of offering incense "in every place" has not yet arrived. When it does, "It shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year, *to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles*"—(Zech. 14, 16).

On the supposition that there is never again to be a temple at Jerusalem, nor a special order of service there, it is difficult to imagine any reason why the nations of the earth should have to make a pilgrimage to that city in order to "worship". It will be no matter of choice: it will be one of compulsion: for "It shall be that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem, to worship the King, even upon them shall be no rain"—(v. 17). The absence of rain will necessarily produce drought and famine; and thus it will prove a most effective means of leading mankind to obey the law which is to go forth from Zion—(Isa. 2, 3).

Divine regeneration.

Human nature is so corrupt, that it will never be completely exorcised of "the carnal mind", which is "enmity against God", merely by preaching. It is, therefore, a most visionary idea to look for the conversion and regeneration of the world through the instrumentality of the feeble means now in existence. God's thoughts being so much higher than man's, he knows best what is required to bring man's will into harmony with His own. Accordingly, the prophet Isaiah by the Spirit has said, "*When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*"—(Isa. 26, 9).

Jehovah's judgments in the past having produced so little effect, it may be expected that His future judgments will be of much more stupendous character. And this expectation will be fully confirmed by an examination of the varied and numerous predictions concerning them, which it would be inappropriate to introduce here. Sufficient is it to point out that God's plan for converting the heathen—a term applicable to nearly the whole world, civilised and uncivilised—is very different from the missionary schemes of "Christendom".

Although the Almighty, represented by His Son, intends using the rod of chastisement for the purpose of correcting mankind, and turning them from their iniquity, yet He will not discard the use of instruction.

The rod is only to be used for the purpose of leading men to listen to His word and obey His law; when mankind have been brought into this attitude, they will be provided with a number of religious teachers. Jesus is not to be the only priest upon the earth. Aaron was the head of a household of priests, and Jesus will occupy a similar position. All who have overcome the present evil world by the "one faith", will be raised to the rank of being associated with him in his priestly office. Hence John, in writing to some of them, says that Jesus "washed us from our sins in his own blood, and *hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father*"—(Rev. 1, 6).

Real union of State and Church.

In proof that they are then to be on the earth, and not in heaven, reference may be made to the song which the redeemed are described as singing to the Lamb:—"Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and *we shall reign on the earth*"—(Rev. 5, 10). Thus they, as well as Jesus, are to unite in their own persons both priestly and kingly functions. In this respect he and they will be like Melchisedec who was at the same time "king of Salem" and "priest of the Most High God"; on this account they are designated "a Royal Priesthood". State and Church will then be united in a manner which has never yet been the case. When such a union existed under the Mosaic law, there was a separate order of men for priests, and another for kings; the former being chosen from the tribe of Levi, and the latter from the tribe of Judah; both however were mortal and fallible. But in the future it will not be so: the same order of men will discharge both religious and political duties on an immortal and infallible basis. They will supersede all those who now hold these offices, becoming not only the rulers of the people, but also their religious instructors. By this means the minds of men will be disabused of the theories and traditions by which they are now deluded, and will be enlightened with that pure truth by which alone they can "know the Lord", and live for ever.

Summary.

Having presented the character of Jesus in his various relationships as a priest, the reader's attention is now invited to a brief review of this subject.

The priestly office of Jesus, it will thus be observed, has two aspects, the one destructive, and the other constructive; each of which has relation both to the past and the future. The former aspect presents him to us as having completely abolished the Mosaic covenant, and destroyed the devil, or sin in the flesh, as far as its power over himself was concerned, together with the certain prospect of liberating all the faithful from the same enemy at his second appearing, and of utterly exterminating sin in every form from the face of the earth at the end of his Royal Priesthood.

The second aspect presents him to us as having confirmed the Abrahamic covenant, on account of which he will be able when he returns from heaven to give immortality, and inheritance of the land of Canaan, to all who have kept the conditions of the covenant; and then to shower down its blessings upon the nations, by taking under his direct control the rulership and religious instruction of all mankind.

The priestly functions of Jesus Christ undoubtedly receive greater attention in the present day than any other portion of his mission. The greatest possible prominence is given to the event which occurred on Calvary nineteen centuries ago. The crucifixion constitutes the beginning and the end of modern evangelical preaching. It is the one idea of those that make a boast of preaching "Jesus Christ and him crucified". But notwithstanding this, the work which Jesus has already effected and will yet effect as a priest, is just as much perverted and misunderstood as are the truths which he taught in the capacity of a prophet.

Theological Cobwebs.

By means of false philosophy and vain imaginations, or "the wisdom of the world", which "is foolishness with God", the cross of Christ has become so covered with the cobwebs of an unintelligible

theology and mystified traditions, as to render it almost impossible to get a clear and well defined view of its use and designs. The reasons which rendered the crucifixion necessary, and the results which flow from it, are alike misapprehended.

By substituting eternal torments for physical death, as the punishment for sin, modern theologians represent Jesus as having died to save men from unending torture in everlasting fire; thereby rendering it necessary that he should "taste" that torment (Heb. 2, 9); and, as he never tasted any such torment, this is equivalent to saying that he has not by suffering death put away sin.

By asserting that man is immortal, they make the precious gift obtainable through the shed blood of Jesus Christ to be happiness only, instead of unending life conjoined with unalloyed joy.

By saying that the Devil is a personal being, super-human and immortal, they completely caricature Jesus Christ's mission as the destroyer of sin, or else render it an impossibility.

By countenancing the Papal tradition that the flesh of Jesus was immaculate, they in effect say that he was not tempted in all points like as we are; and, as a consequence, that he cannot from actual experience feel for the infirmities of his followers.

By telling men that their temptation is caused by an invisible evil fiend who is said to be so powerful that it is almost impossible to resist him, "ministers" lessen the feeling of individual responsibility, and diminish the sense of guilt attaching to sinners for their disobedience.

By contending for the necessity of keeping the Sabbath law, they virtually say that Jesus Christ has not abolished the Mosaic covenant, and thus place themselves in the same position as certain Jews in apostolic times, who inculcated observance of the law of circumcision.

By affirming that the reward promised to the righteous is in heaven instead of on earth, they make

void the Abrahamic covenant which Jesus confirmed by his death.

By believing that the Old Testament saints entered upon their inheritance at death, they in effect render the confirmation of that covenant, by the death of Jesus Christ, its Mediator, unnecessary.

By teaching that the disciples of Jesus go to heaven when they die, theologians make it unnecessary for the "seed" of the Abrahamic covenant to return from heaven to bestow the blessings which that covenant promises to all who have walked in the steps of faithful Abraham, together with the blessings promised to Jews and Gentiles generally.

By supposing that idiots, infants, and the heathen are saved, they make void the conditions plainly laid down in the Bible for obtaining immortality, namely, faith and obedience, and thus represent Jesus to be the author of salvation to those who do not believe in him, or obey him, as well as to those who do.

By proclaiming to unbelieving sinners that Jesus Christ is now interceding with his Father for them, the clergy lull men into a torpor of indifference, and pervert the present mediatorial function of Jesus from that of High Priest of his own household only to that of High Priest for all mankind.

By restricting Jesus Christ's priestly office to his present position in heaven, "divines" deprive the human race of the inestimable blessings to be bestowed when he reigns on the earth, as a king and a priest after the order of Melchisedec.

And lastly, by declaring that Jesus is eternal, that is, has no beginning, and has always possessed the power of living for ever, and therefore incapable of having his existence suspended for a single moment, *theologians make his death an absolute impossibility.*

It is useless to attempt to disguise this plain fact by saying that "his humanity" suffered death; because by that is meant, not the real being, Jesus, the Son of God, but merely a "tenement of clay"; and it is simply a roundabout way of describing the body

of flesh which he is supposed to have tenanted for thirty-three years.

Two contradictory propositions are affirmed : 1st, that Jesus is eternal, and therefore immortal or deathless in the days of his ministry on earth, as well as at any other time ; and 2nd, that he died : these two things are wholly incompatible with each other. As long as the first is maintained, all profession of belief in the second is utterly useless ; it is mere sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.

The preaching of the Cross.

Modern " Christians " do not believe that Jesus really died, that is, was deprived of all life between his crucifixion and his resurrection. Notwithstanding, therefore, their loud boast of allegiance to the cross of Christ, which they unduly exalt at the expense of his crown, they have lost the substance, and retain only the shadow. Thus, the fear to which Paul gave expression when he said, "*Lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect*" (1 Cor. 1, 17), has been fully realised.

The false teaching on this subject which commenced in apostolic days has so developed itself from century to century, that it has leavened in its most corrupt form the whole of modern religious society. The consequence is that when the origin, nature, and mission of Jesus Christ are set forth in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures, those who do it are denounced as " infidels ", etc. It is lamentable, but nevertheless true, that " the preaching of the cross " in its simplicity and purity is as much " foolishness " to modern Gentiles as it was to the ancient Greeks.

The phrase " Jesus Christ, and him crucified " (1 Cor. 2, 2) is not simply an euphonious combination of words designed to round off the sentences of a sermon ; neither is it intended to declare merely that a personage of that name died upon a cross. When the apostle Paul preached nothing else " save Jesus Christ, and him crucified ", he pointed out from the writings of the Hebrew prophets what kind of a Messiah should be expected : that though destined to sit on David's throne,

he must first suffer death; and then he showed that the crucified Jesus of Nazareth was he.

Thus, when at Thessalonica, he went into the synagogues, and "three sabbath days reasoned with them [the Jews] 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 17, 2-3). The Jews believed in a promised Messiah who should be a great prophet and king in their midst; but they did not understand that he was to be a priest, and was to suffer death. It was in consequence of this his crucifixion was placed in such a prominent position by the apostles when preaching to their fellow-countrymen.

The Promised Messiah.

The Jews would have been quite ready to accept Jesus if he had come in power and glory, according to their expectations. But, because he came in humiliation, and was crucified, they rejected him, and the apostles declaring this truth, brought upon themselves the scorn and persecution of their fellow-countrymen. Yet, notwithstanding all this, the apostle Paul resolved to continue his proclamation of the fact that Jesus of Nazareth, although crucified, was the promised Messiah of the Jewish nation; and hence his determination to preach "Jesus Christ, and him crucified", and to glory only "in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"—(Gal. 6, 14).

When preaching to Gentiles, Paul presented a wider view of the subject, because the non-Jewish world neither understood nor believed in the promises of a Hebrew Messiah. Thus, when at Athens, Paul "preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection", and declared that the one God "hath appointed a day in which he will judge (or rule) the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead"—(Acts 17, 18 and 31). When at Rome he was occupied for two years in "preaching the kingdom of God and teaching those things which

concern the Lord Jesus Christ"—Acts 28, 31). To say that God will rule the world by one who was dead and is alive again, is equivalent to "preaching the kingdom of God" because the kingdom is a political and religious administration of affairs to extend over the whole world.

To "preach Jesus and the resurrection" is equivalent to "teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ". The kingdom of God, or the ruling of the earth in righteousness, pertains more particularly to the prophetic and kingly offices of God's beloved Son; the "things which concern the Lord Jesus" refer to his priestly office. The former is comprised by Paul under the name "Jesus Christ"; the latter, under the words "him crucified"; the first must be understood before the second can be appreciated; collectively, they are summarised in the phrase "Jesus Christ, and him crucified".

Correct belief essential to salvation.

Jesus Christ being a representation of the character of God, to misunderstand the work of the former is to misapprehend the character of the latter. The two are so inseparably connected, that erroneous ideas respecting one involve errors respecting the other. Hence, when asked by one of the Jews, "Where is thy Father"? Jesus answered, "Ye neither know me, nor my Father; if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also"—(John 8, 19). They had not given heed to the words of Jehovah spoken through the mouth of one of their prophets:—"Let him that glorieth glory in this, *that he understandeth and knoweth me*, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord"—(Jer. 9, 24).

To know the mission of Jesus is to know God; and to be ignorant of that mission is to be ignorant of the true God. Thus, anyone who believes the sacrifice of Jesus to have been necessary to appease God's wrath, does not understand the benign character of God, and His motives in requiring the death of His Son.

To believe that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all men, is to show complete ignorance of the principles on which God acts in releasing sinners from death.

To believe that eternal torment is the punishment for sin from which Jesus Christ redeems his faithful disciples, is to ignore the attribute of perfect justice possessed by the Divine Being.

To believe that the mission of Jesus Christ is to destroy an immortal superhuman sinner, commonly called the Devil, who is represented as constantly opposing the Deity and successfully thwarting His designs, is derogatory to "the Blessed and only Potentate" from whom proceeds all power.

And to believe that Jesus is one of three eternal persons, is to worship a plurality of Gods, and thereby to reduce the scriptural truth of God's essential unity to a nullity.

General ignorance of "the only true God."

These erroneous notions are so widespread that nearly the whole of modern religious society is guilty of the charge of being ignorant of the "only true God." Consequently, it is destined to suffer the infliction of God's wrath, "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, *taking vengeance on them that know not God*"—(2 Thes. 1, 7-8).

It matters not that its religious guides have taught in the name of the Lord Jesus; this will avail them nothing, seeing that they have taught things contrary to the revealed knowledge of God and His Son. If they should say, "Lord, Lord, open to us", or "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?" the only reply will be, "I know you not, whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity"—(Luke 13, 25-27; Matt. 7, 22-23).

Their followers will share no better fate, for "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch"—(Matt. 15, 14). Not only those who "Speak lies in the name of the Lord" (Zech. 13, 3), but whosoever

“ *loveth* and maketh a lie ”—(Rev. 22, 15)—i.e., anything contrary to “ the truth ”, for “ no lie is of the truth ”— (1 Jno. 2, 21)—will be excluded from “ the tree of life ” and “ the holy city ” — (Rev. 21, 27), when Jesus, as the executioner of God’s vengeance, comes to “ destroy them who destroy (or corrupt) the earth ”—(Rev. 11, 18).

In view of these facts and threats, it is scarcely necessary to urge all who possess ideas respecting the Deity such as have been controverted in the foregoing pages at once to correct them.

PART III.

Jesus Christ as a King

Important as are the prophetic and priestly offices of Jesus, his kingly office is none the less so; so far as grandeur and prominence are concerned, it presents a much more striking aspect than either of the other two.

When fulfilling his prophetic and priestly functions in the first century, he attracted but little attention from the world at large; but when he exercises the office of a king, he will influence the thoughts and actions of all mankind. Nevertheless, the former were the necessary preliminaries to the latter, and were intimately associated with it. When preaching "the gospel of the kingdom," in the capacity of a prophet, he proclaimed that kingdom of which he is to be the king. And the offering up of his perfect sacrifice on the cross in the capacity of a priest, though foreordained of God, was directly brought about by his claiming to be the king of God's kingdom.

Anyone, therefore, understanding Jesus as a prophet and a priest, must necessarily comprehend him as a king. It is because the two former are so much misunderstood that the latter is universally ignored or perverted; and wherever ignorance exists respecting his kingship, it is a proof that the gospel is neither understood nor believed, because the gospel of salvation is glad tidings of that age when he will reign, and of that condition of things in which salvation is to be enjoyed.

The nature of Jesus Christ's office as a king has been already to some extent dwelt upon. Nevertheless, it is a matter of such great importance that it is necessary to enter more fully into details respecting it—to show on what it is based, what are its objects, and

what the results which will flow from it. For this purpose it will be our duty to consider a covenant which Jehovah made with the second of Israel's kings.

I—The Covenant with David

The prophet Nathan was commissioned to go to David and deliver to him the following message:—*“When thy days be fulfilled and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. . . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; THY THRONE shall be established for ever”*—(2 Sam. 7, 12-16).

Although this prediction was to be fulfilled after David's death, when he had gone to sleep with his fathers, it by no means follows that its fulfilment was to take place immediately after his decease. It was not realised in the person of Solomon; for the promise was repeated in other forms by prophets who lived hundreds of years after Solomon's reign. Indeed, as long as David is dead, it must still remain an unfulfilled prediction; because it was said to David, *“Thy kingdom shall be established for ever BEFORE THEE.”* Hence David must be raised from the dead, before his throne can be occupied by the seed which was to proceed out of his bowels; he is, in fact, to be a living witness of the event. This accounts for the words uttered shortly before his death:—*“Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things, and sure; for THIS IS ALL MY SALVATION AND ALL MY DESIRE, although he make it not to grow”*—(2 Sam. 23, 5).

David not in Heaven.

In reading these “last words” of David, it cannot but be observed how widely different they are from the death-bed utterances of modern times. David looked forward, not to an ascent to heaven at death, but, to the fulfilment of a covenant which has yet to come into

force. This he styles "all my salvation and all my desire", thereby showing that all his hopes of a future life were based upon this covenant. That he did not go to heaven at death is clearly proved by Peter saying on the day of Pentecost, "David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2, 34); from which it may safely be concluded that, as the "man after God's own heart" has not gone to heaven, none of the other faithful have gone there. The covenant made with him was therefore similar to the covenant made with Abraham: the latter was promised a future life through possession of the land of Canaan, and the former through the establishment of a throne on that land. But although God was not *then* fulfilling the covenant, and although David himself might die before that event took place, yet he knew that whenever it came to pass he would realise his salvation.

"The seed" again.

The Davidic covenant is frequently referred to in subsequent parts of the Scriptures: thus, it is written in the Psalms, "*I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant: Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations*"—Ps. 89, 3-4). The term "thy seed" may appear rather indefinite, but it cannot be doubted that it was understood by David. He was one of those who obtained "a good report through faith" (Heb. 11, 39) in the Abrahamic promises. The covenant with David was but an amplification of the covenant with Abraham: the "seed" mentioned in each is the same individual. By the latter covenant that "seed" was made joint-heir with Abraham to the land of Canaan, and by the former the "seed" was made heir to the throne of David on that land.

For many hundred years after the covenant made with David, it was not known who was to be the mother of this "seed"; many who desired to occupy this high position were doomed to disappointment. At length the joyful intelligence that she was to bring forth this "fruit" of David's loins was communicated to one who apparently was not looking for such a great

honour, for she was but a "virgin espoused to a man". Speaking of the son who was to be born of her, the angel Gabriel said, "The Lord God shall give unto him **THE THRONE OF HIS FATHER DAVID, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob** for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end"—(Luke 1, 32-33). To Jesus, then, belongs the honour of being the Davidic "seed" who is one day to sit upon David's throne.

The Promise to Mary.

When the prediction was made to the virgin Mary, the whole of it was in the future. The first portion very shortly became an accomplished fact; the other is still a matter of promise. The former has been fulfilled literally, to the very letter; and, as there is no need for any figurative interpretation, it may be reasonably expected that the latter will come to pass in an equally literal manner. If there was no indignity in the Saviour of mankind being the offspring of an unclean and sinful woman, it cannot be beneath his dignity to occupy the exalted position of reigning on the earth as a king.

The predictions respecting his first appearance on the earth having been so literally and minutely fulfilled, the eye of faith can have no difficulty in realising the equally literal fulfilment of the predictions respecting his second appearing. Indeed, the faith that God requires is a belief in his power and intention to fulfil those promises which are yet unfulfilled. The predictions about Christ's first appearing are now facts: and although it is necessary they should be understood, there is little or no more merit in admitting them to be true, than in believing any other historical event: but his second appearing being future, the predictions concerning it require the exercise of that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for", and without which "it is impossible to please God"—(Heb. 11, 1-6).

The literality with which the predictions respecting Christ's first appearing were fulfilled, is strikingly illustrated by his entry on an ass into Jerusalem. The prophet Zechariah addressed "the daughter of Jeru-

salem ” (i.e., the Jewish nation) thus :—“ Behold thy king cometh unto thee ; he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass ”—(Zech. 9, 9). Every reader of the gospels knows that this prophecy was fulfilled to the very letter, and that the multitude, thinking the throne of David was then to be re-established by Jesus, cried out, saying, “ Hosanna to the son of David ” (Matt. 21, 9) ; “ Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord ”—(John 12, 13).

Peace for Jerusalem.

Although mistaken regarding the time for this regal exaltation to take place, they were quite correct as to its import. The same prophet who predicted that David’s “ seed ” would enter Jerusalem on an ass, has also predicted that “ The Lord shall inherit Judah, his portion in the Holy Land, and *shall choose Jerusalem again* ” (Zech. 2, 12) ; and Jesus has confirmed Zechariah by saying, “ Swear not by *Jerusalem* for it is *the city of the Great King* ” (Matt. 5, 35) ; a statement which is explained by his claim to be “ greater than Solomon ”. Jerusalem has been the seat of the throne of God’s kingdom in the past, and it is to occupy the same position in God’s kingdom in the future :—“ *They shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord* ” (Jer. 3, 17), “ The city of righteousness, the faithful city ” (Isa. 1, 26), “ The city of the Lord ” (Isa. 60, 14), “ A city not forsaken ” (Isa. 62, 12), and “ A city of truth ” (Zech. 8, 3). With such a future as this in store, well may it be said of Jerusalem, “ Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God ”—(Ps. 87, 3). Such as understand and believe those “ glorious things ”, are exhorted to “ Pray for the peace of Jerusalem ”, and they are encouraged with the promise that “ They shall prosper that love ” that city—(Ps. 122, 6). To pray for Jerusalem’s peace is another form of saying, “ Thy kingdom come ”—(Matt. 6, 10). None but those who understand the covenant made with David can intelligently offer up this prayer.

The writings of the Hebrew prophets are almost full of predictions respecting the time when the cove-

nant with David will be fulfilled. A few appropriate selections must, however, suffice here. In Isaiah are to be found those well-known words which are sung in the Oratorio of the "Messiah":—"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, *upon the throne of David* and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever"—(Isa. 9, 6-7).

An infallible sign.

The fact that the promised "child" has been already "born" is sure proof that the same "son" will one day sit "upon the throne of David"; at which time the Jews will "serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom God will raise up unto them"—(Jer. 30, 9). As long as the sun continues to rise and set regularly every morning and night, the Jews will possess an infallible sign that the covenant with David will be fulfilled; for the Spirit of God, speaking through Isaiah, has uttered the following decree:—"Thus saith the Lord, *If ye can break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne*"—(Jer. 33, 20-21). The Jews are now in a condition in which they can say, "We have no king, because we feared not the Lord"—(Hos. 10, 3). Instead of having a king of their own, they are compelled to acknowledge the numerous Gentile rulers who exercise lordship over them. But as surely as David's throne has been overturned, so surely will it be re-built and occupied by Jesus of Nazareth.

It was through believing Jesus to be the "seed" of the Davidic covenant that Nathaniel was constrained to say to him, "Thou art the Son of God; *thou art the King of Israel* (John 1, 49); and for the same reason

some of the Jews attempted to "take him by force, to make him a king"; but he prevented them by departing into a mountain—(John 6, 15). It was in consequence, also, of Jesus claiming to be the "seed" of that covenant, that he was ultimately put to death. When before "the chief priests and elders", he was asked by the High Priest the following question:—"I adjure thee by the living God that thou *tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God*". This was equivalent to saying, "Art thou the Messiah destined to sit upon David's throne?" Jesus replied, "Thou hast said" (Matt. 26, 63-64), which was the Jewish mode of giving an answer in the affirmative; he therefore acknowledged that he was David's heir.

King of the Jews.

When before Pilate, the same question was asked in a still plainer form, with a like result: "*Art thou the king of the Jews?*" And Jesus said unto him, "Thou sayest"—(Matt. 27, 11). Pilate seeing in this confession nothing to render Jesus worthy of death, said, "I find no fault in him" (John 18, 38); and as it was a custom for him to release a prisoner unto them at the passover feast, he enquired, "Will ye therefore that I release unto you the king of the Jews?"—(v. 39). But this did not meet with their approval; they were bent upon crucifying him, and seeing that Pilate was reluctant to accede to their wishes when they simply charged Jesus with being the king of the Jews, they resorted to an argument which personally affected his position as a governor of Judea.

They said, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: *whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar*"—(John 19, 12). By impugning Pilate's loyalty to the Roman emperor, in attempting to show that Jesus was the leader of sedition and guilty of treason, they succeeded in gaining their object. But even then they were not altogether satisfied. Pilate wrote on the cross, "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS"—(v. 19). This did not please them, because it conveyed the idea that Jesus was really their

king. So the chief priests said to Pilate, " write not, the king of the Jews ; but that *he said, I am king of the Jews* " (v. 21) ; an incident which affords confirmatory evidence that Jesus claimed to be the one who should fulfil the covenant with David.

Promise of future life.

The promise of a future life by means of the Davidic covenant was not confined to David ; it was also offered to other Jews. Thus the Spirit of God, speaking through the prophet Isaiah, says, " Incline your ear, and come unto me ; *hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David* "—(Isa. 55, 3). If the soul be immortal, there is no need to promise that it " shall live " on condition of the individual inclining his ear, and coming unto God ; for, if naturally immortal, as commonly taught, it will live for ever independent of all conditions. From this passage it will be seen that the Davidic covenant, like the Abrahamic, contains a promise of a future life ; and that this promise being conditional, is subversive of the theory that all men inherently possess a life which will never end.

Jesus made the same offer whenever he preached " the gospel of the kingdom of God ", which is but another name for the Davidic covenant. So also did the apostles, both before and after the crucifixion. Sometimes they spoke of it in language similar to that in the passages above quoted ; thus Peter, on the day of Pentecost, said to his fellow-countrymen, " Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, *He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne* ; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ ". By quoting this prediction, and applying it to Jesus of Nazareth, Peter was able to say, " Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that *God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both*

Lord and CHRIST ”—(Acts 2, 29-36). This was equivalent to declaring that Jesus whom they had despised had been anointed by Jehovah to be a king to sit on David's throne.

The fear which this announcement caused in the minds of many led them first to ask, “ Men and brethren, what shall we do ”? and then to follow Peter's instructions for the purpose of saving themselves from the judgment about to be poured out on that “ untoward generation ” for crucifying their Messiah. In this way they inclined their ear, and came unto Jehovah, and he made with them the covenant of David, by which, if they continued to be obedient, their souls would live for ever. In consequence of it being stated by Peter that Christ was raised up to sit upon David's throne, it is supposed that his sitting on that throne, and reigning as king, followed immediately after his resurrection and ascension to heaven. This, however, by no means follows.

Christ to sit on David's throne.

Jesus is now in the “ far country ”, sitting at the right hand of God until he makes his foes his footstool—(Acts 2, 34-35). By a reference to the 110th Psalm, from which these words are quoted, it will be seen—that it is *after* Christ's enemies have been made his footstool, that “ the Lord shall send the rod of thy (Christ's) strength out of Zion ”, to enable him to rule in the midst of his enemies. Jesus Christ was raised from the dead for the purpose of sitting on David's throne at a future time when the covenant relating thereto is fulfilled; but Christ's resurrection alone is not sufficient; before his reign commences, David also must be raised from the dead, that his throne may be established “ *before* ” him.

Paul made special reference to this covenant when speaking at Antioch; after reminding his “ brethren, children of the stock of Abraham ”, that “ God raised up unto them David to be their king ”, he announced that of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus. Subsequently he says, “ To you is the word of this salvation

sent ", which he then proceeds to expound, at the same time quoting the words of Isaiah, "*I will give you the sure mercies of David*"—(Acts 13. 22, 23, 26, 34). Thus, in preaching to the Jews "the word of salvation", he offered them a share in the Davidic covenant: in so doing, he proclaimed life eternal, as shown by what he afterwards said to some of his kinsmen who refused to hear him:—"It was necessary that *the word of God* should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and *judge yourselves unworthy of EVERLASTING LIFE*, lo, we turn to the Gentiles"—(v. 46).

Accordingly, Paul preached to the Gentiles that which the Jews had rejected; for it is recorded that "When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified *the word of the Lord*; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed"—(v. 48). The "word of God" preached to the Jews comprised the covenant with David; the same "word" was proclaimed to the Gentiles; therefore the "word of the Lord" which "was published throughout all that region" (v. 49), must also have comprised the Davidic covenant.

Jews and Gentiles must accept conditions.

Relying upon this evidence as a proof that it was necessary for Gentiles in the first century to believe in the covenant made with David, there is no escape from the conclusion that it is equally necessary for Gentiles in the twentieth century to believe in the same covenant. The ceremony by which Jews and Gentiles in the present dispensation must signify their belief in the Davidic covenant is the same as that by which they enter into the Abrahamic covenant, namely, immersion. This is evident from the fact that Peter inculcated it on the day of Pentecost, after he had spoken about the covenant with David. But of those who in this way enter into covenant with God, only such as keep the conditions will be permitted to share its blessings, which comprise joint rulership with Jesus Christ when he sits upon the throne of David, as is evident from the following testimony:—"If we suffer,

we shall also reign with him (Jesus) ” (2 Tim. 2, 12); “ 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. 3, 21).

The throne of David, having been given to his “ seed ”, will in due time become the throne of Jesus Christ; and hence he is able to speak of it as “ my throne ”, thereby distinguishing it from that on which he has been sitting since his ascension to heaven, which he denominates “ my Father’s throne ”. The prophet Jeremiah describes the fulfilment of this promise by saying that “ *Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David* ” (Jer. 17, 25); and, in the Apocalypse, these “ kings and princes ” are described as singing a new song to Jesus Christ, in which they say, “ *Thou hast made us unto our God KINGS and priests, and WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH* ”—(Rev. 5, 10). In harmony with this joyful anticipation, the apostle John had another vision presented to him, in which he “ saw thrones, and they sat upon them, . . . and *they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years* ”—(Rev. 20, 4).

These passages, when linked together, clearly demonstrate that Jesus Christ is a king to reign on this earth, not in heaven, and that his disciples are to “ reign *with him* ”, not he over them. Let all who understand and appreciate this great truth endeavour to obtain the high honour of rulership with King Jesus.

II—The Judge of the Quick and the Dead

It was the custom in the East for kings to exercise judicial functions, as well as ruling power; a reference to Solomon’s life will show that he acted both as judge and king. In this respect Jesus will occupy a like position: “ The father judgeth no man, but *hath committed all judgment unto the Son* ” (Jno. 5, 22); therefore, “ it is he who was ordained of God to be the *judge of quick and dead* ”—(Acts 10, 42). Although as yet only the heir to a kingdom, he has a number of ser-

vants to whom he has entrusted certain "talents"—(Mat. 25, 15).

When he returns from heaven to take possession of his kingdom, he will call them together to see what use they have made of their talents during his absence. That all will not have employed them profitably is evident from the fact that they comprise faithful and unfaithful stewards, industrious and lazy servants, wheat and tares, sheep and goats, wise and foolish virgins, and good and bad fish; it will be necessary, therefore, to adopt some means for separating them. This is provided for in "the judgment-seat of Christ".

Occupying, as they do, a more responsible position than any other class of mankind, it is only fitting that they should be the first to be exposed to the scrutinising eye of the infallible Judge; hence "Judgment must begin at the house of God"—(1 Peter 4, 17). Not only is it appropriate; it is also necessary; those who deserve the approval of the Judge will be required to assist him in establishing his kingdom.

The first act, therefore, of Jesus Christ on his return to the earth will be to judge his own disciples, to separate those who have sown to the spirit from those who have sown to the flesh. Proof of this is found in the apostle Paul's words to Timothy:—"The Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."—(2 Tim. 4, 1).

Before "the dead" can be judged they must be restored to life; and, as the nature and object of the Judgment necessitates the appearance of both good and bad at the tribunal of Jesus Christ, there must be a "resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust"—(Acts 24, 15). The prophet Daniel, in predicting this event, says, "*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. 12, 2).

All will not be resurrected.

All men, however, will not then be raised from the dead; for "*Where no law is there is no transgression*"—(Rom. 4, 15); and "*As many as have sinned without*

law shall also PERISH without law”—(Rom. 2, 12). Hence it is said of such as these, “They are dead, *they shall NOT LIVE*; they are deceased, *they shall NOT RISE*” (Isa. 26, 14); “*they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and NOT WAKE*” (Jer. 51, 57); for “*Man that is in honour and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish*”—(Ps. 49, 20). Daniel is, therefore, quite in harmony with the other prophets when he predicts that only *some*, or “*many of them that sleep,*” . . . shall awake.

The “many” will comprise all those who, by a knowledge of God’s revealed truth, have been brought into a state of responsibility, from the time of Abel to the second appearing of Jesus Christ. To the faithful portion, styled by Daniel “the wise,” resurrection is all-important: it is the gate from the prison-house of the grave to eternal life: without it, they would, like the heathen, become “as though they had not been”—(Obad. v. 16). Paul declares this when he says, “*If the dead rise not . . . then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ ARE PERISHED.*”—(1 Cor., 15, 16-18). This was the event to which the apostle, when near his death looked forward as the time for his reward:—“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, *which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me AT THAT DAY,*”—the day of his appearing to judge the quick and dead—(2 Tim. 4, 8 and 1).

It was to the same event that he directed the attention of the Thessalonians in order to comfort them for the loss of their brethren in Christ, saying, “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope; . . . for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, . . . and *the dead in Christ shall rise first,*” that is, before those who will be “alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord” are transferred to the seat of judgment—(1 Thess. 4, 13-17). Had Paul been a believer in the immortality of the soul, he would not have declared to the Corinthians that unless “the dead in Christ” were raised they would “perish;” and if he had believed in going to heaven at

death, he would not have comforted the Thessalonians for the loss of their departed friends by reminding them of the resurrection and the future advent of Christ; he would rather have told them that those friends were not in reality dead, but were with Jesus, "around the throne of God in heaven."

The Judgment.

When the responsible dead have been raised, then the responsible living will be transferred to that part of the earth which is to be the scene of the Judgment; the mode of conveyance is not revealed, but possibly it will be by spirit power, after the manner in which Philip was suddenly carried from the Ethiopian eunuch to Azotus (Acts 8, 39; 1 Thess. 4, 17; Matt. 24, 31; Luke 13, 29). The event which will render this necessary will not then be known to the world at large; only those who receive the angelic summons (Matt. 24, 31) will be aware of the fact that Jesus Christ has arrived upon the earth; mankind generally will simply know that a number of individuals have suddenly disappeared from their midst. Although scripturally espoused to Christ, and called "sons of God" and brethren of Christ, they will for the most part be "the poor of this world"—(Jas. 2, 5). Not being amongst the "mighty noble"—(1 Cor. 1, 26), "the world knoweth" them "not" (1 John 3, 1), and knoweth not the high destiny to which they have been called by Jesus Christ; and therefore the world will not be able to explain their unexpected disappearance.

Not until the king of the Jews has exercised power over the nations, will the world become convinced that God's Son has returned from heaven. To them this event will be in its suddenness like the coming of "a thief" in the night (Rev. 16, 15); not so, however, to those who constitute the true bride of Christ. This would not harmonise with the figure which represents Jesus as a bridegroom, and true believers as virgins espoused to him. A bridegroom does not usually visit his bride for the purpose of marrying her, without due notice; neither will Jesus do this.

Hence he has given a number of signs to indicate the epoch in the world's history when he will appear on its scene. By this means, his "wise virgins," although unable to determine either the day or year, can form some idea of the time when they will be summoned to the "marriage;" whenever it takes place, it will be to them a welcome and long looked for event. The living disciples of Jesus thus removed will be in a mortal, flesh-and-blood condition; and to be in harmony therewith, the dead ones must be raised in the same nature. It is, indeed, necessary that such should be the case, in order to carry out the judicial process.

Rendering account.

First, they must give an account of their probationary career; for Paul declares that "*Every one of us (i.e., all in the truth) shall give account of himself to God*" (Rom. 14, 12); and Peter confirms this by saying, *We "shall give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead"*—(1 Peter 4, 5). All will not be able to give a good account: some will have to confess that they denied their Master; and that they were ashamed of his words; or that they had endeavoured to serve two masters,—Jesus and the devil (*i.e.*, sin in the flesh): of such as these Jesus will be ashamed, and will accordingly say, "I know you not whence ye are; depart from me all ye workers of iniquity" (Luke 13, 27); and to those who stand by (the angels) he will say, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness"—Matt. 25, 30). Then will all who have sown to the flesh realise what it is "*of the flesh*" "*to reap CORRUPTION*"—(Gal. 6, 8); to be among those "*whose end is DESTRUCTION*"—(Phil. 3, 19), not eternal torments; and to be "*devoured*" by "*the fiery indignation*" of Him who "*is a CONSUMING FIRE*" (Heb. 10, 27; 12, 29), which is *the second death* (Rev. 21, 8); terms sufficiently strong, one would suppose, to show that the wicked will be utterly blotted out of existence, instead of being preserved in torment for ever.

But many who will appear before Jesus Christ's tribunal will be able to give a good account of them-

selves; they will be able with Paul to say, "I have fought a good fight . . . I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4, 7); they will, therefore, with him, receive that "crown of righteousness" which he said "the Lord, the righteous Judge," should give at that day, not to himself only, "but unto all them also that love his appearing" (v. 8). The marriage of the Bridegroom with his multitudinous Bride is not a process extending from the death of Abel to the second appearing of Christ; as must be the case if each of the "wise virgins" go to him at death: it is an event which cannot take place until the cry shall arise, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh"—(Matt. 25, 6). At that time all who have "sown to the spirit" will realise what it is "of the spirit" to "reap life everlasting;" they will be born of the spirit" (John 3, 6) in order that they may "enter into the kingdom of God." Flesh and blood "cannot inherit" that kingdom (1 Cor. 15, 50): and therefore they must undergo the change predicted by Paul, when he said, "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).

Righteous to be changed.

The nature of the change he defines as follows:— "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and *this mortal must PUT ON IMMORTALITY*"—(v. 53). Then will they realise that blessing which the apostle promised to the Roman believers, when he exhorted them to "SEEK for glory, honour, AND IMMORTALITY" (Rom. 2, 7); and then will they be able to sing, "O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—(1 Cor. 15, 55). If immortality were their natural birthright, instead of a gift offered through Christ, there would be no need for them to "seek" for it now in order to put it on after judgment.

It should also be noted that it is not until after the resurrection that this triumph of the righteous over death comes to pass; which is in direct opposition to the "orthodox" idea that it takes place at death—an idea frequently expressed by the singing of these words in

connection with death and the supposed flight of the "immortal soul" to realms of bliss. Thus it will be seen that both the righteous and the wicked must stand before the judgment-seat in Adamic nature, for if the former were immortal before judgment, they could not "put on" immortality after being judged; and if the latter were immortal before judgment, the sentence that they shall suffer "destruction" and "reap corruption," could not possibly be carried out on them.

These, then, are the results of the judgment of Christ's household, the objects of which are thus stated by Paul in writing to the Corinthians:—"We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ that everyone may receive the things in (or THROUGH) the BODY, according to that he hath done, WHETHER GOOD OR BAD"—(2 Cor. 5, 10). It will be noticed that, in quoting this passage, several words contained in the authorised version are omitted: the reason is that, being in italics, they are not in the original Greek text, the translators merely inserting them to convey what they considered to be the apostle's meaning; but as they are quite unnecessary to render the passage intelligible they should be omitted. Those who have done "bad" things receive the fruit thereof through their bodies, by being subjected to "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish" (Rom. 2, 8-9), ending in their returning for the second time to the dust from whence they were taken, and thus undergoing the penalty of sin, which is death.

Those who have done good things will receive the fruit thereof through their bodies, by being transformed into spiritual bodies like that of the second Adam after his resurrection, in accordance with the promise to the Philippians:—"The Lord Jesus Christ shall *change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*" (Phil. 3, 21); and thus they will become "like him" (1 John 3, 2), and "equal unto the angels" (Luke 20, 36). They will then be permitted to enter that kingdom on account of which they will have suffered "much tribulation" (Acts 14, 22): the King will say to

one, "*Have thou authority over TEN CITIES,*" and to another, "*Be thou also over FIVE CITIES*" (Luke 19, 17-19).

But before they can begin to exercise this ruling authority in "the kingdom of God," they must assist the King in subduing all other kingdoms, and obtaining the supreme ruling power of the earth. The way in which this is to be done will be explained in the next section.

III—The Punishment of the Nations

It cannot be supposed that the heir to David's throne will be able to reconstitute the kingdom of Israel without the use of power in some form or other.

Before Joshua could establish the twelve tribes on the land of Canaan, after their wandering through the wilderness, he had to subdue the various nations who then held possession of it. Jesus, as the antitype of Joshua, will have to do a similar thing, but on a much larger scale. The names "Jesus" and "Joshua" are synonymous, meaning a *Saviour, a powerful one*; thereby indicating that they to whom they were given were designed to exercise power for the purpose of effecting a deliverance of some kind. Joshua delivered the Israelites from idolatrous, Gentile nations, who impeded their settlement in the land of promise.

The deliverance expected from the hands of Jesus is indicated by the words of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist:—The Lord God of Israel hath raised up a horn of "salvation for us in the house of his servant David *that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us*"—(Luke 1, 69-71). Every Bible reader knows that Jesus did not effect such a redemption as this for the Jewish nation at his first appearing; on the contrary, he predicted that their enemies should cast a trench about the city of Jerusalem, and level it to the ground (Luke 19, 43-44), and that at that time there should be "great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people" (Luke 21, 23);

for "the blood of all the prophets" was required of that generation—(Luke 11, 50-51). But this is no proof that Jesus will never act as a second Joshua by relieving his kinsmen from the yoke of their Gentile enemies, and giving them a permanent rest.

Ensign for Israel.

The prophet Isaiah, writing of a time yet future, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord," declares that "In that day there shall be a root of Jesse" the father of David,—no other than *the root and offspring of David*,—"which shall stand for an ensign of the people" of Israel; "to it shall the Gentiles seek, and *his rest shall be glorious*." The prophet then proceeds to show for what purpose he who is the "Root of Jesse" and "the Offspring of David" is to be set up as an ensign for his people:—"It shall come to pass in that day, *that the Lord shall set his hand again* THE SECOND TIME *to recover the remnants of his people*, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea;" an event which has certainly not yet taken place. But, as if to prevent all doubt or dispute on the point the prophet uses even more comprehensive language, saying "He shall set up an ensign for the nations, *and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah FROM THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH*"—(Isa. 11, 9-12).

When the antitype of Joshua has effected this gathering of the scattered twelve tribes from "the four corners of the earth," then will be fulfilled the words of the prophet Jeremiah, who predicted that the days shall come when the children of Israel "shall no more say, The Lord liveth, who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but *the Lord liveth who brought up and who led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land*"—Jer. 23, 7-8).

Such was the nature of the deliverance which the Jews anticipated their Messiah would effect as soon as he appeared in their midst; and it was partly because Jesus did not attempt to fulfill these hopes that they crucified him. Although disappointed, it was only for a time. If they had believed what he preached, they would have known that he would effect their predicted emancipation in due time. Even when suffering from their malignity, he intimated this, and also the means by which it would be accomplished. When before Pilate on a charge of sedition, for asserting claims antagonistic to the power of Caesar, he made the following declaration:—"My kingdom is not of this world; *if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight*, that I should not be delivered to the Jews"—(John 18, 36).

When saints will fight.

Jesus Christ's kingdom, although pertaining to this earth, did not belong to the Mosiac "world" or *kosmos*,—the constitution of things existing at his first appearing; therefore neither he nor his servants were permitted to use force to establish it. But his words show that when the time arrives for his kingdom to be established, his servants will "fight"; an intimation which is expressly and plainly declared in other parts of inspired Scripture. Thus the Psalmist writes: "Let the *saints* be joyful in glory; let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a *two-edged sword in their hand, 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 judgments written: THIS HONOUR HAVE ALL HIS SAINTS*"—(Ps. 149, 5-9).

This prediction has never yet been fulfilled, as is evident from the fact that "the saints" are reminded that the "weapons" of their "warfare" in the present life are not "carnal", and that they are authorised to use only "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God"—(2 Cor. 10, 4; Eph. 6, 17); they have never, as yet, executed "vengeance upon the heathen" (or

Gentiles), nor bound "their kings with chains". But when the time arrives for the fulfilment of the promise which was given to them by Jesus through the apostle John, then they will do so; for he has said, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, *to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father*"—(Rev. 2, 26-27).

Nations to combine against Christ.

The exercise of such great power by "the saints in glory", or immortalised righteous, will not be without both a cause and an object. It will be caused by the opposition which the "powers that be", styled in the aggregate "the kingdom of men", will manifest against the establishment of the kingdom of God by David's Heir; and its object will be to set up the kingdom of Israel. To effect this, it will be necessary to inflict severe judgments upon the nations, in order to punish them for their wickedness, and subdue their presumptuous pride. It is of this period the prophet Isaiah speaks when he says, "Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. *The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day*"—(Isa. 2, 10, 11). Only by the infliction of severe and unprecedented chastisements upon the existing governments, will the proud and lofty kings and princes of the Gentiles be humbled and compelled to render homage to "the King of the Jews".

Russia to head confederacy.

The armed combination against the Jewish nation will be led by "Gog", who is described by Ezekiel as coming with "many people", into "the land of unwalled villages", "against my people Israel", "to take a spoil and to take a prey" (Ezek. 38. 11, 12, 15, 16), a power which, from the fact that it comes "out of the north parts" to Palestine, and is styled, "The king of the north" (Dan. 11,40), can be no other than Russia.

That power will be the head of a great confederacy of nations (Ezek. 38, 5-7), combined together to overcome the Jews then quietly settled in their own land, and to take possession of their territory. But it will be to no purpose; the prophet has declared, "*It shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy, and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel*"—(v. 18, 19). The Spirit in the prophet then proceeds to describe the "great shaking" to take place: "I will call for a sword against him"; . . . and "*I will plead against him with pestilence and blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord*" (v. 21-23).

The way in which Jehovah will plead with pestilence and blood against "Gog" and the many nations, in order that he may be magnified, is set forth in other passages. It will not be done by the Invisible God direct: it will be effected by deputy; Jesus and his immortal saints will do what is necessary to make Jehovah known among many nations. Hence, in alluding to Jesus as the "Faithful and True" John says, "In righteousness he doth judge and *make war*; . . . and out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that *with it he should smite the nations*" (Rev. 19, 11 and 15); "*And they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful*"—(Rev. 17, 14).

Christ to subdue all enemies.

Notwithstanding the power and position of him who, in company with his faithful followers, is to "smite the nations", the Gentile rulers will stoutly oppose this warrior-king, thinking, doubtless, that he is like one of themselves; for it is prophetically written that "The kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together

to make war against him " (Rev. 19, 19); but without effect. He who in the days of his flesh, refrained from summoning legions of angels to protect his person, will then command legions of saints " equal unto the angels " to strike terror into the hearts of his enemies, and to subdue them. Although it is written, " These shall make war with the Lamb ", it is also predicted, " The Lamb shall overcome them "—(Rev. 17, 14). Then is the time when " the Lord at God's right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath "—Psl. 110, 5).

In this war, " the King of the Jews " and Israel after the spirit will be assisted by Israel after the flesh; for the prophet Micah addresses them in the following language:—" *Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth* "—(Micah 4, 13). Hitherto, with few intervals, the children of Israel have been a " prey and a spoil to all their enemies "—(2 Kings 21, 14), like a " flock " of sheep devoured by " every beast of the field "—(Ezek. 34, 8).

For the last nineteen centuries, they have been " a nation scattered and peeled, . . . a nation meted out and trodden down " (Isa. 18, 2), or beaten into pieces by many Gentile people. But when " Michael shall stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people " (Dan. 12, 1),—the second Joshua who is to deliver them from the hands of all their enemies,—"*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 the flock of sheep, who, if he go through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver* " (Mic. 5, 8). The Gentile lions have been permitted for hundreds of years to play sad havoc with " the lost sheep of the house of Israel "; but when " the good shepherd ", David II, assumes charge over them, to " feed them " (Ezek. 34, 23), they will be permitted to assist in punish-

ing the nations for so grievously afflicting Jehovah's chosen people in previous ages.

Unparalleled trouble.

The intensity and severity of the judgments to be poured out upon the nations when the "King of the Jews" stands up on behalf of his downtrodden people, is indicated by Daniel predicting that at that time "There shall be a *time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time*"—(Dan. 12, 1).

Numerous are the occasions on which the Deity has shown his wrath against mankind, both directly and indirectly, on account of their wickedness; but they have given little heed to it: though terrified for a time, as soon as the tribulation passed away, it has been forgotten, and the former iniquities resumed.

The time is coming when Jehovah's vengeance will be much more widely and strikingly displayed than on any former occasion; of which the political, social, and commercial troubles of the present century are but a foretaste. This divine purpose is evidence that mankind will then be as wicked as at any previous stage in the world's history, and as a proof that the world is not getting better, as generally believed. Therefore, the theory that mankind will go on gradually improving,—politically, socially, and religiously,—until the second appearing of Jesus Christ, is an idle dream.

The Almighty's determination.

The discomfiture of the Gentile powers will be rendered more speedy and effectual by a political combination, and the collection of their forces to battle as the following prophecies show:—"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; PREPARE WAR, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up; *beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears*; let the weak say, I am strong"—(Joel 3, 9-10):—"Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen (or nations), and gather yourselves together round about; . . . *let the heathen (or nations) be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat,*

for there will I sit to judge all the heathen (or nations) round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down, for the press is full; the fats overflow; FOR THEIR WICKEDNESS IS GREAT"—(Joel 3, 11-13).

Although to the natural eye this gathering may appear to be brought about by human means, it will in reality be effected by the Almighty; for He has said, by His spirit in the prophets, *My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger*—(Zeph. 3, 8); "When I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, *I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people,*" "by fire and by sword"—(Joel 3, 1-2; Isa. 66, 16).

The locality to which the nations are to be gathered is shown by a parallel passage in Zech. 14, 2:—"I will gather all nations *against Jerusalem* to battle." Thus the same city which witnessed Jesus Christ's degradation will behold his victory. At his second appearing, as at his first, "The kings of the earth" will "set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his annointed;" but, unlike the first attempt, their object will be frustrated: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision"—(Ps. 2, 2-4). The same prophet who predicts that the nations will be gathered to Jerusalem, also declares that "*Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle*" (Zech. 14, 3); he will "*break them with a rod of iron,*" and "*dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel*" (Ps. 2, 9) until "his enemies shall lick the dust"—(Ps. 72, 9).

Corruption of the Truth.

The principal sin which is about to bring down the avenging wrath of the Deity upon the civilised nations of Europe is that of corrupting His Word, and persecuting those who have adhered to the truth contained in that Word.

This corruption began at a very early stage in the history of the Christian Church. Before the apostles had been long occupied in proclaiming the gospel, false teachers sprang up amongst those who had taken upon themselves the name of Christ. Paul predicted that such would be the case, when taking his departure from the church at Ephesus :—" I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. *Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them* " (Acts 20, 29-30).

Not many years elapsed before the Ephesian church, or ecclesia, realised the truth of this prediction, evidence of which will be found in the epistles addressed by Paul to Timothy, the first having been written when the latter was at Ephesus. In these epistles the apostle reiterates the above prediction, but with greater minuteness : " In the latter times some shall depart from the faith " (1 Tim. 4, 1); "*the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they hearken to themselves* " teachers, having itching ears, *and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables* "—(2 Tim. 4, 3-4).

Before the close of his career, Paul had painful experience of this turning away from the truth; false teachers sprang up, not only in the Ephesian church, but in all the early churches or ecclesias; so that he was constrained to say, " All they which are in Asia are turned away from me "—(2 Tim. 1, 15). The Church which had been espoused to the Second Adam became " corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ," in a similar manner to that in which " the serpent beguiled Eve," the spouse of the first Adam.

False doctrines introduced.

The philosophising Greeks indoctrinated many of the early Christians with the pagan doctrine of the immortality of the soul, through which certain believers were led to say, " There is no resurrection of the dead " (1 Cor. 15, 12); and others to affirm that " The resurrec-

tion is past already"—(2 Tim. 2, 18). Added to this, certain Jewish converts contended for the observance, by disciples of Jesus Christ, of all or a portion of the Mosaic law, which had been abolished by the death on the cross; thereby, as Paul says, making Christ of none effect—(Gal. 5, 2-4).

In this way the seed of the serpent corrupted the spouse of Christ, so that instead of it being "a chaste virgin," "not having spot or wrinkle" (Eph. 5, 27), it became contaminated with Greek "foolishness" and Jewish traditions. Its love was transferred to "another Jesus" than him on whom its affections were first fixed; it imbibed "another spirit" than that which at first animated it; and it taught "another gospel" than that which it at first accepted—(2 Cor. 11, 4).

A portion still held fast the "form of sound words" which they had first been taught. This, of course, produced constant controversy, and thus two opposite parties were developed, the one contending for the "one faith" in its purity, and the other contending for it as adulterated with fables. In course of time, as the line of demarcation between their respective beliefs became wider and more definite, the antagonism between them grew stronger and stronger.

The whole community having been represented in the first instance as a virgin espoused to Christ, that portion which ceased to love him, and transferred its love to "false prophets," is appropriately described as an adulterous woman—(Rev. 2, 20-22). Instead of loving God with all her heart, soul and mind (Matt. 22, 37), she loved the world (1 Jno. 2, 15); and, as a consequence, she was ready at the first opportunity to form an alliance with the world. As long as Paganism was the religion by law established in the Roman empire, it was impossible for those who, while perverting the knowledge of the only true God, rejected gods of wood and stone, to obtain much political power.

Christianity and the Roman Empire.

But, as Paganism decayed, the influence of the Apostasy gradually increased, until at last it became the

stronger of the two, and was established as the supreme religion of the Empire. This result was predicted by Paul when he said, "the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth (or hindereth) will let (or hinder) until he be taken out of the way; and then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming"—(2 Thess. 2, 7-8). That which hindered the development of "the mystery of iniquity" in the apostle's day was Paganism; an impediment which continued until the beginning of the fourth century.

At that time the throne of the Roman empire was occupied by Constantine, who discarded Paganism and imbibed the adulterated truth of the Apostate church. He then changed the religion of the State from idolatry to the spurious form of Christianity. By this means an alliance was effected between the political power and the adulterous spouse of Christ; henceforth the latter was a confirmed "harlot." Her wickedness, so far from diminishing, rapidly increased, and she used her new position as a means of increasing her power. The result was, that from being subordinate to the State, she ultimately assumed supreme control over the political power. Her headquarters were finally fixed at Rome, from which city she issued edicts to the kings of Europe, deposing them and elevating them at her pleasure; she spake "great words against the most High;" endeavoured to "change times and laws;" and persecuted those who continued to form part of the faithful spouse of Christ: thus fulfilling the prediction of the prophet Daniel:—(Dan. 7, 25).

In this condition she is appropriately designated, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. 17, 5), and is represented as a "woman drunken with the blood of the saints," and a "great whore with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication." Protestants also have come under its intoxicating influence. Although the latter have divested the Papal superstition

of some of its grossest absurdities, yet they have retained many of its false doctrines.

The Protestant Reformation.

The Protestant Reformation did good service in protesting against the error of salvation by works alone, and contending for justification by faith; but its leaders failed to define that faith; and their followers, down to the present day, have made little progress in this respect. The "Harlot's" wine taken by Protestants, although somewhat diluted, is sufficiently strong to produce a state of intoxication in which the mental faculties are rendered obtuse in relation to Divine truths. The difference in the degenerate condition of the various sects and denominations of what is called "Christendom," is one simply of degree. The Church of England has imbibed its intoxicating draughts direct from the Church of Rome; Dissenters have partaken of the same liquid after it has streamed through the Church of England. Although professing to teach out of the Word of God, they are in reality propagating, though doubtless sincerely and ignorantly, the errors by which the Apostasy was first developed, and which, amongst others, are still retained by the Papacy.

The consequences of this are fearful to contemplate; for it is said of those who drink the "Harlot's" wine, "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God"—(Rev. 14, 10). When, therefore, the time arrives for the "Harlot" to be punished, all the daughters of whom she is the "mother" will partake of her plagues. In the words of Paul, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven" to destroy "that wicked" one—the "man of sin," or "son of perdition,"—and "in flaming fire take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ"—(2 Thess. 1, 7 and 8; 2, 3 and 8).

After the inspired testimony adduced to show what is comprised in a knowledge of the only true God, and obedience to the Gospel, it is unnecessary to point out that the number who will come under the avenging sword of the Lord Jesus, when he comes in power and

glory, will comprise a large portion of the civilised world; fully justifying such judgments being described, in the figurative language of the Apocalypse, as "a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great"—(Rev. 16, 18). This display of Divine vengeance will have for its objects the punishment of the nations for their past sins, and the preparation of mankind for a new order of things, which will be described in the next section. The object of Jesus Christ in coming to the earth is not simply to execute a work of destruction; he will also carry out a great work of reconstruction, defined by Peter as the "restitution of all things"—(Acts 3, 21).

IV—Prince of Peace

At the birth of Jesus there were heard angelic voices saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men"—(Luke 2, 14). The great blessing for mankind thus heralded forth is to be realised in the future.

At his first appearing Jesus did not bring peace; he simply preached "the gospel of peace"—(Rom. 10, 15). He announced that glorious age when there will be universal "peace on earth." The immediate effect of his preaching was very far from peaceful. He well knew what would be the result; for he predicted it when he said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: *I came 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. 10, 34-36).

By proclaiming the fact that he was the Christ or the King of Israel, strife and division were created among the Jewish people; some believed what he taught; others denied it. The latter were most bitter against the former, and embraced every opportunity of persecuting them. The apostles were listened to as long as they confined themselves to proclaiming the restora-

tion of Israel's kingdom; but when they announced that the crucified Jesus of Nazareth was the King of that kingdom, their Jewish hearers turned away, or else laid violent hands upon them.

Jewish Kingdom will be re-established.

When preaching to the Gentiles, the apostles did not confine themselves to announcing that Jesus was "the King of the Jews:" they proclaimed him to be ruler of the Gentiles also. This is evident from what Paul said to the Athenians, that God "hath appointed a day in the which he will judge (*i.e.*, rule) the world in righteousness by" Jesus Christ—(Acts 17, 31). By declaring Jesus to be a king who should reign over the Jews and rule the whole world, the apostles did that which was contrary to the decrees of the Roman empire, and thus brought themselves into antagonism to it. Hence they were charged with doing "contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is ANOTHER KING, one Jesus"—(v. 7). Had they confined themselves to teaching the theory current in modern times, that Jesus is simply a king to reign in the hearts of his disciples, and that he is always to remain in heaven, they would not have been guilty of such a charge. In this respect, therefore, there is a wide difference between the kingship of Jesus as taught by the apostles, and the kingdom taught by current theology.

There are few subjects on which there is such extensive ignorance as on this; and yet there is no truth more plainly taught in the Bible. The Gentiles are as opposed to the future establishment of a Jewish kingdom on the earth to be ruled by Jesus in person, as were the Jews to the truth that the crucified Jesus is to be their king. Hence the proclamation and belief of this truth, as taught by Jesus and his apostles, leads to as much strife and "variance" in the present day as it did nineteen centuries ago.

A spurious charity.

Let anyone believe and teach that "the gospel of the kingdom" is "the power of God unto salvation,"

and he will soon realise what it is for "a man's foes" to be "they of his own household." He will then learn that the spurious "charity" so prevalent in "orthodox" circles is only intended for those who countenance any and every form of religious belief, however widely it may differ from their own; no one who understands and believes the gospel taught in apostolic days can do this.

Nearly all men profess to desire universal peace on earth, and yet, strange to say, the proclamation of the way designed by God for effecting this object, produces constant contention, strife, and division. God is not to blame for this: it is man's fault. It has always been so, and it will continue as long as there exist in the world those who are content to accept in its simplicity what God has revealed, and those who prefer to substitute the tradition of their fathers, or theories of their own.

Destruction of all present kingdoms.

The events described in the last section are symbolically predicted by Daniel as "A stone cut out without hands"—the stone which the builders rejected—striking an image composed of iron, clay, brass, silver and gold, so that the elements were "broken to pieces, and became like chaff of the summer threshing-floor; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them"—(Dan. 2, 34-35). The prophet then proceeds to say, "The stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth"—(v. 35). Subsequently he explains these symbols in the following languages:—"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."—(v. 44).

The destruction of "the kingdom of men," and the establishment of God's kingdom, will not be the work of a day; it will be effected gradually: a process illustrated by Jesus in the parables of the mustard seed

and the leaven. In the former he compares "the kingdom of heaven" to "a grain of mustard seed . . . which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree"—(Matt. 13, 31-32). In the latter parable, he compares "the kingdom of heaven" to "leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened"—(v. 33).

Heaven on Earth.

"The kingdom of heaven" is another term for "the kingdom of God;" it is not a kingdom in heaven, for it is described as "*under the whole heaven*"—(Dan. 7, 27). It is a kingdom which will be established by the God of heaven, with a king from heaven, and based upon heavenly principles; and it is, therefore, appropriately styled "the kingdom of heaven," although it is not to exist in heaven. Correctly translated, the phrase used by Jesus Christ is *the kingdom of the heavens*; that is, of the "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness"—(2 Pet. 3, 13), a figurative description of the constitution of things under the rulership of "the Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4, 2), and of the wise who are to "shine as the brightness of the firmament," and "as the stars for ever and ever"—Dan. 12, 3). These "new heavens and new earth" are defined by Isaiah to be "Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy"—(Isa. 65, 17-18).

Like David, Jesus will have to subdue some of his enemies before he can establish his throne at Jerusalem; for "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment"—(Isa. 1, 27). And even after he has effected this object, there will be foes at a distance requiring to be brought into subjection to him. For a time, therefore, after he has obtained possession of David's throne, he will fulfil the prediction—"Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies" (Ps. 110, 2); a passage which shows that Jesus is not now exercising the kingly functions referred to in this psalm, for there are no enemies in heaven by whom he can be surrounded.

Regathering of Jews to Palestine.

Having established himself on Mount Zion, surrounded by such of the Jews as are then residing in Palestine, Jesus will send messengers to the various Gentile nations, to demand the release of the Jews in their respective dominions, after the manner in which the God of Abraham sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh. He "*will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth*" (Isa. 43, 6); and he "*will send those that escape*" the judgments of that time "*unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord*"—(Isa. 66, 19-20).

Some Gentiles will doubtless refuse to obey the mandate issued from Zion; but they will, like Pharaoh, be compelled ultimately to yield, by Jehovah's unparalleled judgments; for it is written of the deliverance of Israel, "*According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt, will I show unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf; they shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth; they shall be afraid of the Lord our God*"—(Mic. 7, 15-17). By this means will the obstinate nations be humbled and compelled to lend a helping hand to the gathering in of the Jews.

Some will do it more readily than others, and amongst these the foremost will most probably be Britain. From the fact that the British are a commercial people, and their national arms comprise a lion, they are appropriately symbolised as "*The merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof*" (Ezek. 38, 13);

of whom it is said, " Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God "—(Isa. 60, 9).

Such nations as refuse to render them service will be visited with destructive judgments; for Israel is addressed in the following language:—" *The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted* "—(Isa. 60, 12). When all the Jews have been gathered to their own land, and the rebellious ones sifted out, they will be located according to their tribes. But the land will not be divided in the way it was formerly: it will be cut up into narrow strips extending from the east to the west so that each tribe will possess a portion of the sea coast on the Mediterranean, commencing with Dan on the north, and ending with Gad on the south. A full description of this division will be found in Ezek. 48. The fact that the land has never been thus divided, is a proof that this and parallel prophecies have yet to receive their fulfilment.

Blessings for Israel.

When the Jews are thus settled, " Peace shall be upon Israel " (Ps. 125, 5), and everything connected with them shall be blessed: " The sons of strangers shall build up " their " walls, and their kings shall minister unto " them; " the glory of Lebanon shall come unto " them; " the sons of them that afflicted " Israel " shall come bending unto " them; " and all they that despised " them " shall bow themselves down " to them; for brass they will receive gold; for iron, silver; for wood, brass; and for stones, iron; her " officers " will be " peace," and her " exactors, righteousness;" " violence " will " no more be heard " in their land, " wasting nor destruction within " her " borders;" God's people will be " all righteous," " the branch " of His " planting;" " a little one shall become a thousand," and " a small one a strong nation " (Isa. 60, 10-22); " peace " will be " within the walls " of Jerusalem, and " prosperity within " her " palaces "—(Ps. 122, 7).

Then will the "good tidings" about "Zion" have become an accomplished fact (Isa. 40, 9); the Lord will have comforted the waste places of Zion, and made "her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord" (Isa. 51, 3); the present sterile barrenness will disappear; "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree"—(Isa. 55, 13).

The Lord will then have "comforted his people," and "redeemed Jerusalem" (Isa. 52, 9); and they will have realised the consolation referred to in the well-known words, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that *her warfare is accomplished*, that her iniquity is pardoned"—(Isa. 40, 1-2). Instead of being looked upon as the natural enemy of the Gentiles, the oppressed of all nations, the Lord will extend peace to her like a river, and the "glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream"—(Isa. 66, 12).

The Second Solomon.

Jesus, as the antitype of Melchizedek, will then be "King of Salem, which is King of Peace" (Heb. 7, 2); for it is predicted that when sitting "upon the throne of David," "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end"—(Isa. 9, 7). As the "Greater than Solomon," he will then reign with a peace and splendour exceeding that of any former Jewish or Gentile king. The enmity between the two tribes and the ten tribes will no longer exist. "They shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for *all shall know me* (Jehovah), *from the least to the greatest*"—(Heb. 8, 11).

The Jews are not the only people who are to be blessed with peace when the second Solomon sits upon "the throne of the Lord" at Jerusalem; for it is foretold that "*He shall speak peace unto the heathen* (or nations), and *his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth*" (Zech. 9, 10); "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and

all flesh shall see it"—(Isa. 40, 5). Thus all nations will participate in the peace which is to come upon Israel, and witness the glory of their king. Consequently the enmity against them will cease, and their vast armaments will no longer be required.

Then will come the time when "the nations shall *beat their swords into ploughshares*, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; *neither shall they learn war any more*"—(Isa. 2, 4). It must be apparent at a glance what an immense revolution in human affairs will be effected, in order to bring about this state of things. The total absence of war will render useless all armies, navies, air forces, and every appliance of offence and defence; and thus there will be no need to levy taxes for these purposes. The vast number of men, and the enormous amount of time and money, now devoted to military purposes, will then be available for developing industries of a useful and peaceful character, to be conducted on righteous principles; the markets will never then be agitated with real or false fears of an impending conflict between two or more nations; for there will be no international grievances to be redressed. In those days "abundance of peace (shall flourish) so long as the moon endureth"—(Ps. 72, 7).

Dethronement of present rulers.

But before the Gentiles can enjoy universal peace, their present rulers must be dethroned. God has permitted mortal men to rule the world for nearly six thousand years; they have tried every conceivable form of government, but all have failed to produce justice, peace, and righteousness; those who have governed have used their power for self-aggrandisement and self-gratification, instead of for the benefit of those governed by them. Therefore "the Blessed and Only Potentate" is about to supersede them all. The Almighty intends to take matters into His own hand in a more direct manner than He has ever yet done.

For this purpose “ *He hath appointed a day (or period of time) in the which he will judge (or rule) the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained*, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead ”—(Acts 17, 31). When, therefore, he whom God raised from the dead has seated himself upon his throne at Jerusalem, he will summon all the kings and other rulers to resign their power, and render submission to him who is alone entitled to be “ **KING OVER ALL THE EARTH** ”—(Zech. 14, 9). If they refuse, the immortal saints will “ *bind* ” them “ *with chains* ” and “ *fetters of iron* ”—(Ps. 149, 8). But such as comply with the mandate issued by the Monarch of the whole earth will be permitted to live quietly as subjects of “ *the Lord of lords and King of kings* ”—(Rev. 17, 14).

Among those who do this will doubtless be the rulers of Britain; for this Psalmist predicts that “ *the kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents;* ” the kings of Sheba and Seba “ *shall offer gifts* ”—(Ps. 72, 10). Not one, nor a few, but “ *All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him* ”—(v. 11). Britain then will no longer be governed by a King, Lords, and Commons; America by a President, Senate, and Congress; France by a President and representative Assemblies; nor Russia by an Autocrat or Dictator.

Ruling by Divine Right.

Empires, Monarchies, Republics, and Democracies will then be things of the past. Instead of there being a confederation of States in America, or a United Nations Organisation, all the nations of the earth will be united into one vast kingdom extending over the whole globe, ruled by King Jesus and his brethren, who are to “ *reign on the earth* ” with him. Then will have been fulfilled the prediction which says, “ *Judgment was given to the saints of the most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom* ”—(Dan. 7, 22).

The rulers of that age will not reign by hereditary descent, nor by universal suffrage, but by “ *Divine*

right," which is not the case with present kings, who only rule by Divine permission. Instead of being mortal and fallible, the future rulers will be immortal and infallible; and they will have for their head one who "For the joy that was set before him, endured the cross," and "despised the shame," and has since become "the Captain of their salvation." Then can it be said that "*The Kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever*"—(Rev. 11, 15); and that "There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed"—(Dan. 7, 14).

Men are very fond of puzzling their brains about the future course of nations, and the best forms of government; but if they would take what the Bible says on the subject, they might save themselves a vast expenditure of time, thought, and labour, ending in "vanity and vexation of spirit." The foregoing passages contain a solution of the problem in a nutshell. They announce that all the kingdoms of this world are to be transformed into one kingdom, and that all nations and languages are to serve him who has been made both Lord and Christ. They do not teach that all the inhabitants of the earth are to be induced to believe in Jesus by the human agencies now in operation, and that he is merely to reign in their hearts without coming to the earth, according to popular belief; such a result would not be the kingdoms of the world becoming Christ's kingdom. All hopes of this nature are the result of mere imagination. Even if the benefits which are to come upon the mortal inhabitants of the earth by means of Jesus Christ's kingdom were its only objects, it might appropriately be termed a glorious scheme; for it "will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations" (Isa. 61, 11), and the earth to "be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"—(Hab. 2, 14).

But when it is considered that it is the means by which immortality, or salvation, is to be bestowed upon a vast multitude of the human race, language fails to describe the wisdom of its Author, or its transcendent importance. At present, it constitutes that of which the Gospel is glad tidings; and all who, in past and present dispensations, have believed God's promises respecting it in their various forms, will, at its establishment, be exalted to be its rulers, and receive the gift of immortality. These, however, will constitute merely "the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb, redeemed from among men" (Rev. 14, 4); they will then be used as the instruments for gathering in a much larger number. It is considered a worthy object for a man to desire to be a religious teacher in the present age, for the purpose of saving "immortal souls" in a manner which is contrary to that designed by God; but a man is scouted and looked upon with contempt if he expresses a desire to be a religious teacher in the age to come, and endeavours to induce others to aspire to the same glorious destiny, that they may assist in saving a large number of mortal beings, according to God's method.

The Millenium.

For a thousand years the Kingdom will exist in a mixed condition; its subjects will all be mortal flesh-and-blood beings, but its rulers will be immortal beings. But at the end of that period the former will cease to exist, and all who are found worthy will be exalted to the same nature as the latter, constituting the great harvest from among men; for Jesus "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death"—(1 Cor. 15, 25-26).

There will be an outbreak among the nations at the close of the thousand years, and the rebels who take part in it will "compass the camp of the saints, and the beloved city;" but it will be utterly abortive: fire will come "down from heaven, and devour them"—(Rev. 20, 9). "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, *that God may be all in all*"

—(1 Cor. 15, 28). Thenceforth, “ There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain ; for the former things are passed away ”—(Rev. 21, 4). The earth will then become the eternal abode of all the immortal righteous.

The woes brought into the world through the Fall will all have been removed. “ There shall be no more curse ” (Rev. 22, 3) on either the earth or its inhabitants ; “ The meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”—(Ps. 37, 11). The inheritance lost by man soon after his creation will then have been bestowed upon an immense number of beings gathered from the human race, who will constitute a new creation. The second Adam and his married Bride will then occupy the position of the first Adam and his wife ; and Paradise Lost will then truly and literally have become Paradise Regained.

From the testimony adduced, it must be apparent to the reader that the character of Jesus as a king is highly interesting. But it is something more ; it is not a matter of mere interest : it is all-important.

It is absolutely necessary to the fulfilment of what he preached as a prophet, and to the vindication of the regal claims which led to his crucifixion. If those who talk so much about the cross of Christ did but note the immediate circumstances which brought it about, they would be likely to understand his character as a king, and would appreciate the significance of the inscription written over his head : “ JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS ”—(John 19, 19).

“ The Kingdom ” and “ the Truth.”

When Jesus was before Pilate, after acknowledging, in the Jewish form of speech, that he was king, he made the following important statement : “ To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto THE TRUTH. EVERYONE THAT IS OF THE TRUTH HEARETH MY VOICE ”—(John 18, 37). It has already been shown that Jesus appeared among

the Jews to "preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 4, 43), also styled by him "my kingdom." In the above passage he states that he came to "bear witness unto the truth." These two affirmations indicate a close connection between his "kingdom" and "the truth." "The truth" is, in fact, another term for "the gospel of the kingdom of God;" what is affirmed of the one is also affirmed of the other.

The gospel is described as "*The power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth*" (Rom. 1, 16); and of the former, it is said that believers are "*chosen to salvation through sanctification of the spirit, and BELIEF OF THE TRUTH*"—(2 Thess. 2, 13). Hence these two terms are used interchangeably throughout the New Testament. They are also conjoined, as when Paul says to the Ephesians, "Ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (ch. 1, 13); and to the Colossians, "Ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" —(ch. 1, 5). When, therefore, Jesus said, "Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice," it was equivalent to saying, "Everyone that believeth the gospel of the kingdom heareth my voice."

Such as do this constitute that class of whom Jesus spoke when he said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and *I give unto them eternal life*"—(John 10, 27-28). As eternal life is promised only to those who hear Jesus Christ's voice, it is apparent that it will be given to none others; and, as a consequence none but they will reap any benefit from his sacrificial death; for, in defining his relationship to such, he says, "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep;" that is, for those who believe what he preached about his future kingship.

True Conversion.

Those who do not believe the "gospel of the kingdom" cannot be said to hear "the voice of the good shepherd," and, therefore, are not his "sheep," neither are they "of the truth;" and, as a consequence, are classed with those who "*received not the love of the*

truth that they might be saved”—(2 Thess. 2, 10). They comprise all who are ignorant of the true nature of Jesus Christ's kingdom; who treat it with indifference or contempt, who openly deny it, or who have erroneous conceptions of it. They are of that class of which Jesus spoke when he said, “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein”—(Mark 10, 15); a passage which is parallel to the words he uttered on another occasion: “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven”—(Matt. 18, 3). To be “converted” is not simply to be turned from an immoral to a moral course of life; no conversion is of any value in regard to a future life unless it be a turning from error to the truth which God has revealed. The only way to be “converted” according to the Scriptural method, is, in the words of Jesus, to “receive the kingdom of God as a little child.” Those who are converted to the popular religious systems of the day, as a rule, have no knowledge of the kingdom “of God,” and therefore they cannot “enter therein.”

It is utterly useless for anyone to suppose that, in simply believing Jesus Christ to be a king in some sense, and to have a kingdom of some kind, he believes “the gospel of the kingdom.” What the Deity requires is not a mere assent to a form of words; for words are but the medium for conveying ideas or truths. If we are to understand His revealed will in the way in which language is ordinarily understood—and there is no reason why we should not—He will not be satisfied with anything less than an intelligent apprehension of the meaning contained in the words which He has chosen for revealing His purposes, together with a hearty belief of the same.

Human conceptions meaningless.

To attach to the words and phrases used in the Word of God a meaning different from that intended by their Author, is to substitute human conceptions for the Divine purposes. This is done when it is affirmed that the kingdom of Jesus Christ is his church now on earth,

styled "the church militant," or the church supposed to be in heaven, styled "the church triumphant." Both theories are a complete perversion of the plain and obvious meaning of the whole teaching of the Scriptures on this subject.

Jesus Christ's church in its present condition is in no sense a kingdom; its members are called his "servants," his "disciples," his "joint heirs," and his "brethren;" but nowhere are they called his *subjects*—one of the primary requisites of a kingdom; Jesus is their Saviour, their elder Brother, their Captain, and their Head, but not a King to reign over them. On the contrary, they have the promise that they shall "reign with him," and in view of this, he is called "the Prince of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1, 5), and "King of kings" (Rev. 17, 14); statements showing that his and their kingly power pertains to the future.

To realise this honoured destiny they must have subjects to reign over: an element which is not to be found in heaven; the "nations" which they are to "rule" are not in heaven, but on earth; and, therefore, the latter is the only locality where the kingdom of Christ can be established.

There are other ways in which the truth concerning the kingdom of God is perverted, or rendered of none effect. Thus, to affirm that Jesus Christ will not reign personally on the earth, is to make void the covenant with David, because by virtue of that covenant he is guaranteed possession of the throne which his regal ancestors, David and Solomon, occupied.

To doubt or deny that the twelve tribes of Israel will be restored to the land of Canaan, is to deprive the "King of the Jews" of his subjects, and to falsify the innumerable plain promises given to them by their prophets. To teach that the kingdom of God consists of a kingdom in the skies, is to deprive the faithful disciples of Jesus of the high honour of being "kings and priests" to rule and instruct all the nations of the earth for one thousand years for the purpose of gathering out a large multitude to be the recipients of eternal life.

The Kingdom is not "the Church."

To contend that that kingdom is the church now on earth, is to take away the instrumentality by which the righteous are to enjoy salvation. To deny that Abraham and Jesus, with all the faithful, are to possess the land of Canaan, is to deprive that kingdom of its locality. To declare that Jesus will not return to the earth until the end of the millennium, is to upset the scheme of salvation, and to assert that the whole world can be made righteous through human instrumentality, apart from the personal presence, direction, and superintendence of Jesus Christ.

The only safe plan is to discard all these human traditions and speculations, and to accept with the simplicity of a little child the kingdom of God as portrayed in the writings of the prophets, and as preached by Jesus and his apostles.

Such as do this, believe that Jesus Christ's Kingdom is not yet in existence; that it will not be established until his second appearing; that its throne will be the throne of David at Jerusalem; that its subjects will be the mortal Jews restored to their own land, and also all the Gentile nations upon the earth; that its rulers will consist of Jesus Christ and all his faithful followers, all of whom will be kings and priests; that he and they will dethrone the powers that be, take possession of all the kingdoms of the world, and rule the earth in peace, on righteous principles, for one thousand years; that at the end of that period mortal men will cease to live on the earth, and this globe become the everlasting abode of Jesus Christ and all who will have been redeemed from mankind since the creation of Adam.

Conclusion

We have now taken a survey of the character and mission of Jesus Christ during the whole of his career, past, present, and future.

In so doing, we have seen how inseparably he is linked with the entire scheme of redemption; justly entitling him to be called its Alpha and its Omega. He is the "foundation" (1 Cor. 3, 11) on which the building rests, the keystone that locks the arch, and the pivot round which the whole plan turns. If he be taken away, the entire fabric will fall to pieces. And even if his position in it be altered by means of a false conception of him, its stability will be impaired, and its beauty destroyed. Equally true is it that if any portion of the building be taken away or disfigured our conception of him will be proportionately perverted. It will not do to form an ideal of our own concerning him. What God requires of us is to know him and believe in him "according to the scriptures." To believe in him in any other sense is to treat with contempt that inspired "word" which the Deity has "magnified above all" His "name"—(Ps. 138, 2). How dangerous, therefore, to depart from the record which God has given us respecting His Son!

In the erection of this building, "He who built all things," as a wise Architect first formed the design, and then proceeded to prepare the materials. To accomplish the end he had in view, He devised a kingdom to be established upon the earth. Respecting this kingdom, He at various periods in the world's history, gave promises which gradually unfolded His purpose to mankind, each succeeding promise giving additional particulars. The first promise stated the end which was to be accomplished, namely, the destruction of sin. The second defined the land on which the kingdom is to be established. The third related to the throne and the king who is to occupy it.

Then followed numerous predictions showing who are to be its subjects, and the full extent of its power. And these were succeeded by a series of inspired discourses and epistles having special reference to its rulers. In each of these Divine utterances Jesus Christ occupies a prominent position; for "all the promises of God in him are Yea, and in him Amen" (2 Cor. 1, 20); and he was shadowed forth by various typical persons and things described in the prophetic writings.

As the seed of the woman, we see in Jesus the promised deliverer who is destined to restore that which was lost by the Fall.

As the seed of Abraham, we see in Jesus the future inheritor of the land of Canaan, through whom all the nations of the earth are to be blessed.

As the seed of David, we see in Jesus the heir to David's throne, who is destined to reign at Jerusalem.

As the prophet like unto Moses, we see Jesus in the past proclaiming the will of God to his kinsmen by whom he was rejected, and in the future delivering them from their bondage.

As the "Shiloh," we see in Jesus that member of the royal tribe of Judah who is to wield a sceptre of righteousness over the twelve tribes of Israel.

As the Son of God, we see in Jesus the child of the virgin Mary, born by the direct operation of Deity's spirit, who, from his earliest years to the end of his earthly life, was wholly occupied in doing his Father's will.

As the "man of sorrows," we see Jesus bruised in the heel by the seed of the serpent on account of the transgressions of others.

As the "Lamb of God," we see Jesus a pure and spotless sacrifice, which was offered up to abolish sin and death.

As the "one mediator," we see in Jesus a great high priest who has entered into the Holy of Holies and is interceding for his people.

As the "bridegroom," we see in Jesus him who, having so loved his bride as to die for her, is about to return from heaven to be united to her in marriage.

As a judge, we see in Jesus an infallible arbitrator who is to decide the destinies of all who, by the knowledge of God's truth, have been brought in various ages into a state of responsibility.

As the "Arm of the Lord," we see in Jesus the first-born from the dead, who has abolished death, and brought immortality to light, and who is destined to become the Resurrection and the Life unto all who will have persevered unto the end of the narrow way which leadeth unto life.

As the antitype of Moses, Joshua, and David, we see in Jesus a "man of war" who will liberate the Israelites from their bondage, lead them into their own land, and, after exterminating their enemies from that land, give them a millennial rest therein.

As the antitype of Solomon, and the Prince of Peace, we see in Jesus the "great king" who is not only to be king of the Jews, but also king over all the earth, who will establish peace among all nations and judge the people righteously.

As the antitype of Melchizedek, we see in Jesus a kingly priest who will provide the necessary means for imparting to all people a correct knowledge of the only true God and his Son Jesus the Christ.

The chief portion of the promises having been recorded by Moses and the prophets, it is obvious that their writings must be studied in order fully to comprehend them. Only by adopting this course can the references to them in the writings of the evangelists and apostles be understood.

Harmony of the Testaments.

The attentive reader cannot have failed to notice, from the numerous passages recorded, what a remarkable harmony exists between all these inspired writings. He will also have observed how intimately the Old and

the New Testaments are interwoven together. Neither of them can be understood without the other.

This important fact is to a great extent overlooked in the religious world; and even when it is admitted in the abstract, it is not put to that practical use which ought to be made of it. By the great majority of professing Christians, the Old Testament Scriptures are either ignored or very much neglected, and many even look upon them as a "dead letter," having no connection with the teaching of Jesus and his apostles.

The writings of the prophets are considered so unintelligible that the study of them is treated either with ridicule or silent contempt: on the face of it such conduct as this is unwise and unreasonable. No one expects to comprehend any human writing—whether on history, biography, science or art—by reading the latter half of it first, or by reading that only. Equally absurd and impossible is it for anyone to understand the Divine Book by selecting pages in the latter portions, and taking little or no notice of those which precede them.

The Bible is composed of a series of books which have been given at different times, each of which is more or less dependent on the others. To be understood, they must be read in the order in which they have been revealed. Collectively, they are divided into two great divisions, termed the Old and New Testaments—which may be called volumes I and II. Before volume II can be understood, volume I must be comprehended. How absurd, then, to publish the New Testament by itself, as is done by the Bible Society for the purpose of placing it in the hands of those who have never seen any portion of Holy Writ!

Searching the Scriptures.

The importance, nay, the necessity of familiarity with the Old Testament, in order to understand the teaching of Jesus Christ and his apostles, is shown by their frequent references to it, and quotations therefrom. When Jesus appeared among the Jews he introduced his mission by announcing that he had "not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil" them (Matt.

5, 17); and he subsequently said to them, " *Search the Scriptures*; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me"—(John. 5, 39). The only " *Scriptures* " then in existence were those known as the Old Testament. It was these same writings to which Paul referred Timothy:—" *The holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation* " (2 Tim. 3, 15); a statement which shows that the Old Testament was given to make known the way of salvation.

Acting on this principle, the apostle " *reasoned with* " his fellow countrymen " *out of the Scriptures,*" to convince them that Jesus was the Christ (Acts 17, 2-3), and expounded the kingdom of God " *both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets* "—(Acts 28, 23). So entirely was his teaching based upon the Old Testament, that, when before Agrippa, he declared that he said " *none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come* "—(Acts 26, 22).

On the basis of this fact it is evident that when he preached " *Jesus Christ, and him crucified,*" his teaching must have been in harmony with the Old Testament. With such a teacher as this, there was some propriety in the Bereans searching the Mosaic and prophetic " *Scriptures* " to see whether the things he had spoken were to be found therein; their search would doubtless result in the conviction that what he had uttered was in harmony with previous revelation.

But there is no incentive whatever in the teaching of the self-styled successors of the apostles to induce their hearers to search the Old Testament to see whether the things they utter are to be found therein; for they seldom attempt to expound it. Such a search will simply demonstrate how antagonistic to their religious doctrines are the truths taught by Moses and the prophets. There is no wonder, therefore, that they are so much at variance with the teaching of Jesus and the apostles. Only by a study of the Bible as a whole, from Genesis to Revelation, is it possible to arrive at an exact knowledge of the prophetic, priestly, and kingly functions of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is described as the righteousness, sanctification, and redemption of true believers; and he is also their wisdom (1 Cor. 1, 30); he is both "the power of God" and the "wisdom of God" (v. 24); in him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"—(Col. 2, 3). He is therefore, an embodiment of God's wisdom.

Seven Pillars of Wisdom.

That wisdom is personified in Proverbs as a woman of whom it is said, "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her"—(ch. 3, 18). Under the same figure it is represented as having "builded her house," and "hewn out her seven pillars"—(ch. 9, 1). These pillars are not enumerated in Proverbs, but this deficiency is supplied by Paul in writing to the Ephesians :

1st, the "One God."

2nd, the "One Lord."

3rd, the "One Spirit."

4th, the "One Faith."

5th, the "One Hope."

6th, the "One Baptism."

7th, the "One Body."—(Eph. 4, 4-6).

All these pillars are inseparably associated with Jesus the Christ. As the "One Lord," he is a manifestation of the "One God" by means of the "One Spirit;" he has already confirmed, and will hereafter fulfil, the Abrahamic promises, constituting the "One Faith;" his second appearing is the "One Hope" of all true believers; the "One Baptism" consists of immersion into his name upon a belief of "the truth as it is in Jesus;" and the "One Body" comprises the whole community of the redeemed, of which he is the head.

Thus, the seven pillars of the truth form one harmonious, perfect whole, each of which is necessary to the vitality of the remainder. No one who thoroughly understands and appreciates this can help admiring the beauty of the Divine plan of salvation; neither can he hesitate to apply to it the exclamation of the apostle—"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"—(Rom. 11, 33).

A beautiful plan.

Not only is this plan beautiful; it is equally sublime and simple. While it affords sufficient mental food to satisfy the loftiest intellect during the longest lifetime, it is so simple that a child may understand it. It may, at first sight, seem difficult and complicated; but this is only in appearance, and not in reality.

Its apparent intricacy arises entirely from the mind being previously impregnated with false or distorted ideas on the subject. If everyone, instead of being educated in "orthodox" traditions and fables, were trained up from childhood to believe the truths here set forth, they would become as familiar with them as with the duties of every-day life.

Stated in its simplest and most concise form, the plan of redemption may be defined in the following manner:—One member of the Adamic race, who was at the same time God's Son in a special sense, died to redeem from everlasting death, or non-existence, that portion of mankind who believe and obey God, and to give them unending life to be enjoyed upon the earth, thus restoring to man the inheritance which was lost by the sin of the first human pair.

This is the outline of the picture; all the other incidents constitute the subordinate figures and the background which are necessary to give life, colour, and variety to the main features. And truly it is a most glorious picture: it reflects all the attributes of the Deity—His power, His wisdom, His love, His mercy, His justice, His benevolence, and His truthfulness. It provides that which is best adapted for mankind, whether in this life or the life to come. In no part does it clash with human reason freed from prejudice, and it supplies that which is necessary to gratify the highest aspirations of an intellectual and moral being.

An individual matter.

Reader! do you wish to be among those who will reign with Christ as immortal kings and priests, and live with him on the earth? If so, do not on any account

ignore or treat lightly the Scriptural truths which have been brought before your notice. Many things may seem strange to you, but this is no reason for passing them by. Rather should it lead you to "Search the scriptures," to "see whether these things be so."

Do not rely on the traditions handed down from your forefathers, on the many learned men arrayed on the popular side, or on the belief of the majority. If they be wrong, they cannot help you; and surely it can afford no real satisfaction to obtain favour with man when it involves the loss of God's approval, or to know that, if wrong, you are in company with a large number of others who are equally misguided.

Salvation is an individual matter. God has done what is necessary in providing the means, and showing the way; and it now rests with you to make a right use of those means, and follow His instructions. There are only two destinies in store for you: you must either become as though you had not been, or be exalted to be like Jesus Christ, and live with him throughout eternity.

The reception or the rejection by you of "the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ," will decide the question either one way or the other.

Therefore, "think on these things;" give yourself wholly to them; embrace them with your whole heart and mind—that you may be saved, and so share in the blessings offered by Jesus Christ as a prophet, obtained by him as a priest, and hereafter to be bestowed by him as a king.

Appendix

Should a desire be created to come into contact with the religious community founded upon the tenets of this treatise, the necessary information can be obtained from the channel through which this book is published. The following statement of the

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF SCRIPTURAL TRUTH

which has been adopted by Christadelphians (*i.e.* Brethren of Christ), may be of service to the interested reader; it constitutes an appropriate synopsis of the revealed verities comprehended in a knowledge of the only true God and His Son, Jesus Christ:—

1. That there is one God, the Creator of all things, the fountain of all life, who dwells in Heaven, in unapproachable light; who is self-existent, immortal, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, immutable, and supreme above all; by whose power all things exist, and from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, both temporal and spiritual.

Deut. 6, 4; Mark 12, 29; Ps. 146, 6; 36, 9; 1 Kings 8, 30; Isaiah 43, 10; 1 Tim. 6, 15-16; 1, 17; Heb. 4, 13; Jas. 1, 17.

2. That the Spirit of God, also called the Holy Spirit, is the power of the Deity flowing forth from him, and existing everywhere, and by which he accomplishes all His will; that by this power He created and sustains all things; that by it He spake through the prophets and apostles, and manifested Himself in a Son; and that by it His servants have worked miracles. That its bestowal is not necessary to enable anyone to believe the truth; that it has not been given in the present generation as in the Apostolic age, the only way in which it is now possessed being by a belief of the words of the Spirit, which are the truth.

Ps. 139, 7-12; Job. 26, 13; Neh. 9, 30; 2 Peter 1, 21; 1 Peter 1, 11, 12; Luke 1, 35; Acts 2, 22; Heb. 2, 4; Eph. 4, 4.

3. That man is a mortal creature made of the dust of the ground, and, in consequence of Adam's sin, under sentence of death; that when death occurs he ceases to exist, and while in the death-state is devoid of all thought, consciousness, and life.

Gen. 2, 7; 3, 19; Ps. 103, 14; 1 Cor. 15, 47-49; Rom. 5, 12; Ps. 146, 4; 115, 17.

4. That immortality, or eternal life, is a gift offered conditionally by God, through His Son Jesus Christ, to all who manifest the faith and obedience required by him.

Rom. 2, 7; 6, 23; Tit. 1, 2; 1 John 5, 11, 12; John 3, 16; Rev. 22, 14.

5. That Resurrection affects those only who are responsible to God by a knowledge of His revealed will; that all these, whether just or unjust, faithful or unfaithful, will be raised from the dead at the second appearing of Jesus Christ, and will with the living, appear in a corruptible nature, before the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account of themselves, and to receive in the body according to that which they have done, whether it be good or bad.

Acts 24, 15; Rom. 5, 13; Isa 26, 13, 14; Rev. 11, 18; 2 Tim. 4, 1; Rom. 14, 10-12; 2 Cor. 5, 10.

6. That the unjust will, after judgment, suffer many or few "stripes," according to their deserts, and finally be subjected to extinction of being, from which there will be no release. This is the second death.

Rom. 2, 9; Matt. 13, 42; Luke 12, 47-48; Gal. 6, 8; John 15, 6; Matt. 25, 30, 41; Rev. 21, 8.

7. That the just will, after judgment, be immortalised by a change into spirit-nature, and made kings and priests, to reign with Jesus Christ over the mortal inhabitants of the earth for one thousand years; and that after that period they will inherit the earth for ever. These will be the first fruits unto God and the Lamb.

Matt. 25, 34, 46; Luke 19, 17; 1 Cor. 15, 51, 54; Phil. 3, 21; Rev. 5, 10; Matt. 5, 5; Ps. 37, 34; Rev. 14, 4.

8. That the Kingdom of God will be established at the second appearing of Jesus Christ, and will, in the first instance, consist of the restored kingdom of Israel, but will ultimately comprise all nations of the earth; that its rulers, Jesus Christ and the saints, will be immortal, but its subjects mortal; that its capital will be Jerusalem and its laws divine; that it will have for its object the blessing of all the families of the earth physically, socially, politically, and spiritually, and will be the means of establishing universal peace and righteousness; that it will ultimate in the accession to the ranks of the glorified of a vast multitude, who will form the great harvest of redemption; that at the end of the thousand years, mortal beings will cease to exist on the earth, sin and death will be finally abolished, and the kingdom will be delivered up to God the Father that He may be all in all; that the glad tidings of this kingdom constitute the Gospel which was preached to Abraham, to the children of Israel in the wilderness and by the prophets; and which was also preached by Jesus Christ during his ministry, and by his apostles both before and after the crucifixion.

2 Tim. 4, 1; Matt. 25, 31, 34; Luke 22, 29-30; Rev. 11, 15; Dan. 7, 14, 27; Jer. 3, 17; Isa. 2, 2-4; Gen. 12, 3; Isa. 65, 20-23; Isa. 51, 3; Zeph. 3, 9; Zech. 14, 16; Hab. 2, 14; 1 Cor. 15, 24-28; Gal. 3, 8; Heb. 4, 2; Rom. 1, 1, 2; Luke 4, 43; 8, 1; 9, 2; Acts 28, 23.

9. That Jesus was a mortal man made of a woman, made in all things like unto his brethren, but begotten by God through the power of the Holy Spirit, in consequence of which he was called the son of God; that being the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, "and the fruit of David's loins," or Son of Man, he inherited the consequences of Adam's sin, including sentence of death; that he was the arm of the Lord put forth for the salvation of men, and therefore was called Emmanuel, or "God with us"; that he was anointed with Spirit at his baptism, and sent forth as a prophet to work miracles, and to preach to the Jewish nation; that he was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet committed no sin; that at the end of his ministry he was put to death on the cross, whereby sin was condemned

in his flesh; that in consequence of his perfect obedience to his Father, he was raised from the dead, whereby a way was opened from the grave for all who avail themselves of his covering name in the appointed way; that after being immortalised he ascended to heaven, where he now sits at the Father's right hand to intercede as a High Priest for those who believe and obey the truth; that he will remain there until the time for his enemies to be made his footstool, when he will return to the earth to raise the dead, judge the living and resurrected saints, punish the nations of the earth, restore the Jews to their own land, and establish his kingdom over the whole earth.

Heb. 2, 9; Gal. 4, 4; Heb. 2, 14-17; Luke 1, 35; Gen. 3, 15; Gal. 3, 16; Acts 2, 30; John 5, 27; Isa. 53, 1; Matt. 1, 23; 3, 16; Acts 10, 38; Heb. 4, 15; Phil. 2, 8-9; Rom. 8, 3; Heb. 1, 9; Ps. 16, 8-11; Acts 4, 2, 12; 1, 9; Ps. 110, 1; Heb. 10, 21; Acts 3, 21; 1 Thess. 4, 16; 2 Tim. 4, 1; Rev. 11, 18; Isa. 26, 9; Rev. 14, 14-20; Isa. 49, 6; Luke 1, 68-75; Zech. 14, 9.

10. That the term "Devil," which means a slanderer or false accuser, signifies that which has the power of death, namely, sin in its various forms of manifestation in human nature, and is used interchangeably with the terms Serpent, the Seed of the Serpent, the old Dragon, Satan, &c., that Jesus Christ was manifested to destroy the Devil and all his works; that at his first appearing he destroyed its power over himself; that at his second appearing he will destroy its power over those approved at his judgment seat; and that at the end of the thousand years he will destroy it in relation to the whole human race, after which it will no more exist upon the earth. That there is no such being as a superhuman personal Devil or Satan.

Heb. 2, 14; Rom. 6, 23; Gen. 3, 15; Rev. 20, 2; 1 Jno. 3, 8; 2 Tim. 1, 10; 1 Cor. 15, 25, 26, 54-56.

11. That the term "Satan" simply means an adversary and is applied in Scripture to both good and bad adversaries, but most frequently to human beings, individually and collectively, who are at enmity with God.

Matt. 16, 23; 1 Thess. 2, 18; 1 Tim. 1, 20; Rev. 2, 12, 13; 20, 2.

12. That, as the seed of the woman, Jesus Christ was bruised in the heel by the seed of the serpent at his death; but having been healed of the wound by resurrection, he has led captivity captive, and obtained the keys of death and the grave, so that death hath no more dominion over him: that at his second appearing he will bind the Serpent-powers for one thousand years, at the end of which time they will be loosed for a little season, and will then be mortally bruised and completely destroyed by him.

Gen. 3, 15; Isa. 53, 5; Ps. 30, 2, 3; Eph. 4, 8; Rev. 1, 18; Rom. 6, 9; Rev. 20, 2, 7-9.

13. That the land of Canaan having been promised to Abraham and his seed, the Christ, but never having been inherited by them, Abraham must be raised from the dead and Jesus Christ must return from heaven, before the promise can be fulfilled; that all who are the seed of Abraham by faith, will, as "joint heirs with Christ," share the same inheritance, and that this land will constitute the territory of the restored kingdom of Israel in the age to come.

Gen. 13, 14-17; Heb. 11, 13; Gal. 3, 29; Rom. 8, 17; Luke 13, 28; Ezek. 37, 21-25.

14. That through being born of the virgin Mary, who was of the house and lineage of David, Jesus Christ is the seed of David; that he will, on his return to the earth, sit on the throne of David, and that he will also be the chief king and priest of all the earth.

Luke 3, 23, 31; 2 Sam. 7, 12-16; Luke 1, 32; Rev. 19, 16; Zech. 6, 13; 14, 9.

15. That the covenants of promise consist of the covenant God made with Abraham concerning the land of Canaan, and the covenant made with David concerning his throne; which covenants were confirmed or ratified, by the death of Jesus Christ, and will be brought into force by him at his second appearing.

Eph. 2, 12; Matt. 26, 28; Rom. 15, 8.

16. That the law of Moses having been abolished by the death of Jesus Christ, none of its injunctions are

binding except those re-enacted by Jesus Christ and the apostles; and that the observance of the first day of the week as the Sabbath, as popularly enjoined, is therefore unscriptural.

Eph. 2, 15; Col. 2, 14.

17. That baptism consists of immersion in water, and is therefore a symbolic burial into the death of Jesus Christ, into whose name it is the means of introducing a believer of the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ; that it is the appointed means in the present dispensation, *in connection with the shed blood of Jesus Christ*, of washing away all previous sins; and that it is essential to salvation.

Acts 8, 38; Rom. 6, 4, 5; Gal. 3, 27; Acts 2, 38; I Pet. 3, 21; John 3, 5.

18. That the breaking of bread and drinking of wine, in accordance with Divine appointment and Apostolic practice, are intended to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ, until he returns; and that the command to do this should be observed every first day of the week by the members of his Body.

Luke 22, 15-20; I Cor. 11, 23-26; Acts 20, 7.

BELIEFS WHICH ARE CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE.

The natural immortality of man.

The conscious existence of the dead.

The reward of either righteous or wicked at death.

The eternal torment of the wicked.

A superhuman devil or devils.

That the inheritance of the righteous is to be in the skies.

Resurrection or salvation of heathen, infants, idiots, etc.

That the unjust will not be raised from the dead.

That there is no judgment for believers.

The immortalisation of the righteous before appearing at the judgment seat of Christ.

Salvation by morality or sincerity without the true faith.

The kingdom of God synonymous with the Church on earth in the present dispensation.

Post-millennial advent of Jesus Christ, and the establishment of a millennium without the personal presence of Christ on earth.

Immersion unnecessary for salvation.

Immersion without an intelligent belief of the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

That the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the only elements of the Apostolic Gospel.

The impossibility of exercising faith without the gift of the Spirit.

Absolute and unconditional predestination.

The non-existence of sin in the flesh.

The personality of the Holy Spirit.

The eternal Sonship or the pre-existence of the Son of God.

The possession by Jesus of a life or nature different from that of his mother Mary.

That Joseph was the father of Jesus.

That Jesus Christ, in the days of his flesh, was in the same position as Adam before the Fall.

That the promises to Abraham were fulfilled by the Jews living in the land of Canaan.

The burning up of the earth.

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