CHRISTENDOM ASTRAY

POPULAR CHRISTIANITY (BOTH IN FAITH AND PRACTICE), SHEWN TO BE UNSCRIPTURAL; AND THE TRUE NATURE OF THE ANCIENT APOSTOLIC FAITH EXHIBITED.

EIGHTEEN LECTURES

(Originally Published as "TWELVE LECTURES on the true teaching of the Bible.")

by

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PREFACE

To the Edition of 1884

THE enlightened reader will bear with the seeming arrogance of the title. It is a proposition—not an invective. The question proposed for consideration is a question for critical investigation. Attention is invited to the evidence and the argument. They are strictly within the logical sphere. They can be examined and dismissed if found wanting. What the title affirms is that Christendom, the ostensible repository of revealed truth, is away from that truth.

In reality the title goes further than this. By implication, it asserts certain things to be the truth that are not accepted by Christendom. It offers the proof of the doctrines that are according to truth, as the best demonstration that Christendom is astray from those doctrines. The demonstration is by the Holy Scriptures. To these Christendom is *professedly* subject, and it is in the light of these (estimated as Christendom estimates them, viz., as divine writings) that the question is considered throughout. It cannot be an unacceptable thing to earnest believers in the Bible to have it debated whether their conceptions of duty and destiny are according to the Bible. This is what is done in the following lectures.

This is not the first time the lectures have appeared. They first saw the light under the name *Twelve Lectures*, many years ago (Feb., 1862). They came out then in fortnightly parts (one lecture per fortnight) in response to the demand of those who had heard of them. The lectures themselves were in the first instance delivered in Huddersfield in discharge of an individual duty on the part of the lecturer. Since then many thousands of copies have been circulated. The author little imagined at the time he wrote them, that any such fate was in store for them. He wrote them for delivery only, and supposed their work was done when a small Huddersfield audience had heard them. As a matter of fact they have revolutionised the religious convictions of great numbers of people, of which fact much written evidence has appeared in the pages of the monthly *Christadelphian* during the past sixty years and more.

It will be found upon investigation that the Bible is no more responsible for the views and tenets of Christendom than it is for Mormonism. It propounds a system of doctrine which is compatible with all the evidences of sense, as systemised in the material sciences of the ages, and which at the same time commends itself to the moral instincts of every fully developed mind, as supplying those links, in the absence of which, the human understanding is baffled in its attempts to fathom the mysteries of existence.

Lecture 16 discusses the prophetic bearings of current political events. The result is to show that the times appointed for Gentile ascendency are all either run out, or on the point of running out in the present age of the world. The state of affairs is shown to confirm this conclusion of chronology. Prophetic anticipations have been realised in a way that leaves no doubt of the correctness of the deductions. From the outbreak of European revolution, in 1848, to the British occupation of Egypt, in 1882, and the commencement of the Jewish colonisation of Palestine (on however small a scale), there has been an unbroken series of expected signs of the Lord’s approach. The only point of failure has been as to the place in the programme at which the Lord’s appearing would occur, and this is a failure not of the prophetic word, but of human estimate of probability. It seemed likely that the ending of Papal coercive power would be the time for the Lord to appear. The ending of the Papal coercive power came at the expected time, but not the Lord, and because of this, the thoughtless cry “failure.” True failure there has not been; on the contrary, prophetic expectations that were truly warranted have in all particulars been realised in a very wonderful manner.

Parallel cases in ancient Bible times indicate the nature of the present situation. In the case of the Exodus, Israel left Egypt *thirty years after* the expiry of the period (of 400 years) specified as the duration of Israel's sojourning in the land of the stranger. In the case of the restoration from Babylon, it was not accomplished till *a generation after* the period (70 years) fixed as the duration of their captivity. But in both these cases, *events tending to the development of the foretold results* SIGNALISED THE EXACT ENDING OF THE PERIOD. In the case of the Exodus, Moses, who was fifty years of age at the end of the 400, had appeared on the scene, and "supposed his brethren would have understood how that God, by his hand, would deliver them" (Acts 7:25). In the case of the restoration from Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar's dynasty was overthrown by Darius, who belonged to a people favourable to Israel.

In the present case, all we need look for in this respect is transpiring before our eyes. The events prophetically characteristic of the termination of the "times of the Gentiles," are the facts of contemporary history. Papal ascendancy is at an end in the world of politics, secular and ecclesiastical. The nations are "angry," and wars and rumours of wars are the order of the day. The Zionist movement among the Jews proclaims the imminence of the national resurrection foretold by the prophets, and therefore heralds also the resurrection of the dead.

Of the exact date of the Lord's appearing we have no information. We are in the era of that wonderful event, and it may be the occurrence of any day; but "of that day and hour knoweth no man." We are in the position the disciples occupied in relation to the day of God's judgment on Jerusalem; we wait in a state of indefinite expectancy, knowing that the event looked for is near, even at the door; but not knowing exactly how long.

The truth developed in a complete form is rapidly creating a people for the name of the Lord at his return. Such a work is a necessary prelude to the advent. The apostolic testimony gives us to understand that Jesus finds a people alive at his coming. Hence, their development is a necessity of the end. It is meet that Christ should have a people contemporary with the developments of the end.

At his coming in the flesh, John the Baptist, by preaching, gathered from Israel a select people, to whom in due course Christ was manifested by the descent of the Holy Spirit, and by means of whom in their ultimate operations, he proclaimed the way of life to the world, vanquished paganism, and enthroned his name traditionally in the high places of the earth. His coming in the Spirit draws near: a people is in preparation, increasing in numbers, faith, zeal, and service, to whom, when their development has reached a certain point, he will be revealed, with the thousands whom he shall bring from the dead by his power. May reader and writer alike have the supreme happiness of being included in their glorious number.

(*The author of "Christendom Astray" died in* 1898.)

FOREWORD

"Christendom Astray" was first published as *"Twelve Lectures on the Teaching of the Bible"* in 1862. In the intervening 103 years a number of editions have been made available to assist earnest men and women in their search for The Truth.

The author, Robert Roberts, of Huddersfield, England, had single objective—*to promote the personal study of the Holy Scriptures, with a view to salvation*. This present edition will assist in promoting the author's original intention.

In Lecture 2 the erroneous doctrine of the immortality of the soul is shown to be contrary to Nature and Revelation. Some of the arguments are those which were necessary in 1862 against the then-current philosophical arguments. In noting with interest how the author stood against the philosophical arguments of his day, the reader will learn a valuable lesson. The same Bible which stood against philosophical arguments a century ago, is still mighty to stand against the modern philosophical arguments advanced against the Bible today. The ground of the contention has altered, but the principle is the same—human reasoning exalting itself against Divine revelation.

In a different category is Lecture 16 entitled *"Times and Signs: or the evidence that the end is near"*. In this lecture, Robert Roberts wrote in 1862, after reviewing certain chronological arguments:

> " … if this is so, there wants about forty-four years to complete the 6,000 years of the great world-week, and therefore we are that number of years from the time when the blessing of Abraham shall prevail o'er the whole world through Christ. But we are not, therefore, that number of years from the advent. This may happen within the next twelve months. The coming of Christ is one event; the setting up of the kingdom another."

His anticipation of the return of Christ at that time, and the establishment of the Kingdom by 1906, was incorrect. The question becomes: "Should an error of this nature be preserved in the present edition, or left out?" Who can answer a question of this nature better than the author himself? In the Preface to the Fifth Edition, Robert Roberts stated:

> "The prophetic-chronological conclusions of lecture 11(A) are allowed to appear unaltered, although the state of facts in this year, 1869, would seem to stultify them. The fact is that events have verified them, and brought us to the era of the advent. A.D. 1866 has been signalised by epochal events characteristic of the termination of the Little Horn period, though it has not brought the consummation. The mistake was m expecting the occurrence of the advent and resurrection immediately 1866 was attained …"

Robert Roberts did not hesitate to retain a point on which he was open to challenge, because he was well aware that a discerning mind would appreciate the general argument advanced, and be able to press on in personal study.

The lecture in question is a valuable section of this book. It will give the reader an insight into principles to be applied in order to understand the prophecies of the Bible. It deals with the great time periods of the Bible. It details much of the history of Europe essential to an understanding of the development of prophecy through a period of nearly 2,000 years. It pinpoints the position of the Catholic Church in Bible prophecy, in a clear and forthright manner. Events are outlined concerning the last-days activities of Turkey, Russia and the Jews, leading up to the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The author of *Christendom Astray* was greatly assisted in his understanding of the Bible by the writings of his predecessor, John Thomas. The study of the Bible on the part of John Thomas revealed to him also that Christendom was astray from the Scriptures. He set down the results of his research in a book entitled *Elpis Israel* (or *The Hope of Israel*) being "an exposition of the Kingdom of God." The book, which is a standard work of the Christadelphians, expounds both Bible doctrine and prophecy in a manner that reveals that

the latter does predict the future with certainty, and that when it is correctly expounded, can be completely relied upon. Consider the following statements made in the year 1848:

Concerning the Jews

"There is, then, a partial and primary restoration of the Jews before the advent of Christ, which is to serve as the nucleus, or basis, of future operations in the restoration of the rest of the tribes after he has appeared in the kingdom. The pre-adventual colonisation of Palestine will be on purely political principles; and the Jewish colonists will return in unbelief of the Messiahship of Jesus, and of the truth as it is in him. They will emigrate thither as agriculturists and traders, in the hope of ultimately establishing their commonwealth, but more immediately of getting rich in silver and gold by commerce with India, and in cattle and goods by their industry at home under the efficient protection of the British power" (*Elpis Israel*, pp. 395/6—3rd. Edition, printed 1859).

This statement, based upon Bible prophecy, has been remarkably fulfilled. A partial restoration of Jewry has taken place, the nation of Israel has come into existence, and Britain was a prime mover in accomplishing this.

Concerning Britain

"As I have said elsewhere, the Lion-power will not interest itself in behalf of the subjects of God's kingdom, from pure generosity, piety towards God, or love of Israel; but upon the principles which actuate all the governments of the world—upon those, namely, of the lust of dominion, self-preservation, and self-aggrandisement. God, who rules the world, and marks out the bounds of habitation for the nations, will make Britain a gainer by the transaction. He will bring her rulers to see the desirableness of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba, which they will be induced, by the force of circumstances, probably, to take possession of. They will, however, before the battle of Armageddon, be compelled to retreat from Egypt and Ethiopia …" (p. 398).

Following World War 1 (seventy years after the above statement was written) Britain was granted a mandate over Palestine, and sponsored the establishment there of a national home for the Jews. Since that time, and developing out of that movement, the nation of Israel came into existence. It is all in fulfilment of Bible prophecy, as the above writer clearly showed.

Concerning Russia

In the Preface to the 3rd. Edition of *Elpis Israel* (p. 21), the author wrote:

"Russia's mission is to reduce all the nations of the Old World, save Britain and her dependencies, into one imperial dominion represented in the book of Daniel by the Image of Nebuchadnezzar. Licentiousness will again break loose, and in the mêlée the Austro-Papal empire will succumb; the contest will end in the discomfiture of the Continent and Russia, like a mighty inundation, will overflow the nations, and dash her waves upon their shores, from the Danish Belts to the Dardanelles. Britain will rage, and shake the world with her thunder; but, as in the days of Napoleon, her alliance will be fatal to them that trust her, and only precipitate their fall."

Again (p. 13):

"When Russia makes its grand move for the building up of its image-empire, then let the reader know that the end of all things as at present constituted, is at hand. The long expected, but stealthy advent of the King of Israel, will be on the eve of becoming a fact; and salvation will be to those, who not only looked for it, but have trimmed their lamps by believing the gospel of the kingdom unto the obedience of faith, and the perfection thereof in 'fruits meet for repentance.' "

There is much more in this book in similar vein, not only in regard to the nations mentioned above, but the world in general; and the fulfilment of these anticipations clearly reveals that the Bible is true, and its prophecies certain of fulfilment.

Robert Roberts made a mistake in setting a date for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, because the Bible clearly states: “of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father” (Mark 13:32). There are time periods set down in the Bible, but they do not reveal that date, and the fact that Robert Roberts made a mistake in regard to them only serves to underline the importance for every reader of *Christendom Astray* to turn to the Bible himself for confirmation of the matters set before him. Let him do this, and he will be led into all truth, and rejoice in the knowledge of God’s plan of salvation, and His future purpose to send back Jesus Christ to this earth, that he might establish therein the universal Kingdom over which he will reign (Acts 1:11; Daniel 2:44; Zechariah 14:9). There is a “day appointed” for this glorious and wonderful event (Acts 17:31), and the signs of the times show that it is near at hand, for “at the set time,” “when the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory” (Psalm 102:13, 16).

THE PUBLISHERS

Lecture 1

THE BIBLE—WHAT IT IS, AND HOW TO INTERPRET IT

“The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.… They shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (II Tim. 4:3, 4).
“Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:30).
“There shall be false teachers among you … and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom, the way of truth shall be evil spoken of” (II Pet. 2:1, 2).
“Try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (I John 4:1).
“Their word will eat as doth a canker” (II Tim. 2:17).
“All nations deceived” (Rev. 18:23).

> “TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY: IF THEY SPEAK NOT ACCORDING TO THIS WORD, IT IS BECAUSE THERE IS NO LIGHT IN THEM” (Isaiah 8:20).

THAT CHRISTENDOM is astray from the system of doctrine and practice established by the labours of the apostles in the first century, is recognised by men of very different ways of

thinking. The unbeliever asserts it without fear; the church partisan admits it without shame, and all sorts of middle men are of opinion that it would be a misfortune were it otherwise. The unbeliever, while himself rejoicing in the fact, uses it as a reproach to those who profess to follow the apostles whom he openly rejects; the churchman, while owning the apostles as the foundation, regards it as the inevitable result of the spiritual prerogative vested in "the church," that there should be further unfoldings of light and truth leading away from the primitive form of things; and the moderate and indifferent class accept it as a necessary and welcome result of the advance of the times, with which they think the original apostolic institution has become inconsistent.

Is there not another meaning to the fact? To such as have confidence in the Bible as a divine record, the quotations standing at the head of this chapter must suggest a view of the present state of things very different from that entertained by the common run of religious professors. Do not these quotations require us to believe that it was in the apostolic foresight (a foresight imparted to them by that presence of the Holy Spirit which Jesus before his departure promised he would secure for them during Iris absence—John 14:7; 16:13)—that the time coming was a time of departure from what they preached—when men indulging in "fables" and walking in "pernicious ways," would wholly turn aside from the saving institutions of the gospel delivered by them, and realise the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy as to the state of things upon earth just before the manifestation of God's glory at the appearing of Christ, viz., that "darkness should cover the earth and gross darkness the people"? (Isa. 60:2). Such a view may bring lamentable conclusions, and be fruitful of personal embarrassments in a state of society where a man cannot prosper unless he fall down and worship the current "doxy." But an earnest mind will not be debarred by such considerations from the investigation of a momentous topic. "What is the truth?" is the engrossing question of men of this type, and they follow wherever the answer may lead them, even "to prison and death," if that were possible in our age.

We propose this investigation in the following lectures. Such subjects have been supposed to pertain exclusively to the clerical province. Obviously, it is not a likely theme for a clergyman to discuss whether the whole system of clericalism itself be not a departure from Bible truth. It is not one which he is specially fitted to consider. And, in point of fact, it is more and more generally conceded that questions of Bible truth are matters of non-professional understanding and concern. Nothing but an untrammelled individual knowledge of the Bible will satisfy the earnest curiosity that would know what the truth is amid the intellectual turmoils, questionings and collisions of modern times. If the Bible is God's voice to every man that has ears to hear (which it demonstrably is), it is for every man by himself, and for himself, to seek to understand it, and to extend the benefit he may have received.

Qualification for this is not a question of "ordination": it comes with enlightenment. And not only qualification, but obligation comes with this enlightenment. As soon as a man understands and believes the gospel, he is bound to lend himself as an instrument for its diffusion. The command is direct from the mouth of the Lord Jesus himself: "*Let him that heareth say*, COME" (Rev. 22:17); the example of the early Christians affords unmistakable illustration of the meaning of the command (Acts 8:1–4). Tradition clings to "holy orders." Of these we hear nothing in the Scripture. Apostolic teaching inculcates the common-sense view that the truth of God is designed to make propagandists of all who receive it.

The subject of this afternoon's lecture is the natural starting point of all endeavours to ascertain what the Bible teaches. We want to know what the Bible is in itself, and on what principles it is to be understood. On the first of these points, we must take a good deal for granted. We shall assume throughout these lectures that the Bible is a book of Divine authorship. Our present duty is simply to look at the structure and character of the Bible as a book appearing before us with a professedly divine character taken for granted. Looking at it

in this way, we first discover that the Bible consists in reality of a number of books written at different times by different authors. It opens with five, familiarly known as the "five books of Moses," a history written by Moses, of matters and transactions in which he performed a leading personal part. This history occupies a position of first importance. It lays the basis of all that follows. Commencing with an account of the creation and peopling of the earth, it chiefly treats of the origin and experience of the Jewish nation, of whom Moses says, "The Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth" (Deut. 14:2). The five books also contain the laws (very elaborately stated), which God delivered by the hand of Moses, for the constitution and guidance of the nation.

It has become fashionable, under various learned sanctions, to question the authenticity of these books, while admitting the possible genuineness of the remaining portions of the Sacred Record. Without attempting to discuss the question, we may remark that it is impossible to reconcile this attitude with allegiance to Christ. You cannot reject Moses while accepting Christ. Christ endorsed the writings of Moses. He said to the Jews by the mouth of Abraham in parable: "They have Moses and the prophets, *let them hear them;* if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:29, 31). It is also recorded that when he appeared *incognito* to two of his disciples after his resurrection, "*beginning at* MOSES and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). Further, he said, "*Had ye believed* MOSES; *ye would have believed me:* for *he wrote of me. But* IF YE BELIEVE NOT HIS WRITINGS, HOW SHALL YE BELIEVE MY WORDS?" (John 5:46, 47). If Christ was divine, this sanction of the Pentateuch by him settles the question; if the Pentateuch is a fiction, Christ was a deceiver, whether consciously or otherwise. There is no middle ground. Moses and Christ stand or fall together.

The next twelve books present the history of the Jews during a period of several centuries, involving the development of the mind of God to the extent to which that was unfolded in the message prophetically addressed to the people in the several stages of their history. This gives them more than a historical value. They exhibit and illustrate divine principles of action, while furnishing an accurate account of the proceedings of a nation which was itself a monument of divine work on the earth, and the repository of divine revelation. The book of Job is no exception as to divinity of character. It does not, however, pertain to Israel nationally. It is a record of divine dealings with a Son of God, at a time when that nation had no existence. Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, are the inspired writings of two of Israel's most illustrious kings—writings in which natural genius is supplemented with preternatural spirit-impulse, in consequence of which the writings so produced are reflections of divine wisdom, and by no means of merely human origin. This is proved by Christ's declarations in the New Testament.

In the books of the prophets, from Isaiah to Malachi, we are presented with a most important department of "Holy Writ." In these seventeen books—respectively bearing the names of the writers—we find recorded a multitudinous variety of messages transmitted from the Deity to the "prophets," for the correction and enlightenment of Israel. These messages are valuable beyond all conception. They contain information concerning God otherwise inaccessible, and instructions as to acceptable character and conduct, otherwise unobtainable; in addition to which they have a transcendent value from their disclosure of God's purpose in the future, in which we naturally have the highest interest, but of which, naturally, we are in the greatest and most helpless ignorance.

Coming to the New Testament, we are furnished in the first four books with a history which has no parallel in the range of literature. The Messiah promised in the prophets, appointed of God to deliver our suffering race from all the calamities in which it is involved, appears: and here are recorded His doings and His sayings, What wonderful deeds! What

wonderful words! We are constrained in the reading to exclaim with the disciples on the sea of Galilee: “What manner of man is this?” He entrusted his apostles with a mission to the world at large. In the Acts of the Apostles we have made plain to us in a practical way, what Christ intended them to do as affecting ourselves. In the same book we have the proceedings of the primitive Christians, written for our guidance as to the real import of the commandments of Christ, and the real scope and nature of the work of Christ among men. The remainder of the New Testament is made up of a series of epistles, addressed by the inspired apostles to various Christian communities, after they had been organised by the apostolic labours. These letters contain practical instruction in regard to the character which Christians ought to cultivate, and in a general and incidental way illustrate the higher aspects of the truth as it is in Jesus. Without these epistles, we should not have been able to comprehend the Christian system in its entirety. Their absence would have been a great blank; and we in this remote age should hardly have been able to lay hold on eternal life.

Such is a scant outline of the book we call “the Bible.” Composed of many books, it is yet one volume, complete and consistent with itself in all its parts, presenting this singular literary spectacle, that while written by men in every situation of life—from the king to the shepherd—and scattered over many centuries in its composition, it is pervaded by absolute unity of spirit and identity of principle. This is unaccountable on the hypothesis of a human authorship. No similarly miscellaneous production is like it in this respect. Heterogeneousness, and not uniformity, characterises any collection of human writings of the ordinary sort, even if belonging to the same age. But here is a book written by forty authors, living in different ages, without possible concert or collusion, producing a book which in all its parts is pervaded by one spirit, one doctrine, one design, and by an air of sublime authority which is its peculiar characteristic. Such a book is a literary miracle. It is impossible to account for its existence upon ordinary principles. The futile attempts of various classes of unbelievers is evidence of this. On its own principles it is accounted for God spoke to, and by, its authors “at sundry times and in divers manners.” This is no mere profession on the part of the writers. It is shewn to be a true profession not only of the character of the book and the fulfilment of its prophecies, but by the fact that nearly all the writers sealed their testimony with their own blood, after a life of submission to every kind of disadvantage—“trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments; were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, in deserts and mountains; in dens and caves of the earth—being destitute, afflicted, tormented” (Heb. 11:36–38). To suppose the Bible to be human is to raise insurmountable difficulties, and to do violence to every reasonable probability. The only truly rational theory of the book is that supplied by itself. “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (II Peter 1:21). In this we find an explanation of the whole matter. The presence of one supreme guiding mind, inspiring and controlling the utterances of the authors, completely accounts for their agreement of teaching throughout, and for the exalted nature of their doctrines: on any other supposition the book is a riddle, which must ever puzzle and bewilder the mind that earnestly faces all the facts of the case.

There are, unfortunately, those who hold the book in contempt as a priestly imposture. There are few who do so as the result of individual investigation. It is the result of writings which are not careful about facts, or scrupulous in the use they make of them. The result is lamentable to those deceived. They reject the only book which can possibly be a revelation from the Deity, and they throw away their only chance of immortality; for surely if there be a book on earth that contains the revealed will of God, that book is the Jewish Bible; and if there be a possibility of deliverance from the evils of this life—the corruptibility of our physical organisation, the weakness of our moral powers, the essential badness of a great portion of the race, the misconstruction of the social fabric, the bad government of the

world—that possibility is made known to us in this book, and brought within our reach by it. By his rejection of the Bible, the unbeliever sacrifices an immense present advantage. He deprives himself of the consolations that come with the Bible's declarations of God's love for man. He loses the comfort of its glorious promises, which have such power to cheer the mind in distress. He cuts himself away from all the moral heroism which they impart; he sacrifices the abiding support which they give; the soul-elevating teaching which they contain; the noble affection they engender; the solace they afford in time of trouble; the strength they give in the hour of temptation; the nobleness and interest which they throw around a frittering mortal life. And what does he get in exchange? Nothing, unless it be licence to feel himself his own master for a few mortal years, to sink at last comfortless and despairing into the jaws of a remorseless and eternal grave!

The effect of the Bible is to make the man who studies it, better, happier and wiser. It is vain for the leaders of unbelief to assert the contrary; all facts are against them. To say that it is immoral in its tendencies, is to propound a theory, and not to speak in harmony with the most palpable of facts. To declare that it makes men unhappy, is to speak against the truth; the tormented experience of the orthodox hallucinated is no argument to the contrary, when it becomes manifest, as it will in the course of these lectures, that the Bible is no ways responsible for these hallucinations. To parade the history of unrighteous government and tyrannical priest-craft in support of such propositions, is to betray either ignorance or shallowness or malice. Many are deluded by such a line of argument, and have the misfortune, in many instances, to become conscientiously impressed with the idea that the Bible is an imposture. Such are objects of pity; in the majority of instances they are hopelessly wedded to their view.

It does not come within the scope of the present lecture to deal with the vexed but settleable question of Bible authenticity. Sufficient now to remark that the person who is not convinced by the moral evidence presented to his understanding on a calm and independent study of the Holy Scriptures, in conjunction with the historical evidences of the facts which constitute the basis of its literary structure, is not likely to be altered in his persuasion by elaborate argument. The plan of trying to show what it teaches, and thereby commending it to every man's sober judgment, will be found the most profitable. Here it may be well to notice an aspect of the question not often taken into account in the discussions which frequently take place on the subject.

The modern tendency to disbelieve the Bible must be traceable to some cause. Where shall we look for that cause? The moral inconsistency of professing Christians has, no doubt, done something to shake the faith of many; the natural lawlessness of the human mind is also an element in the various attempts to get rid of a book which exalts the authority of God over the will of man; but is there not another fruitful source of unbelief in the doctrinal tenets of the very religion professed to be derived from the Bible itself? The result of these lectures will be to show that in the course of religious history there has been a great departure from the truth revealed by the prophets and apostles, and that the religious systems of the present day are an incongruous mixture of truth and error that tends, more than anything else, to perplex and baffle the devout and intelligent mind, and to prepare the way for scepticism. Do you mean to say, asks the incredulous enquirer, that the Bible has been studied by men of learning for eighteen centuries without being understood? and that the thousands of clergymen and ministers set apart for the very purpose of ministering in its holy things are all mistaken? A moment's reflection ought to induce moderation and patience in the consideration of these questions. It will be admitted, as a matter of history, that in the early ages, Christianity became so corrupted as to lose even the form of sound doctrine—that for more than ten centuries, Roman Catholic superstition was universal, and enshrouded the world in moral, intellectual, and religious darkness, so gross as to procure for that period of

the world's history the epithet of "the dark ages." Here then is a long period unanimously disposed of with a verdict in which all Protestants, at least, will agree, viz., "Truth almost absent from the earth though the Bible was in the hands of the teachers." Recent centuries have witnessed the "Reformation," which has given us liberty to exercise the God-given right of private judgment. This is supposed to have also inaugurated an era of gospel light. About this there will not be so much unanimity, when investigation takes place. Protestants are in the habit of believing that the Reformation abolished all the errors of Rome, and gave us the truth in its purity. Why should they hold this conclusion? Were the reformers inspired? Were Luther, Calvin, John Knox, Wycliffe, and other energetic men who brought about the change in question *infallible*? If they were so, there is an end to the controversy: but no one will take this position who is competent to form an opinion on the subject. If the Reformers were not inspired and infallible, is it not right and rational to set the Bible above them, and to try their work by the only standard test which can be applied in our day? Consider this question: Was it likely the Reformers should at once, and in every particular, emancipate themselves from the spiritual bondage of Romish tradition? Was it to be expected that from the midst of great darkness there should instantly come out the blaze of truth? Was it not more likely that their achievements in the matter would only be partial, and that their new-born Reformation would be swaddled with many of the rags and tatters of the apostate church against which they rebelled? History and Scripture show that this was the case—that though it was a "glorious Reformation," in the sense of liberating the human intellect from priestly thraldom, and establishing individual liberty in the discussion and discernment of religious truth, it was a very partial Reformation, so far as doctrinal rectification was concerned—that but a very small part of the truth was brought to light, and that many of the greatest heresies of the church of Rome were retained, and still continue to be the groundwork of the Protestant Church.

Such as it was, however, the Reformation became the basis of the religious systems of Germany and England. Reformation doctrines were adopted and incorporated in these systems and institutions, and boys, sent to college in youth, were trained to advocate and expound them, and indoctrined by means of catechisms, text books, treatises, and not by the study of the Scriptures themselves; and on issuing forth to the full-blown dignities and responsibilities of theological life, these boys, grown into men, had to remain true to what they had learnt at the risk of all that is dear to men. It is not wonderful in such circumstances that they did not get farther than the Lutheran Reformation. The position was not favourable to the exercise of independent judgment. Men so trained were prone to acquiesce in what they were brought up to, from the mere force of habit and interest, sanctioned and strengthened no doubt by the belief that it was, and must of necessity be, true. And this is the position of the clergy of the present day. The system is unchanged. The pulpit continues to be an institution for which a man must have a special training. With a continuance of the system, we can understand how the religious teachers of the people may be grievously in error, while possessing all the apparent advantages of superior learning.

It may be suggested that the extensive circulation of the Bible among the people is a guarantee against serious mistake. It ought to be so; and would be so if the people did not, with almost one accord, leave the Bible to their religious leaders. The people are too much engrossed in the common occupations of life to give the Bible the study which it requires. They do not, with few exceptions, give it that common attention which the commonest of common sense would prescribe. They believe what they are taught if they believe at all. They cannot tell you why they so believe. Everything is taken for granted. Of course, there are exceptions; but the rule is to receive unquestioningly the doctrines of early days. Sometimes it happens that a thoughtful reader comes upon something which he has a difficulty in reconciling with received notions. There are two ways in which the thing comes to nought.

The clergyman or minister is consulted; he gives a decided opinion, which, however arbitrary and unsupported, is accepted as final. If the enquirer is not satisfied, his business or his "connection" with the congregation suggests to him the expediency of keeping silent on "untaught questions." If, on the other hand, he be of the reverential and truly conscientious type, though unable to satisfy himself of the correctness of the explanation prescribed, he thinks of the array of virtue and learning on the side of the suspected doctrine, and concluding that his own judgment must be at fault, he thinks the safest course is to receive the professional dictum; and so the difficulty is hushed up, and what might prove the discovery of Scriptural truth is strangled in the inception. Thus, you see, the great system of religious error is protected from assault in the most effectual manner, and is consequently perpetuated from day to day with effects that are lamentable in every way. Through lack of the understanding that might be attained by the independent and earnest study of the Scriptures, the Bible and science are supposed to be in conflict, with the result of generating a practical unbelief, which is rising like a tide threatening to sweep everything before it. The unconcerned are becoming confirmed in their indifference, and the intelligent among devout persons are growing uneasy with a feeling that their position is unsound at the foundation. It is easy to prescribe a remedy—a something that would prove to be a remedy if it could be generally applied; but it is hopeless to see any effectual remedy, so far as the mass are concerned, apart from that manifestation of divine power and wisdom that will take place at Christ's return. Nevertheless, the remedy is available in individual cases. Let earnest-minded people throw aside tradition. Let them rise to a true sense of their individual responsibility. Let them emancipate themselves from the idea that theoretical religion is the business of the pulpit. Let them realise that it is their duty to go to the Bible for themselves. If they study diligently and devotedly, they will make a startling but not unwelcome discovery; they will discover something that will make them astonished they ever regarded popular religion as the truth of God. They will attain to what many an intelligent mind anxiously desires, but despairs of obtaining; a foundation on which the highest and most searching exercise of reason will be in harmony with the most fervent and childlike faith.

We pass to the second part of the subject: "How to interpret the Bible." We get an introduction to this in the words of Paul to Timothy—"The Scriptures are *able to make thee wise* unto salvation" (II Tim. 3:15). Here we have apostolic authority for the statement that the Scriptures "make wise." How is this effect produced? Obviously, by the communication of ideas to the mind. But how are these ideas communicated? There is only one answer: by *the language it employs*. Hence, it ought not to be a matter of difficulty to determine how the Scriptures are to be interpreted. It ought to be easy to maintain that, with certain qualifications, *the Bible means what it says*. And it is so. This emphasis of a very simple and obvious truth may seem superfluous, but it is rendered necessary by the prevalence of a theory which practically neutralises this truth as applied to the Bible. By this theory, it is supposed and assumed that the Bible is not to be understood by the ordinary rules of speech, but is couched in language used in a non-natural sense, which has to be construed, and rendered, and interpreted in a skilled manner. What we mean will be apparent, if we suppose it were said to an orthodox friend, "The Bible, as a written revelation from God, must be written in language capable of being understood by those to whom it is sent." To this abstract proposition there is no doubt he would agree. But suppose his attention were directed to the following statements of Scripture: "The Lord God shall give unto him (Jesus) the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:32), "and he shall be ruler in Israel" (Micah 5:2), and "shall reign over them in Mount Zion" (Micah 4:7). For the same Jesus that ascended to heaven shall come again in like manner as he ascended (Acts 1:11). "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him" (Psa. 72:8, 11.) for he shall come in the clouds of heaven,

and there shall be given unto him a kingdom, glory and dominion, that all peoples, nations, and languages may serve and obey him (Dan. 7:13–14); and "the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously" (Isaiah 24:23).

And suppose, on the reading of these statements, the remark were made, "It seems plain from this that Christ is coming to the earth again, and that on his return, he will set aside all existing rule upon the earth and reign personally in Jerusalem, as universal king,"—what would he say? It is not a matter of surmise. The answer is supplied by thousands of cases of actual experience. "Oh! no such thing!" is the instant response; "what the prophet says is spiritual in its import. Jerusalem means the church, and the coming of Christ again to reign means that the time is coming when he will be supreme in the hearts and affections of men."

This is the method of treating the words of Scripture to which we have referred. It cannot be justified on the plea that the Bible directs us so to understand its words. There are, in fact, no formal instructions on the subject. The Bible comes before us to tell us certain things, and it performs its office in a direct and sensible way, going at once to its work without any scholastic preliminaries, taking it for granted that certain words represent certain ideas, and using those words in their current significance. The best evidence of this is to be found in the correspondence between its terms, literally understood and the events they relate to. The events which form the burden of them are fortunately, in hundreds of cases, open to universal knowledge in such a way that there can be no mistake about them, and themselves supply an accessible easily-applied and recognisable standard for determining the bearing of Scripture statements.

Take a prophecy:—

> "I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours, and *I will bring the land into desolation*; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it, and *I will scatter you among the heathen*, and will draw out a sword after you; and *your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste*" (Lev. 26:31–33). "And thou shalt become *an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee*" (Deut. 28:37).

There is no dispute about the mode in which this has been fulfilled. The sublimest spiritualisticism is bound to recognise the fact that the subject of these words is the literal nation of Israel and their land, and that in fulfilment of the prediction they contain, the *real* Israel were driven from their *real, literal* land, which became *really* and *literally* desolate, as it is this day, and that Israel has become a *literal* byword and a reproach throughout the earth. This being so, on what principle are we to reject a literal construction of the following?—

> "I will take the children of Israel *from among the heathen, whither they shall 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).

It is usual, with this and other similar predictions of a future restoration of Israel and their reinstatement as a great people under the Messiah, to contend that they mean the future glory and extension of the Church. That such an understanding of them can be maintained in the face of the fulfilled prophecies of Israel's calamities will not be contended for by the reflecting mind.

Take another instance:—

> "But thou, *Bethlehem Ephratah*, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of *thee* shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel" (Micah 5:2).

How was this fulfilled? Turn to Matthew 2, 1:—

> "Now Jesus was born in *Bethlehem of Judea*, in the days of Herod the King."

The fulfilment of the prophecy was in exact accordance with a literal understanding of the words employed, as every one is aware.

In Zechariah, chap. 9:9, we read:—

> "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation, lowly, and *riding upon an ass*, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass."

It is difficult to conjecture what the spiritualistic method of interpretation would have made of this as a still unfulfilled prophecy. That it would have expected the Messiah to condescend so far as to ride on the literal creature mentioned in the prophecy, is highly improbable in view of the surprised incredulity with which the idea is received that Christ will sit upon a real throne, and be personally present on earth during the coming age. All conjecture is excluded by the fulfilment of the prophecy in a way that compels a literal interpretation.

> Matt. 21:1–7—"Jesus sent two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find *an ass* tied, and a colt with her; loose them and bring them unto me … And the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them, and *brought the ass and the colt*, and put on them their clothes, and they *set him thereon*. ALL THIS WAS DONE THAT IT MIGHT BE FULFILLED WHICH WAS SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET, SAYING, ETC.

The event that fulfilled the prophecy was the event spoken of in the prophecy. So it is with all fulfilled prophecies. They came to pass exactly as the terms of the prediction, plainly and literally understood, would have led us to expect; that is, a certain thing was plainly predicted, and that thing came to pass. Is not this a rule for the understanding of unfulfilled prophecy?

But, it will be asked, is there no such thing as figure in the Scriptures? Is there no such thing as predicting events in language that will not bear a literal construction, such as describing the Messiah as "a stone," "a branch," "a shepherd," etc.? True, but this does not interfere with the literal understanding of prophecy. It is a separate element in the case coexisting with the other without destroying it. Metaphor is one thing; literal speech is another. Both have their functions, and each is so distinct from the other, that ordinary discrimination can recognise and separate them, though mixed in the same sentence. This will be evident on a little reflection.

We use metaphor in common speech without causing obscurity. We are never at a loss to perceive the metaphor when it is employed, and to understand its meaning. We never fall into the mistake of confounding the metaphorical with the literal. The difference between them is too obvious for that. When we talk of tyrants "*trampling the rights* of their subjects *under their feet*," we mix the literal with high metaphor; but no one is in danger of supposing that rights are literal substances that can be crushed to pieces under the mechanical action of the feet. When we say, "he carries a *high* head," we do not mean a height that can be measured by the pocket rule; "a *black* look out" has nothing to do with colour; "*hard* times" cannot be broken with a hammer; so with "over *head and ears* in love," "heart *melting*," "corn *dull*," "beans *heavy*," "Oats *brisk*," etc. They are well-understood metaphors, beyond the danger of misconstruction; but suppose we say, "The Polish nationality is to be restored." "A new kingdom has just been established in the interior of western Africa," etc., we use a style of

language in which there is no metaphor. We speak plainly of literal things, and instinctively understand them in a literal sense.

Now with regard to the Bible, it will be found that in the main, this is the character of its composition. As a revelation to human beings, it is a revelation in *human language*. It is not a revelation of words but of *ideas*, and hence everything in its language is subordinated to the purpose of imparting the ideas. The peculiarities of human speech are conformed to in the various particulars already mentioned.

Metaphors, for example, find illustration in the following:—

A place of national affliction is likened to an iron furnace. Says Moses in the 4th chapter of Deuteronomy, 20th verse:—

> "The Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the *iron furnace*, even out of Egypt."

The fact that Egypt is metaphorically spoken of as an "iron furnace," does not interfere with the fact that there is a literal country of Egypt.

Nations are said to occupy a position *high* or *low*, according to their political state. Thus in Deuteronomy 28:13, Moses says to Israel:—

> "The Lord shall make thee the *head* and not the *tail*: and thou shalt be *above* only, and thou shalt not be *beneath*."

So Jesus says of Capernaum (Matt. 11:23):—

> "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted *unto heaven*, shalt be brought *down to hell*."

And Jeremiah, lamenting the prostration of Judah, says (Lam. 2:1):—

> "How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down *from heaven unto the earth* the beauty of Israel."

Then nations are likened to rivers and waters. In Isaiah 8:7, we read:—

> "The Lord bringeth up upon them *the waters of the river*, strong and many, even the King of Assyria, and all his glory."

And hence, in referring to the constant devastations to which Israel's land has been subject at the hands of invading armies, the words of the Spirit are, "Whose land the *rivers* have spoiled" (Isaiah 18:2).

Instances might be multiplied; but these are sufficient to illustrate the metaphorical element in the language of the Scriptures. Metaphor there is, without doubt; but this is a very different thing from the gratuitous and indiscriminating rule of interpretation which, by a process called "spiritualising," obliterates almost every original feature in the face of Scripture, making the word of God of none effect.

There is another style of divine communication which is neither literal nor metaphorical, but which is yet sufficiently distinctive in its character to prevent its being confounded with either; and also sufficiently definite and intelligible to admit of exact comprehension. This style is the symbolic style, which is largely employed in what may be called political prophecy. In this case, events are represented in hieroglyph. A beast is put for an empire, horns for kings, waters for people, rivers for nations, a woman for a governing city, etc.; but there is in this style no more countenance to the spiritualisation of orthodoxy than in the metaphorical. It is special in its character, can always be identified where it occurs, and is always explicable on certain rules supplied by the context. The literal is the basis; the elementary principles of divine truth are communicated literally; its recondite aspects are

elaborated and illustrated metaphorically and symbolically. The one is the step to the other. No one is able to understand the symbolical who is unacquainted with the literal; and no one can understand the literal who goes to the Scriptures with his eyes blinded by the veil which the "spiritualising" process has cast over the eyes of the people. This must be got rid of first; the literal must be recognised and studied as the alphabet of spiritual things, and the mind, established on this immovable basis, will be prepared to ascend to the comprehension of those deeper things of God which are concealed in enigmas, for the study of those who delight to search out His mind.

There remains one other important matter to be considered. Not long ago, on the occasion of an address on a kindred subject, a person in the audience put several questions. In answering them, the writer quoted from the prophets; but was stopped by the remark, "Oh, but that's in the Old Testament; we have nothing to do with that; the New Testament is our standard; the Old has passed away." Now this sentiment is a common one with many religious people. It is an erroneous idea, and has done great mischief. It has a slight basis of fact. The "first covenant" dispensation of the law, or the old constitution of Israel, has been abolished; but it is far from being true that what God communicated through the prophets has been annulled. The New Testament itself shews this clearly. As we have already seen, Paul says, "The Scriptures are *able to make thee wise unto salvation*" (II Tim. 3:15). Now it must be remembered that this could only apply to the Old Testament. When Paul made the statement, *the New Testament was not in existence*. Consider then the import of the statement—*the Scriptures of the Old Testament are able to make us* WISE UNTO SALVATION. If this be true, how can it be correct to speak of the Old Testament having been done away?

And this statement of Paul's is by no means the only one to this effect. Hear what he said before Agrippa (Acts 26:22):—

> "Having therefore obtained help of God. I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, *saying* NONE OTHER THINGS *than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come*."

Now, if, in preaching the Christian faith, he said "none other things than those which Moses and the prophets did say should come," it is obvious that Moses and the prophets must contain the subject-matter of that faith. This is undeniable. It is borne out by the interesting incident narrated in Acts 17:11, where, speaking of the inhabitants of Berea, to whom Paul preached, it says:—

> "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica; … and *searched the Scriptures daily*, whether those things were so; therefore, many of them believed."

If the Bereans were satisfied by a searching of the Old Testament, which were the only Scriptures in existence at the time of their search, that what Paul said was true, is it not evident that what he said must in some form be contained in the Old Testament? Does it not follow that the Old Testament furnishes a basis for the things spoken by Paul? That Paul's faith as a Christian laid hold of the Old Testament, is evident from what he said before Felix the Roman Governor:—

> "After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, *believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets*" (Acts 24:14).

In harmony with this individual attitude of Paul in the matter, we find that when he went to Thessalonica, he entered the synagogue, and "three sabbath days reasoned with them *out of the Scriptures*" (Acts 17:2), that is, out of Moses and the prophets, for there were no other Scriptures for him to reason out of. And when he called together the Jews at Rome, it is testified that "he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning

Jesus, *both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets*, from morning till evening" (Acts 28:23).

The same fact, that the Scriptures of the Old Testament are accessory to the teaching of Christ and his apostles, is apparent in several other statements to be found in the New Testament. Peter exhorts those to whom he wrote in his second epistle, chapter 3, verse 2, to "be mindful of the *words which were spoken before by the holy prophets*?" and in the 19th verse of the first chap. of the same epistle, he says, "We have also a more *sure word of prophecy*, WHEREUNTO YE DO WELL THAT YE TAKE HEED." Does not this settle the question? Jesus puts this statement into the mouth of Abraham in a parable (Luke 16:29, 31):—

> "They have *Moses and the prophets*; LET THEM HEAR THEM; If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

And it is recorded of him that during an interview with his disciples, after his resurrection (Luke 24:27), "Beginning *at* MOSES AND ALL THE PROPHETS, he expounded unto them *in all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself." If the Saviour himself appealed to the Old Testament in exposition of the things concerning him, and exhorted us to "hear Moses and the prophets," what further need of argument?

It is obvious that those people fall into a great mistake who suppose that Christianity is something distinct from the Old Testament. So far from Christianity being distinct from the Old Testament, it will be found that Christianity is rooted in the Old Testament. The Old Testament lays the foundation of all that is involved in the New. The New Testament is simply an appendage to the Old, valuable beyond all price, and indispensable in the most absolute sense; but in itself, apart from the Old Testament, far from being sufficient to give us that perfection of Christian knowledge which constitutes a person "wise unto salvation." The two combined form the complete revelation of God to man, vouchsafed for his spiritual renovation in the present, and his constitutional perfection in the future. Divided, they are each inefficacious to "thoroughly furnish the man of God unto all good works."

We must request the reader to suspend his judgment on this point, and refrain from thinking too harshly of an idea which, though probably opposed to his dearest accustomed sentiments, is one that is sustained by the general teaching and emphatic declaration of the word of God, as will be shown in the succeeding lectures, to which, as a whole, the conscientious dissentient is referred for an answer to his objections.

Thus we bring the subject of the present lecture to a conclusion—"The Bible: what it is, and how to interpret it." It was necessary to go into these details by way of preliminary to the investigation which shall be entered into in subsequent lectures—clearing away errors and misconceptions, and laying a distinct and sure foundation for what is to follow.

It only now remains for us to bespeak your sympathy with the subjects, and your patience with the necessarily somewhat dry and tedious process essential to their thorough treatment. It is a vital question, and worthy of all the labour which you can bestow upon it. We cannot be too particular in trying the evidence upon which our faith relies. We ought not to be content to take it second hand. We ought not in a day like this to simply accept what we have been taught at home, in the church and chapel, without ever giving it a thought whether it is right or wrong, or reckoning upon the awful consequences of error.

Never mind if others do not consider it their business to study the Bible. Remember that the majority have always been in the wrong in all ages of the world. Look not at your neighbours, think not of your friends in this matter. They are in all probability like the world in general. They lack independence, and are subservient to their worldly interest. They cannot afford to deviate from orthodox sentiment and usage, and long conformity has deadened their power to judge of the evidence. With all their church-goings and religious profession, the anxiety of the majority of people centres in the present evil world. Act for yourselves. Do as

Peter told a Jewish assembly to do in Jerusalem:—"Save yourselves from this untoward generation."

Lecture 2

HUMAN NATURE ESSENTIALLY MORTAL, AS PROVED BY "NATURE" AND REVELATION.

IN NOTHING will Christendom appear in the eyes of the Bible student further astray than in the ordinary theological view as to the nature of man. We now ask what the Bible teaches on the subject, and getting the Bible answer, we shall seek to confirm that answer by an appeal to Nature—God's other great witness. Our argument may appear to savour of infidel tendencies, but we are confident this appearance will disappear in the eyes of such as can discriminate betweeen intellectual caprice, and earnest conviction entertained for reasons that can be stated. The proposition we have to maintain (and we bespeak your earnest consideration of the evidence in support of it) will be astounding to you at first. It is *that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is an untrue doctrine*, which effectually prevents the believer of it from truly apprehending the truth concerning the work and teaching of Christ.

Consider, first, what the universal theory of the human constitution is. It is that in his proper essential being, a man is a "spiritual" immaterial, and immortal being, living in a material body composed of organs necessary for the manifestation of his invisible and indestructible inner "self" in this external and material world. This organic body is not regarded as essential to man's identity or existence. His proper self is understood to subsist in the immaterial entity or divine spark called the soul or spirit. The organs composing the body are looked upon as things which the man uses as a mechanic uses his tools—the external agencies by which the behests of "the inner man" are carried out. Mental qualities—such as reason, sentiment, disposition, etc.,—are set down as the attributes of the spiritual "essence" which is supposed to constitute himself. The body is, of course, admitted to have a material derivation "from the dust of the ground," but the "essence" is believed to have come from God Himself—to be, in fact, a part of the Deity—a spark, or particle, scintillated from the divine nature, having intelligent faculty and existence independently of the substantial organism with which it is associated. In accordance with this view, death is not considered to affect a man's being. It is regarded simply as a demolition of the material organism, which liberates the deathless, intangible man from the bondage of this "mortal coil," which having

"shuffled off," he wings his way to spiritual regions, for eternal happiness or misery, according to "deeds done in the body."

Now, in opposition to this view, we shall show that, according to the Scriptures man is destitute of immortality *in every sense;* that he is a creature of organised substance subsisting in the life-power of God, which he shares in common with every living thing under the sun; that he only holds this life on the short average tenure of three-score years and ten, at the end of which he gives it up to Him from whom he received it, and returns to the ground, whence he originally came, *and meanwhile ceases to exist*. Such a proposition may well be shocking to ordinary religious susceptibility; but it demands investigation. Our business is to look at the proof. Evidence is the main thing with which we have to deal, and that evidence is of two kinds as indicated—1st, the testimony of existing natural facts; and, 2nd, the declaration of the inspired word of God.

It may seem inappropriate to take natural facts at all into account, in discussing a question in which the Holy Scriptures are allowed to have authority. This impression disappears when we remember that nearly all the arguments by which the popular doctrine is supported, are derived from natural facts. We shall try to show that all the arguments upon which it is founded are fallacious—natural as well as Scriptural. However distasteful to purely sentimental minds such a process may be, it is the only one by which searching minds can be satisfied. We shall endeavour to show—1st, that the natural facts adduced in support of the immortality of the soul do not in any way constitute proof of the doctrine; and, 2nd, that certain natural facts exist which overturn the doctrine. Then we shall show that the testimony of Scripture is entirely inconsistent with the popular doctrine, and teaches, in fact, as one of the first principles of revealed truth, that man is mortal because of sin.

The first argument usually employed by those who set themselves philosophically to demonstrate the doctrine, is like this. They say that matter cannot think, and that as man thinks there must be an immaterial essence in him that performs the thinking, and that, the essence being immaterial, it must be indestructible and, therefore, immortal. This is an old argument, and seemingly strong at first sight. Let us consider: Is it quite correct to assume that matter cannot think? Of course, it is evident that inanimate substances, such as wood, iron, are incapable of thought; but is substance in every form and condition incapable of evolving mental power? To assert this would require the asserter to be able in the first place to define where the empire of what is called "matter" ends, and to prove that he was familiar with every part of this empire. What are the boundaries dividing that department of nature styled "matter," from which the old metaphysicians have distinguished as "mind"? Earth, stones, iron and wood would come into the category of matter without a question, but what about smoke? It may be replied that smoke is matter in diffusion: well, what about light and heat? Light and heat can hardly be brought within any of the ordinary definitions of matter, and yet they manifestly have a most intimate relation to matter in its most tangible form. Nothing can exceed light in its subtlety and imponderability. Is it within or without the empire of matter? It would puzzle the methodical metaphysician to say. And if perplexed with light what would he do with electricity, a power more uncontrollable than any force in nature—a principle existing in everything, yet impalpable to the senses except in its effects—invisible, immaterial, omnipotent in its operations, and essential to the very existence of every form of matter? Is this part of the "matter" from which the argument in question excludes the possibility of mental phenomena? If so, what is that which is not matter? Some say "spirit" is not matter. In truth, *it may be found that spirit is the highest form of matter*. Certainly "spirit" as exhibited to us in the Scriptures possesses material power. The Spirit came upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, "like a mighty rushing wind," and made the place where they were assembled shake, showing it to be capable of mechanical momentum.

Coming upon Samson, it energised his muscles to the snapping of ropes, like thread (Judges 15:14); and inhaled by the nostrils of man and beast, it gives physical life (Psalm 104:30).

It is evident that there would be great difficulty in arriving at such a definition of "matter" as would sustain the argument under consideration. It is, in fact, only an arbitrary and, in modern times, discredited system of thought that has created the distinctions implied in the terms of metaphysics. Nature, that is universal existence, is one; it is the incorporation of one primitive power; it is not made up of two antagonistic and incompatible elements. God is the source of all. In Him everything exists; out of Him everything is evolved. Different elements and substances are but different forms of the same eternal essence or first cause—described in the Bible as "spirit," which God is; and in scientific language, by a diversity of superficial terms. The word "matter" only describes an *aspect* of creation, as presented to finite sense; it does not touch the essence of the thing, though intended so to do by the short-sighted, because unexperimental and unobservant, system which invented it.

But if difficult to fix the limits of unsentient matter, there is another difficulty which is equally fatal to the argument, viz., the difficulty of defining the process which is expressed by the word "think." It would be necessary to define this process before it would be legitimate to argue that every form of matter is incapable of it; for unless defined, how could we say when and where it was possible or not possible. To say that matter cannot think is virtually to allege that the nature of thought is so and so, and the nature of matter so and so, in consequence of which they have no mutual relation. We have seen the impossibility of taking this ground with regard to "matter." Who shall define the *modus operandi* of thought? It can only be done in general terms which destroy the argument now under review. Thought, in so far as it relates to human experience, is a power developed by brain organisation, and consists of impressions made upon that delicate organ through the medium of the senses, and afterwards classified and arranged by that function pertaining in different degrees to brain in human form, known as reason. This is matter of experience. It cannot be set aside as a fact, whatever reservation may be entertained as to the explanation of the fact. It is a fact that destroys the metaphysical argument, since it shows us what the argument denies, viz., that the matter of the brain electrically energised is capable of evolving thought.

The whole argument in question is based on a fallacy. It assumes a knowledge of "nature's" capabilities impossible to man. Chemists can tell the number and proportion of elementary gases which enter into any compound; but who understands the essential nature of any one of those elements separately? The more truly learned great minds become, the more diffident do they grow on this subject. They hesitate to be certain about almost anything in which the secrets of nature are involved. The progress of biological investigation during the last century is eloquent on this subject. None but the ignorant or the superficial would be so unwise as to draw the line fixing the limit of the possible. What is nature? The sphere of omnipotence—the arena of God's operations. Shall we say that anything is impossible with God? True, inanimate matter, such as iron or stone, cannot think; but we know, experimentally, that there is such a thing as "living matter," and that living matter is sentient, and thinking by virtue of its organisation, which is only another phrase for its divine endowment. This is a matter of experience, illustrated in degree in every department of the animal kingdom.

It is argued that the possession of "reason" is evidence of the existence of an immortal and immaterial soul in man. The logic of this argument is difficult of discovery. Reason is unquestionably a wonderful attribute and an incomprehensible function of the mental machinery; but how can it be held to prove the existence of a something beyond knowledge, since there can be no known connection between that which is incomprehensible and that which is unknown? To say that we have an indestructible soul, because we have reasonable faculty, is to repeat the mistake of our forefathers of the last generation, who referred the

achievements of machinery to Satanic agency, because in their ignorance they were unable to account for them in any other way. We may not be able to understand how it is that reason is evolved by the organisation with which God has endowed us, but we are compelled to recognise the self-evident fact that it is so evolved.

Again, it is argued that the power of the mind to "travel," while the body remains quiescent, is proof of its immaterial and, therefore, immortal nature. Let us see. What is this "travelling" of the mind? Does the mind traverse actual space and witness realities? A man has been-in America, has seen many sights, and returns home; occasionally he sees those sights over again; the impressions made on the sensorium of the brain through the organs of sight and hearing, while in America, are revived so distinctly that he can actually fancy himself in the place he has left so many thousands of miles behind. Surely no one will contend that each time this reverie comes upon him, his mind actually goes out of his body, and transfers itself to the place thought of! If this is contended, it ought also to be allowed that the man, when so spiritually transferred, should witness *what is actually transpiring in the country at the time of his spiritual presence*, and that, therefore, we might dispense with the post and telegraph as clumsy contrivances for getting the news compared with the facility and despatch of soulography. But this will not be contended. As well might we say that the places and persons we see in our dreams have a real existence. In both cases, the phenomenon is the result of a process that takes place *within the brain*. Memory treasures impressions received, and reproduces them as occasion occurs—clear, calm and coherent, if the brain be in a healthy condition; confused, disjointed, and aberrated, if the brain be disordered, whether in sleep or out of it. In no case does reverie involve an actual *transit* of the mind from one place to another; and hence the "travelling" argument falls to the ground. If a man could go to China, while his body remained in Britain, and see the country and people *as they really are*, there might be something worthy of consideration, though even then it would not prove the immortality of the soul, but only the wonderful power of the brain while a living instrument, in acting at long distances through an electrical atmosphere.

The power of dreaming is cited as another fact favourable to the popular doctrine; but here again the argument fails; because *dreaming is invariably connected with the living brain*. Beside, who ever dreams a sensible dream? Dreams, in general, are a confused and illogical jumble of facts which have at one time or other been stowed away in the storehouse of the brain; and if they prove anything concerning a thinking spirit, independent of the body, they prove that that spirit loses its power in exact proportion to its separation from the assistance of the body; and that, therefore, without the body it would presumably be powerless.

It is next contended that the immateriality of man's nature is proved by the fact that though he may be deprived of a limb, he retains a consciousness of that limb, sometimes even feeling pain in it. The argument is, that if the man is conscious of a *part* of himself when the material organ of that part is wanting, he will be conscious of his entire being when the whole body is wanting. This looks plausible: but let us examine it. Why is a man conscious of an absent member? Because *the independent nerves of that member remain in the system from the point of disseverment up to their place in the brain;* so that although the hand or foot may be absent, the brain goes on to feel as if they were present, because the nerves that produce the sensation of their presence are still active at the brain centre. But if, when you cut off a leg, you could also remove the entire nerves of the leg from the point of amputation up to their roots in the brain, and still preserve a consciousness of the severed member, the argument would be deserving of consideration.

The most powerful natural argument in favour of the popular doctrine has yet to be noticed. It is the one mainly relied upon by all its great advocates. It is this: It is an ascertained fact in physiology that the substance of our bodies undergoes an entire change every seven years—that is, there is a gradual process of substitution going on, by which the

atoms, one after another, are expelled from the body as their vital qualities are worn out, and their place filled up by new ones from the blood; so that at the end of the period mentioned, the body is made up of entirely new substance. Yet, notwithstanding this constant mutation of the material atoms of the body, and this periodical change of its entire substance, memory and personal identity remain unaffected to the close of life. An old man at eighty feels he is the same person he was at ten, although at eighty he has not a single particle of the matter which composed his body when a boy, and the argument is that the thinking faculty and power of consciousness must be the attribute of some immaterial principle residing in the body, but undergoing no change. Now this has all the appearance of conclusiveness. However, let us look at it narrowly. The question to be considered is—whether this fact of continuous identity amid atomic change, can be explained in accordance with the view which regards the mind as a property of living brain substance. The question is answered by this well-known fact, that *the qualities resulting from any organic combination of atoms are transmissible to other atoms which may take their place as organic constituents*. An atom as it exists in food has no power of sensation; but let it be assimilated by the blood and incorporated with any of the nerves, and it possesses a sensitive power it formerly did not have. It becomes part of the organisation, and *feels* whether in man or animal. Why? Because it takes up and perpetuates the organic qualities which its predecessor has left behind. On this principle, we find that the mark of a scar will be continued in the flesh through life; and so also with discolourations of the skin, which exist in some persons from congenital causes. This perpetuation of physical disfigurement could not take place if it were not for the fact of the transmissibility of corporate qualities to migratory corporate constituents. Now, if we apply this principle to the brain, we have a complete solution of the apparent difficulty on which the argument of the question is founded. *Mind is the result of impressions on the living brain, and personal identity of the sum of those impressions*. This definition may be scouted, but it will quietly commend itself to honest reflection. It will not be questioned by the student of human nature, though it may not be understood. Mental impression is a fact, though a mystery, alike in men and animals; and facts are the things that wise men have to deal with. It is impossible to explain, or even to comprehend, the process by which thought is begotten in the tissues of the brain; but that the process takes place will not be denied. We are conscious of the process, and feel the result in the possession of separate individuality—the power of contemplating all other persons and things objectively. Now, in order to perpetuate this result, all that is necessary is to preserve the integrity of the organ evolving it. This, of course, involves the introduction of fresh material into its structure, but it does not imply an invasion of the process going on in it, which the argument in question supposes; the process conquers the material, and converts it to its own uses, and not the material the process. Who ever heard of a man's bone turning to wheat from the eating of flour? The nutritive apparatus *assimilates*, which is in fact the answer to the argument. The new material entering the brain is *assimilated* to its existing condition; and thus, although the atoms come and go for a lifetime, the condition remains substantially unaltered, like a fire kept up by fuel. If, then, we are asked how a man at eighty feels himself to be the same person that he was at ten, though his entire substance is changed, we reply, those brain impressions which enable him to feel that he is himself, have been kept up all along, though modified by the circumstances and conditions through which he has passed. The process of change is so slow that the new atoms take on the organic qualities of the old, as they are gradually incorporated with the brain, and sustain the general result of the brain's action in preserving its continuous function unimpaired. If cases could be cited in which identity survived the *destruction of the brain*, the case would stand differently; but as a fact, it is only to be found in connection with a *perpetuated brain organisation*.

These are the main "natural" arguments relied upon for proof of the current theological conception of the immortality of the soul. It will be observed that none of them is really logical. Each of them falls through when thoroughly looked into. The natural argument on the other side of the question will be found to stand in a very different position. At the very outset we are confronted with the difficulty of conceiving how immateriality can inhere in a material organisation. Cohesion and conglomeration require affinity as their first condition, but, in this case, affinity is entirely wanting. What connection can exist between "matter" and the *immaterial* principle of popular belief? They are not in the nature of things susceptible of combination. Yet in the face of this difficulty, we find that the mind is located *in the body*. It is not a loose ethereal thing, capable of detachment from the material person. It is inexorably fixed in the bodily framework, and never leaves it while life continues. If we enquire in what portion of the body it is specially located, we instinctively answer that it is not located in the hand, nor in the foot, nor in the stomach, nor in the heart, nor in any part of the trunk. Our consciousness unerringly tells us that it is in the head. We feel, as a matter of experience, whatever our theory may be, that the mind cohabits with the substance of the brain.

Extending our observation externally, we never discover mind without a corresponding development of brain. Deficient brain is always found to manifest deficient reason, and *vice versa*. Master minds in science and literature have larger and deeply convoluted cerebrums. If the popular theory were correct, mind ought to be exhibited independently of either quantity or quality of organisation.

Again, if the mind were immaterial, its functions would be unaffected by the conditions of the body. Thinking and feeling would never abate in vigour or vivacity. We should always be serene and clear-headed—always ready for the "study," whatever might be the state of the bodily machinery; whereas we know that the opposite is the case. Sickness or overwork will exhaust the mental energies, and make the mind a blank. Languor and dullness of spirits are of common experience. We can all testify to days of *ennui*, in which the mind has refused to perform its office; and we can remember, too, the uneasy pillow when horrible visions have scared us. This never happens in a good state of health, but always when the material organisation is out of order. How is this? Does it not tell against the theory which represents the mind as an immaterial, incorruptible, imperishable thing? The mind is the offspring of the brain, and is therefore affected by all its passing disorders.

Let us carry the process further. Let the brain be injured, and we then perceive a most signal refutation of the popular idea; *the mind vanishes altogether*. The following extract illustrates:—

> RICHMOND mentions the case of a woman whose brain was exposed in consequence of the removal of a considerable part of its bony covering by disease. He says, "I repeatedly made a pressure on the brain, and each time *suspended all feeling and all intellect*, which were immediately restored when the pressure was withdrawn". The same writer mentions another case. He says, "There was a man who had to be trepanned, and who perceived his intellectual faculties failing, and his existence drawing to a close, every time the effused blood collected upon the brain so as to produce pressure".
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> PROF. CHAPMAN, in one of his letters, says, "I saw an individual with his skull perforated and the brain exposed, who was accustomed to submit his brain to be experimented upon by pressure, and who was exhibited by the late Prof. Weston to his class. *His intellect and moral faculties disappeared on the application of pressure to the brain*. They were held under the thumb, as it were, and restored at pleasure to their full activity by discontinuing the pressure".
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> But of all facts, the following related by SIR ASTLEY COOPER, in his surgical lectures, is the most remarkable: "A man of the name of Jones received an injury on his head while on board a vessel in the Mediterranean, which rendered him insensible. The vessel soon after made for Gibraltar, where Jones was placed in the hospital, and remained several months in the same insensible state. He was carried on board the *Dolphin* frigate to Deptford, and from

> thence was sent to St. Thomas's Hospital, London. He lay constantly on his back, and breathed with difficulty. When hungry or thirsty he moved his lips or tongue. Mr. Clyne, the surgeon, found a portion of the skull depressed, trepanned him, and removed the depressed portion. Immediately after this operation, the motion of his fingers, occasioned by the beating of the pulse, ceased, and in three hours he sat up in bed, sensation and volition returned, and in four days he got up out of his bed and conversed. The last thing he remembered was the occurrence of taking a prize in the Mediterranean. *From the moment of the accident, thirteen months and a few days before, oblivion had come over him, all recollection ceased*. Yet, on removing a small portion of bone which pressed upon the brain, he was restored to the full possession of the powers of his mind and body".

These cases are not in accordance with the popular theory of the mind. Here is *suspension of mental action on the derangement of the material organisation*. Obviously, the mind is not the attribute of a principle existing independently of that organisation. The facts show that thinking is dependent upon the action of the brain, and cannot, therefore, be the action of an immaterial principle, which could never be affected by any material condition.

There are other difficulties. If the mind be a spark from God—if it be a part of the Deity himself, transfused into material organisations (and this is the view contended for by believers in the immortality of the soul) our faculties ought to spring forth in full maturity at birth. Instead of that, as everybody knows, a newborn babe has not a spark of intellect or a glimmer of consciousness. According to the popular belief, it ought to possess both in full measure, because of the immaterial thinking principle. No one can carry his memory back to his birth. He can remember when he was three years old, perhaps; only in a few cases can he recall an earlier date. Yet, if the popular belief were correct, *memory ought to be contemporaneous with life from its very first moment*.

Again; if all men partake alike of this divine thinking essence, they ought to manifest the same degree of intelligence, and show the same disposition. Instead of that, there is infinite diversity among men. One man is shrewd and another dull—one vicious and depraved, and another high-souled and virtuous—one good and gentle, another harsh and inconsiderate, and so on. There ought to be uniformity of manifestation if there be uniformity of power.

These are so many natural obstacles in the way of the doctrine which constitutes the very foundation of all popular religion. They disprove that man is an immaterial entity, capable of disembodied existence. They show him to be a compound—*a creature of material organisation*—endowed with life from God, and ennobled with qualities which constitute him "the image of God"; but nevertheless mortal in constitution. Why so much opposition? All natural evidence is in its favour. If there are mysteries in it, there is nonetheless obviousness. Mystery is no ground of disbelief. This is shown by the universal belief in the immortality of the soul. Surely this is "mysterious" enough. If it comes to that, we are surrounded with mystery. We can only approximate to truth; the how of any organic process is beyond comprehension; we can but note facts, and bow in the presence of undeniable phenomena. Though we are unable to understand the mode in which nerve communicates sensation, muscles generate strength, blood supplies life, etc., we cannot deny that these agencies are the proximate causes of the results developed, whether in man or animals. Why should there be an exception in the case of thought? What we know of it, is all connected with physical organisation. We have no experience of human mind apart from human brain. In fact, we have no experience of any human faculty apart from its material manifestation; and in ordinary sensible thinking, the various living powers of man are practically acknowledged to be the properties of the numerous organs which collectively compose himself. If he sees, it is recognised as the function of the eye to see; if he hears, that it is with the ear, and that without these organs, he can neither see nor hear. In proportion as these organs are perfectly formed, there is perfect sight or hearing. Why should this principle not

be applied to the mind? The parallel is complete. Man thinks, and he has a brain to think with; and in proportion as the brain is properly organised and developed, he thinks well. If it be large, there is power and scope of mind; if small, there is mediocrity; if below par, there is intellectual deficiency, and idiocy. These are facts apart from theory of any kind; and they prove the connection of mind with living brain substance, however mysterious that connection may be. Some say "No" to all this; "the brain is simply the medium of the soul's manifestation: deficiency of intellect and other mental irregularities are the result of imperfection in the mediumship;" but this begs the question. *It assumes the very point at issue*, viz., the existence of a thinking abstraction to manifest itself. But even supposing we accept the explanation, what does it avail for popular theory? If the soul cannot manifest itself—cannot reason, cannot reflect, be conscious, love, hate, etc.—without a material "medium," what is its value as a thinking agent when without that medium; that is, when the body is in the grave? The explanation, however, cannot be accepted. It is the ingenious suggestion of a philosophy which is in straits to preserve itself from confusion. How much wiser to recognise the fact which presents itself to our actual experience, namely, that all our conscious, as well as unconscious, powers as living beings are the result of a conjunction between the life-power of God and the substance of our organisation, and do not exist apart from that connection in which they are developed.

WHAT THE SCRIPTURES SAY.

We turn now to the Scriptures, whose voice is weightier than the fallible deductions of philosophy. And what find we here? Here we find a complete agreement with the natural facts in the case. First, and most astounding fact of all (as it must appear to those who think the Bible teaches the immortality of the soul), we do not find anywhere in the Bible those common phrases by which the popular doctrine is expressed. "Never-dying soul," "immortal soul," "immortality of the soul," etc., so constantly on the lips of religious teachers, are forms of speech which are not to be met with throughout the whole of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation. Anyone may quickly satisfy himself on this point by reference to a concordance, if he be otherwise unacquainted with the Scriptures. How are we to explain the fact? All the essential teachings of Scripture are plain, unequivocal, and copious. The existence and creative power of God—His purposes in regard to the future—the Messiahship of Jesus Christ—the object of his mission to earth—the doctrine of the resurrection, etc., are all enforced as plainly as language can enforce them; but of the doctrine of immortality of the soul, *there is not the slightest mention*. This fact is acknowledged by eminent theologians, but does not seem to suggest to their minds the fictitiousness of the doctrine. They argue the other way, and maintain (or at least suggest) that the reason of the Bible passing over in silence the doctrine of human immortality is because it is so self-evident as to require no enunciation. This is very unsatisfactory. It would be much more appropriate to suggest the very opposite significance to the silence of the Scriptures on the subject. If the immortality of the soul is to be believed without sanction from revelation, on the mere assumption that it is self-evident, may we not uphold any doctrine for which we have a prepossession? A more rational course to pursue is surely to suspect a doctrine not divinely inculcated, and subject it to the severest scrutiny. This is the course adopted in the present lecture; and we shall find that the process will result in a complete breakdown of the doctrine. The Bible is not silent on the question, although it says nothing about the immortality of the soul. It supplies direct and conclusive evidence of the absolute mortality of man.

Some, however, may not be satisfied that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is not definitely broached in the sacred writings. Recalling to mind the constant use of the word "soul," they may be disposed to consider that it is countenanced and endorsed in such a way

as to render formal enunciation superfluous. For the benefit of such, it will be well to look at the use made of the word in the Scriptures, in order to see its meaning. First, let it be remembered that in its original derivation the word "soul" simply means a breathing creature, without any reference to its constitution, or the duration of existence. This fact is strikingly illustrated in the renderings adopted by our translators in the first few chapters of Genesis. As applied to Adam, it is translated soul (Gen. 2:7); as applied to beasts, birds, reptiles, and fish, it is rendered "creature" and "thing" (Gen. 1:20, 21, 24, 28). The word is employed to express various ideas arising out of respiring existence as its fundamental significance. It is put for persons in the following:—

> "And Abram took … *the souls that* they had gotten in Haran, and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan;" that is, Abraham took all the persons, etc. (Gen. 12:5).

It is applied to animals in this:—

> "Levy a tribute unto the Lord of the men of war which went out to battle, *one soul* of five hundred, both of the persons, and of the *beeves*, and of the *asses*, and of the *sheep*" (Num. 31:28).

It is also used to represent mind, disposition, life, etc.; and that which it describes is spoken of as capable of hunger (Prov. 19:15), of being satisfied with food (Lam. 1:11, 19), of touching a material object (Lev. 5:2), of going into the grave (Job 33:22, 28), of coming out of it (Psalm 30:3), etc. It is never spoken of as an immaterial, immortal, thinking entity. The original word occurs in the Old Testament about 700 times, and in the New Testament about 180 times; and among all the variety of its renderings, it is impossible to discover anything approaching to the popular dogma. It is rendered "soul" 530 times; "life" or "living" 190 times; "person" 34 times; and "beasts and creeping things" 28 times. It is also rendered "a man," "a person," "self," "they," "we," "him," "anyone," "breath," "heart," "mind," "appetite," "the body," etc. In no instance has it the significance claimed for it by professing Christians of modern times. It is never said to be immortal, but always the reverse. It is not only represented as capable of death, but as naturally liable to it. We find the Psalmist declaring in Psalm 22:29, "None can keep alive *his own soul*; " and again, in Psalm 89:48, "What man is he that liveth and shall not see death? *Shall he deliver* HIS SOUL *from the hand of the grave*?" And in making an historical reference, he further says, "He spared not THEIR SOUL from DEATH, but gave their life over to the pestilence" (Psalm 78:50). Finally, Ezekiel declares (chap. 18:4), "The soul that sinneth IT SHALL DIE."

We have to note another difference between scriptural and modern sentiment. We are all familiar with the estimate put upon the value of the supposed immortal soul. We frequently hear it exclaimed, "Oh! the value of one human soul! Countless worlds cannot be placed in the balance with it!" Now we meet with nothing of this sort in the Scriptures. The sentiment there is entirely the contrary way. Take for instance this:—

> "WHAT IS YOUR LIFE? *It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away*" (James 4:14).

Or, Psalm 144:3, 4:—

> "Lord, what is man that Thou takest knowledge of him, and the son of man that Thou makest account of him? *Man is like to vanity; his days are as a shadow that passeth away*."

Or, Psalm 103:14–16:—

"He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust. *As for man, his days are as grass*; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more."

And more expressive than all, we read in Isaiah 40:15–17—

"Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance … *All nations before him are* AS NOTHING, and are counted to him LESS THAN NOTHING, and vanity."

And in Daniel 4:35:—

"*All the inhabitants of the earth* ARE REPUTED AS NOTHING."

There is only one passage that looks a little different from this. It is this:—

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:36, 37).

This is frequently quoted in justification of the popular sentiment; but it will at once be observed that the words do not describe, the absolute value of a man's life in creation, but simply its relative value to himself. They enforce the commonsense principle that for a man to sacrifice his life in order to obtain a thing which without life he can neither possess nor enjoy, would be to perpetrate the lightest folly. Does any one insist that it means the "immortal soul" of common belief? Then let him remember that the same word which is translated "soul" in this passage is translated "life" in the one immediately before in which if we were to read it "immortal soul" the absurdity would at once appear:—

"For whosoever will save his immortal soul *shall lose it*, but whosoever shall LOSE HIS IMMORTAL SOUL for my sake and the gospel's *the same shall save it*" (Mark 8:35).

What an awful paradox would this express in orthodox mouths. But regard the words in the light in which we have already seen the Scriptures use it, and you perceive beauty in the idea—preciousness in the promise. He who shrinks not from sacrificing his life in this age, rather than deny Christ and forsake his truth, will be rewarded with a more precious life at the resurrection: whereas he who renounces the truth to protect his poor mortal interests, will be excluded from the blessings of the life to come.

We get to the root of the matter in Genesis, where we are furnished with an account of the creation of man. Here the phraseology is not at all in agreement with the popular view, but entirely coincides with the view advocated in this lecture:—

"And 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).

Here we are informed that man was made from the ground, and that *that which seas produced from the ground* was the being called MAN. "But," says an objector, "that only means his body." It is possible to say that it *means* anything we may fancy. A statement of this kind is worth nothing. There is nothing in the passage before us, nor anything else in the Scriptures, to indicate the popular distinction between *a man* and his body. The substantial organisation is here called *man*. True, he was without life before the inspiration of the breath of life, yet he was *man*. The life was something super-added to give man living existence. The life was not the man; it was the principle; it was something outside of him, proceeding from a divine source, and infusing itself into the wonderful mechanism prepared for its reception. "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and MAN BECAME *a living soul*." This is frequently quoted in proof of the common doctrine—or rather, *mis*-quoted, for it is

generally given "and *breathed* INTO HIM a living soul"; but it really establishes the contrary. What became a "living soul"? The *dust-formed being*. If, therefore, the use of the phrase "became a living soul," prove the immortality and immateriality of any part of man's nature, it carries the proof to the body, for it was that which became a "living soul." But, of course, this would be absurd. The idea expressed in the passage before us is simple and rational, viz., that the previously inanimate being became a living being when vitalised, but not necessarily immortal, for, though a living soul, it is not said that he became an "everliving" or "never-dying" soul, though doubtless he would have lived had not sin brought death.

But, whatever Adam may have been as originally constituted, the decree went forth that he should cease to be—that he should return to the state of nothingness from which he had been developed by creative power: that he should die: and this constitutes the greatest disproof that could be brought forward of man's immortality in any sense. It was said to Adam that in the day he ate of the forbidden tree, he should "surely DIE" (Gen, 2:17). If there could be any doubt as to the meaning of this, it is set at rest by the terms of the sentence passed upon him when he disobeyed.

> "Because thou hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it … in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till THOU *return unto the ground; for out of it wast* THOU *taken;* for dust THOU *art, and unto dust shalt thou return*" (Gen. 3:17–19).

To say that this sentence merely relates to the body and does not affect the being, is to play with words. The personality expressed in the pronoun "thou" is here distinctly affirmed of the physical organisation. "THOU *art dust*." What could be more emphatic? "THOU *shalt return to the dust*." This, of course, is utterly inapplicable to the intangible principle which is supposed to constitute the soul, and refers exclusively to man's material nature.

Longfellow's view of the matter is that:—

> "Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
> *Was not spoken of the soul*."

Ergo, it conclusively decides *that* to be a man's constituent personality which undergoes physical dissolution, or, at any rate, the indispensable basis of it. Abraham expresses this view:—

> "Behold now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, *which am but dust and ashes*" (Gen. 18:27).

This is Abraham's estimate of himself; some of his modern friends would have corrected him. "Father Abraham, you are mistaken; You are not dust and ashes; it is only your body." Abraham's unsophisticated view, however, is more reliable than "the (philosophical) wisdom of this world," which Paul pronounces to be "foolishness with God" (I Cor. 3:19).

Paul keeps company with Abraham: "I know that in me (*that is, in my flesh*) dwelleth no good thing" (Romans 7:18), and tells us in general to "Beware of philosophy and vain deceit," which are specially to be guarded against on this question.

James (chap. 1:9, 10) adds to this testimony:—

> "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; but the rich in that he is made low: because *as the flower of the grass he shall pass away*."

Which is something like a reiteration of Job's words (chap. 14:1, 2):—

> "Man that is born of woman *is of few days* and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not."

Then comes the words of Solomon, the wisest of all men:—

> "I said (or wished) in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that *they themselves are beasts*; for that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; *as* the one dieth *so* dieth the other; *yea, they have all one breath;* SO THAT A MAN HATH NO PRE-EMINENCE ABOVE A BEAST; for all is vanity. *All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again*" (Eccles. 3:18–20).

The hasty believer in the popular doctrine gets impatient with this statement: *"No pre-eminence above a beast."* At first, he imagines it proceeds from a less authoritative pen than Solomon's; he stigmatises it as detestable; but there it stands, in unmistakable emphasis, as a sweeping condemnation in the very Bible itself, of the flattering dogma which exalts human nature to equality with Deity.

Thus do the Scriptures combine with nature in pronouncing man to be a creature of frailty and mortality, who, though bearing the image of God, and towering far above all other creatures in his intellectual might, and in the grandeur of his moral nature, and in his racial relation to futurity, is yet labouring under a curse which hastens him to an appointed end in the grave.

It is of the highest importance that this truth should be recognised. It is impossible to discern the scheme of Bible truth while holding fundamental error on the nature of man. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul will be found to be the great error of the age—the mighty delusion which overspreads all people like a veil—the great obstruction to the progress of true Christianity! This will be manifest to the reader of the succeeding lectures. Words truly fail to describe the mischief the doctrine has done. It has rendered the Bible unintelligible, and promoted unbelief by making the Bible responsible for a doctrine with which its historic and moral features are inconsistent. It has taken away the vitality of religion by destroying its meaning, and investing the subject with a mystery that does not belong to it. It has robbed it of its vigour, and reduced it to an effeminate thing, disowned and unpractised by men of robust mind, and heeded only by the sentimental and romantic. Fling it to the moles and to the bats, and humbly accept the evidence of fact, and the testimony of God's infallible word.

Lecture 3

THE DEAD UNCONSCIOUS TILL THE RESURRECTION, AND CONSEQUENT

ERROR OF POPULAR BELIEF IN HEAVEN AND HELL

IF CHRISTENDOM is astray on the nature of man, it naturally follows that it is astray on the state of the dead, its theory of which occupies so large a place in the theology of the day. We now look at this subject in the light of facts and the testimony of Scripture.

Death is the greatest fact in human experience, considered in its relation to the individual. Its occurrence is universal and inevitable: its gloomy shadow, sooner or later, darkens every house. Who has not felt its iron hand? Who has not beheld the loved one chilled and stiffened by its desolating blast? The blooming child with all its prattling innocence and winning ways: the companion of youth, rosy, and healthful, and gay; the cherished wife, the devoted husband, the tried and trusty friend; which of them has not been torn from our side by the terrible hand of this ruthless and indiscriminating enemy? One day we have seen them with bright eye, beaming countenance, supple frame, and have heard the words of friendship and intelligence drop from their living lips; the next we look upon them stretched on the bier—still, cold, motionless, ghastly, dead!

What shall we say to these things? Death brings grief to the living. It overwhelms them with a sorrow that refuses consolation. It is not for ourselves that we mourn; news of life would bring gladness, even if friends were far distant, and intercourse impossible. No, it is for the dead our hearts are pained. Let us consider the bearing of this upon the popular theology of the day. If death be merely a change of state, and not a destruction of being, why all this heartbreaking for those who have gone? It cannot be on account of the uncertainties "beyond the grave," because our grief is quite as poignant for those who are believed to have "gone to heaven," as for those about whom doubts may be entertained. Tears flow quite as fast for the good as for the bad, and, perhaps, a little faster. There is something inconsistent with the popular theory here. If our friends are really gone to "glory," we ought to feel as thankful as we do when they are promoted to honour "here below"; but we do not; and why? The evidence will justify the answer. Because *the strength of natural instinct can never be overcome by theological fiction*. Men will never *practically* believe the occurrence of death to be the commencement of life, when they see it to be the *extinction of all they ever knew or felt of life*.

If the dead are *not dead*, but "gone before"; if they are "praising God among the ransomed above," they are alive, and, therefore, they have merely changed a place of "temporal" for a place of eternal abode. They have simply shifted out of the body from earth to heaven, or to hell, as the case may be. The word "death," in its original meaning, has, therefore, no application to man. It has lost its meaning as popularly employed. It is no longer the antithesis of "life." It no longer means the *cessation of living existence* (its radical signification), but simply means a *change of habitation*. "A man die? No, impossible! He may go out of the body, but he CANNOT DIE." This is the popular sentiment—the dictum of the world's wisdom—the tenacious belief of the religious world.

We shall enquire if there is anything in the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, or in the testimony of nature to warrant this belief. And we shall find that there is not only an entire absence of warrant for it, but great evidence to show that death *invades a man's being and robs him of existence*, and that consequently in death he is as totally unconscious as though he had never lived. Let the reader suspend his judgment. He will find that the sequel will justify this answer, appalling as it may at first appear.

First, let us consider, for a moment, the primary idea expressed by the word death. It is *the opposite of life*. We know life as a matter of positive experience. The idea of death is

derived from this experience. Death is the word that describes its interruption, or negation, or stopping. Whether life is used literally or figuratively; whether it is affirmed of a creature or an institution, death is the opposite of the life so spoken of. It means the absence or departure of the life. In order, therefore, to understand death in relation to our present enquiry, we must have a definite conception of life, We cannot understand life in a metaphysical sense; but this is no bar to our investigation; for the difficulty in this sense is neither greater nor less than in the case of the animals, and in the case of the animals people profess to find no difficulty in reconciling the mystery of life with the occurrence of actual death.

Throwing metaphysics aside, we need but ask ourselves, what is life as known experimentally? It is the answer of literal truth to say that it is the aggregate result of the organic processes transpiring within the human structure—in respiration, circulation of the blood, digestion, etc. The lungs, the heart, and the stomach conspire to generate and sustain vitality, and to impart activity to the various faculties of which we are composed. Apart from this busy organism, life is unmanifested, whether as regards man or beast. Shock the brain, and insensibility ensues; take away the air, and you produce suffocation; cut off the supply of food, and starvation ensues with fatal effect. These facts, which everybody knows, prove that *life depends on the organism*. They show that human life, with its mysterious phenomena of thought and feeling, is the evolution of the complicated machinery of which we are so "fearfully and wonderfully made." That machinery, in full and harmonious action, is a sufficient explanation of the life we now live. In it and by it we exist.

Now, whatever prejudice the reader may feel against this presentation of the matter, he cannot evade recognising this, that *there was a time when we did not exist*. This important fact shows the possibility of non-existence in relation to man. The question is, shall this state of non-existence again supervene? And this is a simple question of experience, on which, alas! experience speaks but too plainly. Since human existence depends on material organic function, non-existence ensues upon the interruption of that function. By experience we know that this interruption does take place, and that man dies in consequence. Death comes to him and undoes what birth did for him. The one gave him existence; the other takes it away. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," is realised in every man's experience. In the course of nature, his being vanishes from creation, and all his qualities submerge in death for the simple reason that the organism that develops them then stops its working.

These are the facts of the case from a natural point of view. But when we look into the Scriptures it is astonishing how much stronger the case becomes. When the Scriptures speak about the death of anyone, they do not employ the phraseology of the modern religionist. They do not say of the righteous that they have "gone to their reward," or "gone to their last account," or that they have "winged their flight to a better world"; or of the wicked, that they are "gone to appear before the bar of God, to answer for their misdeeds." The language is expressive of a contrary doctrine. The death of Abraham, the father of the faithful, is thus recorded:—

> "And Abraham *gave up the ghost, trod died* in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and *was gathered to his people*" (Gen. 25:8).

So also in the case of Isaac:—

> "And Isaac *gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people*" (Gen. 35:29).

So of Jacob:—

> "And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and *yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people*" (Gen. 49:33).

Of Joseph it is simply said:—

"So Joseph *died*, being an hundred and ten years old, and they embalmed *him*, and *he* was put in a coffin in Egypt" (Gen. 50:26).

So in the case of Moses:—

"So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there, in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried *him* in a valley, in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day" (Deut. 34:5, 6).

And so we shall find it in the case of Joshua (Jos. 24:29), Samuel (I Sam. 25:1), David (I Kings 2:1, 2, 10; Acts 2:29, 34); Solomon (I Kings 11:43), and all others whose death is recorded in the Scriptures. They are never said to have gone away anywhere, but are always spoken of as dying, giving up their life, and returning to the ground. The same style of language is adopted by Paul when he speaks of the generation of the righteous dead. He says (Heb 11:13):—

"These all *died* in faith, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES, but having seen them *afar off*"

If Jesus spake of the death of Lazarus, he recognised the fact in its plainest sense (John 11:11–14):—

"He (Jesus) saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his *death*, but they thought he had spoken of taking rest in sleep. *Then said Jesus unto them plainly*, LAZARUS is DEAD."

When Luke records the death of Stephen (Acts 7:60), he does not indulge in any of the high-flown death-bed rapture so prevalent in modern religious literature. He simply says, "He fell asleep." Or when Paul has occasion to refer to deceased Christians, he does not speak of them as "standing before the throne of God!" The words he employs are in keeping with those already quoted (I Thess, 4:13):—

"I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning *them which are* ASLEEP, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope."

There are no exceptions to these cases in Bible narrative. All Bible allusion to the subject of death is as unlike modern sentiment as it is possible to conceive. The Bible speaks of death as the *ending of life*, and never as the commencement of another state. *Not once* does it tell us of a dead man having gone to heaven. Not once, except by an allowable poetical figure (Isa. 14:4) or for purposes of parable (Luke 16:19–31), are the dead represented as conscious. They are always pictured in language that accords with experience—always spoken of as in the land of darkness, and silence, and unconsciousness. Solomon says:—

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for *there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom*, IN THE GRAVE, *whither thou goest*" (Eccles. 9:10).

Job, in the anguish of accumulated calamity, cursed the day of his birth, and wished he had died when an infant; and mark what he says would have been the consequence:—

"For now should I have *lain still and been quiet; I should have slept; then had I been at rest* with kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places [tombs] for themselves; or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver, *or as an hidden untimely birth* I HAD NOT BEEN, *as infants which never saw the light*; there the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not

the voice of the oppressor; the small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master" (Job 3:13–19).

He also makes the following statement, which with the one just quoted, ought to be well considered by those who believe that babies go to heaven when they die:—

(Chapter 10:18)—"Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? O, that I had *given up the ghost*, and no eye had seen me; *I should have been* AS THOUGH I HAD NOT BEEN."

David incidentally alludes to the state of the dead in the following impressive words (Psa. 88:5, 10–12):—

"Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, *whom thou rememberest no more*; and they are cut off from Thy hand."

"Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise Thee? Shall Thy loving kindness be declared in the *grave*, or Thy faithfulness in *destruction*? Shall Thy wonders be known *in the dark*, and Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?"

These questions are answered in a short but emphatic statement, which occurs in the 115th Psalm, verse 17:—

"The DEAD praise NOT *the Lord, neither* ANY *that go down into silence*."

And the Psalmist gives pathetic expression to his own view of man's evanescent nature, in the following words, which have a direct bearing on the state of the dead:—

(Psa. 39:5, 12, 13)—"Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth, and mine age is as nothing before Thee. *Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity*.… Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not Thy peace at my tears, for I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. O, spare me, that I may recover strength, *before I go hence*, and BE NO MORE."

He says in Psalm 166:2, "*While I live* will I praise the Lord, I will sing praises unto my GOD WHILE I HAVE ANY BEING"; clearly implying that in David's view, his being would cease with the occurrence of death.

In addition to these general indications of the destructive nature of death as a *deprivation of being*, there are other statements in the Scriptures which specifically deny that the dead have any consciousness. For instance:—

"The living know that they shall die; but THE DEAD KNOW NOT ANYTHING, neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten; also their *love*, and their *hatred*, and their *envy is now* PERISHED, neither have they any more a portion for in anything that is done under the sun" (Eccles. 9:5, 6).

How often we hear the remark concerning the dead, "Ah, well! He knows all now!" What shall we say about it? If Solomon's words have any meaning, the remark is the very opposite of true. What can be more explicit? "*The dead know not anything.*" It would certainly be a wonderful feat of exegesis that should make this mean "The dead know everything." How common again, to believe that after death, the *dead* will love and serve God with greater devotion in heaven, because freed from the clog of this mortal body; or curse Him with hotter hatred in hell, for the same reason; that, in fact, their love will be perfected, and their hate intensified; in the very face of Solomon's declaration to the contrary. "Their *love* and their *hatred*, and their *envy* are now *perished*." David is equally decisive on this point. He says (Psa. 146:3, 4):—

> "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help; his breath goeth forth, *he* returneth to his earth; *in that very day* HIS THOUGHTS PERISH."

Again (Psalm 6:5):—

> "*In death* THERE IS NO REMEMBRANCE OF THEE: in the grave *who shall* give thee thanks?"

Hezekiah, king of Israel, gives similar testimony. He had been "sick, nigh unto death," and on his recovery, he indited a song of praise to God, in which he gave the following reason for thanksgiving:—

> "For the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee, *they that go down into the pit* CANNOT *hope for thy truth. The living*, THE LIVING, HE shall praise Thee as I do this day" (Isa. 38:18, 19).

This array of Scripture testimony must be conclusive with those with whom Scripture authority carries weight. If there is anything decisive in the verdict of Scripture, the state of the dead ought no longer to be a debatable question. The Bible settles it against all philosophical speculation. It teaches that death is a total eclipse of being—a complete obliteration of our conscious selves from God's universe. This will do no violence to the feelings of those who are governed by wisdom of the type inculcated in the Scriptures. Such will but bow in the presence of God's appointment, whatever it is. They would do this if the appointment were harder to receive than it is in this case. Instead of being hard to receive, it accords with our experience and our instincts. And still better, it frees all Bible doctrine from obscurity.

It establishes the doctrine of the resurrection on the firm foundation of *necessity*; for in this view, a future life is only attainable by resurrection; whereas, in the popular view, future life is a natural growth from the present, affected neither one way nor the other by the "resurrection of the body." In fact it is difficult to see any use for resurrection at all if we accept the popular idea; for if a man "goes to his reward" at death, and enjoys all the felicity of heaven of which his nature is capable, it seems incongruous that, after a certain time, he should be compelled to leave the celestial regions, and rejoin his body on earth, when without that body he is supposed to have so much more capability of enjoyment. The resurrection seems out of place in such a system; and accordingly we find that, now-a-days, many are abandoning it, and vainly trying to explain away the New Testament doctrine of physical resurrection altogether, in favour of the Swedenborgian theory of spiritual resuscitation.

We have cited many Scriptures in proof of the *reality* of death, and the consequent unconsciousness of those who are dead. Those Scriptures are not ambiguous. They are clear, plain, and intelligible. Now, suppose the positive declarations they make were propounded in the form of interrogations, to any modern religious teacher, or to any of the intelligent among his flock, would their answers be at all in harmony with those declarations? Let us see. Suppose we enquire, "Do the dead know anything"? what would the answer be? "Oh, yes, they know a great deal more than the living." Or let us ask, "When a man goes to the grave, do his thoughts perish"? The answer would instantly be, in the words of a "reverend" gentleman, in a funeral sermon, "Oh no, we rejoice to know that death, though it may close our mortal history, is not the termination of our existence—*it is not even the suspension of consciousness*." Or again, Is there any remembrance of God in death? "Oh yes, the righteous dead know Him more perfectly, and love Him more fully than they did when on earth." Do the dead praise the Lord? "Certainly; if they are redeemed; they join in the song of Moses and the Lamb before the throne." Do babies that die pass away as though they had never been born? "No! perish the thought! They go to heaven and become angels in the presence of God."

Thus, in every instance, popular belief, in reference to the dead, is exactly contrary to the explicit statements of Scripture. It is a belief entirely destitute of foundation. It is opposed to all truth—natural and revealed. In the last lecture, an endcavour was made to expose the fallacy of the "natural" arguments on which it is founded. We shall now look at a few of the Scriptural reasons that are generally put forward in its behalf. Those reasons are based upon certain passages that occur mostly in the New Testament; and of these passages it has to be remarked, to commence with, that, although they do bear on the face of them some apparent countenance to popular belief, not one of them *affirms* that belief. The evidence they are supposed to contain is *purely inferential*. That is, they make certain statements which are supposed to *imply* the doctrine sought to be proved, but they do not proclaim the doctrine itself. Now, it is important to note this general fact to commence with. It is something to know that *there is not a single promise of heaven at death in the whole Bible, and not a single declaration that man has an immortal soul; and that all the supposed evidence contained in the Bible in favour of these doctrines, is so decidedly ambiguous, as to be open to disputation as to its meaning*. It is important, because the testimony in favour of the opposite view (the one set forth in the present lecture), is so clear and explicit that it cannot be set aside without the grossest violation of the fundamental laws of the language. This consideration suggests an important principle of Scriptural interpretation, viz., that *plain testimony* ought to guide us in the understanding of what may be obscure. We ought to procure our fundamental principles from teaching that cannot be misunderstood, and harmonise all difficulties therewith. It is unwise to found a dogma on a passage, which, from its vagueness, is susceptible of two interpretations, especially if that dogma is in opposition to the unmistakable declarations of the Word of God elsewhere.

Let us for a moment apply this principle to the Scriptures cited by those who set themselves to justify the popular theory.

The first is the answer of Christ to the thief on the Cross (as set out in the Authorised Version), "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). This is thought to establish the common idea at once; but let us see. The pith of the argument turns upon the *date* of its fulfilment. Now Jesus was not in paradise in the popular sense, that day; for we find him saying to Mary after his resurrection, "Touch me not, for I AM NOT YET ASCENDED TO MY FATHER" (John 20:17). Jesus was not in heaven *during at least three days after his promise to the thief*. Where had he been? The answer is *in the grave*. Ay, but his soul, asks one, where had it been? Let Peter answer (Acts 2:31), "His soul was not left *in hell*, neither did his flesh see corruption." He, or "his soul," which is equivalent to "himself," was in the grave, or "hell" (for the words are in most cases synonymous in scriptural use, as we shall see by and by), awaiting the interference of the Father from above to deliver him from the bonds of death. The conclusion is, that Christ's promise to the thief is of no avail whatever as a proof of the heaven-going consciousness of the dead, inasmuch as it was not fulfilled in the sense in which we would require to view it before it could constitute such proof.

Has it been fulfilled at all? Let us consider the question of the thief. It was quite clear that his mind was not fixed on the idea of going to heaven. He did not say, "Lord, remember me, now that thou art about to *go* into thy kingdom," but "Lord, remember me, *when thou comest* into Thy kingdom." He had a *coming* in his eye—not a going; and he looked upon it as a *future event*, and his desire was to be remembered *when that future event should be accomplished*—"when thou comest into thy kingdom." We shall say something about this "coming" hereafter. Meanwhile it is sufficient to direct attention to the general fact, as furnishing a clue to the meaning of Christ's answer. There is good ground for the contention of those who say that Christ's answer is most properly read with the comma after "today"—"*I say unto thee today*, thou shalt be with me in paradise." But in either case, the words are devoid of the meaning attached to them by those who quote them to support the popular idea.

The account of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31) is the principal stronghold of the popular belief. It is brought forward with great confidence on every occasion on which the popular belief is assailed. A little consideration, however, will reveal its unsuitability to the purpose for which it is used. We must first realise, if we can, the nature of the passage of Scripture in question. It is either a literal narrative or a parable. If it is a literal narrative—that is, an account of things that actually happened, given by Christ as a guide to our conception of the "disembodied" state—then it is perfectly legitimate to bring it forward in confutation of the view advanced in this lecture. But in that case it would not only upset that view, but it would upset the popular view also, and establish the view that was entertained by the Pharisees, to whom the parable was addressed; for it will be found on investigation that it is the tradition of the Pharisees that forms the basis of the parable; a tradition which clashes with the popular theory of the death-state in many particulars.

Look at the incidents of the parable: see how incompatible they are with the popular theory. The rich man *lifts up his eyes*, being in torment, and *sees* Abraham *afar off*, and Lazarus in his bosom; and cries, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip *the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue."* Does popular theology allow of the wicked in hell seeing the righteous in heaven? or admit of the possibility of conversation passing between the occupants of the two places? And has the popular immortal soul, finger-tips, tongue, and other material members, on which water would have a cooling effect? Abraham denied the rich man's request, adding as a supplementary reason, "Between us and you there is a *great gulf* fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you CANNOT." (Is a "gulf" any obstacle to the transit of an immaterial soul?) The rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brethren, to testify to them lest they should come to the same place of torment; Abraham answered, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded *though one* ROSE FROM THE DEAD." (What need, according to the popular view, for a rising from the dead, since a spirit commissioned from the "vasty deep" would have been sufficient to communicate the warning?) The whole narrative has an air of tangibility about it which is inconsistent with the common view of the state of the dead. Besides, think of heaven and hell being within sight of each other, and of conversation passing between the two places! If we insist upon the story as a literal narrative, we are committed to all these particulars, which are so thoroughly at variance with the popular theory.

Is it a literal narrative? Even orthodox believers talk of it as a parable, which it doubtless is. As a parable, it has nothing to do with the question in dispute one way or other. It was addressed to the Pharisees to enforce the lesson that in due time the mighty and rich would be brought down, and the poor exalted; and that if men would not be led by the testimony of Moses and the prophets, miracles (even the raising of the dead) would fail to move them. The parable has no reference to the particular view of the death-state which its literal outlines reflect; it bears entirely on the lesson which it was used to convey. A parable does not teach itself; it teaches something else than itself, else it were no parable. But it may be urged that all parables have their foundation in fact. So they have, but they do not necessarily exhibit things that are possible. Parables in which trees speak, and a thistle goes in quest of matrimonial alliances, and corpses rise out of their tombs and address other corpses newly arrived, will be found in the Scriptures (Judges 9:8; II Kings 14:9; Isaiah 14:9, 11). The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is founded on fact but not necessarily on a literal possibility. That the dead should speak was necessary for the purpose of the parable, and it would not surprise the Pharisees to whom it was addressed. For, in fact, it embodies *their belief*. This is apparent from the treatise on "Hades, " by Josephus (himself a Pharisee), which will be found at the close of his compiled works, and in which the reader will find a recognition of the existence of "Abraham's bosom," and the fiery lake in "AN UNFINISHED PART OF THE WORLD." He will find the belief of the Pharisees (reflected in the parable of

Jesus) a very different thing from popular belief in heaven beyond the skies, and hell as an abyss in the black and dizzy parts of the universe. A perusal of it will convince him of the wide dissimilarity of the Jewish theory embodied in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, from the commonly received doctrine of going to heaven and hell.

It may be asked, Why did Christ parabolically employ a belief that was fictitious, and thus give it his apparent sanction? The answer is that Christ was not using it with any reference to *itself*, but for the purpose of being able to introduce a dead man's testimony. He wanted to impress upon them the lesson conveyed in the concluding words of Abraham, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead"; and in no more forcible way could he have done this, than by framing a parable based upon their own theory of the death-state, which admitted of the consciousness of the dead, and, therefore, their capability to speak on the subject he wanted to introduce. This did not involve his sanction of the theory, any more than his allusion to Beelzebub carried with it a sanction of the reality of that God of the heathen (Matt. 12:27).

When Christ had occasion to speak plainly, and for himself, of the dead, his words were in accordance with the truth. Witness the case of Lazarus: "Then said he unto them *plainly* (indicating that 'sleep' is not 'plain' and literal), *Lazarus is* DEAD" (John 11:14–25); "He that believeth on me, *though he were dead*, yet shall he live," that is, by resurrection, for he had said just before, "I am THE RESURRECTION and the life"; "The hour is coming in which 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 condemnation*" John 5:28, 29). It is in these plain words of Christ that we are to seek for Christ's real ideal on the subject of the dead, and not in a parabolic discourse, addressed to his enemies for the purpose of confusion and condemnation and not of instruction.

It would be strange indeed if so important a doctrine as the heaven-and-hell consciousness of the dead should have to depend upon a parable! Those who insist upon the parable for this purpose have to be asked what are we to do with all the testimony already advanced in proof of the reality of death? Are we to make a parable paramount and throw away plain testimony? Are we to twist and violate what is clear to make it agree with what *we think* is meant by that which is admittedly obscure? Is not the opposite rather the course of true wisdom, determining and solving that which is uncertain by that which is unmistakable? If it may be urged, as it has been urged, that it was unlike Christ to perpetuate delusion, and withhold the truth on such an important question as that involved in the parable used, it is sufficient to cite the following in reply:—

> "And the disciples came and said unto him, *Why speakest thou unto them in parables*? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, *but to them* IT IS NOT GIVEN. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath. *Therefore speak I to them in parables"* (Matt. 13:10–13). "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others in parables, that SEEING THEY MIGHT NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MIGHT NOT UNDERSTAND" (Luke 8:10).

The next Scriptural argument in favour of the popular theory is generally advanced with an air of great confidence. "Didn't John, in the Isle of Patmos," says the triumphant questioner, "see the redeemed of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, standing before the throne of God, and giving glory? Who are these, if the righteous don't go to heaven at death"? This argument is generally felt to be overwhelming. "Stay, friend; turn to the first verse of the fourth chapter of Revelation, and see what you find there: 'I heard a voice as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee THINGS WHICH MUST BE HEREAFTER.' The sights which John witnessed were

representations of things which *were to be at a future time*, and, therefore, when he saw a great multitude praising God, he beheld the assembly of the resurrected *as they will appear at the second advent*."

Next comes Stephen's dying prayer—(Acts 7:59)—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." This is understood to mean that Stephen expected the Lord to receive his immortal soul. That this cannot be the meaning becomes manifest on a consideration of the Scripture doctrine of "spirit." Stephen's *pneuma*, spirit or breath, was not *himself;* it was merely the principle or energy that give him life, as it gives all other men and animals life. This principle does not constitute the man or the animal. It is necessary to give them existence, but it does not belong to them, except during the short term of their existence. Stephen's spirit was not Stephen, though essential to his existence. The individual Stephen consisted of that combination of power and organism Scripturally defined as "body and soul and spirit." His spirit as an abstraction was God's and proceeded from Him, as have done the spirits of all flesh. Thus we read in Job 33:4, "The spirit of God hath made me, and *the breath of the Almighty* hath given me life." Hence it is said—(Job 34:14, 15)—"If He (God) set His heart upon man—if He gather unto Himself HIS spirit, and HIS *breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust."* The spirit is indispensable as the basis of a living man, consisting of bodily organism. It is the life principle of all living creatures. When this life principle, emanating from God, is withdrawn, it reverts to its original proprietorship, and the created being disappears. This is the idea expressed in Solomon's words (Eccl. 12:7), "Then shall the dust return to the earth *as it was*, and *the spirit shall return unto God*, WHO GAVE IT."

But, it may be asked, why should Stephen be anxious about his spirit in this sense? Well, it must be remembered that Stephen looked forward to a renewing of life at the resurrection. This was his hope. *He hoped to get his life back*. Consequently, when he came to die, he confided it to the keeping of the Saviour till that day, and, as the narrative adds, "He *fell asleep*." If Stephen's personality, expressed in the pronoun 'he' appertained to Stephen's spirit, and not to the bodily Stephen, then this statement would prove that the spirit fell asleep; and this is just what those who quote this passage deny.

We next come to the words of Paul, in II Corinthians 5:8, "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be *absent from the body*, and to be present with the Lord." This seems at first sight to express the popular idea; but let us consider it. Orthodox people understand that by this, Paul meant to express the desire to depart from his body and go to Christ in heaven. If this was the "absence from the body" that Paul desired, the passage would doubtless stand as an orthodox proof: but was this the "absence from the body" that Paul desired? The context answers the question by defining precisely the idea that was before Paul's mind. It was not disembodiment, as the orthodox idea required: for he says in verse 4 of the same chapter, "*Not that we would be unclothed, but* CLOTHED UPON (*with our house which is from heaven*) *that* MORTALITY *might be* SWALLOWED UP *of life*." What Patti desired was deliverance from the cumbrance of an imperfect sinful body, and the attainment of the incorruptible body of the resurrection, for, says he (5:4):—

> "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened (5:2) earnestly desiring to be clothed upon *with* OUR HOUSE *which is from heaven*."

Or, as he expresses it in Romans 8:23:—

> "We ourselves groan within ourselves, *waiting for the adoption*, to wit, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY."

Now, when does this redemption of the body take place? Not at death, for at death the body undergoes the very opposite of a process of "redemption." It goes into bondage and destruction. It breaks up in the ground in corruption; not till the resurrection at the coming of

the Lord, is it raised to incorruption. Not till then does "presence with the Lord" take place. The testimony is:—

> "The Lord himself *shall descend from heaven* with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, AND SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD" (I Thess. 4:16, 17).

This "absence from the (corruptible) body" is synonymous, in the passage quoted, with "presence with the Lord," since flesh and blood will, in the case of the accepted, then be merged in the spirit-nature with which the saints are to be invested. Says Paul, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 15:50). This being the case, he might well desire to be absent from flesh and blood. But this was not enough: it was necessary to add his desire to be present with the Lord, for all who are absent from the body will not attain to the honour of incorruptible existence in his presence. Many will be absent from the body for ever, and nothing else; that is, they will be without body—without existence—swallowed up in the second death: only those who are accepted will "be absent from the body, and PRESENT with the Lord" in the glory of the spirit-nature.

We must next look at the 23rd verse of the first chapter to Philippians—"I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." As in the last case, this also seems, on its face, to give expression to the idea that popular theology imputes to Paul. In reality, however, it does not do what it appears to do. The words do not teach that Paul would be with Christ as soon as he departed. It would require to be shown from other parts of God's word that a man was with Christ the moment he "departed," before the passage could be pressed into that service. As it stands, it merely expresses a certain *sequence of events*, without indicating whether there is any actual interval between the events or not. Depart, first; then be with Christ, but whether immediately after departing, or a time after departing, there is nothing in the expression to tell. If we understand that depart means to die, then the question to settle is, what is provided in the Christian system as the means of introducing a dead person to Christ? The answer which all investigation will yield to this question is, *Resurrection*. It might seem as if two things so far apart could not be brought together as they are in Paul's language; but it must be remembered that the thing is described *from the point of view of the person dying*. Now, if the dead, "know not anything," which the Scriptures declare (Eccles. 9:5), it follows that departing and being with Christ would, to those dying, appear instantly sequential events, and, therefore, perfectly natural to be concatenated in the way Paul does here.

Paul invariably points to Christ's return as the time of being made present with Christ. As instanced in I Thess. 4:17, already quoted, after describing the coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the transformation of the living, he says, "So shall we EVER *be with the Lord*." Again in 2 Corinth. 4:14, he says, "He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall *raise up* us also by Jesus, and *shall present us* WITH YOU." Again John says (I Epistle 3:2), "*When he shall appear*, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." For this reason Paul tells us in the very epistle in which the disputed words are found, that he was striving "if by any means he might attain *to the resurrection of the dead*" (Phil. 3:11). In no case does he speak of presence with the Lord occurring till that event.

Assuming this to be settled, we have to harmonise this understanding of the text with the necessity of the context. If it be asked in what sense death would be a "gain" to Paul, the answer is furnished in the words of Christ: "Whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it." Paul was about to be beheaded; this was the death he refers to in the context. Consequently, he would, in a special way, stand related to the words of Christ, "Be thou faithful unto death, and *I will give thee a crown of life"* (Rev. 2:10). The question as to when

this crown would be given is settled by Paul's declaration in II Timothy 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me AT THAT DAY (Christ's appearing and kingdom, see 1st verse), and *not to me only but unto* ALL THEM also that love, his appearing." It was "gain" to die, also, because Paul would thus be freed from all the privations and persecutions enumerated in II Cor. 11:23–28, and would peaceably "sleep" in Christ.

There are arguments advanced on Scriptural grounds in favour of the immortality of the soul which do not quite come within the category of "passages" quoted, but are rather in the nature of deductions from scriptural principles. It may be of advantage to look at some of these before passing on.

"*There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked*."—This is quoted to prove the eternal torment of the wicked. It surely requires no argument to show that it fails entirely in this purpose. The statement is true, irrespective of any theory that may be held as to the destiny of the wicked. While the wicked are in existence, either in this life or after resurrection, there is no peace for them. It is impossible there could be peace for them, especially looking forward to the time when they shall be the objects of God's judicial and all-devouring vengeance. But this does not prove (as it is quoted to prove) that they are immortal Such an idea is utterly precluded by the testimonies quoted.

The appearance o[Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:3). As regards Elias, it is testified that he did not see death, but was translated—bodily taken away (II Kings 2:11). His appearance would, therefore, be no proof of the existence of disembodied spirits. As to Moses, if he were bodily present, he must have been raised from the dead beforehand. That he was bodily apparent is evident from the fact of the disciples—mortal men—seeing and recognising him. But it is an open question whether either Moses or Elias were actually present. The testimony is that the things seen were "a vision" (Matt. 17:9). Now from Acts 12:9, we learn that a vision is the opposite of reality—that is, something seen after the manner of a dream—a something apparently real, but in reality only exhibited visionally to the beholder. The audibility of the voices settles nothing one way or the other, because in vision, as in a dream, voices may be heard that have no existence, except in the aural nerves of the seer. In dreams the illusion is the result of functional disorder; in vision, it is the result of the will-energy of the Deity, acting upon the hearing organisation of the trance-wrapt seer (*vide* Acts 10:13; also the song of the Apocalyptic living creature, and the voice of "souls under the altar"). Neither does the presence of Jesus (an actual personage) as one of the three, contribute much to a solution, because there would be no anomaly in causing Moses and Elias to visionally appear to Jesus, and in association with Jesus. It is probable Moses and Elias were really present, but the use of the word "vision" unhinges the matter a little. In no case can the transfiguration be construed into a proof of the immortality of the soul. It was doubtless a pictorial illustration of the kingdom, in so far as it represented Jesus in his consummated power and glory, exalted over the law (represented by Moses) and the prophets (represented by Elijah), and, therefore, elevated to the position to which the prophets point forward, when, as the head of the nation of Israel and the whole earth, he will cause to be fulfilled the prediction of Moses and the command of the heavenly voice:—"Him shall ye hear in all things"; "Hear ye him."

"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:32). If the orthodox believer took a logical view of this statement, he would perceive that instead of proving the immortality of the soul, it indirectly establishes the contrary. It recognises the existence of a class of human beings who are not "living," but "dead." Who are they? According to the popular theory, there are no "dead" in relation to the human race at all; every human being lives for ever. It cannot be suggested that it means "*dead*" in the moral sense, because this is

expressly excluded by the subject of which Jesus is speaking—the resurrection of the dead bodies from the ground (5:31).

The Sadducees denied the resurrection. Jesus proved the resurrection by quoting from Moses the words of Jehovah, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." How did Jesus deduce the resurrection from this formula? By maintaining that God was not the God of those who were dead in the sense of being done with (see Psalm 49:19–20). From God calling Himself the God of three men who were dead, Jesus argued that God intended to raise them; for "God calleth those things which be not (but are to be) AS THOUGH THEY WERE" (Rom. 4:17). The Sadducees saw the point of the argument, and were put to silence.

But if, as is usually contended, the meaning of "*God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*," be, that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are alive, Christ's argument for the resurrection of the dead is destroyed. For how could it prove the purpose of God to raise Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to assert that they were alive? The very argument requires that they shall be dead at some time, in order to be the subjects of resurrection. Thus it is that the fact of their being dead at a time when God calls Himself their God, yields the conclusion that God purposes their resurrection. But take away the fact of their being dead, which orthodox theology does by saying they were immortal, and could not die, and you take away all the point of Christ's argument. Looked at the other way, the argument is irresistible, and explains to us how the Sadducees were silenced.

"*Their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven*" (Matt. 18:10). Whose angels? The angels of "the little ones *which believe*" (Matt. 18:6). It is customary to synonomise "spirits" with "angels," and to make it out that "their angels" means the "little ones" themselves; but this is a liberty so entirely at variance both with the sense and philology of the case, as to be undeserving of reply. The "little ones" are those who "receive the kingdom of God as a little child," and "their angels" are the angels of God who supervise their interests. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him" (Psa. 34:7). "Are they (the angels) not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation"? (Heb. 1:14). This fact is a good reason why we should "take heed that we despise not one of these little ones"; but adopt the popular version of the matter, and the reason vanishes. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for their redeemed spirits are in heaven." This would involve a paradox. Yet without it, the proof for immortal-soulism which some see in it, is nowhere to be found.

"*In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is* NO DEATH" (Prov. 12:28). This is sometimes quoted to prove that as regards the righteous at any rate there is no such thing as even momentary extinction of being. If the passage prove this, the converse is established also, that in the way of unrighteousness *is death*, and in the pathway thereof NO LIFE. The terms of an affirmative proposition have the same value in a negative. Hence, if this passage prove the literal immortality of the righteous, it proves the literal mortality of the wicked, which is more than those who use this argument are prepared to accept. The passage bears out the proposition that the Bible is against the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

"*Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul*" (Matt. 10:28). This is the orthodox advocate's great triumph. He feels here he has a foothold, and he recites the passage with an emphasis entirely absent from his other efforts. He generally snatches his triumph too early, however. He begins comment before finishing the verse. He exultantly enquires why this passage has not been quoted, and so on. If asked to go on with the verse and not leave it half finished, he is not at all enthusiastic in his compliance. However, he goes on if somewhat reluctantly, and stumbles over the concluding sentence, "*but rather fear him that is able to* DESTROY BOTH SOUL AND BODY *in hell*."

Instantly perceiving the disaster which this elaboration of Christ's exhortation brings upon his theory of imperishable and immortal-soulism, he suggests that "destroy" in this instance means "afflict," "torment." But there is no ground for this. In fact, a more unwarrantable suggestion was never hazarded by a theorist in straits. In all the instances in which *appollumi*—the word translated "destroy," is used, it is impossible to discover the slightest approach to the idea of affliction or torment. We append all the New Testament instances in which it is used:—"The young child to destroy him" (Matt. 2:13); "might *destroy him*" (Matt. 12:14; Mark 3:6; 11:18); "Will miserably *destroy* those wicked men" (Matt. 21:41); "*Destroyed* those murderers" (Matt. 22:7); "Persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas and *destroy* Jesus" (Matt. 27:20); "Art thou come to *destroy*" (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34); "Into the waters to *destroy* him" (Mark 9:22); "And *destroy* the husbandman" (Mark 12:9; Luke 20:16); "To save life or *destroy*" (Luke 6:9); "Not come to *destroy* men's lives" (Luke 9:56); "The flood came and *destroyed* them all" (Luke 17:27, 29); "Of the people sought to *destroy* him" (Luke 19:47); "To steal, and to kill, and to *destroy*" (John 10:10); "*Destroy* not him with thy meat" (Rom. 14:15); "I will *destroy* the wisdom of the wise" (I Cor. 1:19); "Were *destroyed* of serpents" (I Cor. 10:9); "And were *destroyed* of the destroyer (I Cor. 10:10); "Cast down but not *destroyed*" (II Cor. 4:9); "Is able to save, and to *destroy*" (Jas. 4:12); "Afterward *destroyed* them that believed not" (Jude 5).

In all these cases "destroy" has a very different meaning from "afflict" or "torment." The reader has only to substitute either of these words for "destroy" in any of the passages to see how utterly out of place such a paraphrase of the word would be. If "destroy" in every other case has its natural meaning, why should an exceptional meaning be claimed for it in Matthew 10? No reason can be given beyond the one already hinted at, viz., the necessities of the orthodox believer's theory. This is no sound reason at all, and, therefore, we put it aside, and enquire what Jesus meant by exhorting his disciples to "Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

We reply, that "life," in the abstract, which is the equivalent of the word translated "soul"—the Revisers of the New Testament being witnesses (for they have substituted "life" for soul in Matt. 16:25, 26)—life in the abstract is indestructible. But life is not the man, nor of any use to him if it is not given to him. It is God's purpose to give life back to those who obey Him, and to give it back immortally. This constitutes the essence of the statement we are considering. Arising out of this, there comes the special view that life in relation to those who are Christ's, cannot be touched by mortal man, however they may treat the body. Of this life, Paul says, "IT IS HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD" (Col. 3:3) "and when CHRIST, WHO IS OUR LIFE, *shall appear*, then shall we appear with him in glory" (5:4). This life is the "*treasure in the heavens*, which faileth not," spoken of by Jesus and said by Peter to be "reserved in heaven." Now when men kill the saints, they only terminate their mortal existence. They do not touch that real life of theirs, which is related to the eternal future, and which has it foundation in their connection with Christ in the heavens. This is in Christ's keeping and can be touched by no man. We are not to fear those who can only demolish the corruptible body, and cannot do anything to prevent the coming bestowal of immortality by resurrection. We are to fear him who hath power to destroy BOTH BODY AND SOUL (LIFE) in Gehenna; that is, in the coming retribution by destructive fire-manifestation, which will utterly consume the ungodly from the presence of the Lord. We are to fear God, who has the power to annihilate from the universe, and who will use the power on all such as are unworthy. We are not to fear those who can at best only hasten the dissolution to which we are Adamically liable.

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ERRONEOUSNESS OF POPULAR BELIEF IN HEAVEN AND HELL

This follows as a conclusion from what has gone before. If the dead are really dead—in the absolute sense contended for in this lecture—of course they cannot have gone to any state of reward or punishment, because they are not alive to go.

We might well leave the matter in this position, as an inevitable conclusion from the premises established; but its grave importance justifies us in carrying the matter further. The belief in question is not only erroneous in supposing that the dead go to such places as the popular heaven or hell, *immediately after death*, but, *in thinking that they ever go there at any time*.

According to the religious teaching of the present day, the place of final reward is a region beyond the stars—remote from the farthest limit of God's universe, "beyond the realms of time and space." The ideas entertained concerning the nature of this place are very vague. So far as they take shape, whether in picture or in discourse, they take their cue from the earth. Hence, "The plains of Heaven." In these "plains" the inhabitants are generally represented as singing a perpetual song of praise. The numbers are supposed to be constantly recruited by arrivals from the earth "below." A man dies, and according to orthodox idea, the liberated soul flies with inconceivable rapidity to the realms above, safely installed in which, bereaved friends console themselves with the idea that the dead are "not lost, but gone before." Friends think of them as better off in that "happy land, far, far, away," than they were in this vale of tears.

Doubtless if it was true, that they were gone to a happy land, the contemplation of their state would be consoling. Whether true or not, it must strike every reflecting mind as an exceedingly discordant element in the case that the righteous after enjoying years of celestial felicity, should have to leave the abode of their bliss, on the arrival of the day of judgment, come down to earth, re-enter their bodies for arraignment at the bar of eternal judgment. What is this judgment, "according to what they have done," for? It seems natural to suppose that admission into heaven in the first instance is proof of the fitness and acceptance of those admitted. Why, then, the trial afterwards? Judgment in such a case seems a mockery. The same remark applies to those who are supposed to have gone to the place of woe.

What is the escape from this distracting inconsistency? It is to be found in the recognition of the unfounded character of the whole heaven-going idea of popular religion. This going to heaven is a purely gratuitous speculation. There is not a single promise throughout the whole of the Scriptures to warrant a man in hoping for it. There are, doubtless, phrases which, to a mind previously indoctrined with the idea, seem to afford countenance to it, such, for instance, as that used by Peter (1st Epistle, chap. 1:4; 4): "An inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, *reserved in heaven* for you": of which also we have an illustration in the words of Christ (Matt. 5:12): "For great is your reward *in heaven*"; and more particularly in his exhortation to "Lay up for yourselves treasures *in heaven*, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

But the countenance which these phrases seemingly afford to the popular idea, disappears entirely when we realise they express *an aspect* of the Christian hope, viz.: its present aspect. God's salvation is not now on earth; indeed, it is not yet an accomplished fact anywhere, except in the person of Christ. It merely exists in the divine mind as *a purpose*, and, in detail, that purpose is specially related to those whom Jehovah fore-knowingly contemplates as the "saved," who are said to be "written in the book," that is, inscribed in the book of *His remembrance* (Malachi 3:16). Therefore the only localisation of reward, at present, is *in heaven*, to which the eye instinctively turns as the source of its promised manifestation. This is especially the case when it is taken into account that Jesus, the pledge of that reward, yea, the very germ thereof, is *in heaven*. In his being there, who is our life, the undefiled

inheritance at present is there; for it exists in him in purpose, in guarantee, and in germ. It has no other kind of existence anywhere else at present; but it is only in heaven in "reserve"; "reserved in heaven," in Peter's phrase. When a thing is "reserved," it implies that when it is wanted, it will be brought forth. And thus it is that Peter speaks in the very same chapter. He says the salvation that is reserved in heaven is a "salvation that is to be *brought unto you* at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 1:13). We shall see in future lectures that it is not bestowed upon any until its manifestation at "the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ," of whom it is said that "*His reward is* WITH HIM" (Rev. 22:12; Isaiah 40:10).

The phrases in question indicate in a general way that "Salvation cometh from the Lord"; and, the Lord being in heaven, it cometh from heaven; and, being yet unmanifested, can properly be said to be at present in heaven. But, on the specific question of whether men go to heaven or not, the evidence is conclusive, as showing that no son of Adam's race is offered entrance to the holy and inaccessible precincts of the residence of the Deity. "God dwelleth in light *which no man can approach unto*" (I Tim. 6:16). The emphatic declaration of Christ is, "*No man hath ascended up to heaven*, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven" (John 3:13).

Agreeably to this declaration, we have no record in the Scriptures of anyone having entered heaven. Elijah was removed from the earth; so was Enoch; but Christ's statement forbids us to suppose that they were conducted to the "heaven of heavens" which "is the Lord's." The statement that they went "into heaven" does not necessarily imply that they went to the abode of the Most High. "Heaven" is used in a general sense as designating the firmament over our heads, which we know is a wide expanse, while "the heaven of heavens" points to the region inhabited by Deity. If it be asked, Where are they? The answer is, No one knows; because there is no testimony on the subject beyond that of Christ's, which proves that they did not go to the heaven of which he was speaking.

And especially is it true that there is no record in the Scriptures of any *dead man* having gone to heaven. The record is the other way—that the dead are in their graves, knowing nothing, feeling nothing, being nothing, awaiting that call from oblivion which is promised by resurrection. Of David it is specifically declared that he has not attained to the sky translation which in funeral sermons is affirmed of every righteous soul. And David, remember, was "a man after God's own heart," and certain, therefore, of admission into heaven at death, if anybody were. Peter says:—

> "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* … FOR DAVID IS NOT ASCENDED INTO THE HEAVENS" (Acts 2:29, 34).

This is emphatic enough. If you say Peter is speaking of David's body, then it proves that Peter recognised David's body as David, and the departed life as the property of God taken back again. Again, let Paul speak of the "great cloud of witnesses," who have passed away—the faithful saints of old times, who are supposed to be before the throne of God, "inheriting the promises," and he tells us:—

> "These all died in faith, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES, but having seen them *afar off*, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:13).

And in the same chapter, verses 39–40, he repeats:—

> "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."

Let us now consult those cases in which consolation is administered in the Scriptures in reference to the dead. You know the doctrines which are enforced with such peculiar urgency by the religious teachers of the present day, when they have to discourse of the departed, such as in the funeral sermons, by way of "improving the occasion." You will find a great contrast to these in Scriptural cases of consolation concerning the dead. When Martha told Jesus that Lazarus was dead, he did not tell her he was better where he was. He said (John 11:23), "*Thy brother shall rise again*."

When death had removed some of the Thessalonian believers, the survivors, who had evidently calculated upon their living until the coming of the Lord, were filled with sorrow. In this condition, Paul writes to comfort them. Suppose a minister of the present day had had the duty to perform, what would have been his language? "You must rejoice, my friends, for those who are dead, for they are gone to glory. They are delivered from the trials and vexations of this life, and are promoted to a felicity they could never experience in this vale of tears. It is selfish of you to grieve; you ought rather to be glad that they have reached the haven of eternal rest."

But what says Paul? Does he tell them their friends are happy in heaven? This was the time to say so if it were true, but no; his words are:—

> "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them *who are asleep*, that ye sorrow not even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. (When?) For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the *coming of the Lord*, shall not prevent (or precede) them who are asleep: For the *Lord himself shall descend from heaven* with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God *and the dead in Christ shall rise first*; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore *comfort one another with these words*" (I Thess. 4:13–18).

The second coming of Christ and the resurrection are the events to which Paul directs their minds for consolation. If it be true that the righteous go to their reward immediately after death, Paul would certainly have suggested such a consolation, instead of referring to the remote, and (in the orthodox view) comparatively unattractive event of the resurrection. The fact that he does not do so, is circumstantial proof that it is not true.

The earth we inhabit is the destined arena in which Jehovah's great salvation will be manifested. Here, subsequently to the resurrection, will the reward be conferred and enjoyed. There is no point more clearly established than this by the specific language of Scripture testimony. Old and New Testaments agree. Solomon declares, "Behold *the righteous shall be recompensed* IN THE EARTH" (Prov. 11:31).

Christ says:—

> "Blessed are the meek; *for they shall* INHERIT THE EARTH" (Matt. 5:5).

In Psalm 37:9–11, the Spirit speaking through David, says:—

> "Evildoers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they *shall* INHERIT THE EARTH. For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be; yea thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the *meek shall inherit the earth*, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

Some corroboration is to be drawn from the following promise to Christ, of which his people are fellowheirs with him:—

> "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH *for thy possession*" (Psa. 2:8).

In celebrating the approaching possession of this great inheritance, the redeemed are represented as singing:—

> "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and *we shall reign* ON THE EARTH" (Rev. 5:9, 10).

And the end of the present dispensation is announced in these words:—

> "*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).

Finally, the angel of the Most High God, in announcing to Daniel, the prophet, the same consummation of things, says:—

> "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom UNDER *the whole heaven*, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:27).

Without going into the particular question involved in these passages of Scripture, which will be considered afterwards, it is sufficient to remark that they unmistakably prove that it is on the earth that we are to look for the development of that divine programme of events, so clearly indicated in the Scriptures of truth, which is to result in "glory to God in the highest, and ON EARTH *peace*, goodwill toward men."

DESTINY OF THE WICKED

If we seek for information on this question at the religious systems, we shall be told of an unfathomable abyss of fire, filled with malignant spirits of horrid shape, in which are reserved the most exquisite torments for those who have been displeasing to God in their mortal state. In the foreground of the lurid picture, we shall see cursing fiends mocking the damned; men and women wringing their hands in eternal despair; and stretching away on all sides, and down to the deepest depth, a weltering ocean of blackness, fire, and horrible confusion. We shall be told that God, in His eternal counsels of wisdom and mercy, has decreed this awful triumph of Devilry!

Do we believe it? There are certain elementary truths, that, by an almost intuitive logic, exclude the possibility of its being true. If God is the merciful Being of order, and justice, and harmony, exhibited in the Scriptures, how is it possible that, with all His foreknowledge and omnipotence, He can permit ninetenths of the human race to come into existence with no other destiny than to be tortured? The Calvanistic theory has, of course, its answer, but its answer is mere words; it does not touch, or alter, or even soften the difficulty; the difficulty—the dreadful difficulty—remains to agonise the believing mind that really grasps what the popular idea of hell-torments means. The effect on the majority of reflecting minds is disastrous, in a too easy revolt against the Scriptures.

Rather than believe such a doctrine, most men reject the Bible altogether, and even dispense with God from their creed, and take refuge in the calm, if cheerless, doctrines of Rationalism. This is what many are driven to, in unfortunate ignorance of the fact that the Bible is not responsible for the doctrine. It is a pagan fiction. It ought to be known, for the comfort of all who have been perplexed with the awful dogma, and who have yet hesitated to renounce it, in fear of being also compelled to cast aside the Word of God, that it is as thoroughly unscriptural as it is distressingly dreadful.

The whole teaching of the Bible in regard to the destiny of the wicked is summed up in four words from the 37th Psalm, verse 20, "*The wicked shall* PERISH." Paul gives the explanation of this in Rom. 6:23: "*The wages of sin is* DEATH." Death, the extinction of being, is the pre-determined issue of a sinful course. "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap *corruption*" (Gal. 6:8). That reaping corruption is equivalent to death, is evident from Rom. 8:13: "*If ye live after the flesh ye shall* DIE." Corruption results in death, so that the one is equal to the other.

The righteous die, as well as the wicked; therefore, it is argued, there must be some other than physical death. The answer is that the death that all men die is not a judicial death—not the final death to be dealt to those who are responsible to judgment. Ordinary death but closes a man's mortal career. There is a SECOND death—final and destructive. The unjust are to be brought forth, at Christ's appearing, for judicial arraignment, and their sentence is, that, after the infliction of such punishment as may be merited, they shall, *a second time*, by violent and divinely-wielded agency, be destroyed in death. To this Jesus refers, when he says, "He that loses his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it; *but he that* (in the present life) *saveth his life, shall* (at the resurrection) LOSE *it"* (in the second death). All the phraseology of Scripture is in agreement on this subject.

We read in Malachi 4:1:—

> "Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly *shall be stubble*: and the day that cometh *shall burn them up*, saith the Lord of HOSTS, THAT IT SHALL LEAVE THEM NEITHER ROOT NOR BRANCH."

Again, in II Thess. 1:9:—

> "They shall be punished with EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

The Spirit of God by Solomon in the Proverbs uses the following language:—

> "*As the whirlwind passeth* SO IS THE WICKED NO MORE; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation" (Prey. 10:25).

And again, Prey. 2:22:—

> "*The wicked shall be cut off from the earth*, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it."

Zophar gives the following emphatic testimony:—

> "Knowest thou not this of old—since man was placed upon earth—that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds, yet HE SHALL PERISH FOR EVER, LIKE HIS OWN DUNG. They that have seen him shall say, Where is he? *He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found, yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night*" (Job, 20:4–8).

David employs the following graphic figure to the same purport:—

> "The wicked shall perish. The enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs. They shall consume: *into smoke shall they consume away*" (Psa. 37:20).

And we read in Ps. 49:6–20:—

> "They that trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches … their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to

all generations. They call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man being in honour, abideth not: *he is like the beasts that perish*. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. *Like sheep they are laid in the grave*; DEATH SHALL FEED ON THEM; *and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning … He shall go to the generation of his fathers*, THEY SHALL NEVER SEE LIGHT. Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, *is like the beasts that perish*."

Of their final state we read in Isaiah 24:14:—

"They are dead, *they shall not live*; they are deceased, *they shall not rise;* therefore, hast thou visited and DESTROYED *them, and made all their memory to perish*."

The teaching of these testimonies is self-elucidatory; it is expressed with a clearness of language that leaves no room for comment. It is the doctrine expressed by Solomon when he says: "*the name of the wicked shall rot*" (Prov. 10:7). The wicked, who are an offence to God, and an affliction to themselves, and of no use to any one, will ultimately be consigned to oblivion, in which their very name will be forgotten. They do not escape punishment; but of this, and of those passages which seem to favour the popular doctrine, we shall treat in the next lecture.

It may seem to the reader that the word "hell" as employed in the Bible, presents an obstacle to the views advanced in this lecture. If the Greek word so translated carried with it the idea represented to the popular mind in its short, pithy Saxon form, the popular view would be capable of demonstration, for the word is frequent enough in the Bible, and is used in connection with the destiny of the wicked. But the original word does not carry with it the idea popularly associated with the word "hell." The original word has no affinity with its modern use. One does not require to be a scholar to see this. A due familiarity with the English Bible will carry conviction on the point, though conviction is undoubtedly strengthened by a knowledge of the original Greek and Hebrew. What, for instance, has the orthodox believer to say to the following:—

"And they (Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude), shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are GONE DOWN TO HELL WITH THEIR WEAPONS OF WAR; *and they have laid their swords under their heads*" (Ezek. 32:27).

It is but necessary to ask if men's immortal souls take swords and guns with them when they "go to hell"? This may sound irreverent, but it shows the bearing of the passage. The hell of the Bible is a place to which military accoutrements may accompany the wearer. The nature and locality of this hell may be gathered from a statement only five verses before the passage quoted. "Asshur is there and all her company; his *graves* are about him, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, *whose graves are set in the sides of the pit, and her company is round about* HER GRAVE." The references point to the Eastern mode of sepulture, in which a pit or cave was used for burial—the bodies of the dead being deposited in niches cut in the wall. As a mark of military honour, soldiers were buried with their weapons, their swords being laid under their heads. They went down to "HELL *with their weapons of war*."

It will be seen that hell is synonymous with the grave. This is proved, so far at least as the Old Testament is concerned. The original word is *sheol*, which, in the abstract, means nothing more than a concealed or covered place. It is, therefore, an appropriate designation for the grave, in which a man is for ever concealed from view. Every use of the word hell in the Old Testament, will fall under this general explanation. As regards the New Testament, there is the same simplicity and absence of difficulty. The original word is, of course, different, being Greek instead of Hebrew; it is in nearly all cases, *hades*. That *hades* is equal to the Hebrew word *sheol* is shown by its employment as an equivalent for it in the Septuagint (Greek) translation of the Hebrew Scriptures; and also in its use by the writers of the New Testament

when they quote verses from the Old Testament where *sheol* occurs in the Hebrew. For instance, in David's prophecy of the resurrection of Christ, cited by Peter on the day of Pentecost ("Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell" a.v.*), the word in Hebrew is *sheol*, and in Greek *hades*. In this instance, hell simply and literally means the grave, in view of which, we see the point of Peter's argument. Understood as the orthodox hell, there is no point in it at all; for the resurrection of the body has no point of connection with the escape of a so-called immortal soul from the abyss of popular superstition. A similar consideration arises upon I Cor. 15:55; "O *grave* (hades), where is thy victory?" This is the exclamation of the righteous in reference to resurrection, as anyone may see on consulting the context. Our translators, perceiving this, instead of rendering *hades* by "hell," have given us the more suitable word "grave"; but if *hades* may be translated "grave" here, it may, of course, be translated so anywhere else.

There is another word translated hell, which does not mean the grave, but which at the same time affords as little countenance to orthodox belief as *hades*. That word is *Gehenna*. It occurs in the following passages: Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; Jas. 3:6. The word ought not to be translated at all. It is a proper name, and like all other proper names, should only have been transliterated. It is a Greek compound signifying the valley of the Son of Hinnom. Calmet in his Bible Dictionary, defining it, has the following:—

"GEHENNA or Gehennom, or Valley of Hennom, or Valley of the Son of Hennom (see Josh. 15:8; II Kings 23:10), a valley adjacent to Jerusalem, through which the southern limits of the tribe of Benjamin passed."

The valley was used in ancient times for the worship of Moloch, in which Israel, lamentably misguided, offered their children to the heathen god of that name. Josiah, in his zeal against idolatry, gave the valley over to pollution, and appointed it as a repository of the filth of the city. It became the receptacle of rubbish in general, and received the carcases of men and beasts. To consume the rubbish and prevent pestilence, fires were kept perpetually burning in it. In the days of Jesus it was the highest mark of ignominy that the council of the Jews could inflict, to Order a man to be buried in Gehenna. In one of Jeremiah's prophecies of Jewish restoration, the obliteration of this valley of dishonour is predicted in the following words: *"And the whole valley of the* DEAD BODIES, *and of the* ASHES, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, *shall be holy unto the Lord"* (Jer. 31:40).

This is the Gehenna to which the rejected are to be given over at the judgment. That it should be translated "hell," and thus made to favour popular delusion, is simply due to the opinion of the translators that ancient Gehenna was a *type* of the hell of their creed. There is no true ground for this assumption. It is the assumption upon which Calmet's remarks are based, notwithstanding his knowledge of the subject. He was of the orthodox school, and makes the common orthodox mistake of begging the question to begin with. Let the orthodox hell be proved first before *Gehenna* is used in the argument. If it is a type of anything, it must be interpreted as a type rather of the judgment revealed, than of one imagined. And the orthodox "hell" is mere imagination, based on Pagan speculations on futurity.

The judgment revealed is indeed related to the locality of Gehenna, and is one that will take the same form as regards circumstance and result. "They (who come to worship at Jerusalem in the future age, Is. 66:20–23) shall go forth and look upon *the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me*; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh" (5:24). The reader will observe a similarity between these words and the words of Christ in Mark 9:44–48, "Where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

These words are frequently quoted in support of eternal torments, but they really disprove them. In the first place, the undying worm and the unquenchable fire must be admitted to be symbolical expressions. The worm is an agent of corruption, ending in death. Fire is a means to the same end, but by a more summary process. When, therefore, they are said to be unarrestable in their action, it must be taken to indicate that destruction will be accomplished without remedy. The expression cannot mean immortal worms or absolutely inextinguishable fire.

A limited sense to an apparently absolute expression is frequently exemplified throughout the Scriptures. In Jer. 7:20, Jehovah says, His anger should be poured out upon Jerusalem, and should "*burn and should not be quenched.*" He says also in Jer. 17:27, "I will kindle a fire in the gates of Jerusalem, and it shall devour the palaces thereof, and *it shall not be quenched*." This does not mean that the fire with reference to itself should never go out, but that in relation to the object of its operation, it should not be quenched till the operation was accomplished. A fire was kindled in Jerusalem, and only went out when Jerusalem was burned to the ground. So also God's anger burned against Israel, until it burnt them out of the land, driving them out of His sight; but Isaiah speaks of a time when God's anger will cease in the destruction of the enemy (chap. 10:25).

The same principle is illustrated in the 21st chapter of Ezekiel, verses 3, 4, 5, where Jehovah states that his sword will go forth out of its sheath against all flesh, *and shall no more return*. It is not necessary to say that in the consummation of God's purpose, His loving kindness will triumph over all exhibitions of anger, which have for their object the extirpation of evil. In the absolute sense, therefore, His sword of vengeance will return to its sheath, but not in the sense of failing to accomplish its purpose. So that the worm that preys upon the wicked will disappear when the last enemy, death, is destroyed, and the fire that consumes their corrupt remains will die with the fuel it feeds on; but in relation to the wicked themselves, the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. The expressions were borrowed from Gehenna, where the flame was fed, and the worm sustained, by the putrid accumulations of the valley.

The statement in Matt. 25:46 is more apparently in favour of the popular doctrine, but not more really so when examined. "These shall go away into everlasting *punishment*, but the righteous into life eternal." Even taken as it stands in the English version, this does not define the nature of the punishment which is to fall on the wicked, but only affirms its perpetuity. The nature of it is elsewhere described as death and destruction. Why should this be called "*aionion*" (translated "everlasting")? *Aionion* is the adjective form of *aion*, age, and expresses the idea of *belonging to the age*. Understood in this way, the statement only proves that at the resurrection, the wicked will be punished with the punishment *characteristically pertaining to the age* of Christ's advent, which Paul declares to be "everlasting DESTRUCTION from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (II Thess. 1:9). The righteous receive the life related to the same dispensation—a life which Paul declares to be immortality (I Cor. 15:53).

It is usual to quote, in support of the eternal torments, a statement from the Apocalypse, *"They shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever"* (Rev. 14:11; 20:10). On the face of it, this form of speech does lend countenance to the popular idea, but we must not be satisfied with looking on the face of it in this instance, because the statement forms *part of a symbolical vision*, which has to be construed mystically in harmony with the principle of interpretation supplied in the vision. If Apocalyptic torment "for ever and ever" is literal, then the beast, the woman with the golden cup, the lamb with the seven horns and seven eyes, are literal also. Is the orthodox believer prepared for this? Surely, Christ is not in the shape of a seven-horned lamb, or a man with a sword in his mouth; surely, the false Church is not a literal prostitute, or the Church's persecutor a literal wild boar of the woods. If these are

symbolical, the things affirmed of them are symbolical also, and torment (or judicial infliction, for this is the idea of *basanizo*, the Greek word), "for ever and ever" is the symbol of the complete and resistless, and final triumph of God's destroying judgment over the things represented.

Failing Scriptural evidence, the orthodox believer takes refuge among "the ancient Egyptians, the Persians, Phœnicians, Scythians, Druids, Assyrians, Romans, Greeks, etc.," and among "the wisest and most celebrated philosophers on record." All these people—the superstitious and dark-minded heathen of every land, the founders of the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God—all these believed in the immortality of the soul, and, therefore, the immortality of the soul is true!

Logic extraordinary! One would think that the opinion of the ignorant and superstitious in favour of the immortality of the soul would be rather against, than for, the likelihood of its being true. The Bible does not rate our ancestors very highly as regards their views and ways in religious things. Paul speaks of the period prior to the preaching of the Gospel (and referring to Gentile nations), as "the times of this IGNORANCE." (Acts 17:30). Of the wisdom which men had educed for themselves through the reasonings of "the wisest and most celebrated philosophers," he says, "Hath not God made FOOLISH the wisdom of this world?" "The wisdom of this world is FOOLISHNESS with God" (I Cor. 1:20; 3:19). Wise men will prefer being on Paul's side.

The orthodox believer glories in the wisdom of ancient philosophy and paganism, which Paul pronounces foolishness. What can we do but stand with Paul? Paul says that immortality was brought to light by Christ in the Gospel (II Tim. 1:10). If so, how can we believe in the version of it put forward by the "wisest and most celebrated philosophers," *centuries before Christ appeared*, and whose wisdom Paul, speaking by the Spirit, pronounces "foolishness"? Either Christ brought the truth of the matter to light, or he did not. If he did, the doctrines before his time were darkness; if the doctrines before his time (rejoiced in by the orthodox believer) were not darkness, but light, then Christ did not bring the truth to light in the Gospel, for in that case it was brought to light before the gospel was preached.

But many who were once orthodox are losing their orthodoxy, and are beginning to see that the teaching of the Bible is one thing and popular religion another. The following extract, from a work published in America "The Theology of the Bible," (by Judge Halsted), will illustrate this:—

"The Rev. Dr. Theodore Clapp, in his autobiography, says he had preached at New Orleans, a zealous sermon for endless punishment; that after the sermon, Judge W., who, says he, was an eminent scholar, and had studied for the ministry, but relinquished his purpose, because he could not find the doctrine of endless punishment and kindred dogmas, asked him to make out a list of texts in the Hebrew or Greek on which he relied for the doctrine. The doctor then gives a detailed account of his studies in search of texts to give to the judge; that he began with the Old Testament in the Hebrew; and prosecuted his study during that and the succeeding year; and yet he was unable to find therein so much as an allusion to any suffering after death; that, in the dictionary of the Hebrew language, he could not discern a word signifying hell, or a place of punishment in a future state; that he could not find a single text, in any form or phraseology, which holds out threats of retribution beyond the grave; that to his utter astonishment it turned out that orthodox critics of the greatest celebrity were perfectly familiar with these facts; that he was compelled to confess to the judge that he could not produce any Hebrew text; but that still he was sanguine that the New Testament would furnish what he had sought for without success in Moses and the prophets; that he prosecuted his study of the Greek of the New Testament eight years; that the result was that he could not name a portion of it, from the first verse in Matthew to the last of Revelation, which, fairly interpreted, affirms that a portion of mankind will be eternally miserable. The doctor

concludes by saying it is an important, most instructive fact, that he was brought into his present state of mind (the repudiation of the dogma) by the Bible only—a state of mind running counter to all the prejudices of his early life, of parental precept, of school, theological seminary, and professional caste."

Yes, the Bible and the seminaries are at variance on this important subject. The seminaries light up the future of the wicked with a lurid horror, which the worthy of mankind even now feel to be a great drawback from the satisfaction of the prospects of the righteous. How can there be perfect joy and gladness with the knowledge that fierce Despair reigns among tormented millions in another place? The Bible gives us a glorious future, unmarred by such a blot. It exhibits a future free from evil—a future of glory and everlasting joy to the righteous, and of oblivion to all the unworthy of mankind—a future in which the wisdom of God combines the glory of His name with the highest happiness of the whole surviving human race.

Lecture 4

IMMORTALITY A CONDITIONAL GIFT TO BE BESTOWED AT THE RESURRECTION

IF HUMAN nature be essentially mortal, and if death in relation to it be the destruction of all its manifested powers, what is the true relation of a future life to our perishing race? Many jump to the conclusion that the position taken in the two previous lectures involves a denial of future retribution, and even the rejection of the existence of God. That this is a great mistake will presently be made apparent. The view of man's mortality certainly leads to a modification of popular views, but not with the effect stated. And the modification it leads to is borne out by the testimony of the Bible with an explicitness that removes all difficulty from the path of a devout mind.

There is a natural aspiration for immortality in the human breast. The lowest forms of human nature, such as idiots, and barbarous races, may be destitute of it, but where human nature has developed to anything like its natural standard, there is a craving after the perfect and unending. We seem mentally constituted for them. Death comes as an unnatural event in our experience. We dislike it; we dread it; we long for immortality; we aspire to live for ever.

It is customary to argue from our desire for immortality that we are actually immortal. This is the principal argument used by Plato, who may be said to be the father of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The argument is universally employed by believers in the

immortality of the soul to the present day. It is astonishing that its logic should pass unquestioned. It would readily appear absurd in the case of any other instinct or desire. A hungry man, for example, desires food; is this a proof he has had his dinner? The argument turns the other way. If we desire a thing, our desire is evidence that we are yet without the object of desire; for, as Paul says, "What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for"? If we experience a longing for immortality, it is a proof we are destitute of it.

The existence of such a desire, however, proves a great deal in its place. It proves immortality as a possibility in the economy of the universe. No instinct or desire exists in nature without a corresponding object on which it acts. Are we hungry? There is food to be eaten. Are we curious? There are things to be seen and known. Have we benevolence? There is benefit to be conferred, need to be supplied, and suffering to be alleviated. Have we conscience? There is right and wrong. Have we marvellousness? There is incomprehensibility in heaven above and earth beneath. Have we veneration? There is God to adore. And so on, with every feeling throughout sentient nature. On this principle, the spontaneous craving for immortality and perfection proves the existence of the conditions desired, and the possibility of their attainment; and though we may be ignorant as Hottentots of the "where," "when," "how," etc., relating to them, there remains the strong natural presumption that the condition thus desired cannot be altogether a dream, though at present beyond our reach.

Still, we must use proper discrimination in the application of the argument. It does not prove the necessary attainment of immortality by any. The existence of a desire is no guarantee of its gratification. A man of great alimentive capacity may be in circumstance where food cannot be obtained. He may be shut up in a Hartley colliery, with death as the consequence. His alimentiveness points to food as its proper object, but does not insure possession of it; *that* is a question of proper circumstance. The logical deduction from this longing for immortality is, that as it is inconceivable that an instinct could exist which it was impossible to gratify, immortality and perfection must be attainable conditions; but that the gratification of a desire being dependent upon proper relative circumstances, it all depends upon the nature of the circumstances governing the possession of immortality as to whether immortality will be attained or not. This cuts between the orthodox believer and the infidel, refuting the immortal soulism of the one, and demolishing the irrational belief of the other.

What is immortality? We can best comprehend a thing by contrast. We know something of mortality, from which the idea of *im* (not) mortality comes. The word "mortality" comes from the Latin root "*mors*," death, and signifies *deathfulness*. To say of anything that it is mortal, is to affirm that it is limited in its power to continue in life, owing to inherent tendency to dissolution. We say of man that he is mortal; and he is so. We behold him daily perishing. He comes into existence as an organised being, inheriting and exhibiting all the qualities of the stock from which he is derived. We see him go out of existence as regularly as we see him come into it. The death list is the universal corollary of the birth list. No man of woman born is exempt from the law of death; however superior to his fellows he may be, however lofty the genius, however farseeing the intellect, however genial the friendship, however lovely the general character, the hand of death stays not; the end must come; the law of sin and death working in his members takes his life at last, and he sinks to the oblivion from which he emerged. This is the mortality of actual experience, whatever theory people may entertain on the subject.

Popular theory says that the mortality of common experience is related to *condition*, not to *being*; that it changes a man's place of existence, but does not touch the fact of his existence. Let us consider this a moment. It is a manifest truth that life in the abstract is indestructible; but are we to say that, therefore, a living being is indestructible? If so, it would prove the immortality of beasts, for they certainly live, as really as man, though their nature is inferior. Life is not a thinking individual power in its abstract condition, unless we take the

sum total of all life as it exists in God, "the fountain of life." Subordinately to Him, the power or capacity of individual manifestation exists in the vast ocean of life-power that subsists in the Great Eternal Fountain: but it is latent there, and can only be developed by what men have been pleased to call "organisation."

The thing may seem a mystery; but certainly it is not more a mystery than the metaphysical view which attempts to explain a mystery by a greater mystery still. Mystery or no mystery, it is the teaching of experience and the declaration of the word of God. "They have all *one breath*" (or spirit—the same word) is Solomon's statement concerning men and animals (Eccles. 3:19). Moses is equally decisive. Speaking of the flood, he says (Gen. 7:23), "And *every living substance* was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both MAN, and cattle, and the creeping things." Again (Gen. 7:21, 22), "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing … and *every man; ALL in whose nostrils was the breath of life … died*." Here man is categorised with animals, as belonging to the same class of existence—being a creature of "living substance" inhaling the universal "breath of life" shared by ALL. "*The spirit of God* is in my nostrils," says Job (chap. 27:3). "Cease ye from man *whose breath is in his nostrils,* " is the command of inspiration in Isaiah 2:22. God "gathering unto Himself HIS spirit and HIS breath," is Zophar's description of death in Job 34:14. Mark, the "spirit" is spoken of as the Almighty's; and man—the substance creature—as the *possessor* of spirit; but philosophy has inverted this order of ideas. It has made the spirit into the possessor, and the body the thing possessed; and has opened the door for the concomitant doctrines of disembodied sky-kingdom rewards, hell punishments, etc., etc.

The theory falls to the ground on the reception of the simpledoctrine of the Scriptures that "God formed MAN *of the dust*" (Gen. 2:7); that "the first man is of the earth, earthy," and that, "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy" (I Cor. 15:47, 48); that the life that is in him is God's and returns to God when the man dies (Eccles. 12:7). The opposite doctrine, which is but the offspring of human speculation, and not the teaching of the Scriptures—for whoever read of "immortal souls" in the Bible?—is a delusion which binds the understanding of all who labour under it, giving rise to many gratuitous difficulties as to God's moral government of the world, and preventing a proper apprehension of the doctrines of Christianity, which have for their very foundation the truth that man is an evanescent form of conscious life, to whom the day of death is appointed because of sin.

How comes it to pass that man, having strong instinctive desires for immortality and perfection, shall be found in a state so much the reverse, in all respects? There is an explanation. This explanation "nature" refuses to furnish. The condition of man as a natural accident is an impenetrable mystery. Nature establishes the strictest correspondence between instinct and condition in the case of every other species throughout her wide domain, but she refuses this happiness-producing adaptation in the case of her noblest production—man, leaving him to the wretchedness of disappointed noble aspiration. It is impossible to account for this fact on natural principles. Unaided by revelation, human condition and destiny must ever remain an insoluble enigma.

Turning to the Bible, the mystery is explained. We are taken away back to the origin of our species. We are shown Adam and Eve, our first parents, in primeval innocence, the happy occupants of a paradise of heavenly planting. We need not be frightened away from the contemplation of this picture by Darwinism. The evolution of species is not only an undemonstrated, but an undemonstrable scientific guess. Nay, more; it is an untenable and self-stultifying hypothesis. Though many scientific men endorse it, many other scientific men reject it altogether, on scientific grounds. Professor Owen, for example—a name great in science—is in the front rank of the rejectors of Darwinism.

There is a short way of disposing of antagonistic speculation. If Christ is true, so is the Mosaic presentation of Adam in the garden of Eden; for Christ endorsed the Mosaic writings; and the New Testament, in more places than one, ties Adam and Christ together as the two poles in the divine scheme (I Cor. 15:20–21; Rom. 5:12–20). It is no childish relapse, therefore (though it is so esteemed in many quarters), that goes back for information on a problem of human condition to the episode of Eden. Let us go thither a moment; we behold Adam and Eve pursuing the pleasant occupation of dressers of that magnificent garden of a thousand hues, spreading itself below the warming rays of an Asiatic sun. We contemplate them spending their days in the sweetness of innocence, and drinking in, with virgin faculty, the pure delights of nature. When we think of what follows, we are taught the lesson that man exists not for himself alone—that mere sensuous enjoyment is not the supreme object of existence—that there are higher actions of the mind, more serious responsibilities, more exalted obligations, which exercise alone can wake us up to—that God is the highest, and demands the absolute submission of our wills and affections to Him as the essential condition of our happiness and His pleasure.

Adam is prohibited from touching a certain tree in the midst of the garden, not because the tree was intrinsically bad, or that there was any sin in the act itself apart from interdict, but because such a prohibition was, in the circumstances, the simplest and most convenient mode of educating him in regard to his relations to the Almighty. "Where no law is, there is no transgression," says Paul. So long as the tree was free from prohibition, Adam was at liberty to use it as freely as the others; but, the prohibition having been enjoined, it became unlawful for him to touch it. How long Adam continued to obey, we are not informed; but we know that in the course of time he infringed the divine enactment.

> "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and *he did eat*" (Gen. 3:6).

The consequence of this act was most calamitous:—

> "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life, thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, *till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*" (Gen. 3:17–19).

Here is an explanation of the present exceptional condition of the human race. Adam, originally created with a view to possible immortality, was doomed to return to his original nothingness, and there then commenced in him that process of physical decay which terminates all in death. Having all sprung from Adam, we have, of course, inherited the death-tending qualities of his nature, because the clean cannot come out of the unclean (Job 14:47). On this principle, death has passed upon all men through Adam; and so we find ourselves mortal.

It is no uncommon thing nowadays to jest upon the subject, and to mockingly enquire why God did not prevent this result. It is useless to attempt an answer to those who are guilty of this folly, because they are not in a frame of mind to appreciate it. Tho very question evinces a flippancy of thought and, in most cases, a shallowness of moral nature which it is hopeless to deal with. To answer is like throwing pearls before swine; they are certain to "turn again and rend." The deep-thinking and the devout will have no difficulty in perceiving that the occurrence of such a bitter chapter in human history was incidental to the investiture of man with the God-like prerogative of free agency; and, further, that its occurrence was

foreseen by the Almighty, and intended by Him to be the basis on which He should establish the triumph of eternal benelovence and eternal wisdom. It requires no very profound discernment to see that the introduction of evil will lead to ultimate results, so perfectly glorious as to show the infinite wisdom and mercy of God in permitting it.

After the occurrence of the transgression, and the passing of the sentence consequent upon it, a precaution was taken for the purpose expressed in these words, taken from the 3rd chap. of Genesis (verses 22 and 23):—

> "And now, lest he (Adam) put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and *live for ever*: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken."

Let those who believe in the natural immortality of man ponder the import of these words. What necessity would there have been for preventing Adam from eating of the tree of life "lest he eat and live for ever," if he were already and essentially immortal? Adam being mortal, the precaution was a merciful one; for had Adam, in his fallen and unhappy state, become invested in immortality, the earth would have become peopled with undying sinful men, who in the course of ages would have multiplied and overcrowded the globe, and developed a scene of indescribable confusion and misery. But this terrible calamity was averted. Adam was excluded from access to the other tree, which, under a provisional arrangement, had been endowed with life-giving virtue; and so continued mortal: and his descendants, innumerable, sin-stricken, and wretched, are mercifully swept away, generation after generation, like grass before the mower.

It is easy here to realise how unfounded are the popular hopes of salvation based on "being good," as they phrase it. Adam by one offence, and that, too, an offence inspired by the good motive, as men would say, of doing himself good, viz., that he might become wise, and be as the Elohim—by one offence, came under sentence of death. If one offence was fatal in the case of Adam, how can his descendants, laden with sins, hope to escape by any amount of poor goodness? No, no! men must be forgiven and justified before they can be saved: and how they are to attain to this state may be learnt in the teachings of the Apostles—apart from which there is "no hope" (Eph. 2:12).

As it is from the Scriptures alone that we derive any rational account of the present mortal and afflicted condition of mankind, so are they the only source of information concerning our future destiny. Job asks, "If a man die, shall he live again"? This is the question which it is the special function of the Bible to answer. From no other source can we procure an answer. If we speculate upon it as a philosophical problem, we grope in the dark. There is no process in nature from which we can reason on the subject. There is no real parallel to resurrection. A seed deposited in the ground springs again, and renews its existence by the law of its nature. The power to spring again is part of itself. Not so with man. To use the words of Job (chap. 14:7–10):—

> "There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground, yet through the scent of water it will bud and bring forth boughs like a plant. But *man dieth and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and* WHERE IS HE?"

Where is he? The answer is a simple one; he is nowhere. The dust has returned to the earth as it was, and his life-spirit has returned to God who gave it: and though both dust and life continue to exist as separate elements, the *man* who resulted from their organic combination has ceased to be; and if he ever "live again," it will be the result of a fresh effort on the part of Almighty power.

That he will live again, is one of the blessed teachings of the Word of God. "Since by man came death, by man came also *the resurrection of the dead*" (I Cor. 15:21). It was the peculiar mission of Christ to bring this truth to light. He proclaimed himself the "Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25), adding, "He that believeth in me, *though he were dead*, YET SHALL HE LIVE." He came, not simply to re-infuse spiritual vigour into the deadened moral natures of men, but to open a way of deliverance from the physical law of death which is sweeping them into the grave, and keeping them there. He came, in fact, to raise the bodies of men—which are the men themselves—from the pit of corruption, and to endow them, if accepted, with incorruptibility and immortality. Paul says:—"*He will change our vile body*, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Philip. 3:21). This is connected with the resurrection, for Jesus himself says, "This is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, *but should raise it up again at the last day*" (John 6:39). Thus, life and immortality are said to have been "brought to light by Jesus Christ, through the Gospel" (II Tim. 1:10). In fact, this very aim of the sacrificial work of Christ, as the Saviour of the world from sin, and as the reconciler of the world to God, from whom all men have gone astray, was to offer men everlasting life. This will appear from the following citations from the New Testament:—

"I am come that *they might have* LIFE, *and that they might have it more abundantly*" (John 10:10).

God sent His only begotten Son into the world, *that we might* LIVE *through him*" (I John 4:9).

"Ye will not come to me, *that ye might have* LIFE" (John 5:40).

"I am the resurrection *and the* LIFE" (John 11:25).

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him *should not perish, but have* EVERLASTING LIFE" (John 3:16).

"Thou (the Father) hast given him (the Son) power over all flesh, that he *should give* ETERNAL LIFE to as many as Thou hast given him" (John 17:2).

"My sheep hear my voice.… *I give unto them* ETERNAL LIFE; *and they shall never perish*; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John 10:27, 28).

"This is the record, that God hath given to us ETERNAL LIFE, *and this* LIFE *is in His Son*" (I John 5:11).

"This is the promise that He hath promised us, *even* ETERNAL LIFE" (I John 2:25).

"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is ETERNAL LIFE *through Jesus Christ our Lord*" (Romans 6:23).

"That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope *of* ETERNAL LIFE" (Titus 3:7).

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ *unto* ETERNAL LIFE" (Jude 21).

There is one obvious reflection on the reading of these passages; if immortality be the natural attribute of every son of Adam from the very moment he breathes, there is little meaning in testimonies which, one and all, speak of immortality as a future contingency, a thing to be sought for, a reward, a thing to be given, a thing brought to light through the gospel, etc. There is complete obscurity in such language if immortality be a natural and present possession. How can a man be promised that which is already his own? The divine promise is that God will award eternal life to those who *seek* for glory, honour, and immortality. This is the strongest proof that human nature knows nothing of immortality at present.

What is this immortality? Modern talk on the subject would lead us to suppose it was a mental quality, like conscience or benevolence—a thing of *spiritual condition*—an essence which is itself without reference to time or space. As death has come to have an artificial theological significance, so immortality itself, the promised gift of God through Jesus Christ,

has been frittered away into a metaphysical conception—beyond the comprehension, as it has been placed beyond the practical interest of mankind. Bringing commonsense and Scripture teaching to bear on this point, we find that *im*-mortality is the opposite of *mor*tality. The one being deathfulness in relation to being, as such, the other is deathlessness in the same relation. Both are terms definitive of duration rather than of quality, of life, although quality is implied in both cases. A mortal is a creature of terminable existence; an immortal, one so constituted that his life is endless. Yet the terminability of the one, and the endlessness of the other, are the result of the established conditions of their natures respectively. Man is mortal, because his organism tends to decay. If that organism could go on working from year to year, without deterioration or liability to disorder, he would be immortal, apart from violence, because life would be constantly sustained and manifested. But it is not so, as we know to our sorrow; his nature contains within it the seeds of corruption, and hence it runs down to unavertable dissolution. The finest constitution will succumb at last to the gradual exhaustion going on from year to year. To be immortal, we require to be incorruptible in substance; because that which is incorruptible cannot decay; and an incorruptible living organism will live for ever. Hence the immortality of the New Testament is a promise of resurrection to incorruptible bodily existence.

> "It is sown in corruption, *it is raised in incorruption*; it is sown in dishonour, *it is raised in glory*; it is sown in weakness, *it is raised in power*; it is sown a natural body; *it is raised a spiritual body*" (I Cor. 15:42–44).

Again (Phil. 3:20, 21):—

> *"Jesus Christ … shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."*

To obtain immortality, is to be transformed from our present weak, frail, corruptible condition of body, into a perfect, incorruptible, powerful condition, in which we shall no more be the subjects of weakness, pain, sorrow, and death, but shall be like the Lord Jesus Christ in his present exalted state of existence.

This transformation occurs at the return of Jesus Christ fromheaven as is evident from the following testimonies:—

> "Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead at HIS APPEARING AND HIS KINGDOM" (II Tim. 4:1).
>
> "But every man in his own order (of ressurection): Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's AT HIS COMING" (I Cor. 15:23).
>
> "Your life is hid with Christ in God. *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear,* THEN shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:3, 4).
>
> "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, *at the last trump*; for the trumpet shall sound, and *the dead shall be raised incorruptible,* and we shall be changed. For *this corruptible must put on incorruption,* and this mortal must put on immortality. SO WHEN *this corruptible shall have put on incorruption,* and this mortal shall have put on immortality, THEN SHALL BE BROUGHT TO PASS THE SAYING THAT IS WRITTEN, *Death is swallowed up in victory*" (I Cor. 15:51–54).

From the last testimony, taken along with one from the 4th chapter of I Thess., previously quoted, we learn that the faithful in Christ Jesus who are in the land of the living at the second advent of their Lord and Saviour, will—(after they have been judged)—undergo an immediate transformation into the incorruptible nature of the spiritual body, without going through the process of death. Hence the statement "we shall not all sleep." So that some perhaps now living, like Enoch and Elijah, will be exceptions to the general rule of mortality, and shall not taste of death.

As to the nature of the resurrected body, we find in one of the passages quoted from Paul's epistles, the words, "It is raised *a spiritual body*." Some think this means a gaseous, shadowy, spectral body, that a man could drive his hand through. On the contrary, the righteous in the perfected state will be as real and corporeal as mortal men in the present life. We learn this in the most unmistakable manner. Look at the following statements:—"He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned LIKE UNTO HIS OWN GLORIOUS BODY" (Phil. 3:21). "We know that when Christ shall appear, we shall be LIKE HIM; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2). Here is a starting point: Christ is the pattern after which his people are to be fashioned. If, therefore, we would learn knowledge in regard to the nature of the righteous in the future state, we must contemplate the nature of Christ subsequent to his resurrection. We are enabled to do this, because Christ appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, and had several interviews with them. We find him aiming to give evidence to his disciples of his *reality*, when they were terrified by his sudden appearance, thinking him an illusion before their eyes.

He said:—

> "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; *handle me and see*; for a spirit (*Pneuma*, apparition) *hath not* FLESH AND BONES, AS YE SEE ME HAVE. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb; and *he took it and did eat before them*" (Luke 24:38–43).

Here is positive proof that Christ was as real and corporeal after his resurrection as he was before. The body that was laid in the tomb by Joseph of Arimathea was the body that afterwards arose and appeared as "the same Jesus"—"I myself"—to the disciples, who handled him, and who ate with him. This is proof that the righteous in the resurrection will be as tangible and bodily as he was then, seeing that they are to be "fashioned *like unto his glorious body*."

It is suggested that Christ's nature was transformed into intangible essence after his ascension; but there is nothing to support such a suggestion. The supposition is simply gratuitous and undeserving of consideration. It is excluded by the evidence of Christ's reality and identity after his ascension. Even if this were not so, the suggestion would be without standing ground. Since there is no statement to the effect that Christ ceased to be bodily after his ascension, the only rational alternative would be to assume that no such change took place, and that Christ remained, and continues to be the same real though glorified personage who exhibited his hands and feet to his assembled disciples. But the fact of his bodily continuance is borne out in the statement made by the angels to the disciples, just after the ascension:—

> "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 1:11).

What would the disciples understand by *"this same Jesus"?* Would they not think of the blessed Saviour, who, a few days before, had eaten bread in their sight, and said to them, a "spirit (or phantasm) hath not *flesh and bones* AS YE SEE ME HAVE"? Undoubtedly; and they would look forward to the time of his re-appearance, with the prints of the nails in his hands, and the mark of the wound in his side, which it is evident, from Zech. 13:6, will be the subject of anxious and interesting curiosity to Jewish beholders at his coming. Therefore, the proof remains that the righteous in the resurrected state will be substantial as their Lord and Master, instead of the bodiless entities generally imagined.

Though not less real than mortal man, the glorified saints will possess a different kind of nature. They are, in the present state, "natural bodies," but then, they will be "spiritual bodies." Here is the destinction. Natural or animal bodies are sustained in life by the blood, as saith the Scriptures in Leviticus 17:14, "The life of all flesh *is the blood thereof*." The blood is the medium of animal vitality, with which it becomes charged by the action of the air on the lungs. The life principle or "spirit" is thus applied only in an indirect manner. The blood is proximately the life-giving agent; bodies sustained by it are simply blood bodies. Their life is not inherent; it is dependent on a complex function which is easily interfered with. It is applied by a process so delicate as to be easily marred by external influences and accidental circumstances. Therefore, life is uncertain, and constant health and vigour almost impossible. Our constitutions are easily impaired, and we are liable to be afflicted with distressing infirmities and pains which easily become dangerous: hence the lucrative profession which is accredited with the skill to "cure" unfortunate humanity. Ah, they cannot "cure." The disease is too deep for their skill. It is in the constitution; it is in the blood; it is deep-grained and incurable. All that the doctor can do is to patch a humanly-unmendable mortality.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the only true physician. He offers us resurrection to spirit-body existence. He promises to fashion us like unto his own glorious body. He undertakes that though we may be afflicted with all the pains that flesh is heir to in this present life, yea, disfigured by all the distortions of disease; though we may die loathsome deaths and be laid in the grave a mass of festering corruption, we shall be raised to a pure and incorruptible state, in which our bodies shall be "spiritual bodies"; not because ethereal, which is not their characteristic, but because directly energised by the spirit of God, and filled in every atom with the concentrated inextinguishable life-power of God himself. This is the testimony of Christ (John 3:6): "That which is born of Spirit is SPIRIT." He had said, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." Mortal men and women are born of the flesh; therefore, they are but flesh—a wind that passeth away and cometh not again; but let a man be "born of the spirit," and he is no longer the frail and perishable offspring of Adam. His corruptible has put on incorruptibility. He is an invincible, all-powerful, immortal son of God. "They are the children of God," says Jesus, speaking of the resurrection which is unto life, "BEING *the children of the resurrection*."

Paul says (Rom. 8:11), "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also *quicken your mortal bodies* BY HIS SPIRIT that dwelleth in you." Here is a second birth to be effected by the spirit of God; and on the principle laid down by Christ, all who are the subjects of this operation of the spirit upon their mortal bodies, will be "born of the spirit," and will, therefore, be "spirit" in nature or "spiritual" bodies—bodies sustained in life by the direct operation of the spirit of life, without the intermediate mediate agency of the blood—immortal, bloodless embodiments of the spirit of life in flesh and bones, like the Lord Jesus; not pale and ghastly as a human body would be without blood, but beautiful with the electrical radiance of the Spirit which can show colour otherwise than by blood, as witness the jasper and the ruby, and the rainbow. Living by the thorough permeation of the life-spirit in the substance of their natures, they will be glorious and powerful, "pure as the gem, strong as adamant, and incorruptible as gold," glorious in the sense of physical luminosity, as exemplified in the Lord Jesus when he shone with the lustre of the sun on the mount of transfiguration, and, according as it is written:—

> "They that be wise *shall shine as the brightness of the firmament*, and they that turn many to righteousness *as the stars for ever and ever*" (Dan. 12:3).

Powerful, in the sense of being vigorous and inexhaustible in the power of the faculties, as it is written:—

> "The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary. There is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; *they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint*" (Isa. 40:28–31).

Incorruptible in the sense of being undecaying and imperishable in nature, and therefore entirely free from any liability to pain or disease. In this perfect condition, the righteous will have a boundless eternity before them—everlasting joy upon their heads; no more dullness of mind; no more fretting and heart-failing at the afflictions of mortal life; no more sorrow, no more growing old; no more passing away; but all perfection, harmony unbroken, love unquenchable, joy unspeakable, and full of glory. This will be the happy state of the righteous; this the consummation of that blessed promise, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." (Isa. 25:8).

This precious life and immortality, brought to life by Jesus Christ through the gospel, is not to be indiscriminately bestowed. All men will not attain to it; only a few will be counted worthy. The precious gift is freely offered to all; but it is conditional. It is not to be given to the faithless and the impure. Perfection of character must precede perfection of nature. Moral fitness is the indispensable pre-requisite, and God is the judge and the prescriber of the peculiar moral fitness necessary in the case. This is proved by the following passages:—

> "To them who by *patient continuance in well doing seek for glory*, honour and immortality, eternal life" (Rom. 2:7).

> "If thou wilt enter into life, *keep the commandments*" (Matt. 19:17).

> "*Except* ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53).

> "*He that believeth on the Son* hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life" (John 3:36).

> "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, *and that believing ye* might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

> "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. *He that believeth* and is baptised shall be saved" (Mark 16:15, 16).

> "*He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me*, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation" (John 5:24).

> "*He that believeth in me*, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

> "I will give unto *him that is athirst* of the fountain of the water of life freely" (Rev. 21:6).

These testimonies give the deathblow to Universalism. They predicate salvation upon conditions which exclude the majority of mankind. They restrict it to a class which has always been small among men, and effectually disprove the mistaken theory of benevolence which proclaims the "universal restoration" of every human being. This may represent Christianity as a very "narrow" affair, but no narrower than its divinely-intended scope. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way"; this is its characteristic, and not without wisdom. The development of an approved family from the sons of men is its object. The world's vast populations are merely incidental to this plan. They come, and they go; and, as flesh, they profit nothing. They come from nothing, and go whence they came. It is only the theory of

universal human immortality that gives rise to the idea of universal human salvation. When human nature is looked upon at its true standard of vanity, the difficulty vanishes.

Those who are excluded from eternal life are divided into two classes—1st, those who hear the word, and reject it; and 2nd, those whom circumstances preclude from hearing it at all—such as the pagans of ancient times, and the natives of barbarous countries. The second class includes a third, viz., those whose misfortunes prevent them from believing, even if they hear the word, such as idiots, and very young children. The fate of the first class (those who hear the word, and reject it) is plainly stated. They are to be reserved for punishment:—

> "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words … the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

The punishment is inflicted at the resurrection, as Jesus says: "They that have done evil (shall come forth) *unto the resurrection of damnation*." This "resurrection of damnation," however, is not a resurrection to unending life, or to hell fire in the popular acceptation. It is a resurrection to judicially administered shame and corruption. They shall of the flesh, to which they have sown, reap corruption (Gal. 6:8), which ends in the triumph of the worm and fire over their being—that is, in death. They rise to the shame and confusion of a divine and frowning rejection, in which "few stripes" or "many stripes" are inflicted, according to desert—differences in the duration and intensity of suffering as justice may demand, after which the wicked are finally engulfed in the "second death," which obliterates their wretched existence from God's creation. Being of no use, they are put out of the way, and disappear for ever, "where the wicked cease from troubling."

This must have been evident from the numerous testimonies quoted in the last lecture. A paganised theology delights in assigning them to endless existence of torment. This idea is based upon certain obscure New Testament expressions which are supposed to countenance it, but which, when properly understood, have no such terrible significance. "Unquenchable fire" is one of those expressions; it seems to imply the eternal conscious existence of the wicked, but reflection will show it involves the opposite. If the fire is not quenched, there is no escape from *consumption*. This phrase is used in this sense in Jer. 17:27, Ezek. 20:47, and other places. The same is true of "worm dieth not." Herod's worms died not, and the consequence was that HE died (Acts 12:23). If *they* had died, *he* would have recovered. "Everlasting punishment" is affirmed of the wicked; but this does not teach eternal torment. *Aionian* translated "everlasting," does not necessarily import unending perpetuity. Of *aion,* age, from which it is derived, Parkhurst observes, "It denotes duration or continuance of time, *but with great variety*." *Aionian*, therefore, means age-pertaining, without fixing *duration,* which is determinable by the scope of that of which it is affirmed. In the case before us, it is spoken of the punishment of the wicked. As we know, from other parts of Scripture, that the punishment of the age of retribution terminates in death, we are enabled to see the "aion" of the punishment is only co-extensive with the duration of that punishment.

Some imagine that the application of this principle to the phrase "eternal life" destroys the hope of immortality, by making it a thing of possible terminability. If there were nothing beyond the phrase "eternal (*aionian*) life," we should have an uncertain foundation for the hope of endless life. We should in that case simply be informed that there was an age-pertaining life—a life pertaining to the coming age of God's intervention in human affairs, but should not, by the phrase, receive any information as to the nature of that life or the extent of its duration. But the case stands not in this uncertain state. We are explicitly informed by other testimonies, that while *aionian* punishment ends in death, the life to be conferred in that same *aion* is inextinguishable. "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world … neither marry nor are given in marriage; NEITHER CAN THEY DIE ANY MORE, for they are

equal unto the angels" (Luke 20:35–36). "There shall be NO MORE DEATH" (Rev. 21:4). "They shall *never perish*" (John 10:28). "He will *swallow up death in victory*" (Isaiah 25:8). "This mortal must put on IMMORTALITY" (I Cor. 15:53). If immortality had an end, it would not be immortality. *Aionian* life is unending life. We know this, not from the use of the word *aionian*, which would tell us nothing on the subject, but from testimonies like thos quoted.

The second class of those who do not attain to life, are those who, never having seen the light, have never rejected it, and for that reason cannot be liable to the judgment that awaits those who have. What is to be done with them? It is common to suppose they will be among the saved. Who can entertain such a supposition in view of the fact that they are sinners, and already excluded from life? Besides, if darkness and unenlightenment be a passport into the kingdom of God, why did Jesus send Paul "to turn the Gentiles *from darkness* to light … THAT THEY MAY RECEIVE … INHERITANCE among them which are sanctified"? (Acts 26:18). If salvation in barbarism is certain, it would be better to let men remain in ignorance than imperil their eternal destiny by the responsibilities of knowledge. We must remember that the very circumstances that preclude the class in question from being rejectors of the Messiah, also prevent them from accepting him in whom alone is hope and life. They have none of the responsibilities of the rejectors of the gospel, but they have also none of the privileges of its enlightened and obedient believers. What, then, is to become of them? Paul answers the question in Romans 2:12:—"As many as have sinned without law shall also *perish without law*." Paganism, heathenism, idiotcy, and infantile incapability are amenable to no law. Therefore, resurrection does not take place in their case. Death has passed upon them under the only law they were ever related to, viz., the law of Adam; and they sleep, never to be disturbed. Their position is described in the following passage from Isaiah 26:14:—

> "They are dead, they SHALL NOT LIVE; they are deceased, they SHALL NOT RISE; therefore hast thou visited and DESTROYED them, and *made all their* MEMORY TO PERISH."

A similar declaration is made in Jeremiah 51:57, in regard to the aristocracy of Babylon, who belonged to the identical class of whom we are speaking:—

> "I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her captains and her rulers, and her mighty men, and *they shall sleep* A PERPETUAL SLEEP, and *not wake*, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of Hosts."

God is just, and in this His justice is made manifest. He could not punish them with justice, and He could not reward them with justice; therefore He puts them aside.

This completes the sum of what has to be advanced in reference to the conditional nature of immortality, as a gift to be bestowed at the resurrection. The proposition is plain, and the evidence conclusive. May it be the happy lot of all who read these pages to inherit the glorious gift.

Lecture 5

JUDGMENT TO COME; THE DISPENSATION OF DIVINE AWARDS TO RESPONSIBLE CLASSES AT THE RETURN OF CHRIST

AN EXAMINATION of the Bible will show that Christendom is astray on nothing more than on the subject of judgment to come. The common idea of "judgment to come," is that at a certain time popularly known as the "last day," God will bring every human being to individual account—that heaven will be emptied, and hell emptied, of their countless myriads of souls, which will be reunited to their former bodies (resurrected to receive them) and added to earth's living population and brought to judgment.

There is no exception to this rule in orthodox minds. It does not seem to strike them as a strange thing that there should be a judgment day for anyone, if every case is settled at the occurence of death. Neither does it appear to them any difficulty that the manifestly irresponsible classes of mankind should be brought to judgment. "Heathens," pagans, barbarians of the lowest type, human brutes of all sorts, idiots, infants—*everyone*—absolutely every human soul that has ever had a being, in what condition soever it may have existed—according to current theology, will be resuscitated, and brought to account.

That there are difficulties—great and insuperable—in the way of such an idea, can be attested by the agonising efforts of many a thoughtful mind. That the idea itself is thoroughly unscriptural we propose now to show.

We have in reality done so in previous lectures. But the matter is deserving of a closer and more systematic consideration. We have quoted statements that declare the non-resurrection of those who, being unenlightened, are non-responsible. Further evidence is found in David's description of the position occupied by the class in question (Psalm 49:6–20):—

> "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him (for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever); that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption. For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations … nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: *he is like the beasts that perish*. This their way is their folly; yet their posterity approve their sayings. LIKE SHEEP THEY ARE LAID IN THE GRAVE; *death shall feed on them*; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning. (You that fear my name … shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be *ashes under the soles of your feet*—Mal. 4:3). And their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me. Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away—his glory shall not descend after him. Though while he lived, he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself, *he shall go to the generation of his fathers*; THEY SHALL NEVER SEE LIGHT. *Man that is in honour and understandeth not*, IS LIKE THE BEASTS THAT PERISH."

This is reasonable. It would be unreasonable to bring the brutish of mankind to individual account. Judgment has its basis in responsibility, and responsibility is a question of circumstances and capacity. Human beings in a state of barbarism may have the latent capacity to be responsible; but this does not make them responsible for the simple reason that the capacity is latent. The actual condition of mind which gives the ground of responsibility does not exist. This is the case with children. They possess reason and moral capacity in the germ, but because these qualities are not developed, by universal law they are held not responsible in human matters. Is God less just than man?

Human responsibility to the Deity primarily arises from human capacity to discern good and evil, and power to act upon discernment. Beasts are not accountable either to man or God, because they are destitute of the power to discriminate or choose. They act under the power of blind impulse. Idiots are in the same category of irresponsible agents in the degree of their incapacity, and many men not considered idiots are little better as regards their power of acting from rational choice.

The nature and extent of human amenability to a future account can only be apprehended in view of the relations subsisting between God and man, as disclosed in the history presented to us in the Scriptures. Apart from this, all is speculation, theory, and uncertainty. Philosophy is at fault, because it disregards the record. Accept the record, and all is simple and intelligible. The progenitor of the race was made amenable to consequences placed within the jurisdiction of his will in a certain matter. Disobedience occurred and the law came into force: Adam and all his posterity came under the power of the law of sin and death, which was destined in their generations to sweep them away like the grass of the earth. Had God intended no further dealings with the race, responsibility would have ended here. The grave-penalty would have closed the account; and human life, if indeed it had continued on the face of the earth in the absence of divine interposition, would have been the unredeemed tale of sorrow, which it is in the experience of all who are "without God and without hope in the world," unburdened, it may be, with the responsibilities but unalleviated by the hopes and affections with which the day-spring from on high hath visited us, and lightened this place of darkness.

But, in His great mercy, Jehovah conceived intentions of benevolence which He is working out in His own wise way. He did not—in haste and blunder, as our short-sighted philosophers insist His goodness ought to have prompted Him to do—at once and summarily, and without condition, reprieve the sentenced culprit. This would have been to violate those deep-laid principles of law which guide all the Deity's operations, "in nature" and in "grace," and preserve the conditions of harmony throughout the universe. It would have been to perform a work not of mercy, but of destruction, confusion, and anarchy. The method of benevolence conceived in the divine mind was intended to work beneficence toward man conformably with the law that had constituted him a death-stricken sinner, a law which involves "glory to God in the highest" as well as "goodwill toward men."

This intention necessitated those successive dispensations of His will which the world has witnessed in times past, and which have rescued both human existence and human responsibility from the bottomless profound to which the law of Eden consigned them. The enunciation of His purpose in promise and prediction, and the declaration of His law in precept and statute, reopened relations between God and man, and revived the moral responsibility which otherwise would have perished. *It is, however, a divine principle that this result is limited to those who come within the actual sphere of operations*.

> "Where no law is, there is no transgression" (Rom. 4:15).
>
> "If ye were blind (that is, ignorant), *ye should have no sin*" (John 9:41).

"The times of this ignorance *God winked at*" (Acts 17:30).

"Man that is in honour and *understandeth not*, IS LIKE THE BEASTS THAT PERISH" (Psa. 49:20).

"*This is the* (ground of) *condemnation*, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light" (John 3:19).

Hence, in the absence of light—that is, when men are in a state of ignorance—they are not amenable to condemnation; God "winks at" their doings (Acts 17:30), just as He winks at the actions of the brutes of the field. Barbarous nations are in this condition. They are without light and without law, and Paul's declaration on the subject is in harmony with the general principles enunciated in the Scriptures quoted:—"As many as have sinned without law shall also *perish* without law" (Rom. 2:12). If from him to whom much is given, much is required (Luke 12:48), it follows that from him to whom nothing is given, nothing shall be required, and from him to whom little is given, little is required in all the area over which the judgment operates.

This principle of absolute equity in the matter of responsibility is exemplified in the words of Jesus:—"If I had not come and spoken unto them, *they had not had sin*" (John 15:22). "That servant which knew his lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with *many stripes*; but he that knew not and did commit things *worthy of stripes*, shall be beaten with few stripes" (Luke 12:47). "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" (John 12:48).

The operation of these principles is illustrated in the history of human experience. From Adam to Noah, there was but a little light. The promise of a seed, by the side of the woman, to crush out the serpent principle of disobedience and its results, was almost the only star that shone in the darkness of that time. Prophetic glimpses of the coming interference in its ultimate shape, such as those vouchsafed to Enoch (Jude 14), and the precepts of Noah, the preacher of righteousness, through whom the Anointing Spirit promulgated the divine principles to those who were disobedient (I Peter 3:18–20), added a little to the light of these times, but, apparently, not more than was sufficient to confer a title of resurrection on those who laid hold on it by faith. So far as we have any information, few became responsible to a resurrection to condemnation in pre-Noachic times. Human wickedness, culminating in universal corruption, was visited with the almost total destruction of the species by a flood, which may be regarded as having been a winding-up of all judicial questions arising out of the preceding period, so far as condemnation is concerned, and, therefore, as precluding from resurrection to judgment those who were the subjects of it.

On this point, however, positive ground cannot be taken. Since resurrection unto life will take place in several cases belonging to that dispensation, it is not improbable that resurrection to condemnation may also take place among those who were obnoxiously related to that which gave the others their title, including the class specified in Enoch's prophecy—"the ungodly," who were guilty of "ungodly deeds" and "hard speeches" against Jehovah, and who must, therefore, have possessed the amount of knowledge necessary to constitute a basis of responsibility. This must remain an open question, not because the principle upon which judgment will be administered is obscure, but because we have not a sufficient amount of information as to the facts of the time in question to enable us accurately to apply the principle.

The principle itself, that responsibility Godward, is only created by contact with divine law in a tangible and authorised form, holds good in every form of human relation to the Almighty. Noah's immediate family were within the pale of the divine cognition, and responsibility in reference to another life may arise out of that; but their descendants

wandered far out of the way of righteousness and understanding, sinking below moral responsibility, degenerating to the level of the beast, and establishing those "times of ignorance" throughout the world which we have Paul's authority for saying were "winked at."

In the call of Abraham, the member of an idolatrous family, but who possessed the latent disposition to be faithful, God arrested the tendency to repeat the universal corruption of antediluvian times. The germ of a more direct responsibility was planted among men by his election, and by the bestowal of promises upon him which had ultimate reference to the whole of the race. Abraham individually, while constituted a man of privilege, was also constituted a man of responsibility. Abram, the idolater, was his own—his own to live, like the insect of the moment—his own to die and disappear like the vapour. Abraham, the called of God, was no longer his own, but bought with the price of God's promise. He entered upon a higher relation of being. He was exalted to a higher destiny, and had imposed upon him Godward obligations, unknown to his former condition. Success or failure in the ordering of his life, was of much greater moment than before. Faith and obedience would constitute him the heir of the world, and the subject of resurrection to immortality: unbelief would make him obnoxious to a severer and farther.reaching displeasure than fell upon Adam.

In this respect, the children of Abraham by faith, that is, those who walk in the steps of the faith which Abraham had being yet uncircumcised (Rom. 4:12), who, being Christ's, are Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:29) through believing the gospel, and being baptised into Christ, are like their father. By nature children of wrath, even as others, they were in the days of their ignorance "without God and without hope in the world" (Eph. 2:12), "strangers from the covenants of promise" (ibid), "alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them" (Eph. 4:18), living without law, and destined, as the result of that condition, to perish without law in Adam; inheriting death without resurrection—death without remedy; having neither the privileges nor the responsibilities of a divine relationship.

When called from darkness to light, by the preaching of the gospel, whether they submit to that gospel or refuse submission, they are "not their own." They neither live nor die to themselves as formerly. They have passed into a special relationship to Deity, in which their lives, good or evil, come under divine supervision, and form the basis of a future accountability, unknown in their state of darkness, at which God winked.

The law of faith established by the promises made to Abraham, constituted a centre, around which responsibilities of this description developed themselves. All who acquired Abraham's faith came under Abraham's responsibilities. Doubtless, many entered this position in the course of the Mosaic ages. The law was added because of transgression (Gal. 3:19), and the purpose of its addition is indicated in its being styled *a schoolmaster*. Its mission was to teach *the first lessons* of Jehovah's supremacy and holiness. It was not designed as a system through which men might acquire deliverance from Adamic bondage. Its purpose was purely preliminary and provisional, having reference to that result in its ultimate bearings, but not intended directly to develop it.

Paul's comment on it is as follows: "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Gal, 3:21). It was impossible life could come by a law which required moral infallibility on the part of human nature. For this reason, the law, though "holy, and just, and good" (Rom. 7:12), was "weak through the flesh," and though "ordained to life," Paul found it (from this cause) "to be unto death" (verse 10). The consequence was, that "all the world stood guilty before God"; and in that moral relation to the Deity, they were precluded from boasting, that is to say, precluded from attaining to eternal life on a principle which would have left it open to them to think, and to say, that their life was their own by right as against the Deity. Prospectively considered, this was a mighty triumph of divine wisdom; for had immortal existence been attainable by self-

acquired title, room would have been left for the admission of an element in the relations of God and man which would have disturbed the perfect harmony that will exist where God is absolutely supreme, both in law and benevolence, and man is in the position of a love-saved brand from the burning.

The law of righteousness by faith is the principle on which men are saved—that is, saving righteousness is recognised or imputed by God where He is honoured by faith being exercised in what He has promised. This law came into operation with Abraham. Actually, it had its origin in Eden, for we read of Abel that by faith (the substance of things hoped for), he offered an acceptable sacrifice (Heb. 11:4). The prediction of the woman's serpent-destroying seed formed a pivot on which faith could work even then, and doubtless was the subject-matter of the faith which saved Abel, Enoch, and Noah; but the full and official initiation of the law of faith, as the rule of salvation, occurred in the history of Abraham. This law was the basis of resurrectional responsibility.

The Mosaic law was national. Its rewards and penalties were confined to the conditions of mortal life. It took no cognisance of, and made no provision for, life beyond the natural term of human existence. In its ceremonial forms and observances, it symbolised the truth in relation to Christ and his mission, but in its proximate bearing upon the nation, it subserved no spiritual purpose beyond the continual enforcement of the schoolmaster lesson of Jehovah's supremacy and greatness. In this, however, it established the greatest of first principles, and laid a foundation on which the Abrahamic law of faith could have its perfect work.

Out of the law, as a national code, it does not appear any resurrectional responsibility arose. Yet, concurrently with its jurisdiction, it is evident that a dispensation of God's mind, having reference to resurrection, was in force. Undoubtedly this was subordinate, and occupied the place of an undercurrent; but, its existence is unquestionable, else how are "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets," to appear in the Kingdom of God? If it be recognised that God's purpose from the beginning had reference to the mission of the Christ as "The Resurrection and the Life," there will be no difficulty in apprehending this conclusion. Obscurely it may be, but really it must be, that resurrectional responsibility was contemplated in all Jehovah did through His servants, from righteous Abel to faithful Paul. Jesus has shown us that the very designation assumed by the Deity in converse with Moses at the bush, though apparently used for the simple purpose of historical identification, expresses the doctrine of resurrection in relation at any rate to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God called Himself the God of men that were dead; *therefore*, reasoned Jesus—and that convincingly, for the Sadducees were put to silence—He intends to raise them from the dead.

If so great a conclusion can warrantably be deduced from so apparently slim a foundation, what may we not legitimately infer from the promise of a country to them they never possessed, and the assurance of the universal blessing of mankind in connection with them, which has never yet been realised! What but the conclusion affirmed by Paul that they "died in faith, *not having received the promises*," and, therefore, that they must rise from the dead to realise them? With this general argument in view, it is easy to recognise resurrectional responsibility in many expressions which a forced method of explanation alone can apply to the judgment of the present limited experience (Psalm 37, whole of the chapter: 49:14; 58:10; 62:12; Prov. 11:18–31; Ecclesiastes 3:17; 5:8; 11:9; 12:14; Isaiah 3:10; 26:19–21; 35:4; 66:4, 5, 14; Malachi 3:16–18; 4:1–3, etc.).

Jewish responsibility was greater than that of the cast-off descendants of the rejected groundling of Eden, because their relation to Deity was special, direct, and privileged. The responsibility originating in natural constitution, was supplemented by the obligations imposed by divine election, and arising out of the national contract entered into at Sinai, to be obedient to all that the Deity required (Ex. 24:3, 7). This is recognised in the words of

Jehovah by Amos, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; THEREFORE *I will punish you for all your iniquities*" (Amos 3:2). The national sufferings of the Jews, in dispersion and privation, are evidently (both on the face of the testimony, and on a consideration of the moral bearing of the case) a full discharge of the responsibility arising from national election.

A responsibility lying in degree between that of the Jews and the outlying Gentiles, attached itself to those nations that were in contact with the Jewish people. This is evident on many pages of the prophets. Take, for instance, the words addressed to the king of Tyre:—

> "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; … thou wast upon the holy mountain of God. Thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the 'stones of fire' … *Because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem,* Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people; she is turned unto me; I shall be replenished now she is laid waste. *Therefore* thus saith the Lord God, *Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus,* and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up" (Ezek. 28:13–14; 26:2–3).

Take, also, similar words addressed to Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia:—

> TO AMMON: "*Because thou hast said,* AHA, *against my sanctuary when it was profaned,* and against the land of Israel when it was desolate, and against the house of Judah when they went into captivity, *Behold therefore, I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession,"* etc. (Ezek. 25:3–4).

> TO MOAB: "*Because that Moab and Seir do say,* Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen, *therefore,* … I will execute judgments upon Moab" (Ezek. 25:8–11).

> TO EDOM: "*Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah* by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended and revenged himself upon them, therefore, thus said the Lord God, I will stretch out mine hand upon Edom," etc. (Ezek. 25:12–13).

> TO PHILISTIA: "*Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge,* and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred, THEREFORE thus saith the Lord God, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines," etc. (Ezek. 25:15–16).

In these cases, it does not appear that God intends to mete out individual judgment by resurrection from the dead. It requires a high state of privilege before such can with justice be done. The majority of mankind, particularly in the rude and barbarous times that required the schoolmaster lessons of the Mosaic law, were in circumstances of pure misfortune. Born under condemnation in Adam, and left to the poor resources of the natural mind, which in all its history has never originated anything noble apart from the ideas set in motion by "revelation," they were as unable to elevate themselves above the level on which they stood as any tribe of animals. How just and merciful it was then, of the Deity to "wink at" "the times of this ignorance" (Acts 17:30), which alienated from the life of God (Eph. 4:18), and allow flesh, under such circumstances, to pass away like the flower of the field, that the place thereof might know it no more (Psa. 103:15, 16).

On the supposition that every human being is an immortal soul, such a line of action would, of course, be excluded, and the circumstances of the early "dispensations" would be altogether inexplicable. An immortal soul, in the times of antiquity, would be worth as much as one now; and if it be wise and kind to save immortal souls now, there would seem a strange absence of wisdom and beneficence in the arrangement, which in these early ages, put salvation beyond their reach, and made their doom to hell-fire inevitable by the lack of those means of knowledge which are in our day accessible.

If, to get out of this difficulty, it be suggested that man, in such a plight, will in mercy be permitted to enter heaven, we are instantly compelled to question the value of our own

privileges, nay, to doubt and deny the wisdom of the gospel, which, on such a theory, is not only necessary to salvation but a positive hindrance to it; since by its responsibilities, it imperils a salvation which, in its absence, would be certain. We should also be compelled to deny the testimony of Scripture, that man having no understanding is like the beasts that perish, and that life and immortality have been brought to light by Christ *through the Gospel*.

But we are not now dealing with the monster fiction of Christendom. We leave the immortality of the soul out of the account, and deal with the question of judgment in the light of the fact that mankind is perishing under the law of sin and death, and, in Adam, has no more to do with a future state than the decaying vegetation which, year by year, chokes the forests, and passes away with the winter. The endeavour is to realise, in the light of reason and Scripture testimony, the varying shades of responsibility created by the dealings of the Almighty with a race already exiled from life and favour under the law of Eden.

We have seen that resurrectional responsibility was limited to those who were related to the word of the God of Israel. The promises and precepts conferred privilege and imposed responsibility having reference to resurrection. They formed a basis for that awakening from the dust to everlasting life, and shame and everlasting contempt, foretold to Daniel, and implied in many parts of the writings of Job, David, and Solomon. The extent to which they operate, it is neither possible nor important for us to determine. The law of resurrectional responsibility operates much more vividly upon our own times, and it is the relation of this law to ourselves that we are more especially concerned to elucidate.

It was left for him who proclaimed himself the "Resurrection and the Life" to define clearly the relation of judgment to the great scheme of which he was the pivot and the means. He appears before us as the solution of the great difficulty which must have haunted the minds of the faithful men of ancient times, in reference to the declaration that "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked" (Eccles. 3:17). He exhibits in himself the method by which the arbitration of the unapproachable and immeasurable Deity is to be brought to bear upon mortal and finite man. The "Word made flesh" proclaims himself the instrument and vehicle of divine judgment. He tells us that "*the Father hath committed* ALL JUDGMENT *unto the Son*" (John 5:22), and that as no man can come to the Father but by him, so no one will be judged by the Father but in the light of the word which operates through him (John 12:48).

It is highly important that this fact should be distinctly recognised, because it is part of the truth concerning Jesus, which forms a prominent feature in the proclamation of the gospel. This is evident from these testimonies: 1st, that in which Paul comprehends the doctrine of eternal (*aionian*) judgment among first principles (Heb. 6:1, 5); 2nd, the declaration of Peter: "*He commanded us to* PREACH UNTO THE PEOPLE *and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be* THE JUDGE OF QUICK AND DEAD" (Acts 10:42); 3rd, the statement of Paul that there is a "day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, *according to my* (Paul's) *gospel"* (Rom. 2:16). These general evidences are strengthened by the following testimonies, which we submit in detail on account of the importance of clear and Scriptural views on the subject:—

> "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*" (John 12:48).
>
> "As many as have sinned in the law shall be *judged by the law*" (Rom. 2:12).
>
> "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (I Cor. 3:13).
>
> "The Father who, without respect of persons, *judgeth according to every man's work*" (I Pet. 1:17).

"The day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds … *in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ*" (Rom. 2:5, 6, 16).

"We shall all stand before *the judgment seat of Christ* … Every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:10, 12).

"Judge nothing before the time, *until the Lord come*, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (I Cor. 4:5).

"*We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ*, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10).

"*The Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead* at his appearing and his kingdom" (II Tim. 4:1).

"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this (that is when the death-state ends in resurrection) *the judgment*" (Heb. 9:27).

"Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead" (I Pet. 4:5).

"That we may have boldness *in the day of judgment*" (I John 4:17).

"The time of the dead that *they should be judged*" (Rev. 11:18).

The proposition that judgment is one of the prerogatives and functions of the Messiah, thus stands upon a very broad Scriptural foundation, not merely as a fact, but as a constituent of the truth as it is in Jesus. The bearing of the fact is apparent in connection with the mission of the Messiah, as related to our particular dispensation. This is briefly defined by Paul to be to "purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14), and by James, "to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name." The mode of accomplishing this work is the preaching of the Gospel. An invitation has gone out to the ends of the earth, for people of any "kindred, nation, people, or tongue" to become servants of the Messiah, and heirs of the kingdom which God has promised to them that love Him.

Over the whole period of the times of the Gentiles the number of these who respond to His call is considerable; but all who are thus called are not chosen (Matt. 22:14), because many who accept the word preached are not influenced by it to "present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable." As in the case of the Israelites under Moses, "the word preached does not profit them, *not being mixed with faith*" in all who hear it (Heb. 4:2). The soil being bad, the seed produces no result of any consequence. The net of the kingdom (Matt. 13:47) submerged (by preaching) in the ocean of "peoples and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," encloses bad fish as well as good. The propagation of the gospel results not only in rejectors, but in servants, and not only faithful servants, but unfaithful also.

Not only so, but there are different degrees of merit among those who are faithful. Some sow bountifully, others sparingly. Some bring forth fruit thirty fold, and some a hundred fold. No man can assess the degrees. None of the servants can say, "This shall be accepted much, and that little, and the other not at all." In this matter, they are commanded to "judge not" (Matt. 7:1), and indeed they cannot do it; though, if censoriously inclined, they may attempt it, and sin. There are secrets unknown (good and evil), which require to be known most accurately, before a just judgment can be given. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Sam., 16:7).

Here, then, is a great community, living and dead, every member related to the rest by the closest of ties, and yet each sustaining a problematical relation to the finality upon which they have set their hearts—the attainment of immortality, and the inheriting of God's kingdom; each having a right to the promised blessing, so far as the judgment of the rest is concerned,

and yet each so situated with reference to God, that unfaithfulness will bring his damnation, though all his comrades approve.

When and by what means is this endless variety of causes to be adjusted? When and how is there to be a settlement of the account still open between the Deity and His servants? which to a man is simply inextricable, and impossible if extricated? Has God made any provision by which this superhuman task shall be accomplished?—this balancing of good and evil in the infinite diversity of millions of "quick and dead"?—this determination of the minute shades of merit and demerit, attaching to the responsible dead and living of a hundred generations?—this rewarding, in just ratio, of unknown and forgotten deeds of constancy and mercy?—this exposure and retribution of evil thoughts, hidden malice, hard speeches, and deeds of darkness? Has He arranged for such a scrutiny of the affairs of His people, as shall result in the separation of the evil from the good, the reward of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked among them?

The answer sometimes given to this question is true in the fact upon which it is built, but wrong in the construction of the fact. It is said that "the Lord knoweth them that are His," and that, therefore, there is no necessity for a judgment; that "He discerneth the thoughts and intents of the heart," and "needeth not that any should tell Him what is in man." This is true, and marks the difference between the" judgment seat of Christ" and a human judicature which makes inquisition *for the purpose of ascertaining the facts*. But when this truth is made the means of displacing the necessity for the revealed purpose of judging the quick and the dead, it is applied with an illogical and pernicious result. It is illogical, because it by no means follows that the Deity's omniscient perceptions are not to have *official expression*, especially when, as in this case, those perceptions affect the standing of those who are the subjects of them, and determine *in the expression of them*, their destiny.

In all transactions between man and the Deity, there is an invariable accommodation on the part of the latter to the necessities and finite apprehensions of the former. Why did Jehovah allow a faithless generation of Israelites to escape from Egypt under Moses, and go through the miraculous experiences of the desert, and finally pronounce condemnation on them, instead of acting on His knowledge, and summarily destroying them in a night, like the Assyrians, without warning or explanation? Because He was anxious to bring down to human apprehension the methods of His moral procedure, which He could only do by acting on human modes and processes. Why did He allow Korah, Dathan, and Abiram to lurk in the camp for a season, and trouble the congregation by attempting a rebellion against Moses and Aaron, instead of acting upon His omniscience, and weeding them out at the beginning of the journey, and so save the nation from turbulence? Because such a mode of procedure, instead of illustrating and justifying the ways of God to man, would have wrapped them in mystery, and clothed them with the appearance of caprice and injustice.

Why did He so long forbear with the Jews in their obstinacy, foreknowing their ultimate rejection of all His messengers and His own Son? Why did Jesus, who discerned "spirits," tolerate Judas till he convicted himself by betraying his master? Why did the Spirit suffer Ananias and Sapphira to come into the presence of the apostles, and go through the formality of hearing their own condemnation, before their mendacity was punished by death? In fact, why do things happen at all as they do? Why did not the Deity frame the terrestrial economy of things on such a basis that obedience and not disobedience should have been the law? The whole history of divine procedure, in relation to human affairs, shows that divine omniscience is never allowed for a moment to forestall or displace the natural order of events, but rather sets up and enforces the law by which everything has its full and logical course, before the culminating consequence is reached.

To say that because God knows the righteous from the wicked, He will not bring them to the formality of a judgment, is to reason against every operation of the Deity on record. It is

true the Deity knows; but is it not necessary that the righteous and the wicked themselves should know? How shall the righteous know themselves approved, and the wicked condemned, and the Deity be justified in the eyes of both, without the declaration of what He knows?

The conclusion is also pernicious, because it evolves the rejection of one of the doctrines which are defined as the first principles of the doctrines of the Christ. We have quoted testimony sufficient to show that the doctrine of the judgment of the living and dead by Christ is part and parcel of the gospel-proclamation about Him. We further submit, on the strength of considerations already passed in review, that logically viewed, it is a natural and necessary part of the glad tidings. It is one of the finest sources of relief which the truth affords, the knowledge that the disputes, misunderstandings, and wrongs of the present maladministration of things, are destined, in the purpose of God, to come before an infallible tribunal, at which every man shall have praise or condemnation, according to the nature of the disclosure.

It is gladdening to know that there lies between this corrupt state of things and the perfection of the kingdom of God, an ordeal which will prevent the entrance of "anything that defileth," which, as fire, will try every man's work, and thin down, by a process of purification, the crowd of those who do no more than say "Lord, Lord!" It is comforting to know that wrongful suffering will then be avenged, that secret faithfulness will then be openly acknowledged, that unappreciated worth will be recognised, and that evil doing, unpunished, unsuspected, and unknown, will be held up for execration, in the face of so august an assembly as that of the Elohim, presided over by the Lion of the tribe of Judah. This is part of the glad tidings concerning Jesus Christ.

In these remarks, we assume that the object and effect of the judgment is to mete out to every man who is summoned to it, *according to his deeds*, WHETHER GOOD OR BAD. This is apparent from the testimony quoted to prove that judgment will be executed by the Son of Man at his coming. We append further and more specific evidence on this point:—

> "Many will say to me in *that day*, Lord, Lord … And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: DEPART FROM ME, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22–23).
>
> "Every idle (evil) word that men shall speak, *they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment*" (Matt. 12:36).
>
> "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and *then he shall reward every man according to his works*" (Matt. 16:27).
>
> "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:12).
>
> "Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3:12).
>
> "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, *to give every man according as his work shall be*" (Rev. 22:12).
>
> "The work of a man shall He render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways" (Job 34:11).
>
> "Doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? and shall not He render to every man according to his works?" (Prov. 24:12—See also Psa. 62:12).
>
> "I the Lord search the heart; I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer. 17:10).

Another important evidence of the conclusion to which these testimonies lead us, is to be found in the parables of Christ, in many of which he illustrates the relation between himself and his servants in connection with his departure from the earth. In all of these, he presents the fact that at his return he will "take account" of them, and deal with them according to their individual deserts. Thus, in the parable of the nobleman (Luke 19:15), "It came to pass that *when he was returned*, having received the kingdom, *he commanded these servants to be called unto him to whom he had given the money*, THAT HE MIGHT KNOW HOW MUCH EVERY MAN HAD GAINED BY TRADING." Those servants are given as three in number, and, doubtless, represent the several classes of which the bulk of Christ's professing servants are composed. The first gives a satisfactory account of himself, having increased five talents to ten, and receives jurisdiction over ten cities. The second has made two talents into four, and entitles himself to meritorious recognition, and the allotment of four cities. The third, who, though less privileged, might have stood equally well, had he turned his single talent into two, justifies his indolence on the plea that he dreaded a service where more was expected than was given in the first instance. This man, who stands for the unfaithful, is rejected. The decree is, "Take the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath ten talents.… Cast ye the UNPROFITABLE SERVANT into outer darkness" (Matt. 25:28–30). Here the unprofitable servant figures in the judgment of the king's household, at his return, as well as the approved.

In Matt. 22:1–14, we have another parable in which the same feature is introduced. A certain king issues invitations to his son's marriage, but the parties invited make various excuses for not coming. The king then orders a general invitation to all and sundry whom his servants may find on the highways, and his servants execute the orders, and "gather as many as they found, *bad and good*." The king then comes in to see the guests, and "*saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment*, " whom he ordered to be "*bound hand and foot, and taken away*." This shows that the judgment to be carried out by Jesus at the time of reckoning has the practical effect of "*severing the wicked from amongst the just*." To the same purport is the parable of which the latter italicised words are an explanation. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to the shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but *cast the bad away*" (Matt. 13:47, 48). Also the following: "The Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore … lest coming suddenly, *he find you sleeping*" (Mark 13:34, 36).

Further, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return … Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching … But, and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and to drink and to be drunken, the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour when he is not aware, and *will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers*" (Luke 12:35–37, 45, 46). The parable of the ten virgins enforces the same fact, viz., the unworthy portion of his servants will be publicly and officially rejected at the time the others are acknowledged.

This is in harmony with the reason of the thing, as well as with the numerous testimonies already cited from the apostolic writings. Many are called, but only few out of the many are "chosen." When should the choice take place, but at the time represented in these parables, viz., "When the lord of those servants cometh" to develop the state of things with reference to which the choice is to be made? (Matt. 25:19). The present is not a time for dividing the wicked from the righteous. Both go to the grave, and "rest together in the dust," and their merits and demerits would sleep for ever with them in the silence of the tomb, were it not for the awaking voice that calls the just and unjust, at the appointed time, from the oblivion of

hades, to give an account before the "judgment-seat of Christ." Now is not the time for Jesus to execute judgment. He is a priest over his own house. The great question of account is left over till he returns. "*He shall judge the quick and the dead* AT HIS APPEARING AND HIS KINGDOM." He shall open the dread book of God's remembrance, wherein are indelibly recorded the thoughts and transactions of those who shall come to judgment, and the dead shall be judged out of those things that are written in the book.

Shall the wicked be absent at such a moment? The suggestion is precluded by the testimony and by the sense of the thing. A mockery of a judgment-seat it would be if its operations were confined to the allotment of rewards to the accepted. To judge, in the executive sense, is to enforce the division of good from evil. This is the function of Jesus in relation to His servants at His coming. True, says the suggester, but it will only be the living wicked that he will reject; the dead wicked will sleep on to another period. Is it so, then, that the accident of death a day before the advent will shut off a wicked man from the jurisdiction of the Judge of the quick *and dead*? Is it so that Jesus will only judge the living *and not the dead* at his appearing? Is it so that he is not "lord both *of the dead* and living?" (Rom. 14:9). The answer is self-evident; life or death makes no difference in our relationship to the judgment-seat. The Son of Man has power to call from the dead at his will, and, therefore, virtually, the dead are as much amenable to his judicature as those who may happen to be in the flesh when he is revealed.

The constituted servants of Christ—by belief of the gospel and baptism—are candidates for the kingdom to be manifested at the appearing of Christ, which is to exist thereafter a thousand years; and it is meet that they should be arraigned in his presence to have it decided, as between them and him, when the time comes to enter the kingdom, which of all the number are worthy of the honour sought. This, it is declared, in the testimonies quoted, he will do. To do otherwise—to leave over the underserving of them for adjudication at a subsequent period, would both violate the fitness of things, and contravene the express declarations which we have quoted on the subject. Jesus has declared that he will confess or deny men in the presence of the angels at his coming, according to the position taken by them in his absence (Luke 9:26; Matt. 10:32, 33). Does not this necessitate their presence on the occasion? Where would be the shame of a denial if the one denied were not there to witness his own disgrace? Some will be "ashamed before him *at his coming*" (I John 2:28). Daniel says that at that time "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and *some to shame and everlasting contempt*." This agrees with Paul's statement that "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," shall be the lot of every soul of man that is contentious and disobedient to the truth, "*in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus*" (Rom. 2:8, 9, 16); and with his exhortation in another place, to "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, *who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness*" (I Cor. 4:5).

With the general conclusion before us, that the judgment-seat is the appointed tribunal for determining the great question of individual desert, in relation to the dispensation of God's favour in Christ, we come to the minor but involved question of the nature and position of the dead, during the interval elapsing between their emergence from the death-state and their adjudication by the judge. The object of that adjudication is defined by Paul in the following words: "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, *that every one may receive in body according to that we have done*, WHETHER GOOD OR BAD" (II Cor. 5:10). What shall those "receive in body," who have in the sense of those words, "done good"? and what, those who have "done bad"? Paul, in another place, answers these questions. He says God "will render to every man according to his deeds: *to them who by patient continuance in well doing* (he will render) ETERNAL LIFE. But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish … *in the day when God shall judge the secrets*

of men by Jesus Christ" (Rom. 2:6–9, 16). The same fact he announces in more specific terms to the Galatians (6:7, 8), "Be not deceived; for God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, *that shall he also reap*. He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh *reap corruption*; but he that soweth to the Spirit *shall of the Spirit reap* LIFE EVERLASTING."

Paul does not mention the judgment in this testimony; but it is evident that it relates to the judgment, since life everlasting is not "reaped" in the present state of existence, and "corruption" befalls all alike, without reference to the "sowing." It is evident that the results of the present life are to be dispensed at the judgment-seat. Paul, indeed, expressly declares it in the words already quoted, "that we may receive," etc. This is reasonable, and befitting of the Deity, who is "a God of order" to the utmost exactitude in all things.

If this be so, does it not follow that prior to the judgment-seat, both classes of those subject to judgment, occupy the neutral position they hold in the present life, commingling indiscriminately, awaiting the tribunal, none knowing who is who? Is it not evident that the judgment-seat forms the great natural boundary line between probation and exaltation: the great crisis for determining the standing of the many who have been "called"; the time for that disclosure of divine secrets, which results in the severing of the wicked from among the just, and the rejection and the condemnation of the one, and the acceptance and glorification of the other? If so, it follows that up to the appearance of the dead before Christ to give an account, these questions are undecided, so far as their effect in relation to them is concerned. They are, of course, known to the divine mind, as we have already had occasion to consider, but not declared or enforced. Christ, as the judge of the quick and dead, is entrusted with that very office.

What is the conclusion from these Scriptural premises? There is only one: that the dead assembled for judgment are *men and women in the flesh* recovered from the grave, reproduced, and made to "STAND AGAIN" (*anastasis*) in the presence of their Lord and Judge, to have it determined whether they are worthy of receiving the "hidden manna" of eternal life, for which they are all candidates, or deserving of reconsignment to corruption and death, under the special solemn circumstance of rejection by him who is "altogether lovely." Thus, those who are alive when the Lord comes, and those who emerge from the grave at that period, will be on a footing of perfect equality. They will all be gathered together into the one Great Presence, for the one great dread purpose of inquisition. Not until they hear the spoken words of the King will they know how it is to fare with them. All depends upon the "account." This can only be accurately estimated by the Judge. A righteous man will tremble and underrate his position; on the other hand, "the wicked" may venture with coolness and effrontery before that august tribunal, to recount with complacence and confidence the list of their claims to the Messiah's consideration:—"Have we not prophesied [preached] in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works?"

It is evident from three things—from the reason of the thing, from Christ's parables, and Paul's and Peter's statements—that the judgment will be no dumb show, no wholesale indiscriminate division of classes, but will be an individual reckoning. "Everyone of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:12). It might naturally be fancied that persons before the judgment-seat would simply be paralysed and rendered powerless to utter their minds; but it must be remembered that the power is then and there present that touched Daniel, and made him stand on his feet, when he was felled to the earth by the terrors of angelic presence; and, doubtless, this power will be put forth to enable all calmly, clearly, and with deliberation to manifest themselves as they are. Enswathed by the human spirit "mesmerically" applied, this result can now be partially achieved; how much more when the power of the Highest sustains, will those who are acted upon by it, feel isolated from all perturbing influences, and be enabled to concentrate their minds upon the solemn task they have to perform.

The idea that the righteous dead will spring into being in a state of incorruption, and that the living faithful will be instantaneously transformed, in their scattered places throughout the earth, and changed into the spiritual nature before appearing in the presence of Christ (though apparently countenanced by testimonies which are superficially construed by those who read them) is an error of a serious complexion, since it practically sets aside the New Testament doctrine of the judgment (itself a first principle), and tends to destroy the sense of responsibility and circumspection induced by a recognition of the fact that we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that we may receive in body according to that we have done, whether good or bad.

To profess a belief in the judgment while holding this view, is only to retain a form of words out of deference to New Testament phraseology while having lost that which is represented by the words. If the dead are to awake to incorruptibility or death, according to their deserts, Jesus is robbed of his honour as judge, and the judgment-seat is robbed of its utility and its terror. If the living are to be subject to immortalisation, say in their own houses, before Christ pronounces them blessed, is the judgment-seat not a mere empty form? If (worse than all) the wicked are not to be there to hear and receive their doom, it is no judgment at all, but a mere muster of the chosen; no terror at all, but a ceremony divested of every element of anxiety, since to have a part in it, according to this theory, is to be safe beyond miscarriage; no rendering to *every man* according to his deeds, whether *good or bad*; but a mere bestowal of gifts and honours upon the King's assorted friends. Yet this is the mistaken view which many are led to entertain by a superficial reading of certain parts of the apostolic testimony. We shall consider those passages in detail.

I Thess. 4:16. *The Dead in Christ* SHALL RISE FIRST.—On this it is contended that the accepted will come forth from the grave first; but a reference to the context will show that the comparison implied in these words, is between *the dead righteous* and *the living righteous*, and not between the righteous dead and the wicked dead. The Thessalonians were apparently mourning the death of some of their number in a way that indicated a fear on their part that the deceased had lost something by dying. Paul assures them that this was a mistake. "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (or go before) them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise *first*. THEN (or second) we which are alive and remain shall be caught up," etc. Paul simply means to teach that the dead are restored to life and perfected before the living enter upon the inheritance, and that, therefore, the dead lose nothing by dying. "Wherefore," says he, "comfort one another with these words."

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power" (Rev. 20:6). It is argued upon this that none of the wicked can be raised at that time. The question turns upon the words "have part in the first resurrection." What is it "to have *part* in the first resurrection"? The word translated "part" is *meros*, and this is defined by Parkhurst to mean "a piece, part, portion, fellowship, lot," etc.; hence, to have part in the first resurrection, is to have "a piece, part, portion, fellowship, or lot," at the coming of Christ. To merely come forth is not to have a portion in the resurrection that takes place. There will be many at the judgment-seat who will be dismissed without a "piece, part, portion, lot, or fellowship." The King will refuse to own them. On such the second death hath power, but on those who attain to the condition of things that John witnessed and described as "the first resurrection," viz., a living and reigning with Christ a thousand years—"the second death hath no power." As Jesus says, "*Neither can they die any more*, for they are equal unto the angels."

"*They who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the* RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD, *neither marry nor are given in marriage,"* etc. (Luke 20:35). On the strength of this, it is contended that the unworthy will not come out of the grave at the time the worthy come forth to "obtain that world." The argument is based on a misconstruction of the verse. "The resurrection from the dead" is something more than the act of rising from the grave. "Resurrection" involves the act of rising from the dust, but comprehends more than this in many parts of the New Testament. For instance, the Sadducees asked Jesus, "IN THE RESURRECTION whose wife shall she be?" (Matt. 22:28)—that is, in *the state to which the dead will rise*. How would the question read if construed "whose wife shall she be in the act of rising from the grave"? Again, "IN THE RESURRECTION *they neither marry nor are given in marriage*" (Matt. 22:30)—that is, in *the state to which the dead rise*. Again, "they that have done good (shall come forth) *unto the resurrection of life*, and they that have done evil unto *the resurrection of condemnation*"; that is, one class come out of the grave to one *resurrection-state*, and the other to another *resurrection-state*. It is testified that Paul preached Jesus and the resurrection (Acts 17:18). This could not mean that Paul simply preached the act of rising from the grave. The mere act of rising from the grave is not necessarily a good thing. Lazarus and the son of the widow of Nain rose from the grave, but not to the resurrection (state) preached by Paul. They merely received a renewal of mortal life. The wicked of a certain class will rise from the grave, but the act of rising will not be to them a gladsome event, but the contrary; they would prefer to be left in the oblivion of the tomb. Everything depends upon THE STATE to which the rising from the grave is the introduction. Paul preached *the resurrection-state of incorruption and immortality*. To this state, the dead have to rise. The mere act of rising is not the resurrection. It is involved in it; it is a part, but as employed in the Scriptures, it requires the state after coming out of the grave to be added, before the idea expressed by the word resurrection is complete.

Another illustration of this is to be found in a passage on which the opponents of this idea rely: "*I saw thrones, and they sat upon them*, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands, *and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years*. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. THIS (what? The state of things that John witnessed—the reigning of the accepted for a thousand years)—THIS IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION" (Rev. 20:4, 5). There is no mention of the act of coming out of the grave. John merely sees certain persons who had been dead, occupying a certain position with Christ; and, describing the scene as a whole, he calls it THE FIRST RESURRECTION. Evidently the word resurrection cannot here be restricted to the act of rising from the grave. Many will have a part in this "first resurrection" who will never go into the grave at all, viz., "those who are alive and remain." "Resurrection" here broadly covers a state and a time to which the persons seen are introduced by rising from the death-state, whether in that state they are below the sod, or walking above it in mortality. But both living and dead will have to appear before the judgment-seat, before they take the position in which John saw them, and when they appear at the judgment-seat they will have companions whom they will never see again, for to some, Christ will "say unto them in that day … I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22, 23). Such will be "ASHAMED before him *at his coming*" (I John 2:28; Dan. 12:2).

A principal obstacle is found in the words, "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." This is made an obstacle by assuming that it applies to the unfaithful servants of Christ. This assumption is evidently a mistake, because the vision of John comprehended only the resurrection of the just, who "lived and reigned with Christ." All that the passage really proves is, that there is to be no more resurrection of dead people after

Christ has come till the end of the thousand years. It is certain that it is not intended to teach, and, as we have seen, does not teach, that there will be no resurrection of unjust at the coming of Christ. No one part of the Scriptures can violate the unequivocal testimony of other parts. To admit of the common interpretation of Rev. 20:6, would be to abandon the New Testament doctrine of judgment.

But the greatest stumbling-block with those who deny the judgment of the saints consists of Paul's statements on the subject of resurrection in I Cor. 15: *"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.… The dead shall be raised incorruptible"* (verses 42–44, 52). Restricting these words to the mere act of emergence from the ground, they naturally seem an express affirmation, that the body is incorruptible, spiritual, and immortal from the first moment of its restoration; and that, therefore, judgment is anticipated and superseded by this silent proclamation of acceptance, and that nothing lies between those thus rising incorruptible and perfected salvation, but a joyous reunion with the Lord.

The mistake consists in construing Paul's words too narrowly, and reading them as if he were dealing with the dramatic incidents of the resurrection, instead of the state of existence to which the act of resurrection leads. Paul is not discussing the scientific aspect of the subject. He is not defining the process by which a dead man ascends from the depths of corruption to the nature of the angels; the literal details are foreign to the subject before his mind. He is dealing with the broad question propounded by the objector; first, how—as a question of possibility—are the dead raised? and second, for or to ("with" not being in the original) what body do they come?

He introduces Adam and Christ in proof of his proposition that "there is a natural body and a spiritual body." He quotes the record of Moses with reference to Adam in proof of the existence of a natural body. "The first man, Adam, was made a living soul" (or natural body). His proof of the second lies in this: "the last Adam *was made a quickening spirit*." No supposing a person, ignorant of the history of Christ, were to receive his impressions of Christ's history from this statement—supposing he had no other source of information—would he not come to the conclusion that "the last Adam" was a spiritual body from the first moment of his existence? Would he ever conclude from it that "the last Adam" was first a helpless babe at Bethlehem, clad in the flesh-and-blood-nature of his mother; then a boy, submissive to his parents; then a carpenter, helping in the workshop to earn a livelihood for the family; then anointed with the Holy Spirit and power, going about doing good, and performing works "which none other man did," and that, finally, he was abandoned of the power of God, and *crucified through weakness*, even the weakness of frail human nature? Would the uninformed and the superficial reader of Paul's allusion to the last Adam learn from it that not only the first Adam, but the last Adam also, was a natural body for thirty-three-and-a-half years, and that he only became a life-giving spirit, by the power of God, in his resurrection?

By no means. All these facts, so familiar to us, are elliptically compressed into the words "was made." A process with so many striking features is expressed in a way which, if there were no other information, would conceal it. If this is the case with reference to Christ—if we are at liberty to believe against the appearance of things in I Cor. 15 that Christ was first a living soul and then a quickening spirit, why need there be a greater difficulty in reference to his people, whose re-awakening in the flesh and appearance at the judgment-seat is kept out of sight, in a phrase which its use in other cases admits to the possibility of covering the whole ground?

Coincidentally and elliptically speaking, "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we—the living—shall be changed." Both events will occur at the advent. This is true, speaking

broadly of the subject, without reference to details; but it is not, therefore, untrue that both classes will “appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive in body according to what they have done, whether good or bad” (II Cor. 5:10). A general statement of truth cannot exclude the involved particulars, though it may appear to do so. The course of true wisdom is, not to set one part of the Word against another part, but to harmonise apparent conflict, by giving effect to all details, and finding a place for these in all general forms of the same truth. This course is not taken by those who, on the strength of the chapter discussed, would deny that the dead come forth to judgment with reference to their candidature for immortality. On the contrary, they put Paul here in conflict with Paul elsewhere. They erect his general and elliptical declarations on the subject of the resurrection, as barriers to his own particular statements in other places, and those of Christ and his apostles generally.

In opposition to this course, we have endeavoured to find, in I Cor. 15, a place for all these features; a place unseen by the unacquainted reader, but detectable by those having Paul’s general teaching in view. Paul is in harmony with himself. The resurrection includes all that is divinely associated with it. The upshot is incorruption, glory, power, and spirituality of nature, but these are only reached through the tribunal which will “make manifest the counsels of the heart.” Prior to this, the future is a sealed book, except in so far as it is reflected in a man’s conscience. The judgment will settle all, separating the chaff from the wheat, and determining who are the saints, in deed and in truth, and who the unprofitable servants, who have had but a name to live, and are dead.

We commend to the serious consideration of every one interested, the sobering fact that there is a day appointed when God shall judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus, justifying the righteous and condemning the wicked. It is a fact that will encourage, strengthen, and sustain every person who, having been enlightened and joined to the brotherhood of Christ, is working with a single eye, as seeing him who is invisible; and it is a fact that, vividly realised, will correct and purify those who, in a similar position, may be suffering themselves to be diverted from the path of truth and duty by considerations of a temporal nature. The record exhibited at the judgment-seat is written now in the lives of those who will appear there. The one will be an exact reflex of the other. A faithful stewardship sustained now will be honoured then with praise, recognition, and promotion: while an opposite course will bring exposure, shame, condemnation, and death. “The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fools.”

Lecture 6

GOD, ANGELS, JESUS CHRIST, AND THE CRUCIFIXION

WITH REVERENCE, we approach the subjects proposed for consideration in the present lecture.

That Christendom is astray in its conceptions of God will, unhappily, be but too evident. That we must possess Scriptural knowledge of the subject will also be evident. The "knowledge of God" is an essential feature of Christian attainment, according to the apostolic standard. Those "who *know not God*" are among those whom vengeance is to overtake (II Thess. 1, 8). Knowledge of God is the basis of sonship to God. Without it, we cannot enter the divine family. How can we love and serve a being whom we do not *know*? Knowledge is the foundation of all. It is the rock upon which everlasting life itself is built. "This is life eternal, *that they might know Thee*, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

Where shall we find this knowledge? We cannot find it where we please. It is to be found only where God has placed it. It is to be found in the Scriptures. We cannot get it anywhere else. Nature tells us something. The consummate wisdom of all her arrangements—the ineffable skill displayed in the construction of even the smallest animalcule, show us the presence, in the universe, of a supreme designing and perfect intelligence, but nature can do no more. It can tell us God is, because He must be, but it can tell us nothing of His being, His character, His purpose, His will with regard to man, or His object in forming the universe. Speculations on these points only lead to the monstrosities of ancient and modern heathenism.

That a revelation of Himself has come from the Creator of all things will excite the highest admiration and gratitude in every mind that is enabled to realise what this stupendous privilege means. Peace now and life everlasting for the endless ages coming is easily spoken of: but who can measure the wealth of well-being involved in the words? This wealth comes with the knowledge God has given us: and the knowledge he has given us comes to us through the Bible, and through no other medium-ship in our day.

But we are in a peculiar position with regard to this knowledge. It no longer shines before us in its pristine simplicity and glory. Along with almost every other item of divine truth, it has been covered up in the most dangerous way by the organised Apostasy from original truth, which obtained ascendancy in Christendom very early in the Christian era. The Apostasy does not professedly deny the God revealed in the Bible. On the contrary, it makes an ostentatious profession of belief in Him. It holds up the Bible in its hand and declares it to be the source of its faith—that the God of Israel is its God. In this way, the impression is made universally that the God of popular religion is the God of the Bible, so that in reading the Bible, people do not read critically on the subject, but necessarily and as a matter of course, recognise the popular God in the phrases by which the Bible designates the God of Israel. If the case were otherwise—if popular theology in words denied the God of the Jews, and asserted its own conceptions in opposition to Hebrew revelation, there would be a greater likelihood that people would come to a knowledge of what God has truly revealed concerning Himself, because they would be prepared to sit down clear-headedly, discriminatingly, and independently to ascertain what the Deity of Hebrew revelation is. As it is, people are misled, and find the greatest difficulty in rousing themselves to an apprehension of the difference between the orthodox God and the Bible Deity, and the importance of discerning it.

Popular theology says that God is three eternal elements, all equally increate and self-sustaining, and all equally powerful, each equally personal and distinct from the other, and yet all forming a complete single personal unity. There is, say they, "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost," each "very God," each without a beginning, each omnipotent and separate from the other, and yet all ONE.

If we ask why one of these elements should be called the Father, not having preceded or given existence to the others; and why another should be called the Son, not having been

brought into existence by the Father, but co-eternal with Him; and why the third should be called the Holy Ghost (or Spirit), since both "God the Father," and "God the Son" are holy and spiritual, we are not met with an explanation. Popular theology contents itself with saying that the truth is so—that there are three in one and one in three: that as to how such a thing can be, it cannot say, as it is a great mystery.

Mystery indeed! There are mysteries enough in creation—things, that is, that are inscrutable to the human intellect, such as the ultimate nature of light and life; but Trinitarianism propounds—not a mystery, but a contradiction—a stultification—an impossibility. It professes to convey an idea, and no sooner expresses it than it withdraws it, and contradicts it. It says there is one God, yet not one but three, and that the three are not three but one. It is a mere juggle of words, a bewilderment and confusion to the mind, all the more dangerous, because the theory for which it is an apology, employs in some measure the language of the Bible, which talks to us of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We will look at the Bible representation of the "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." We shall find that representation in accord with a rational conception of things, enlightening the understanding as well as satisfying the heart—agreeing with experience, as well as revealing something beyond actual observation. We shall find it to supply that consistent and intelligible information of the First Cause of all things which the intellect of the noblest creature He has formed in this sublunary creation craves, and information of a character such as would be expected to come from such a source.

To begin with "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3:14), as God is apostolically described, who was made known to Israel by the angels, revealed through the prophets, and manifested in Jesus. The first thing revealed about Him is His absolute unity. He is declared to be ONE. This is one of the most conspicuous features of what is revealed on the subject. We submit a few illustrations of the testimony:—Moses to Israel (Deut. 6:4):—

> "Hear, O Israel, *the Lord our God is* ONE *Lord*."

Jesus to one of the Scribes (Mark 12:29):—

> "Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments, is, Hear, O Israel, *the Lord our God is* ONE *Lord*."

Paul to the Corinthian believers (I Cor. 8:6):—

> "To us there is but ONE GOD, *the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him*."

Paul to the Ephesians (Eph. 4:6):—

> "There is ONE GOD *and Father of* ALL, who is ABOVE ALL, and through all, and in you all."

Paul to Timothy (I Tim. 2:5):—

> "There is ONE GOD, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

With these statements agree the Almighty's declarations of Himself, of which the following are examples:—

> "I am God, and THERE IS NONE ELSE … and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done" (Isa. 46:9, 10).

> "I am the Lord, and *there is none else*: THERE IS NO GOD BESIDE ME" (Isa. 45:5).

> "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts: *I am the first and I am the last,* AND BESIDE ME THERE IS NO GOD … Is there a God beside Me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any" (Isa. 44:6, 8).

The only statement in the New Testament that amounts to a plain inculcation of the Trinitarian view, is unanimously renounced by Bible critics as a spurious interpolation upon the original text. On this ground is has been omitted altogether from the Revised Version of the New Testament. It is in the 7th verse of the 5th chapter of I John:—"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one: and there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one." The interpolation is enclosed in brackets. The verse reads intelligibly without the interpolation, and affirms a fact patent to the early believers. The interpolation bears its condemnation on its face; for it would confine the presence of "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit"—that is, God in every form according to Trinitarianism—to heaven, and thus upset the Scriptural and obvious fact that the Spirit is everywhere, and that God's presence, by it, fills the universe.

"This text is not contained in any Greek MS. which was written earlier than the fifth century. It is not cited by any of the Greek ecclesiastical writers, not by any of the earlier Latin fathers, even when the subjects upon which they treat would naturally have led them to appeal to its authority. It is, therefore, evidently spurious, and was first cited, though not as it now reads, by Virgilius Tapsensis, a Latin writer of no credit, in the latter end of the fifth century; but by whom forged is of no great moment, as its design must be obvious to all." Such is a statement of the grounds upon which the passage has been omitted from the Revised Version.

The revelation of the Deity's unity, set forth in the testimonies quoted, agrees with the one great induction of modern science. Nature is seen to be under *one law and one control* throughout its immeasurable fields. There is no jar, no conflict; the power that constitutes, sustains, and regulates all is seen to be ONE. Cold freezes and heat dissolves in all countries alike. The light that discloses the face of the earth, irradiates the moon and illuminates the distant planets. The power that draws the moon in circular journey round the earth, impels the earth around the sun, and drags even that stupendous and glorious body, with all its attendant planets, in a vast cycle, with the rest of starry creation, around AN UNKNOWN CENTRE; that is, a centre distinctly indicated in the motion of the stellar universe, but whose locality cannot even approximately be determined on account of the vastness of the motion, and the impossibility of obtaining data for calculation in the compass of a human life-time.

The suggestion that this Unknown Centre is the source of all power is in significant harmony with what the Scriptures reveal concerning God. There is a source—there must be a source—and this source must be a centre, because all power is manifested at centres. The earth draws every object on it to its centre, and pulls the moon round it as well. The earth in its turn is attracted towards the sun and drawn around it; and the sun itself with the whole framework of creation is drawn round A CENTRE. These are facts in the economy of things, and they are therefore divine facts, because the economy of things is the handiwork of God.

The testimonies quoted say that all things are OUT OF the Father. But where is THE FATHER? Does His name not imply that He is THE SOURCE? And, being the Source, is He not the Centre of creation? Some shrink from the suggestion that Deity has a located existence. Why should they? The Scriptures expressly teach the located existence of Deity. We submit the evidence: Paul says in I Tim. 6:16. *God dwells* "IN THE LIGHT *which no man can approach unto."* Here is a localisation of the person of the Creator. If God were on earth in the same sense in which He dwells in LIGHT UNAPPROACHABLE, what could Paul mean by saying that man cannot approach? If God dwells in UNAPPROACHABLE LIGHT, He must have an existence there, which is not manifested in this mundane sphere. This is borne out by

Solomon's words: "God *is* IN HEAVEN, *thou upon earth*" (Ecclesiastes 5:2); "therefore let thy words be few." Jesus inculcates the same view in the prayer which he taught his disciples: "Our Father *which art* IN HEAVEN." So does David, in Psalm 102:19, 20: "He (the Lord) hath looked down from THE HEIGHT *of His sanctuary;* from HEAVEN did the Lord behold the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner." And again, in Psa. 115:16: "The HEAVEN, even the HEAVENS, are the Lord's; but the *earth* hath He given to the children of men." Solomon in the prayer by which he dedicated the temple to God (recorded in the 8th chapter of I Kings), made frequent use of this expression: "Hear Thou IN HEAVEN *Thy dwelling place*." It is impossible to mistake the tenor of these testimonies: they plainly mean that the Father of all is a person who exists in the central "HEAVEN OF HEAVENS" as He exists nowhere else. By His Spirit in immensely-filling diffusion, He is everywhere present in the sense of holding and knowing, and being conscious of creation to its utmost bounds; but in His proper person, all-glorious, beyond human power to conceive, He dwells in heaven.

Consider the ascension of our Lord, after his resurrection, and mark its tendency in this direction. Luke says (chap. 24:51), "He was parted from them, and carried up *into* HEAVEN, " and Mark reiterates the statement: "He was received up INTO HEAVEN, and *sat on the right hand of God*" (Mark 16:19). These statements can only be understood on the principle that the Deity has a personal manifested existence in "THE HEAVENS." What part of the wide heavens this honoured spot may occupy, we cannot and need not know. Probably it is that great undiscovered astronomical centre to which allusion has already been made.

There is great and invincible repugnance to this evidently Scriptural and reasonable, and beautiful view of the matter. It is the popular habit, where serious views of God are entertained at all, to conceive of Him as a principle or energy in universal diffusion—without corporeal nucleus, without local habitation, "without body or parts." There is no ground for this popular predilection, except such as philosophy may be supposed to furnish. Philosophy is a poor guide in the matter. Philosophy, after all, is only human thought. It can have little weight in a matter confessedly beyond human ken. The question is, What is revealed? We need not be concerned if what is revealed is contrary to philosophical conceptions of the matter. Philosophical conceptions are just as likely to be wrong as right. Paul warns believers against the danger of being spoiled through philosophy (Col. 2:8). Philosophy or no philosophy, the Scriptures quoted plainly teach that the Father is a tangible person, in whom all the powers of the Universe converge.

There is other evidence in the occurrences at Mount Sinai. There Moses had intercourse with the Deity. We will not say that the Being with whom he had this intercourse was actually THE ETERNAL ONE, because it is evident, from what Stephen and Paul teach, that it was an angelic manifestation (Acts 7:38, 53; Heb. 2:2); and because Christ declares no man hath seen God at any time (John 1:18). Yet it is affirmed that to Moses it was a similitude of Jehovah (Num. 12:8). It was, therefore, a *manifestation* of the Deity; and, if so, it illustrated the reality of the Deity; for the Deity must be higher, greater, and more real than His subordinate manifestations. The testimony is as follows:—

> "The Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I COME UNTO THEE IN A THICK CLOUD, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.… Be ready against the third day: for the third day THE LORD WILL COME DOWN *in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai* … And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were THUNDERS AND LIGHTNINGS, *and a thick cloud upon the Mount*, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the Mount.
>
> *And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke*, BECAUSE THE LORD DESCENDED UPON IT IN FIRE, *and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly*.… And God spake all these words (the ten commandments) … And all the people saw

the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, 'Speak thou with us and we will hear; but let not God speak with us lest we die'.… And the people stood afar off, and Moses *drew near unto the thick darkness*, WHERE GOD WAS. And the Lord said unto Moses, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven," etc. (Ex. 19:9, 11, 16–18; 20:1, 18–22).

Further on this subject, we have the following in Ex. 24:1, 2, 9–12, 15–18:—

"And He (Jehovah) said unto Moses, come up unto the Lord, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship ye afar off. *And Moses alone shall come near the Lord*; but they shall not come nigh, neither shall the people go up with him.… Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, AND THEY SAW THE GOD OF ISRAEL. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He laid not His hand; also they saw God, and did eat and drink. And the Lord said unto Moses. Come up to Me into the Mount, and be there, and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written, that thou mayest teach them.… And Moses went up into the Mount, and a cloud covered the Mount. And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And the seventh day He called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud; *and the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the Mount in the eyes of the children of Israel*. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the Mount; and Moses was in the Mount forty days and forty nights."

All subsequent reference to these things is founded on the idea that they are related to a real person and presence. Thus we read in Numbers 12:8:—

"With (Moses) will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches, *and the SIMILITUDE of the Lord shall he behold*."

Again (Exodus 33:11):—

"And the Lord spake unto Moses FACE TO FACE, *as a man speaketh unto his friend*."

Again (Deut. 34:10):—

"And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom *the Lord knew face to face*."

Now, though the manifestation witnessed in these cases was a manifestation through angelic mediumship, yet the manifestation speaks to us of a Being higher and more real than that manifestation. It helps the mind to climb to some conception (though necessarily superficial and inadequate) of Him "who maketh His angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire" (Psa. 104:4)—who is "light, and in whom is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5)—who "inhabiteth eternity" (Isa. 57:15)—who is a "consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29)—whom no man hath seen, nor (on account of our grossness and weakness of nature) can see; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto (I Tim. 6:16)—who is of purer eyes than to behold the iniquity of the children of men (Hab. 1:13)—the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, who fainteth not, neither is weary, and there is no searching of His understanding (Isa. 40:28).

"Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being His counsellor, hath taught Him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed Him and

taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and showed to Him the way of understanding?… All nations before Him are as nothing, and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom, then, will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?" (Isa. 40:12–18). Who can, by searching, find out God? (Job 11:7). Behold, God is great, and we know Him not; neither can the number of His years be searched out (Job 36:26). His eyes are upon the ways of man, and He seeth all his goings.

The testimony before us is, that God is the only underived and self-sustaining existence in the universe. All other forms of life are but incorporations of the life which is in Him—so many subdivisions of the stream which issues from the great fountainhead. The following statements affirm this view:—

> "The King of kings, and Lord of lords, who ONLY *hath immortality*, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto" (I Tim. 6:15, 16).
>
> "IN HIM *we live, and move, and* HAVE OUR BEING" (*Acts* 17:28).
>
> "For *out of* Him (*ex autou*), and through Him, and to Him ARE ALL THINGS" (Rom. 11:36).
>
> "To us there is but one God, the Father, *of whom* ARE ALL THINGS" (I Cor. 8:6).

Popular theology teaches that God' made all things "out of nothing." This is evidently one of many errors that have long passed current as truth. It has proved an unfortunate error; for it has brought physical science into needless collision with the Bible. Physical science has compelled men to accept it as an axiomatic truth that "out of nothing, nothing can come," and having been led to believe that the Bible teaches that all things have been made out of nothing, they have dismissed the Bible as out of the question on that ground alone. They have taken refuge by preference in various theories that have recognised the eternity of material force in some form or other.

The Bible teaches that all things have been made out of God—not out of nothing. It teaches, as the passages quoted show, that God, as the antecedent, eternal power of the universe, has elaborated all things out of Himself. "Spirit," irradiating from Him, has, under the fiat of His will, been embodied in the vast material creation which we behold. That Spirit now constitutes the substratum of all existence—the vary essence and first cause of everything. All things are "in God," because embraced in that mighty effluence which radiating from Himself, fills all space, and constitutes the basis of all existence. In this way God is omnipresent; His consciousness is *en rapport* with all creation by reason of the universal prevalence of His Spirit, which is one with His personal Spirit-substance, in the way that light is one with the body of the sun. The idea of God's omniscience is too high for us to readily grasp, but we see it illustrated on a small scale in the fact that the human brain in certain sensitive states is conscious of everything within the radius of its own nervous effluence. Though located in the heavens, the Creator, by His universal Spirit, knows everything; and His infinite capacity of mind enables Him to deal with everything, contemplatively or executively, as the case may require.

THE SPIRIT

So much at this time concerning THE FATHER—the Root and the Rock of creation. We next introduce the subject of "the Spirit" for investigation.

We have had to say much of this in speaking of the Father, but it calls for separate consideration. The Spirit is much spoken of throughout the whole course of Scripture. We are

introduced to it as early as the first chapter of Genesis, and only part from its company in the last chapter of Revelation. We get a key to the subject in the fact testified, that the Father is "spirit" in His personal substance ("God is spirit"—John 4:24), and that the Spirit in its diffusion has to do with the Father, for He styles it "*My* spirit" (Gen. 6:3). Nehemiah says, Thou "testifiedst against them (our fathers) by THY SPIRIT *in Thy prophets"* (Nehem. 9:30). The Father and the Spirit are one. Yet there is a distinction between the Father and the Spirit as to the form in which they are presented to our apprehension. Of the former, as we have seen, it is testified that He dwells "in heaven—in unapproachable light," and is therefore, located; while of the latter, it is declared that it is everywhere alike.

> "Whither shall I go from *Thy spirit*? or whither shall I flee from *Thy presence*? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell (or the grave, or unseen place), behold, Thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me; if I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day. The darkness and the light are both alike to Thee" (Psa. 139:7–12).

But, in addition to its universality of diffusion, the Spirit is also presented in the aspect of an agency used by the Father in the accomplishment of His designs. Thus, in speaking of the origin of the various tribes of living creatures that inhabit the earth, David says, "*Thou sendest forth* THY SPIRIT, they are created: and Thou renewest the face of the earth" (Psa. 104:30). Again, "*By His spirit* He hath garnished the heavens" (Job 26:13). Again, "*The spirit of God* hath made me; *and the breath of the Almighty* hath given me life" (chap. 33:4). "*The Spirit of God* moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2). Also, how frequently throughout the history of Israel we read the words that the "Spirit of God came upon" this and that prophet, when anything wonderful was accomplished (*e.g.*, Jud. 15:14). All prophecy and revelation were communicated in the same way. "Thou testifiedst … *by Thy spirit* in Thy prophets" (Nehem. 9:30). "I am full of power *by the spirit of the Lord*" (Micah 3:8). "Holy men of God *spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit"* (II Pet. 1:21).

It will occur to every reflecting mind that if this spirit is an actual element in universal creation, its presence ought to be detected in the course of the extensive and relentless researches now and for many years going on into the secrets of nature, in the laboratory of the experimental chemist. It may shock the current theological mind to suggest so intimate a relation between the Deity and His works. But the higher forms of intelligence cannot exclude the perception that if God has evolved the material universe out of His own energy, and sustains and controls it by His power, that energy cannot be a nullity, but must be an actually present force in the economy of things.

Now, it is a fact that in our day, there has been discovered a subtle, unanalysable, incomprehensible principle, which, though inscrutable in its essence, is found to be at the basis of all the phenomena of nature—itself eluding the test of chemistry or the deductions of philosophy. Scientists have called it ELECTRICITY. This is everywhere, and is the foundation of all organisation, in fact, of all substance, whether organised or unorganised. MATTER in every form is but a combination of grosser elements held together by electricity. Electricity governs the laws of an animal's life and a planet's motion—omnipotent under the hand of intelligence to destroy or build up.

What is this? The name "Electricity" tells nothing; that really means "amber-icity" (*electron* being the Greek word for amber), and was adopted as the name of the inscrutable element from the circumstance that its existence was first discovered from the friction of amber. Could a better name be devised than what the Scriptures have given it—SPIRIT? It is one of the highest proofs of the truth of Jewish revelation, that its disclosure of the Deity in

His relation to the universe coincides with the facts brought to light by the researches of the human intellect in the field of nature.

The employment of this element in accomplishing the designs of intelligence, is illustrated in the facts of animal magnetism, mesmerism, biology, table rapping, clairvoyance, and "spiritualism." In these sciences and systems—(some of them ignorantly made the basis of pretensions to divine prescience and authority)—men make use of the divine "*ruach*" which they naturally possess, to accomplish results which cannot be developed apart from the action of willpower. Though animals have the same spirit, they lack the intelligence to use it in this form. They use it all up in the mere process of existence. Men having intelligence, find this wonderful agent at their command to a limited degree. One man can influence another by it. Inanimate objects can be moved. Distant facts and occurrences can, in a high state of nervous susceptibility, be perceived by it. Unopened letters can be read; and numberless other prodigies accomplished, made familiar by science and the facts of "spiritualism"—a false and absurd system, based upon misunderstood facts of nature.

We are thus enabled to comprehend the relation assigned in the Scriptures to this universal, invisible agent, in the operations of Deity. If a human being, who is but the faint image of the divine, can in certain stages, have his powers of cognition extended beyond his material person by the action of spirit, it is easy to conceive that the Deity's observation and presence are as universal and infinite as spirit itself. If a human being can move a needle, lift a table, and compel another to act without the intervention of material instrumentality, by the employment of this invisible fluid as the medium of his will, what difficulty is there in understanding the Deity, who is infinite, doing anything He may will to do, and communicating a revelation of Himself to chosen men in the way recorded in the Scriptures?

Spirit concentrated under the Almighty's will, becomes Holy Spirit, as distinct from spirit in its free, spontaneous form. In the one, we are in the domain of fixed law; in the other, God is in communion with us for words of wisdom or works of power, independently of fixed law. It is given to but few to experience this form of the Spirit's manifestation. It is given to none in the present day. The apostles were the recipients of it on the day of Pentecost. Its power was real and felt. Its influx was accompanied with the sound of a mighty wind, that shook the material fabric of the building in which they were assembled. Its results were manifest, God's hand was upon the apostles, and they were endowed with powers above natural law. Their faculties were preternaturally exercised. They were enabled by the Spirit to speak fluently in languages they had never learnt; not in unknown tongues, but words which were identified by the bystanders as the current languages of the time. These bystanders were Jews and proselytes from the various countries of the globe, assembled to keep the feast of Pentecost at Jerusalem. When they heard the apostles, they said:—

> "Are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man IN OUR OWN TONGUE wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak *in our tongues* the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:7–11).

By the same power, the apostles were instructed in things they did not know naturally, according to the promise of Christ. "When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, *he will guide you into all truth*; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, *and he shall show you things to come*" (John 16:13). It also endowed them with miraculous power, evinced in the instantaneous cure of disease, the raising of the dead, and other wonderful works. The Spirit was the medium, instrumentality, or power by which these things were done. It was a reality, a palpably present something pervading the persons of the

apostles. Thus, from the body of Paul "were brought unto the sick, handkerchiefs, or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them" (Acts 19:11, 12). The healing spirit-power in Paul could be conveyed in conducting media, and brought medically to bear on the afflicted. Thus, also the shadow of Peter crossing the sick was efficacious for cure (Acts 5:15). The same peculiarity is apparent in the case of Jesus, to whom the Spirit was given without measure (John 3:34). When a certain afflicted woman in a crowd came stealthily behind him and touched the hem of his garment, that she might receive benefit, Jesus "perceived that *virtue had gone out of him*" (Luke 8:46; Matt. 14:35, 36).

These miraculous powers were necessary to qualify the apostles for the performance of the work they had to do. That work was to bear witness to the resurrection of Christ (Acts 1:22), as the basis of the truth built upon that fact. Now, how could they have done this with any effect if their testimony had not been miraculously confirmed? How could they have obtained credence to the naturally incredible announcement that a man publicly executed by the Romans, had been secretly raised from the dead, unless their words had been confirmed by the power alleged to be on their side? It is true the apostles were witnesses, in a natural sense, of the fact that Christ was alive, and would have steadily maintained their testimony to the fact, even if God had not worked with them, but how could the work of getting many to believe their testimony have been accomplished? The earnest protestation of belief on the part of the apostles, though it might have influenced a few, could not have produced that widespread conviction which was necessary to the creation of the Body of Christ.

The effusion of the Holy Spirit did this. By the manifestation of supernatural powers, it bore witness to the truth of what the apostles declared. It is said, "They went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, *and confirming the word with signs following*" (Mark 16:20). Paul describes the case in similar terms:—"The great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, *God also bearing them witness with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit*" (Heb. 2:3, 4). In this sense, the Holy Spirit is styled a witness of Christ's resurrection; "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree, … and we are His witnesses of these things, *and so is also the* HOLY SPIRIT, whom God hath given to them that obey Him" (Acts 5:30–32). This is in accordance with what Christ had said: "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, *he shall testify of me. And ye also shall bear witness*, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:26, 27).

The power granted to the apostles for the confirmation of their testimony, was deposited in them as heavenly treasure in an earthen vessel, and they had the power of imparting it to others. This is evident from an incident recorded in Acts 8. Philip, the evangelist, went down to Samaria, and so proclaimed the truth (of which miraculous attestation was produced by him), that many believed and were baptised; but these did not at the time receive the gift of the Holy Spirit:—

> "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit (*for as yet he was fallen upon none of them*: only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. And when Simon saw that *through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given*, he offered them money, saying, Give me also *this power*, that, on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:14–19).

This power of bestowing the Spirit was invariably exercised where the truth was received. In almost every case recorded, the reception of the Spirit followed the reception of the truth. It was, indeed, a matter of promise that this should be so. On the day of Pentecost, Peter said,

"Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and *ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit: for the promise is unto you and to your children*, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38, 39). This promise was realised in the experience of the churches founded in the days of the apostles. The spirit distributed to believers its preternatural powers in different forms and degrees. Paul says:—

> "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the serf-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (I Cor. 12:6–11).

The object of this general diffusion of spiritual power in apostolic times, is thus stated by Paul:—

> "He gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, *till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive"* (Eph. 4:11–14).

This is perfectly intelligible. If the early churches, consisting of men and women fresh from the abominations and immoralities of heathenism, and without the authoritative standard of the completed Scripture which now exists, had been left to the mere power of apostolic tradition intellectually received, they could not have held together. The winds of doctrine, blowing about through the activity of "men of corrupt minds," would have broken them from their moorings, and they would have been tossed to and fro in the billows of uncertain and conflicting report and opinion, and finally stranded in hopeless shipwreck. This catastrophe was prevented by the gifts of the spirit. Properly qualified men, as to moral and intellectual parts, were made the repositories of these gifts, and empowered to "speak and exhort, and rebuke *with all authority*." They "*ruled*" the communities over which they were placed, feeding the flock of God over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2, 3). In this way the early churches were built up and edified. The work of the apostles was conserved, improved, and carried to a consummation. The faith was completed and consolidated by the voice of inspiration, speaking through the spiritually-appointed leaders of the churches. By this means the results of gospel-preaching in the first century, when there were no railways, telegraphs, or other means of a rapid circulation of ideas, instead of evaporating to nothing, as, otherwise, they would have done, were secured and made permanent, both as regards that generation and succeeding centuries.

But it must be obvious that the case stands very differently now. There is no manifestation of the Spirit in these days. The power of continuing the manifestation doubtless died with the apostles; not that God could not have transferred it to others, but that He selected them as the channels of its bestowment in their age, and never, so far as we have any evidence, appointed "successors." There are many who claim to be their successors; but it is not the word but the power of a man that must be taken as the test in this matter. Let those who think they have the Spirit produce their evidences. There is a great outcry about the Holy

Spirit in popular preaching; but nothing more. There are phenomena which are considered outpourings of the Holy Spirit; but they bear no resemblance to those of apostolic experience, and, therefore, must be rejected. They are explicable on natural principles.

When an exciting and highly mesmeric preacher gets a crowded audience, it is not a great wonder if his inflammatory exertions are successful in stimulating the susceptible among his hearers, to a state of mind corresponding with his own. He but uses a natural means, which evokes a natural result. If any of the natural conditions are wanting, the result is impaired to that extent. The "spirit," for instance, never descends to the same extent at an outdoor meeting as in a crowded chapel, especially if the day be windy. It is not dispensed so liberally to half-filled as to well-occupied pews. It does not come so quickly at the bidding of a dull temperament and barren imagination, especially if the man be of small stature—as it does to that of a lusty, exciteable, well-built man, or a nervous, wiry, emphatic man. The reason is, that all these conditions are unfavourable to the play of the latent magnetism of the human system.

Were it the Holy Spirit that attended these operations, it would overleap all barriers, and not only so, but its result would be of a more worthy and permanent character than the impressions made at "revival meetings," and rather more in harmony with what the Spirit has said through its ancient media, than the sentiments induced at these gatherings. But the fact is, it is not the Holy Spirit at all. It is the mere spirit of the flesh worked up into a religious excitement, through the influence of fear—an excitement which subsides as rapidly as the agency of its inception is withdrawn.

The result of an intelligent apprehension of what the word of God teaches and requires, is different from this; this has its seat in the judgment, and lays hold of the entire mental man, creating new ideas and new affections, and, in general, evolving a "new man." In this work, the Spirit has no participation, except in the shape of *the written word*. This is the product of the Spirit—the ideas of the Spirit reduced to writing by the ancient men who were moved by it. It is, therefore, the instrumentality of the Spirit, historically wielded: the sword of the Spirit by a metaphor which contemplates the Spirit in prophets and apostles in ancient times, as the warrior. By this, men may be subdued to God—that is, enlightened, purified, and saved, if they receive the word into good and honest hearts, and "bring forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some a hundred." By this they may become "spiritually minded," which is "life and peace" (Rom. 8:6). The present days are barren days, as regards the Spirit's direct operations. They are the days predicted in the following language:—

> "I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, *but of hearing the words of the Lord*. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro *to seek the word of the Lord*, AND SHALL NOT FIND IT" (Amos 8:11–12).

> "Therefore night shall be unto you, *that ye shall not have a vision*; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; *and the sun shall go down over the prophets*, and the day shall be dark over them. Then shall the seers be ashamed and the diviners confounded; yea, they shall all cover their lips, *for there is no answer of God*" (Mic. 3:6–7).

THE ANGELS

Jesus says, "No man hath seen God at any time"; yet in Genesis 32:30, Jacob says, "I HAVE SEEN GOD FACE TO FACE, and my life is preserved." There are other places in scripture in which God is said to have appeared, and to have been seen and talked to, which is in seeming contradiction to the statement of Jesus, and requires explanation.

The explanation introduces us to THE SUBJECT OF ANGELS: for it so happens that the difficulty has been created by the improper translation of terms employed in connection with God's angelic manifestations. God's manifestations have chiefly been by angelic mediumship. This will be evident to the ordinary New Testament reader from Paul's description of the law given to Moses as "the word spoken *by angels*" (Heb. 2:2); and Stephen's remark that God, who spoke to Moses in Sinai, was "*the angel that spake to him*" (Acts 7:38). This feature will be found constantly recurrent.

Now, the names by which these angelic beings are designated are appropriate to them as the subordinate agents of the Deity. But this fact is concealed in the English version of the Scriptures by the translation of all divine names uniformly by the terms "Lord" and "God." Dr. Thomas says:—

> "The names of God which occur in the Bible are not arbitrary sounds; and one of the chief imperfections of the English authorised translation, or rather version, is the slovenly manner in which all the names by which God has been pleased to make Himself known to His people, have been rendered after the fashion of the Septuagint, by the two words, 'Lord' and 'God'. These words do not convey the ideas of the spirit in its use of terms. 'Lord' is of Saxon origin, and signifies monarch, ruler, governor, something supreme or distinguished …
>
> "It fails to represent the meaning of Ail, Eloah, Elohim, Shaddai, and Yahweh; for all of which it is often, or rather most frequently, and almost generally used. The word Adon [another of the names of God employed in the original] is properly enough rendered by 'Lord', but not the other words, for which it should never be used. The common use of God in the English language is as little justifiable as that of the word Lord. God, in Saxon, signifies good, a meaning which cannot possibly be extracted from any of the names recited above; God is indeed good, but that word is not a translation of any of the words before us, and when used in their stead, leaves the mind in the dark concerning the things which they were intended to convey."

He then goes on to give a definition of each of the various words referred to. Ail, signifying strength, might, or power: Eloah, having the same signification; and Jehovah, or, more properly, Yahweh, literally He who will be, are all names appropriated to *the uncreated Deity;* but *Shaddai* and *Elohim* are plural names otherwise applied. Shaddai signifies mighty or powerful ones, from Shahdad, to be strong or powerful; while Elohim is the plural of Eloah, and means gods or powerful ones. Now these plural names are very frequently employed in the record of God's transactions with men; and it will be found they are descriptive of the angels. In Hebrews 1:6, Paul quotes a statement from Psalm 97:7, in which the word "Elohim" occurs. In the Psalm it is rendered "gods"—"Worship him, all ye gods"; in Hebrews, it is rendered as follows:—"Let all *the angels of God* worship Him." Here, to Paul's mind, *Elohim* represented angels.

Again, in Exodus 3, we have an account of the unconsumed burning bush, which God selected as a medium of communication with Moses. It is stated that Moses hid his face and was afraid to look upon *God*, who announced Himself from the bush as "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"; yet in the second verse, we read that "*the angel of the Lord* appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush"; so that the agency was angelic, though the power was of God.

Again, in the instance already cited, Jacob says that he had "seen God face to face"; while from Hosea we find that it was not the *Most High God* that Jacob saw, but one of the Elohim, or angels. The prophet (Hosea 12:3, 4) referring to the incident, says, "Jacob by strength had power with God; yea, he had power over *the angel*, and prevailed."

These instances prove that "Lord" and "God," as employed in the English version, do not always signify the great Increate, but sometimes, in fact almost generally, those glorious

beings who act and speak in His name and with His authority. Keeping this in view, many seeming difficulties made much of by unbelievers entirely disappear.

The angels are referred to by David in these words:—"Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word" (Psalm 103:20). Who are these angels? Popular theology represents them in books and on hearses, tombstones, etc., as baby cherubs with wings. Many believe that their ranks are greatly recruited from time to time by arrivals from earth of baby-spirits, who, thenceforth, become their mothers' guardians—a beautiful poetical fancy, and very pleasing to maternal instincts; but as a matter of serious teaching, to be dismissed from the rational mind. It is simply untrue. The whole of popular belief concerning the nature of angels is characterised by the same mysticism and misconception which we have seen to pertain to other doctrines. The angels of the Bible are as real as ourselves, though of a much more exalted order of being: and, instead of babyhood, are distinguished by all the maturity and dignity which belong to perfect intelligence. Three of them appeared to Abraham (Gen. 18:1–5):—

> "He sat in the tent door in the heat of the day, and he lift up his eyes, and looked, and lo! *three men* stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on."

Abraham thought they were ordinary wayfarers, and desired to extend his hospitality towards them. Paul, referring to the circumstances in Heb. 13:2, says: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained *angels* UNAWARES."

> "And the men said unto Abraham, So do as thou hast said. And Abraham took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and *they did eat."*

In the next chapter, we read:—

> "There came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground, and he said, Behold, now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet; and ye shall rise up early and go on your ways. And they said, Nay, but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly, and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and *they did eat*." (vv. 1–3).

Lot, also, like Abraham, supposed his angelic visitors to be ordinary men, and was among the number of those who "entertained angels unawares." He was only brought to a knowledge of their true character when they said:—

> "Bring all that thou hast out of this place, for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and *the Lord hath sent us to destroy it*." (Gen. 19:12, 13).

Manoah, the father of Samson, fell into a similar mistake (Judges 13:15). He pressed an angel-visitor to partake of his hospitality; and it is added (verse 16), "for Manoah *knew not that he was an angel of the Lord*." These narratives prove that the angels of God are like ourselves, so far as figure is concerned; and that they are not the ethereal beings of popular theology. Eating and having their feet washed takes them out of the category of "orthodox" angels. They are as real and substantial as mortal men, but of a higher nature. Like the

glorified righteous of the future age, they are incorruptible in substance, and, therefore, immortal, and luminous in appearance when that quality is not restrained. We read in the account of Christ's resurrection (given by Matthew, chapter 28:2, 3), that "the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. *His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow*"; and Cornelius, when describing the vision of an angel which he had seen, says (Acts 10:30), "A MAN stood before me *in bright clothing*."

The angels, in form and feature, resemble human beings. They eat and drink, and walk and talk, and deport themselves in general like ourselves; but unlike us, they are incorruptible, deathless, perfect, and strong in the might with which God has invested them for the execution of His purposes. They have power to traverse space; but it does not require wings to do this, for the Lord Jesus ascended to heaven without the aid of such appendages. It is only necessary to possess power to counteract the influence of physical gravitation, and the ability to command it at will. This power dwells in the angels and in the Lord Jesus Christ, and seems generally to be the characteristic of spirit-bodies. In the angels we behold an exemplification of what the saints will be after the resurrection; for Jesus says:—

> "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; *neither can they die any more*; FOR THEY ARE EQUAL UNTO THE ANGELS, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:35, 36).

At present, the righteous are "*a little lower than the angels*" (Heb. 2:7); then, they will be on the same level. This is a confirmation of all that was advanced in the last lecture regarding the state of the righteous after they have attained to immortality. It is a state in which they will be real, substantial, human-like in form, of flesh and bone, yet incorruptible, glorious, powerful, never-dying, perfect in happiness, uncloyed in the exercise of the functions of their exalted condition.

ON THE NATURE OF JESUS CHRIST

If Christendom is astray as to the Father and the Holy Spirit, it is not wonderful that we should find it astray in its conception of the Lord Jesus who is the manifestation of the Father by the Spirit. Christendom believes Christ to be the incarnation of one of three distinct essences, or personalities, which are supposed to constitute the God-head; and that though clothed in human form, he was God in the absolute sense of being the Creator.

This is the doctrine of the Trinitarian section of Christendom, in opposition to which, another section believes that Christ was a mere man, begotten in the ordinary process of generation, and distinguished above his fellows by a pre-eminent endowment of the "virtues" of human nature, which fitted him to be an example to mankind. This (the Unitarian) view regards him as a teacher sent from God, and is in some sense the Son of God; but denies the essential divinity of his nature. Both these views will be found equally removed from the truth. The truth lies between.

The testimonies which teach the indivisible unity of the Deity, as the One Father, out of whom ALL things have proceeded, and who is supreme above all, even above Christ (I Cor. 11:3), are inconsistent with the Trinitarian representation of God. The supremacy and unity of the Father would not be affirmable if there were three co-equal personalities in His One personality—a doctrine which presents us with a contradiction in terms as well as in sense.

Jesus emphasises the distinction between himself and the Father, in the following statements:—

> "I can of *mine own self* do nothing: as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent *me*" (John 5:30).

Again:—

> "My doctrine is not *mine*, but *His* that sent me" (John 7:16).

Again:—

> "It is written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. I am *one* that bear witness of myself; and the Father that sent me (the other witness), beareth witness of me" (John 8:17–18).

Again:—

> "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, *the only true God*, AND Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

The marked distinction recognised and affirmed in these statements is incompatible with the doctrine which regards the Son as an essential constituent of the one "triune" Father. There are "the Father," "the Son," and "the Holy Spirit." The question is, what is the relation between the three, as taught in the Scriptures? The objection now urged is against the relation which Trinitarianism teaches to exist between these three. The endeavour is to show that they are not three co-equal powers in one, but powers of which one is the head and source of the others. The Father is eternal and underived; the Son is the manifestation of the Father in a man begotten by the Spirit; the Holy Spirit is the focalisation of the Father's power, by means of His "free spirit," which fills heaven and earth. There is, therefore, a trinity of existences to contemplate, and a certain unity subsisting in the trinity, inasmuch as both Son and Spirit are manifestations of the one Father; but the Trinitarian conception of the subject is excluded.

But the Unitarian view, still more so. Joseph was not the father of Jesus. He himself repudiated his paternity, and was about to put away Mary, his betrothed, when an angel came to him with this message:—

> "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife. For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 1:20).

This marvel had been previously intimated to Mary by the angel Gabriel, as recorded in Luke 1:35:—

> "The Holy Spirit 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."

The Unitarian evades these testimonies by denying the authenticity of the first two chapters of Matthew and Luke. The reasons for this denial are altogether flimsy and insufficient: nay, they are bad. The evidence in proof of the genuineness of the (by them) rejected chapters is more than decisive: it cannot be answered: it is irresistible. It leaves no room for doubt or gainsaying. There is the united evidence of all the accessible ancient MSS. and versions, supported by the recognition of the very earliest Christian writers, confirmed by the internal character of the chapters and the necessity for the event which they narrate, to explain the character and mission of Jesus of Nazareth. Against this, there is the merely negative fact that the disputed chapters are absent from the Ebionite gospel, which at the time

of its production was pronounced a corruption; and from the Evangelium of Marcion, a gospel which he wrote to suit his own heathenish notions, and from which he recklessly omitted, not only the disputed chapters, but everything that interfered with his peculiar ideas.

The first writer who mentions the Ebionites is Irenæus, who speaks of them as a sect not only separated from the general body of Christians, but who opposed the doctrines preached by the Apostles, and rejected, not only the disputed chapters, but *the greater part of the books of the New Testament*, rejecting all the epistles of Paul, whom they called an apostate from the law. They only made use of a Hebrew gospel, which they called Matthew's, but which differs from Matthew in many particulars besides the two chapters. Here is a sect which rejected whole books of authentic Scripture, because they were inimical to their notions. How can a reasonable man accept such a sect as affording guidance on the question of the authenticity of two particular chapters absent from their version, but present in almost all other MSS. throughout the world? Their "Matthew" was impugned at the time. It was proclaimed a corruption of the genuine gospel, while the "canonical" Matthew, as we have it, was never called in question. Epiphanius thus speaks:—"In that gospel which they (the Ebionites) have called the gospel according to Matthew, which is not entire and perfect, but *corrupted and curtailed*, and which they call *The Hebrew Gospel*, it is written" (and he quotes), "Thus," says he, "they change the true account into a falsehood … They have taken away the genealogy from Matthew, and accordingly begin their gospel with these words: 'It came to pass, in the days of Herod, King of Judæa.' " Origen alludes to it thus:—"It is written in a certain gospel, which is called, 'according to the Hebrews,' *if indeed any one is pleased to receive it*, NOT AS OF AUTHORITY, but for illustration of the present question" (and then he quotes). He afterwards quotes this as a specimen of the same *gospel according to the Hebrews*: "Just now my mother, the Holy Ghost, took me by one of my hairs, and carried me to the great mountain Tabor." This absurdity, and another passage, quoted by Origen, prove that the text of the Hebrew gospel, read by Origen, was not the same as our Greek gospel of Matthew, with which its friends suppose it to be identical. It differed on many points besides the first two chapters. The absence of the first two chapters of Matthew from the Ebionite and Nazarene gospels is of no weight in view of their rejection of Paul's epistles, which even the Unitarians accept. The omission is accounted for in the way the rejection of Paul's epistles is accounted for; the two first chapters did not coincide with their notions, and therefore they struck them out. The Nazarene and Ebionite copies of Matthew's gospel not only omit the first two chapters, but in several instances they contradict the other three gospels of Mark, Luke, and John, whereas the corresponding passages in our Greek copy of Matthew agree with them, which shows which way the tampering has occurred.

As to Marcion, he omitted the two disputed chapters: but he also rejected the whole of the Old Testament, both the law and the prophets, as proceeding from the God of the Jews, whom he regarded as the creator of this world, in contrast to a higher Creator. As to the New Testament, he made one for himself consisting of only one gospel, supposed to be compiled chiefly from Luke, and only ten of Paul's epistles, which are altered from the received version in numerous instances, in order to make the text more pliable to his gnostic notions. People who quote him against the miraculous conception are bound consistently to follow him in these variations as well. He did not admit Christ to have been born at all. Consequently, be begins his gospel thus:—"In the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius, God descended into Capernaum." He not only omits the first two chapters of Luke; he omits also the account of John the Baptist, the baptism of Christ, and his visit to Nazareth. He also omits part of chapter 8:19; 10:21; 11, part of verse 29, and all of verses 30, 31, 32, 49, 50, 51; 12:6, 28, part of verses 8, 30, 32; 13:1–5: altered verse 28, omitted from 29 to end of chapter: 15:11–32; 17, part of 10–12: whole of verse 13: whole of 17:31–33; 19:28–48; 20, from 9 to 18: also 37, 38; 21:18, 21, 22; 22:16, 35, 37, 50, 51; 23:43; 24:26–7, and verse 25 altered.

Those who quote Marcion as an authority in the case of the first two chapters, ought to accept him as such in all these cases. That they disregard him in these cases is a proof that, even in their opinion, his authority is of no weight.

The divine paternity of Jesus would stand an unassailable truth, even if the records of Matthew and Luke had no existence. These records are, however, invaluable. They are the circumstantial illustrations of a truth which, though the nature of the case, and the prophetic testimony necessitate it, we could not have so clearly and satisfactorily comprehended without them. They explain to us the appearance and character of Christ, and make us privy to the divine method of procedure, from its incipiency onwards, in the most wondrous work of God among men.

That Christ was an example in the sense of being "holy, harmless, and undefiled" is beyond doubt; but it is also true that he was a great deal more. The speciality of his mission is so plainly stated as to leave no room for the Unitarian doctrine of moral example. "Behold the Lamb of God *which taketh away the sin of the world,* " said John the Baptist, on seeing Jesus (John 1:29). How did he take it away? The answer is in the words of the apostle Paul:—"He put away sin *by the sacrifice of himself*" (Heb. 9:26). Jesus himself had said, "I lay down my life *for my sheep*." Paul also says to Timothy, in the second epistle, first chapter, tenth verse, "Jesus Christ *hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*"; a fact which is stated by Christ himself in this form, "God sent His Son, that the world *through him* might be saved" (John 3:17). Furthermore, Peter says, "There is none other name under heaven given whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12). Salvation is thus directly connected with the first appearing of Christ, and with what he accomplished then; not on the principle of moral stimulus supplied, but in virtue of the essential result secured by the course he fulfilled.

Leaving both Trinitarianism and Unitarianism, we may find the truth in the Scriptures for ourselves. The simple appellation of "Son," as applied to Christ, is sufficient to prove that his existence is derived, and not eternal. The phrase, "Son of God," implies that the one God, the eternal Father, was antecedent to the Son, and that the Son had his origin in or "out of" the Father to whom he must therefore be subordinate in a sense inconsistent with Trinitarian representation. "This day have I begotten thee" is the language of Scripture, dearly pointing to a commencement of days. This view is confirmed by the statement of Christ:—"As the Father hath life in himself, so *hath he given to* the Son to have life in himself" (John 5:26).

Christ, therefore, though now possessed of inherent life, had been invested with it; it is not in this case underived. It is only the Great Uncreate, the Father, that can say, "I am, and there is none else beside me." Yet, though Christ's is not an underived existence, it is more directly divine than the human. A man is an embodiment of his father's mortal life-energy. Jesus was not born of the will of the flesh, but of God. He was begotten of Mary through the power of the spirit. This was the origin of his title, "the Son of God." See the angel's words to Mary:—"*Therefore* also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

But, though Son of God, he was flesh and blood. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of *flesh and blood*, he also himself likewise took part of THE SAME.… He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him *the seed of Abraham*. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren" (Heb. 2:14, 16, 17). He was *made sin for us*, who knew no sin (II Cor. 5:21). As he was in character sinless, this could only apply to his bodily constitution, which, through Mary, was the sin-nature of Adam. As Paul says elsewhere (Rom. 8:3), "God sent his Son *in the likeness of sinful flesh*." "He was sent forth *made of a woman*" (Gal. 4:4), "of *the seed of David* according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3). Jesus was "*a man* approved of God by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him (after his thirty years' preparation) in the midst of Israel" (Acts 2:22). This is Peter's

description of him. Paul speaks of him as "the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5). He was tried and disciplined as Adam was, but succeeded where Adam failed. "Though he were a son, yet *learned he obedience by the things which he suffered*" (Heb. 5:8). This precludes the idea of his being "very God." He was the Son of God, the manifestation of God by spirit-power, but not God himself. "*The life was manifested,* " says John, "and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, *which was with the Father and was manifested unto us*" (I John 1:2).

Again, in his gospel narrative (chapter 1:14), he says:—"*The Word was made flesh* and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth," from which it is evident that Christ was a divine manifestation—an embodiment of Deity in flesh—Emmanuel, God with us. "God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him," says the same apostle (chapter 3:34). The spirit descended upon him in bodily shape at his baptism in the Jordan, and took possession of him. This was the anointing which constituted him *Christ* (or the anointed), and which gave him the superhuman powers of which he showed himself possessed. This is clear from the words of Peter, in his address to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius—(Acts 10:38)—"*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power*; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed."

This statement alone is sufficient to disprove the popular view of Christ's essential Godhead. If he were "very God" in his character as Son, why was it necessary he should be "anointed" with spirit and power? He did no miracles before his anointing. He had no power of himself. This is his own declaration: "I can *of mine own self do nothing*" (John 5:30). "*The Father that dwelleth in me,* he doeth the works" (John 14:10). On Calvary, left to the utter helplessness of his own humanity, he felt the anguish of the hour and cried out, "My God, my God, *why hast thou forsaken me*?" (Matt. 27:46). Before his anointing, he was simply the "body prepared" for the divine manifestation that was to take place through him. The preparation of this body commenced with the Spirit's action on Mary, and concluded when Jesus, being thirty years of age, stood approved in the perfection of a sinless and mature character. After the Spirit's descent upon him, he was the full manifestation of God in the flesh. The Father, by the Spirit, tabernacled in Christ among men. "God was in Christ," says Paul, "reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

When raised from the dead and glorified, he was exalted to "all power in heaven and earth "; his human nature was swallowed up in the divine; the flesh changed to spirit. Hence, as he now exists, "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily" (Col. 2:9). He is now the corporealisation of life-spirit as it exists in the Deity. But this change from what he was "in the days of his flesh" has not obliterated a single line of his human recollections. This is evident from Paul's words in reference to his priestly function: "We have not an high priest which *cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*" (Heb. 4:15). This can only be on the principle that Jesus retains a memory of the infirmity with which he himself was encompassed in the day of his flesh career upon earth.

When Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," he did not contradict the statement that "no man hath seen God at any time," but simply expressed the truth contained in the following words of Paul:—Christ is "*the image of the invisible God*" (Col. 1:15); "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person" (Heb. 1:3). Those who looked upon the anointed Jesus, beheld a representation of the Deity accessible to human vision.

Jesus declares things of himself which are held to sanction the idea that he existed as a person before his birth of Mary; such as that "he came down from heaven to give life to the world" (John 6:33); that "he proceeded forth and came from the Father" (John 8:42; 16:28); that he had "power to lay down his life and power to take it again" (John 10:18); that he "had glory with the Father before the world was," and was "loved of Him before the foundation of the world" (John 17:5–24), etc.

It is evident, however, that we must understand these expressions in the light of the *undoubted* facts of Christ's life and mission. These literal facts are that he was begotten of the Holy Spirit, and born a baby at Bethlehem (Luke 1:35; 2:5–7); grew up to be a man, increasing in wisdom with years, stature, and experience (Luke 2:52); remained the private and undistinguished son of Joseph the carpenter, until the power of the Spirit was shed upon him at his baptism (Luke 3:21–23): AFTER WHICH, he did the works and *spoke the words recorded*; that he was put to death *through weakness* (II Cor. 13:4); was deserted of the power of the Father when suspended on the cross; and that he was afterwards raised from the dead *by the Father* (Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 37, and so on).

With these facts in view, we are enabled to attach the proper sense to statements which, in a naked and detached form, would appear to teach a personal pre-existence. For instance, when Jesus said to the Pharisees that he came down from heaven, he could not mean that the person standing before them had bodily descended from the clouds, as his words, literally understood, would have taught, and as the Pharisees appeared to have understood; he meant to say that his origin was from heaven. The "Holy Spirit" that came upon Mary—the "Power of the Highest" that overshadowed her, came down from heaven; consequently, the resultant man could, without extravagance, say he came down from heaven. The sense was literal as applied to *the Power of the Highest* that produced "the man Christ Jesus"; both at the stage of his begettal and the stage of his anointing on the banks of the Jordan, when the Spirit descended in bodily form and abode upon him; but not literal as applied to the man Christ Jesus.

When he said he proceeded forth and came from God, it was in the sense of these facts. He could not mean that as a person he had emanated from the very presence of the Almighty, but that the Father had sent him in the way disclosed in the record of his birth and baptism. John is described as "a man sent from God," without meaning to suggest that John existed before he was born and sent.

When Jesus said he had power to take up his life after it should be laid down, he expressed the confidence that God would raise him. It was not power in the dynamic sense; but authority (εξονσια); he immediately adds, "*This commandment* HAVE I RECEIVED OF MY FATHER"; that is, the taking up of his life would result from the Father's power and authority, exercised in accordance with the pledge given by the Father. Literally, Jesus did not take up his life; the Father raised him (see the references to Acts, three paragraphs back); but because it was the Father's purpose, and because the Father spoke through Jesus (John 14:10), Jesus could appropriately say that he had power to raise up himself. An example of this style of language, in which what a person has a relation to in the divine purpose, is considered as under his control and referable to his power, occurs in Jer, 1:10:—

> "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, *to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.*"

Literally, the prophet did none of these things, but was overpowered and slain, as nearly all the servants of God were; yet the things he predicted came to pass, and this is taken as a sufficient basis for the highly-wrought language above quoted, which imputes the result of Jeremiah's predictions to Jeremiah's individual operations.

Christ's statement that he had glory with the Father before the world was, must in the same way be understood in harmony with the elementary facts of the testimony. The glorification of Jesus was a purpose with the Father from the beginning: and, in this sense, he had glory with the Father before the world was. This may appear a strained explanation; but a regard to the scriptural habit of speech will justify it, in view of the testified facts of the case.

The Lord said to Jeremiah (chapter 1:5):—"*Before I formed thee in the belly* I KNEW THEE; *and before thou camest forth out of the womb*, I SANCTIFIED THEE: and I ordained thee a

prophet unto the nations." Now Jeremiah did not exist before his conception. Yet these words would seem to teach it, if understood as those who believe in the pre-existence of Christ, understood the statements about him. As a purpose Jeremiah existed; his person was as clearly present to the divine mind as if he had stood before Him in actual fact. This is the explanation of words, which, rigidly construed, would imply Jeremiah's pre-existence.

Look again at the words spoken of Cyrus, the Persian ruler, more than a hundred years before he was born (Isaiah 45:4):—"For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name; *I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me*." The same remark applies here: Cyrus was present to the divine contemplation as really as if he existed. Hence a style of language which would seem to assume his existence before he was born.

On the same principle, the purpose to raise a dead man is expressed by ignoring his death, and assuming his continued existence. Thus Jesus deduces the resurrection from the fact that God styled Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, at a time when these men were dead. The Sadducees saw the force of the argument, and were silenced (Matt. 22:31–34). The principle of the argument is expressed in the words of Paul (Rein. 4:17)—"God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth *those things which be not* (but are to be) AS THOUGH THEY WERE."

The words spoken of Jesus are of this order. When he said in prayer to the Father, "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world," he did not teach that he existed from "he foundation of the world," but that the Father regarded him with love from the beginning, and that, therefore, to the Father's mind, he was present. In the words of Peter, "He was *fore-ordained* before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times." (I Peter 1:20).

The same style of language is adopted with reference to Christ's people: "He hath chosen US in him *before the foundation of the world*." Literally, this would prove the existence of believers before the world began, for properly, a thing must exist to be the object of choice; actually, it only proves divine foresight. The glory which Jesus *had* before the world was, was the glory which God purposed for him from the beginning. Literally, he had not the glory referred to before the world was. What was the nature of that glory—the glory Jesus received in answer to this prayer? HE—the bodily Jesus—the body prepared —that which was evolved from the substance of Mary and made the subject of the anointing—was made incorruptible in substance, and the spirit shed upon that substance so abundantly, that it made him more luminous than the sun (Acts 26:13), and gave him power to bestow the spirit, and control providence in heaven and earth. Was Jesus possessed of *this* glory before he was born? Was he a body anointed with the spirit before he was the body prepared? Was he a real resurrected Jesus before Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem? Yet this was the glory he had with the Father before the world was. It was a glory he had in the Father's purpose, but in no other sense.

In the same way are we to understand the words, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). This was Christ's answer to the incredulity excited by his statement, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." The Jews thought he meant to insinuate that he was contemporary with Abraham, whereas he only meant to express the fact stated by Paul in the following words:—"These all (including Abraham—see verse 8) died in faith, not having received the promises, *but having seen them* AFAR OFF" (Heb. 11:13). It was this seeing of the promise of Christ "afar off" that made Abraham glad. It was the day presented in the promises that he saw, but, as they almost always did, the Jews mistook Jesus, and, as he was prone to do, he deepened their bewilderment by using another form of speech, which still more obscured his meaning, on the principle indicated in Matt. 13:11–15: a form of speech which in one phrase expressed two aspects of the truth concerning himself, viz., that

he was purposed before Abraham existed, and that the Father, of whom he was then the manifestation, existed before all.

Jesus said, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). He could not mean, in view of all the testimony, what Trinitarians understand him to mean, that he and the Father were identically the same person ("the same in substance, equal in power and glory"), but that they were one in spirit-connection and design of operations. This is apparent from his prayer for his disciples, "That they may be one, EVEN *as we are one*." The unity is not as to person, but as to nature and state of mind. This is the unity that exists between the Father and the Son, and the unity that will be ultimately established between the Father and His whole family, of whom Christ is the elder brother. When this unity is established, Christ will take a more subordinate position than he now occupies, in relation to the race of Adam. Paul says, "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" (I Cor. 15:28).

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THE CRUCIFIXION

This was Christ's great act of obedience; but why was such an act of obedience necessary? Nothing has more staggered thoughtful minds than this question; and yet nothing is simpler when the Scriptural elements of the case are all placed together. It is a theological habit to represent the death of Christ as an act on his part to appease the wrath of the Father towards sinners. The Scriptures, on the contrary, always speak of it as an expression of God's *love* towards fallen humanity. We read:—

> "God SO LOVED the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Again, John, in his First Epistle 4:9 and 14, says:—

> "*In this was manifested the love of God toward us*, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him, … and we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son *to be the Saviour of the world*."

Paul expresses the same sentiment in Romans 5:8:—

> *"God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*

And again in II Corinthians 5:19:—

> "*God was in Christ*, reconciling the world *unto Himself*, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

But the question presses: How was God's love manifested *in the death of Christ*? Could not divine love have been manifested without so tragic an event? Evidently not; for on the very eve of crucifixion, Christ prayed to the Father in these agonising terms—"*If it be possible*, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." The cup did not pass; therefore, it was not possible. He drank it deep, pouring out his soul unto death. Why was the death of Christ indispensible? What did it accomplish? A consideration of the testimony will guide us to an answer which the discarding of the doctrine of natural immortality prepares us to understand. First let us consider the following New Testament allusions to the object of the crucifixion:—

"Christ *died for our sins* according to the Scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3).

"He was wounded *for our transgressions*; he was bruised *for our iniquities*; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5).

"He *put away sin* by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26).

"Christ our passover is sacrificed for *us*" (I Cor. 5:7).

"God spared not His own Son, but delivered him up *for us all*" (Rom. 8:32).

"While we were yet sinners, Christ *died for us*" (Rom. 5:8).

"We have redemption *through his blood*, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14).

"Having *made peace* through the blood of his cross, to reconcile all things" (verse 20).

"You He *hath* reconciled in the body of his flesh through death" (verse 22).

"His own self *bare our sins* in his own body on the tree" (I Pet. 2:24).

"The Son of Man came to give his life *a ransom for many*" (Mark 10:45).

"The man Christ Jesus, who gave himself *a ransom for all*" (I Tim. 2:5, 6).

"Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us *that he might redeem us from all iniquity*" (Titus 2:13, 14).

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself *for our sins*, that he might deliver us from this present evil world" (Gal. 1:3, 4).

"This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the *remission of sins*" (Matt. 26:28).

"Thou wast slain, and *hast redeemed us to God* by thy blood" (Rev. 5:9).

These statements affirm a connection between the death of Christ and the restoration of sinful man to divine favour and life. There may not, at first, appear to be a logical connection between the two things; but a consideration of all the facts of the case will reveal the deepest philosophy in the whole arrangement—using the term philosophy in its true sense, in the conviction that absolute wisdom characterises everything with which the mind of Deity has to do—the principles involved in the death of Christ are simple and easily understood. It is the going astray of Christendom from these first principles that has thrown obscurity over the sufferings of the Man of Sorrows. It is of the first importance to get rid of this obscurity. It is not the mere fact of Christ's transfixion on the cross by the Romans, that constitutes the saving and enlightening truth of the matter; it is *the principles involved in the tragedy* that constitute the truth to be known.

These principles have been divinely revealed. The first is, that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Paul says, "By one man sin entered into the world, and *death by sin*" (Rom. 5:12). What this means, we have seen, Adam disobeyed a command given to him, and, *in consequence of disobedience*, WAS CONDEMNED TO RETURN TO THE GROUND FROM WHENCE HE CAME. Hence, "sin," which has become an obscure and unintelligible term, is simply disobedience. It is, in fact, so styled by Paul in the very chapter in which he describes Adam's act as "sin." He says, "By one man's *disobedience* many were made sinners" (Rom. 5:19). If it is used in any secondary sense (such as when Paul speaks of "sin that dwelleth in me") that secondary sense is covered by, or included in, the major sense of disobedience. Sin being

disobedience or transgression (agreeable with John's definition, "Sin is the transgression of the law"—I John 3:4), we are enabled to understand the relation of death to it.

This death is not a "state of the soul," or "peril of eternal damnation in the flames of hell"; both of which are unknown to Scripture, either in word or idea, being pagan corruptions of the truth. The death resulting from Adam's transgression is a *dissolution of being in the grave*. Hence Paul puts resurrection by Christ in antithesis to death by Adam. "For since by man came death, by man came also *the resurrection of the dead*." This being the nature of death, we are enabled to understand the law which makes it the result of sin. Sin being the transgression or disobedience of the divine law, the perpetrator of it is out of joint with the law of well-being, whether as regards himself, others, or God. He cannot have joy of himself, he cannot yield happiness to others, and he cannot yield pleasure to his Creator. Misery is the result of such a state; and it is one of the beneficent ordinances of God that perpetual existence shall be impossible under such circumstances—that death (extinction of being) shall follow in the train of moral pestilence, and wipe its evil results from the face of creation. He will not allow the evil to become permanent. So far from decreeing or countenancing an eternal hell, where sinners shall writhe and devils triumph to all eternity, His law, with jealous and inexorable power, follows close on the heels of sin, and suppresses the very germ of rebellion and misery.

This is the first principle to be apprehended before the crucifixion can be understood. Adam, the father of the race, disobeying in face of the declared penalty of death, brought upon himself the threatened sentence, and his posterity are involved in the same condemnation, for the simple reason that they are but propagations of his own being in all its qualities and relations, and also because they are themselves, every one of them, sinners by actual transgression, and, therefore, on their own account, subject to death.

Now here is the problem to be solved, and which has been solved in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus: how is condemned human nature to be emancipated from the law of sin and death, in harmony with the righteousness that has brought that law into force? If humanity were left to itself, it would inevitably perish; because it. is not only incapable of a perfect righteousness, but it cannot set aside the condemnation in which it already exists. God's plan in Christ has given usa scheme by which human salvation is achieved without the violation of any of His laws, which are necessary to the maintenance of His supremacy in the universe. Christ meets all the necessities of the case. The first necessity was that the law, both Edenic and Mosaic, should be upheld. The law required the death of the transgressing nature, viz., human nature. He had this nature, and he died:—

> "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, *he also himself likewise took part of the same* … He took not on him the nature of angels, but *he took on him the seed of Abraham*" (Heb. 2:14, 16).

> "God sent His own Son *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3).

But it was also necessary that such a sufferer should be sinless, because sin would have prevented resurrection to life immortal. This necessity for sinlessness in "the Lamb of God" was constantly prefigured under the law by the spotlessness of the beasts offered in sacrifice. Christ as the great antitype fulfilled this condition: "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." He could triumphantly ask his persecutors, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John 8:46). If Christ had been a son of Adam merely, he would have been a sinner, and, therefore, unfit for sacrificial purposes. On the other hand, if he had been clothed with angelic or immaculate nature, he would have been equally disqualified, inasmuch as it was necessary that the sinning nature should suffer in him. The combination of condemned human nature with personal sinlessness was effected through divine power begetting a son

from Mary's substance. A "Lamb of God," was thus produced, guileless from his paternity, and yet inheriting the human sin-nature of his mother.

It is not possible that "The blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4), for the reason that appears in view of all these facts. The law would admit of no substitute, but exacted the very nature obnoxious to its penalty. Christ, then, "being found in fashion as a man," and yet being sinless, was a perfect sacrifice; because being the representative of human nature he could meet all the claims of God's law upon that nature, and yet triumph over its operation by a resurrection to immortal life. The Lamb being provided, the sacrifice followed. The "Messiah was cut off." "He was wounded *for our transgressions*; he was bruised for our iniquities: … the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

God dealt with him representatively. There is a great difference between a *representative* and a *substitute*. A representative is not disconnected from those represented. On the contrary, those represented go through with him all that he goes through. But in the case of a substitute, it is otherwise. He does his part *instead of* those for whom he is the substitute, and these are dissociated from the transgression.

Christ suffering as the representative of his people, is one with them, and they are one with him. In what he went through they went through. Hence, Paul says believers were crucified with Christ, and baptised into his death. This death he declares to have been "the declaration of the righteousness of God," which God required as the basis of the work of reconciliation and forgiveness (Rom. 3:24–26).

Christ having died, God raised him from the dead to a glorious existence, even to equality with Himself. This was the essential point of the scheme, as appears from 1st Corinthians 15:17, 20: "*If Christ be not raised* YOUR FAITH IS VAIN, *ye are yet in your sins*. But now is Christ risen from the dead"; and being raised, he constitutes the "one name given under heaven whereby men may be saved" (Acts 4:12). If Christ had been a personal transgressor, the law of sin would have kept him in the grave, and the scheme of salvation would have miscarried at its vital point. The way of salvation could not have been opened through him; a dead Saviour would have been no ark of refuge—no life-giver to the mortal sons of men.

But Christ, after suffering the natural penalty of disobedience in human nature, having been raised from the dead to live for evermore, he is "the Saviour of all such as come to him." He has life for bestowal by his own right. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; *and this life* IS IN HIS SON. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I John 5:11, 12). Life is deposited in him for our acceptance, on condition of allying ourselves to him, yea, on condition of our entry into him, and becoming part of him; for Paul says of those who are in Christ, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones," and the aggregate of such are designated "*the Bride*, the Lamb's wife," —"His body, the church."

Divine wisdom, which is foolishness with men, has provided a means whereby we get the benefit of the result achieved in Christ. Baptism in water is the ceremony by which believing men and women are united to Christ, and constituted heirs of the life everlasting which he possesses in his own right. This will be demonstrated more particularly in a later lecture. Meanwhile, we quote Paul's words: "As many of you as have been *baptised into Christ* have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). Entering into Christ, we are made *one* with him, and become heirs to the privileges of the position which he has established in himself, after the analogy of the woman who, at her betrothal, obtains a prospective title to that which belongs to the man to whom she is betrothed. *In the first Adam*, we inherit death without the possibility of retrieving our misfortune, so long as we remain connected with him. *In the last Adam* (who, however, it must always be borne in mind, ascended to the last Adam position from the first Adam state), we obtain a title to eternal life. Hence the words of the apostle Paul: "As in Adam all die; even so in Christ shall all be made alive," that is, the "all" of whom he is

speaking, viz., believers of the truth, as may be seen by the context (I Cor. 15:22, 23), and only those who are found worthy at the judgment-seat. He is speaking here of being made alive immortally, not of mere resuscitation of mortal life to judgment, of which many will be the subjects who have never been Christians, but who are among the responsible unjust by reason of their privileges.

By nature we are in Adam. By the gospel and baptism we pass "into Christ." This is God's appointment; and we cannot be saved except by compliance with His appointments.

Natural virtue will avail nothing, because, *in itself*, it is related only to the present, and establishes no right in respect of future existence. Those who are trusting to it, are building their house upon a foundation of sand. There is only one name given under heaven whereby men can be saved; and if we refuse to put on that name, and thus reject Christ, "who is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Corinthians 1:30), there remains nothing for us but the utter worthlessness of our own mortality, which without redemption will perish for ever under the just condemnation of Him who hath already passed the decree in prospect: "Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away *even that he hath*."

O reader, "refuse not Him that speaketh." Turn not thine ear from the invitation which calls thee to drink of the fountain of the water of life freely. Gladly accept it; humbly comply with its requirements; and thou shalt, in due time, be delivered from the bondage of mortal flesh which lies heavy upon thee, and be promoted to the glorious liberty of the children of God!

Lecture 7

THE DEVIL NOT A PERSONAL SUPERNATURAL BEING, BUT THE SCRIPTURAL PERSONIFICATION OF SIN IN ITS MANIFESTATIONS AMONG MEN

IN the religion of Christendom, the devil figures almost more prominently than God. If we have found Christendom astray as to the nature of man, it will not be wonderful if we find it astray on the subject of the devil, with which, scripturally, man has so much to do.

The theology of Christendom places the devil in juxtaposition with God. As the one is presented for worship as the source and embodiment of all good, so the other is held up for detestation and dread, as the instigator and promoter of all evil. Practically, the one is regarded in the light of the good God, and the other as the bad god. It is the polytheism of paganism in its smallest form: and the philosophy of the ancients embodied in names and forms supplied by the Bible.

Good and evil are regarded as separate essences, and each is attributed to the control of a separate being. Instead of having a god for war, a god for love, a god for thunder, a god for fire, a god for water, and so on, down the whole list of nature's phenomena, modern theology confines the ruling powers of the universe to two agencies, with whom respectively it leaves the contest of good and evil—God and the devil—a contest in which they measure strength in what would appear to be a somewhat equal encounter.

We have looked at Bible teaching concerning God. It is appropriate now to consider what it teaches about the devil, for there is a Bible doctrine of the devil, as there is a Bible doctrine of God. And it certainly is not less important to know the truth about the one than it is to know the truth about the other. The doctrine of the devil has as intimate a bearing upon the truth of Christ as the doctrine of God. This may be a surprising proposition at first; but on due investigation it will become apparent from two separate points of view.

First, the orthodox point of view. From this, the devil is seen in large proportions. He occupies the first position in the scheme of religion. He is the principal figure in the picture. He is the great enemy from which our immortal souls are supposed to stand in need of being delivered. He enters largely into Methodistic outpourings, hortatory or devotional. He is the great nightmare, the great object of terror, the great fowler, with net-snare, exerting his utmost cunning and device—which are something superhuman—to entrap souls. Cruden describes him as "a most wicked angel, the implacable enemy and tempter of the human race … deadly in his malice, surprisingly subtle possessing strength superior to ours, having a mighty number of principalities and powers under his command … He roves, full of rage, like a roaring lion, seeking to tempt, to betray, to destroy us, and to involve us in guilt and wickedness … In a word, he is an enemy to God and man, and uses his utmost endeavours to rob God of His glory, and men of their souls."

Common belief assigns something like omniscience to the evil being thus described; he is regarded as universally at work, alike active in England and America, and all other parts of the globe at the same time, and exerting his seductive arts in millions of hearts at once. He is also believed to be, in some sense, omnipotent, achieving his behests by a power superior to nature, and certainly more successfully than God in the mutual strife for human souls; since hell, according to tradition, receives a far larger proportion of the earth's inhabitants than find their way to the celestial city.

If this be the truth about the devil, it is of the first importance to know it; for how can we mentally adapt ourselves to our spiritual exigencies if we ignore the very first relation we sustain, in our exposure to assault and capture at the hands of an unseen, but potent and untiring, malignant foe? A denial of this truth—if it be a truth—is a mistake of the first magnitude, and cannot fail to imperil the soul thus deluded, unless indeed—which no one believing the Bible can maintain—it is a matter of indifference whether a man know the truth of the matter or not. We must presume every orthodox believer will estimate the doctrine at its inherent value, and maintain that it is of vital consequence for a man to believe in the peril from which Christ came to save him.

From the second point of view, the doctrine appears in the same light of essential importance, though the picture seen is different in hue and outline. Assuming for the moment that there is no such being as the devil of orthodox belief, but that the devil is something occupying an entirely different relation to the universe and ourselves from that assigned to

the infernal monster of Christendom, it is equally important that we understand this, as it is that we accept the popular doctrine of the devil, if that is the truth. How this is will presently appear. No one acquainted with the teaching of the New Testament will dispute, that it is necessary to understand and believe *the truth concerning Christ*. James, speaking of himself, and those who were Christ's, says, "Of his own will begat he us *with the word of truth"* (James 1:18). Paul, describing the spiritual cleansing to which obedient believers of the truth are subject, styles it "the washing of water *by the word*" (Eph. 5:26). Christ also says to his disciples: "Ye are clean *through the word I have spoken unto you*" (John 15:3), and to the Jews who were disposed to be his disciples; "Ye are clean *through the word I have spoken unto you free*" (John 8:32). Now, this truth is styled "the word of the truth of the gospel" (Col. 1:5), "by which also ye are saved" (I Cor. 15:2).

Descending from these general intimations to particulars, we find that the word of the truth of the gospel, designed to cleanse and save men, consists of "the kingdom of God and *those things that concern our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Acts 28:31), elsewhere styled, "the things concerning the kingdom of God and *the name of Jesus Christ*" (Acts 8:12). From this it follows, that for a man to believe the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16), he must believe *the truth concerning Jesus Christ*. In view of this, let the reader ponder the following testimonies:—

> "*For this purpose the Son of God was manifested*, that he might DESTROY *THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL"* (I John 3:8).
>
> "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, (Jesus) 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" (Heb. 2:14).

Is it possible to believe the truth concerning Christ, and be ignorant of the nature of the devil that he was expressly manifested to destroy with his works? It is unnecessary to answer the question. It is necessary to put it for the purpose of shewing that the doctrine of the devil (in whatever form the truth of the matter may be found to exist) is so far from being an unimportant matter, that it is one of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, ignorance of which argues a fatal want of knowledge in relation to the first of divine principles. The doctrine of the devil is not an "advanced" subject, but bears upon the most elementary aspects of divine truth. The idea that it is otherwise is due to the obscurity arising from tradition and an imperfect translation of the Scriptures. The sense of the thing, alone, would indicate the importance of the subject; for how can a man be in a state of enlightenment in relation to divine things, who is ignorant of a matter so vastly affecting the relation of man to God, on whichever side the truth may lie?

Now, we make bold at once to assert that the popular doctrine of a personal devil has no foundation whatever in truth, but is the hideous conception of the heathen mind, inherited by the moderns from the mythologies of the ancients, and incorporated with Christianity by those "men of corrupt minds," who, Paul predicted, would pervert the truth, "giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils" (I Tim. 4:1). In taking this position, we are not unaware that apparent countenance is given to the doctrine in the Scriptures. Nay, it is because of this circumstance that it becomes worth while to attack the monster conceit, in order that conscientious minds, over-shadowed with the nightmare of theology, may see that, as in other instances, the apparent sanction accorded by the Scriptures to a false doctrine is no sanction at all, but arises from a misconstruction under educational bias, of certain allusions to other agencies altogether.

In the first place, there are certain general principles which exclude the possibility of the devil's existence. "The wages of sin is *death*" (Rom. 6:23). "Sin entered into the world, and DEATH *by sin*" (Rom. 5:12). This is an eternal principle; death and sin are inseparable. "God

ONLY hath immortality" (I Tim. 6:16); and He bestows it on the principle of obedience. Disobedience, which is sin, in every case, He visits with death. Therefore, the angels which kept not their first estate, were cast down to hell (the grave), and reserved under chains of darkness (the bonds of death)—(Jude 6; II Peter 2:2, 4), therefore Adam was sentenced to return to the ground (Gen. 3:19); therefore Moses was prohibited from entering the promised land, and condemned to die (Deut. 32:48, 52); and, therefore, Uzzah was slain for harmlessly (humanly speaking) saving the ark from a fall (II Sam. 6:6, 7); therefore "the man of God that came out of Judah" was torn by a lion for turning back to eat bread with another prophet, in disobedience to a divine command, under the Sincere impression that in so doing he was obeying the commands of the Almighty (I Kings 13:1, 25).

An immortal rebel is an impossibility. With God is the fountain of life (Psalm 36:9). No one can steal a march upon Him, so as to retain life and power in rebellion. "In His hand is the life of every living thing" (Job 12:10), and He cuts away the life that is lifted against Him; He consigns all disobedience and sin to death. Will it be suggested that God has made an exception in the case of the devil? The Bible devil is a sinner (I John 3:8): therefore the devil cannot be immortal. God is no respecter of persons, whether of men or angels. God is not double in His modes of action. He is one. He is the same for ever and in all places. He does not act one way on the earth, and on another principle in the sun or other parts of His dominion; His ways are wise, uniform, and unvarying. Therefore the operation of His law, which links death with sin, would destroy the devil if he were a person; "for the devil sinneth from the beginning," and must, therefore, have been mortal from the beginning.

In some cases, the popular view so far yields to this argument on the subject, as to admit that the devil cannot be immortal, and must, in course of time, be destined to die; but saves itself by suggesting that, though mortal, he may have an existence contemporaneous with that of the human race, and that his career will only end with the triumph of the Son of God on earth. But this is, if possible, more absurd and untenable than the ordinary view. The theory of an immortal, supernatural devil, who was once an angel, has an air of plausibility and consistency about it, when not scanned too closely; but the idea of a mortal devil—who never was anything but a sinner himself—entrusted with a general jurisdiction over other sinners (for it is said he has the power of death and disease), for the purpose, not of dispensing the divine law, but of antagonising the Deity in His dealings with the human race—doing all he can to afflict and damn those whom Deity is represented as striving to save, is something exceedingly difficult to conceive. If this is the Bible devil, why was it necessary that Jesus should die to compass his destruction? He took part of flesh and blood, that "THROUGH DEATH he might destroy him that hath the power of death, *that is, the devil*" (Heb. 2:14). Why through death? If the devil is a being separate from mankind, what had the immolation of flesh and blood on Calvary to do with the process of his destruction? If he were the strong, personal, active power of evil contended for, it wanted strength, and not weakness, to put him down. It wanted "the nature of angels," and not "the seed of Abraham," to enter into a successful encounter with "the personal power of darkness." But Jesus, to destroy him, was manifested in the flesh, and submitted to death. Victory crowned his efforts, and the devil was destroyed; in what sense, we shall see.

The words "devil" and "Satan" occur repeatedly in the Scriptures, and are used in a personal sense; but there is no affirmation of the doctrine popularly attached to the words. This is remarkable; for if the doctrine be true, it would be reasonable to expect that it would be formally enunciated like other points of truth. The doctrine of God's existence; of His creative power; of His relation to His universe, is not only implied in the appellations He appropriates to Himself, but expressly propounded. "I am God, and there is none else" (Isaiah 46:9). "To whom will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things" (Isaiah 40:25, 26). "God dwells in

heaven." "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. There is not a word on my tongue, but lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from Thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" (Psalm 139:2–7).

These and many other like declarations affirm the reality of God's glorious existence, His attributes, and power; but there is no such information in the case of the devil. The popularly received theory of his origin and relation to God and man is definite enough; and there are some things in the Scriptures at which we shall look, which are supposed to bear out the theory; but this is principally due to Milton, whose *Paradise Lost* has done more to give shape and body to the tradition of a devil than all other influences put together. His poetry has woven together a number of Scriptural things which have really no connection one with another, but which work admirably into a consistent whole when the parts are not too closely scrutinised.

The narrative of the temptation in the Garden of Eden is one of those parts. In Milton, and in the general popular conception of the subject, the supernatural devil took the shape of a serpent, and became the tempter of Eve. There is absolutely nothing in the Bible narrative to warrant this view. The narrative exhibits the natural serpent, "*more subtle than any* BEAST OF THE FIELD *which the Lord God had made*" (Gen. 3:1), as the tempter. The creature was endowed with the gift of speech (no doubt, specially with a view to the part it had to perform in putting our first parents to the test). Possessing this power, it reasoned upon the prohibition which God had put upon "the tree in the midst of the garden," and coming to the conclusion, from all he saw and heard, that death would not be the result of eating, he said, "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5).

To say that a supernatural personal devil put this into the serpent's head is to go beyond the record. It is to put something into it that is not there. The narrative accredits the serpent as a natural agent with the part it took in the transaction, and the sentence afterwards passed upon the serpent, rests upon the same basis: "Because THOU *hast done this*, THOU art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. Upon thy belly shalt thou go, *and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life*" (Gen. 3:14). If the serpent had been a passive and irresponsible tool in the hands of Infernal Power, it is difficult to see the appropriateness or justice of a decree which heaps all the blame and visits all the consequences upon it, instead of upon the Being supposed to have instigated its crimes. To suggest that the serpent was Satan in reptile form is again to go beyond the record, and enter a region where one guess or one assertion is as good as another. The idea is forbidden by the sentence which condemns the serpent to eat dust *all the days of its life*. Paul evidently recognised nothing beyond the serpent in the transaction. "I fear," says he, "lest by any means, *as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty,* " etc. (II Cor. 11:3).

Some people make a great difficulty about the serpent speaking; but surely there is as much difficulty about a serpent speaking under satanic inspiration as in one speaking by faculty divinely conferred for a purpose. If a "dumb ass, speaking with man's voice, forbad the madness" of a Balaam—(II Pet. 2:16)—why not a serpent be enabled to utter its thoughts when it was necessary to try the faithfulness of Adam and Eve? How otherwise could they be put to trial? It would never occur to their childlike and inexperienced minds to disobey. The suggestion had to come from without, and could only emanate from some of the living forms by which they were surrounded. If it be asked why temptation was necessary at all, it has to be answered that the obligation to obey is never so palpable to the consciousness, as when a temptation to the contrary is presented. Obedience that cannot stand the shock of temptation

is weak and ready to die. Trial strengthens and makes manifest. Hence, the probation through which the race is passing.

It is commonly believed that the devil was once a powerful arch-angel, and that he was driven out of heaven on account of his pride; after which, he applied his angelic energies to oppose God in all His schemes and movements, and do as much evil as he could in the universe, being assisted in this by a host of angelic sympathisers, who were driven down to hell along with him. This view is supposed to have a certain degree of countenance in the Bible. Let us look at all the places where it is supposed this countenance is given. The case of the fallen angels is largely relied upon:—

> "If God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (II Pet. 2:4).

> "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6).

This is all the information we have on the subject. It is scanty and obscure, but, such as it is, it points in a very different direction and to a very different occurrence from that indicated in popular tradition. It does not tell of angels being expelled from heaven to engage in marauding expeditions against human interests and divine authority, wherever their caprice might lead them; but of disobedient angels, not necessarily in heaven, being degraded from their position, and confined in the grave against a time of judgment. It speaks of them as in custody, "in chains of darkness"—a metaphor highly expressive of the bondage of death—in which they are held and from which they will emerge, to be judged, at a time when the saints shall sit in judgment (I Cor. 6:3). The time and locality of their fall are matters of speculation. The probability is that the globe was the scene of the tragedy in pre-Adamic times, since both Peter and Jude categorise it with the Flood and the perdition of Sodom. The dark, chaotic, aqueous condition of things that prevailed at the time when the spirit of God illuminated the scene, preliminary to the six days' work of reorganisation, may be presumed to have been due to the catastrophe which hurled the illustrious transgressors into destruction. This idea is countenanced by the words addressed to Adam: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and *replenish* (fill again) the earth," which was only appropriate on the supposition that the earth was occupied before Adam's time. This was the command delivered to Noah after the Flood, when the earth had been cleared of its population by judgment. The sin of the angels, so far as indicated in the statements before us, consisted in leaving the earth without authority, and probably against command.

Be that as it may, it will be seen that the Scripture allusions to the fallen angels afford no countenance whatever to the idea that there was "a rebellion in heaven" under the leadership of "Satan," resulting in the expulsion of the rebels, and the establishment in the universe of a great antagonism to God, having its centre and headquarters in the hell of popular creed. Superficial believers in the Miltonic antecedents of "the Prince of Darkness," quote Rev. 12:7, in proof of them:—

> "And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven; and the great Dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

Surely those who quote this to prove a rebellion in heaven before Adam, must stagger a little, when it is pointed out to them that it describes something that was to happen *after the days of John*. The things seen by John in "Revelation" were representative of *events future to his time*. This is evident from Rev. 4:1: "Come up hither, and I will shew thee *things which*

must be hereafter." Hence, how absurd to quote any of his descriptions as applicable to an event *alleged to have occurred before the creation of the world*!

Secondly, what John saw were not real things, but signs or symbols of real things. This is evident from the opening statement of the Apocalypse: "He (Jesus) sent and *signified* it by his angel unto his servant John" (Rev. 1:1). The seven churches of Asia were represented by *seven candlesticks*, and Christ by a *seven-horned lamb*; the totality of the redeemed by *four beasts full of eyes*; an imperial city by *a woman*, etc. This being so, it is inadmissible to read the above-quoted account of "war in heaven" literally, which must be done before the popular view can be maintained. The very nature of the scene described precludes the possibility of a literal construction. Only read the chapter and realise it.

A woman *clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet*, is opposed by a dragon with *seven heads* and *ten horns, who, with his tail, sweeps the third part of the stars from their places in the sky!* The woman gives birth to a child, which the dragon is waiting to devour. The child is snatched up to heaven, whither it is apparently followed by the dragon, for we find the dragon engaged in a war upon Michael and his angels in heaven. The war ends in the triumph of Michael. The dragon is expelled, falls to the earth, gives chase to the woman, and, unable to catch her, ejects from his venomous jaws a flood of water intended to drown her, but the earth opens, the water sinks through the rent, and the woman is saved.

The fact is, it is a magnificent hieroglyph, with a deep political significance, which subsequent history has verified with the utmost exactness. This is not the place to go into the matter. We recommend the reader to peruse Dr. Thomas's Exposition of the Apocalypse (*Eureka*, in three vols.), for a logical, eloquently-written, intellect-satisfying, and heart-building explanation of this and all the mysteries of "Revelation." It suffices, at present, to show that Rev. 21 affords no countenance to the idea which it is the object of this lecture to destroy. The class of people who refer to it in support of a personal devil, also quote Isaiah 14:12–15, and Ezek. 28:11–15; but these Scriptures have even less to do with the subject than Rev. 12. In both cases, if the reader will read the whole chapter, he will find the personage addressed is an earthly potentate—in one case the King of Babylon, and in the other, the Prince of Tyre.

It is worthy of remark that in the divine dealings with the Jewish nation, as exhibited in Biblical history or the writings of the prophets, there is an absence of everything giving countenance to the idea of a personal devil. In all God's expostulations with His people, the appeal is to themselves. There is no recognition of diabolical agency or occult influence? How shall we account for this? If Satanic influence, of the type recognised by popular tradition, were a fact, it would surely be recognised in proceedings intended to remedy its evil working. Would it be righteous to charge the responsibility of devilish suggestion upon poor beleaguered human nature? Devil-influence must detract from human accountability in the ratio of its potency. No account of the existence of such an influence is taken in God's extensive communings with His chosen nation. This is one of the strongest evidences that it is a fiction.

If there is no such devil, then, as the arch-fiend of orthodox repute, busy hunting souls and scheming, with irrepressible and untiring activity, to thwart God's beneficent designs, what are we to understand by "the devil" so often mentioned in the Bible, and spoken of in the "third personal pronoun, singular, masculine gender"? This is the question now demanding an answer, and the demand will be met by facts which will show the impossibility of the existence of the devil of popular superstition.

We first look at the original words, *devil and Satan*, for these (with very slight modification) are the original words, though now so long current as English words. *Devil* is Greek; *Satan* is Hebrew, and Greek only by adoption. *Devil*, in the singular number, only occurs in the New Testament; *Satan* is found in both Old and New. It is no use referring to an

English dictionary to ascertain the exact meaning of the terms as employed in the original tongue. The English language was unknown at the time the words were written. An English dictionary only gives the meaning of current words as *currently understood*. No doubt the dictionary would favour the popular view of the matter, by defining the devil to be "a fallen angel, the enemy of God and man," but this is of no more value than any utterance on the subject one might hear in society. The whole question is whether the received (and, therefore, the dictionary) doctrine of the devil is true. This we can only settle by going to the original sources of information.

SATAN

"Satan" is a Hebrew word, and *transferred to the English Bible untranslated from the original tongue*. Cruden (himself a believer in the popular devil) defines it as follows:— "Satan, Sathan, Sathanas: *this is a mere Hebrew word, and signifies* AN ADVERSARY, AN ENEMY, AN ACCUSER." If Satan is "a mere Hebrew word, signifying adversary," etc., obviously it does not *in itself* import the evil being which it represents to the common run of English ears. This conclusion is borne out by its uses in the Hebrew Bible. The first place where it occurs is Num. 22:22:—

> "And God's anger was kindled because he (Balaam) went; and the angel of the Lord stood in the way for *an adversary* (SATAN) against him."

It next occurs in the same chapter, verse 32:—

> "And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? Behold, I went out *to withstand* (marg., to be AN ADVERSARY—a Satan to) thee."

In this case, Satan was a holy angel. Understanding "Satan" to mean adversary in its simple and general sense, we can see how this could be; but, understanding it as the evil being of popular belief, it would be a different matter. The following are other cases in which the word is translated "adversary," in the common version of the Scriptures:—

> "Let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be *an adversary* (SATAN) to us" (I Sam. 29:4).

> "And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be *adversaries* (SATANS) unto me?" (II Sam. 19:22).

> "But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither *adversary* (SATAN) nor evil occurrent" (I Kings 5:4).

> "And the Lord stirred up *an adversary* (SATAN) unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom" (I Kings 11:14).

> "And God stirred him up *another adversary* (SATAN), Rezon, the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah."

> "And he was *an adversary* (SATAN) to Israel all the days of Solomon" (I Kings 11:23, 25).

In these cases, the translators have *translated the word*, and by this means have fenced off the notion of diabolical interference in the matters recorded, which would certainly have sprung up if the word had been "Satan" instead of adversary. In one or two other cases, however, they have not translated the word, but simply transferred it in its Hebrew form,

unaltered, to the English version, thus mystifying the idea of the original, and giving countenance to the popular Satanic theory.

A notable instance of this is found in the narrative of Job's trials. "Satan" here plays a conspicuous part, and of course the common English reader thinks of the creature variously denominated the Devil, Lucifer, Old Harry, the Old Gentleman, the Prince of Darkness, Old Nick, Old Scratch, Sooty, Old Horny, the Gentleman in Black, etc. He sees the monster with horns, hoofs, and tail, bloodshot eyes, and fiery sceptre, every time he encounters the word "Satan" in the narrative; and a vivid imagination will supply the clanking of chains, the hissing of fire and smoke, and the general accessories of Satanic dignity, according to popular conceptions. This is purely owing to a mistaken use of the word, borrowed from bygone days of intense darkness. If the reader will substitute "the adversary" for "Satan," which is done marginally in recent editions of the Bible, he will read strictly according to the original, and escape popular devilism.

But who was the adversary, it may be asked, who proved such a terror to Job, against whom he exerted such power? All the answer that can be made is, that there is no information as to who he was in particular. His title would show that he was an enemy of Job, and probably of the sons of God in general—a wicked, overbearing lord, whose envy and malice were only equal to the dominion he seems to have exercised. It is impossible to be more specific than this, in saying who he was. We can say who he was *not*. He was not the horned and sulphurous monster of popular superstition, for he did not come from "hell" to attend the assembly of the sons of God, but from "going to and fro *in the earth*." He was not the "devil" of popular theology, who is so coy of spiritual influence that he flies when the Bible is presented, or the godly fall on their knees; for he came boldly into the blaze of the divine presence, among a crowd of worshippers. He was not the arch-fiend, who is represented to be on the alert to catch immortal souls, and drag them into his fiery hold; for he had his eye on Job's estate and effects, and ultimately got his envious malice to take effect on Job's body. The probability is he was a powerful magnate of the time—a professed fellow of the sons of God—but an envious and despiteful malignant, who looked on Job with evil eye, and sought to effect his ruin.

But, you say, what about the calamities of tempest and disease that befell Job? Was it in the power of a mortal man to control these? The answer is these were God's doings, and not the adversary's. "*Thou movedst* ME against him, to destroy him without cause" (chapter 2:3). This is the language in which God describes Satan's transaction in the matter. It was God who inflicted the calamities at the adversary's instigation. This is Job's view of the case: "Have pity upon me, O ye my friends," says he, "THE HAND OF GOD *hath touched me*" (chapter 19:21). And the narrator, in concluding the book, says: "Then came there unto him all his brethren … and they bemoaned him, and comforted him *over all the evil* THAT THE LORD HAD BROUGHT UPON HIM" (chapter 42:11). But even supposing the adversary had actually wielded the power that affected Job, that would no more prove him a supernatural agent, than do the miracles achieved by Moses prove him to have been no man. God can delegate miraculous power even to mortal man.

The three other cases in which Satan is *untranslated* are the following:—

> "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel" (I Chron. 21:1).
>
> "Set thou a wicked man over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand" (Psa. 109:6).
>
> "And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem," etc. (Zech. 3:1, 2).

With regard to the first, the adversary seems to have been God; for we read in II Sam. 24:1, "The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and HE *moved David against them to say*, Go, number Israel and Judah." The angel of God was a Satan to Balaam, as we have seen, and, in this case, God proved a Satan to Israel. Moved, doubtless, by the general perversity of the people, He impelled David to a course which resulted in calamity to the nation.

In the second case, it is evident that Satan (*margin*, an adversary) is synonymous with "wicked man" in the first half of the verse. The second part of the verse is the first part repeated in another form, as is so frequently the case in Hebrew writing, *e.g.*, "He washed his garments in wine, *and his clothes in the blood of grapes*." "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; *neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption*." On the same principle, a wicked man standing over the subject of David's imprecations, was Satan standing at his right hand; of course, not the orthodox Satan.

As to the case of Joshua, the high priest, the transaction in which "Satan" appeared against him was so highly symbolical (as anyone may see by reading the first four chapters of Zechariah), that we cannot suppose Satan, the adversary, stood for an individual, but rather as the representative of the class of antagonists against whom Joshua had to contend. The nature of these may be learnt from the following:—

> "Then stood up Joshua, the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the Man of God.… Now when THE ADVERSARIES *of Judah and Benjamin* heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel, then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you, etc. But Zerubbabel and Joshua, and the rest of the chief Of the fathers of Israel said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God, but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the King of Persia hath commanded us. *Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even unto the reign of Darius king of Persia*" (Ezra 3:2, 3; 4:14).

The individual adversary seen by Zechariah, side by side with Joshua, represented this class-opposition to the work in which Joshua was engaged. Those who insist upon the popular Satan having to do with the matter, have to prove the existence of such a being first, before the passage from Zechariah can help them; for "Satan" only means adversary, and in itself lends no more countenance to their theory than the word "liar" or "enemy."

The Hebrew word "Satan" was adopted into the Greek language; whence we meet with it in the New Testament, which, as the generality of readers well know, was written in Greek. It is here where the word is most jealously cherished as the synonym of the popular "angel of the pit." People think, if they cannot prove the existence of the devil from the Old Testament, they certainly can from the New, most abundantly. A critical consideration of the matter, however, will show that in this, they are entirely mistaken. Satan, in the New Testament, no more means the arch-fiend of popular superstition, than Satan in the Old. This will be quickly manifest to the unprejudiced mind.

In the first place, if Satan is the popular devil, in what a curious light the following statement appears, addressed by Jesus, in the first century, to the church at Pergamos:—

> "I know thy works and where thou dwellest, *even* WHERE SATAN'S SEAT IS: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, WHERE SATAN DWELLETH" (Rev. 2:13).

According to this, in the days of John, the apostle, Satan's headquarters were Pergamos, in Asia Minor. The fact is, the *enemies of the truth* were notably numerous, energetic, and powerful in that city, and indulged in relentless and successful persecution of those professing the name of Christ. This earned for the place the fearful distinction of being styled by Jesus "Satan's (the adversary's) seat," and "the dwelling place of Satan" (the adversary). This is intelligible: but if the popular devil is in reality Satan, we are invited to contemplate the idea that the devil had forsaken hell in those days, and pitched his tent for a while in the salubrious city of Pergamos, whence to despatch his busy emissaries all over the globe!

Jesus, on a certain occasion, styled Peter "Satan":—

> "But he turned, and said unto PETER, *Get thee behind me*, SATAN: thou art an offence unto me: for *thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men*" (Matt. 16:23; Mark 8:33; Luke 4:8).

Understanding "Satan" to mean adversary, we can comprehend this incident. Peter protested against the sacrifice of Christ. He thereby took the attitude of an enemy, for had Jesus not died, the purpose of his manifestation would have been frustrated: the Scriptures falsified, God dishonoured, and salvation prevented. In opposing the death of Christ, Peter was, therefore Satan, *in the Bible sense*. This sense Christ actually defines: Thou (Peter) savourest (or favourest, or hast sympathy with) *not the things that be of God but* THOSE THAT BE OF MEN." To be on the side of men against God is to be Satan. Peter was, for the moment, in this position. He made himself part of the great adversary—the carnal mind—as collectively exemplified in the world that lieth in wickedness (I John 5:19)—the friendship of which is enmity with God (James 4:4). Jesus, therefore, commands him from his presence. But how about the popular devil? Was Peter Satan in the orthodox sense? He was, if the orthodox construction of the word is correct; for Jesus says he was. But Peter was a man who became Christ's leading apostle. Therefore, the orthodox construction is the mistaken and ridiculous construction, from which we shake ourselves free, in recognition of the fact that Peter for the moment was a Bible Satan, from which he afterwards changed by "conversion" (Luke 22:32).

Paul says, "Hymenæus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto SATAN, *that they may learn not to blaspheme*" (I Tim. 1:20). This also shows that the New Testament Satan is not the popular Satan: for no one ever hears of the popular Satan being employed by Christian teachers to correct the blasphemous propensities of reprobates. It is presumable that Satan's influence would have an entirely contrary effect; and accordingly clerical endeavours are generally directed with a view to rid sinners of his presence. At Methodist prayer and revival meetings—in which orthodox religion is carried to its full and consistent issue—the cry is, "Put the devil out"; and this prayer is uttered with especial vehemence over any hardened sinner who may be got hold of.

The process of "delivering over to Satan," according to apostolic practice may be gathered from I Cor. 5:3–5:—

> "For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed; in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, *when ye are gathered together*, and my spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

The meaning of this is, simply, the expulsion of the offender from the community of the believers. This is evident from the verse immediately preceding those we have quoted: "Ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed MIGHT BE TAKEN AWAY FROM AMONG YOU", and also the concluding sentence, "PUT AWAY FROM AMONG

YOURSELVES THAT WICKED PERSON" (verse 13). This was the apostolic recommendation in all cases of recalcitrancy.

> "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition *reject*" (Tit. 3:10).
>
> "*Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly* … … If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and *have no company with him*" (II Thess. 3:6, 14).
>
> "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and *avoid them*" (Rom. 16:17).
>
> "I would they were even *cut off* which trouble you" (Gal. 5:12).

To repudiate the fellowship of anyone, was to hand him over to the adversary, or Satan, because it was putting him back into the world, which is the great enemy or adversary of God. The object of this was remedial:—"Have no company with him, *that he may be ashamed*. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (II Thess. 3:14, 15). In this way, Paul, by cutting off Hymenæus and Alexander, hoped to bring them to their senses, and arrest their contumaciousness. They were in the ecclesia, and speaking against Paul and others, and against things that they did not understand; and by the bold measure of excommunication, he hoped to teach them a lesson they could not learn in fellowship. It was likely to make a man think, to thus "hand him over to Satan" (the adversary). The object of it, in the recommendation to the Corinthians, was "for the destruction of the flesh"—that is, the extirpation of the carnal mind in their midst: for he says immediately after, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. Purge out therefore the old leven, *that ye may be a new lump*, as ye are unleavened.… *Put away from among yourselves that wicked person*" (I Cor. 5:6–7, 13). By this policy they might hope to preserve in purity the faith and practice of the spirit, resulting in the salvation of the ecclesia as a whole. All this is intelligible. But if the New Testament Satan be the popular Satan, then the whole matter is involved in inextricable fog. The infernal devil is made to play a part in the arrangements of the apostles for sending men to heaven—a part, be it observed, which he is never called upon to perform now.

"Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again, *but* SATAN *hindered us*" (I Thess. 2:18). Who obstructed Paul's travels? The enemies of the truth. On several occasions they watched the gates of the city where he was, to intercept and kill him, and he only eluded them by adroit expedients. "Satan," or the adversary, was the general name for the whole of them; but when he comes to particulars, Paul mentions names: "*Alexander the coppersmith* did me much evil The Lord reward him according to his works. Of whom be thou ware also, for he hath greatly withstood our words" (II Tim. 4:14). "As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth, *men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith*" (II Tim. 3:8), "Their word will eat as doth a canker, *of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus*" (II Tim. 2:17). The orthodox devil took no part in the opposition which Paul encountered from these men. Who ever heard of Bunyan's "Apollyon" stopping him in the way, and defying him with arrows and terrors of the pit? Yet, if the New Testament Satan be the popular Satan, this ought to have been among his experiences.

"And after the sop, Satan entered into him" (Judas)—(John 13:27). Judas's adverse or Satanic intentions with regard to Jesus, developed themselves immediately after Jesus handed him a morsel of bread, dipped, after oriental custom, in the bowl on the table. Why? Because the handing of the sop to him marked him as the man who was to be traitor. Jesus had said, "One of you shall betray me." The intimation excited a painful and eager curiosity among the disciples, who began to question to whom it was that Jesus referred. In answer to John's whispered enquiry who it was, Jesus said "He it is to whom I shall give a sop when I have

dipped it. *And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot*. And after the sop, Satan entered into him.… He then, having received the sop, *went immediately out*." It was not surprising that Judas, thus openly identified, should no longer parley with his own evil designs. His treacherous inclinations took fatal decision. This was, in New Testament phrase, "Satan entering into him," that is the adversary rising within him. If the Satan in the case was the popular Satan, the hard question would present itself, Why was Judas punished for the devil's sin? "It had been good for that *man*, " said Jesus, "if he had not been born," showing that the sin of Christ's betrayal was charged upon the man Judas.

There is another case where the sinful action of the human heart is described as the inspiration of "Satan" (Acts 5:3). Ananias and Sapphira went into the presence of the apostles with a lie on their lips; Peter said, "Ananias, *why hath* SATAN *filled thine heart* to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" The meaning of Satan filling the heart, crops out in the next sentence but one: "Why hast THOU *conceived this thing in thine heart*?" (verse 4); also in Peter's address to Sapphira, who came in three hours after Ananias. Peter said unto her, "How is it that YE HAVE AGREED TOGETHER to tempt the spirit of the Lord?" (verse 9). The action of Satan in this case was the voluntary agreement of husband and wife. But supposing we had not been thus informed that the lie of Ananias was due to a compact with his wife, from selfish motives, to misrepresent the extent of their property, we should have had no difficulty in understanding that Satan filling the heart was the spirit of the flesh, which is the great Satan or adversary, moving him to the particular line of action which evoked Peter's rebuke. James defines the process of sin as follows: "Every man is tempted when he is *drawn away of his own lust*, and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth death" (James 1:14, 15). Hence, the action of lust in the mind is the action of the New Testament Satan, or adversary. All sin proceeds from the desires of the flesh. This is declared in various forms of speech in the Scriptures, and agrees with the experience of every man. The following are illustrations:—

> "OUT OF THE HEART *proceed* evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness (this was the sin of Ananias), blasphemies," etc. (Matt. 15:19).
>
> "The CARNAL MIND is *enmity against God*. IT is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).
>
> "Now the WORKS OF THE FLESH are *manifest*, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like" (Gal. 5:19–21).
>
> "For ALL that is in the world, the LUST of the FLESH, *a*nd the LUST of the EYES, and the PRIDE OF LIFE, is of the world" (I John 2:16).

The great Satan, or adversary, then, which every man has to fear, and which is ever inclining him to a course opposed to wisdom and godliness, is the tendency of the mere animal instincts to act on their own account. This tendency is the spirit or inclination of the flesh, which must be vigilantly repressed for a man to keep out of the way of evil. The truth alone, which is the utterance and power of the Spirit, will enable him to do this. If he surrender to the flesh, he walks in the way of death. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye, through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8:13).

The object of the gospel being sent to the Gentiles by Paul, was to "turn them *from* DARKNESS *to light, and from the power of* SATAN *unto God*." Ignorance, or darkness, is the great power of the adversary lurking within us; for where a man is ignorant of God's will, the flesh has a controlling power with him. The Gentiles are alienated from God, "*through the* IGNORANCE *that is in them*" (Eph. 4:18). Enlightenment, through the hearing of the Word, creates a new man within, who, in process of time, kills the old man "which is corrupt

according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22), or, at least, keeps him under, lest the new man become a castaway (I Cor. 9:27). Introduce the active, plotting, intelligent fiend of orthodoxy, and the whole picture is changed and involved in bewildering confusion. But he cannot be introduced, Our experience forbids.

Look at the fact; *men are prone to evil in proportion to the relative strength of the animal nature*. Some men are naturally amiable, intellectual, benevolent, and correct; they cannot be anything else in the circumstances and with the organisation which they have. Others, again, are naturally coarse, rough, brutish, thick-headed, low, and selfish, through the power of ignorance and an inferior organisation, which prevent them ever ascending to nobility of nature. Jesus recognises this fact in the parable of the sower. The seed fell into *different kinds of soil*. One is styled "good ground." In this, the seed grew well, and brought forth much fruit. In his explanation of the parable, Jesus defines the good ground to be "honest and good heart" (Luke 8:15). This is in exact accord with experience. Only a certain class of mind is influenced by the word of truth. There are people on whom the preaching of the Word is wasted effort. Jesus terms such "swine," and says, "Cast not your pearls before them; give not that which is holy unto dogs." A much larger result attends the proclamation of the truth among the English, for instance, than among the Caribs of South America, or the Zulus of Africa. The soil is better, both as to quality and culture. Now, in view of this fact that good and evil, in the moral sense, are determined by organisation and education, what place is there for the Satan of orthodox belief, whose influence for evil is reputed to be of a spiritual order, and whose power is believed to be exerted on all, without distinction of education, condition, or race?

These general explanations will cover all the other instances in which the word "Satan" is used in the New Testament. All will be found capable of solution by reading "Satan" as the adversary, and having regard to the circumstances under which the word is used. Sometimes "Satan" will be found a person, sometimes the authorities, sometimes the flesh; in fact, whatever acts the part of an adversary is, scripturally, "Satan." "Satan" is never the superhuman power of popular belief.

THE DEVIL

We must now pass on to consider the word "devil." This is the word which is more particularly associated, in the popular mind, with the tradition of a supernatural evil being. The orthodox believer, giving way to the Bible doctrine of Satanism herein set forth, is prone to cling to the word "devil" with the idea that here, at any rate, his daring theory is safe; that, under the broad shelter of this world-renowned term of theology, the personality of this arch-rebel of the universe is secure from the arrows of criticism. We might summarily dispose of this illusion, by pointing to the fact that "devil," in many instances is used interchangeably and along with "Satan," and that therefore, the two stand or fall together. But as this, though logical, might not be quite conclusive to the class of minds which these lectures are intended to reach, we shall investigate this part of the subject separately, and on its own merits.

First, then, with regard to the word "devil," Cruden remarks: "This word comes from the Greek *diabolos*, which signifies *a calumniator or accuser*." Parkhurst says, "The original word *diabolos* comes from *diabebola*, the perfect tense, middle voice of *diaballo*, which is compounded of *dia*, through; and *ballo*, to cast; therefore meaning *to dart* or *strike through*; whence, in a figurative sense, it signifies *to strike or stab with an accusation or evil report*." Hence, Parkhurst defines *diabolos* as a substantive, to mean "an accuser, a slanderer," which he illustrates by referring to I Tim. 3:11; II Tim. 3:3; Titus 2:3: in all of which, as the reader will perceive by perusing the passages, it is applied to human beings.

From this it will be perceived that the word "devil," properly understood, is a general term, and not a proper name. It is a word that is, and may be, applied in any case where slander, accusation, or falsehood is exemplified. As Jesus applied "Satan" to Peter, so he applied "devil" to Judas: "Have not I chosen you twelve, *and one of you is* A DEVIL?" (John 6:70). Judas proved a liar, a betrayer, a false accuser, and, therefore, a devil. Paul, in I Tim. 3:11, tells the wives of deacons not to be devils. His exhortation, it is true, does not appear in this form in the English version. The words, as translated, are "Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers (*diabolous*)." This is a plural inflection of the word translated devil, and ought to be rendered uniformly with its occurrence elsewhere. Either this ought to be "devils," or *devil* elsewhere ought to be *false accuser*. The same remark applies to II Tim. 3:2, 3: "For men shall be … without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers (*diaboloi*)"; and to Titus 3:3: "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers (*diabolous*)."

Jesus applied the term to the persecuting authorities of the Roman State. He said in his letter, through John, to the church at Smyrna, "*The devil* shall cast some of you into prison" (Rev. 2:10). The pagan authorities were the accusers and hunters of the early Christians, bent upon "stabbing through" and killing to the ground, the whole sect. In the same book, the power of the world, politically organised on the sin-basis (introduced under the symbol of a dragon, having seven heads and ten horns), is styled "that old serpent, *which is the devil*, and Satan." In these instances, the popular construction of the word "devil" is entirely excluded, and its meaning and use as a general term are illustrated.

There is, however, a wider use of it in the New Testament, which, while superficially countenancing the orthodox view, is more directly destructive of that view than even the limited cases cited, it is that which personifies the great principle which lies at the bottom of the rupture at present existing between God and man, as pre-eminently the accuser and striker through with a dart—the calumniator of God and the destroyer of mankind. First, let the fact of this personification be demonstrated. The evidence of it makes a powerful beginning in Heb. 2:14, where we read as follows:—

> "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he (Jesus) 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."

On the supposition that the devil here referred to is the orthodox devil, or a personal devil of any kind, there are four absurdities on the face of this passage.

In the first place, to take on the weakness of flesh and blood was a strange way of preparing to fight a powerful devil, who, it would be imagined, would be more successfully encountered in the panoply of angelic strength, which Paul expressly says Jesus did not array himself in; for he says, "He took not on him the nature of angels" (Heb. 2:16).

In the second place it was stranger still that the process of destroying the devil should be submission to death himself! One would have thought that to vanquish and destroy the devil, life inextinguishable, and strength indomitable, would have been the qualification. Undoubtedly they would have been so, if the Bible devil had been the orthodox devil—a personal monster.

In the third place, the devil ought now to be dead, or whatever else is imported by the word "destroyed," for Christ died nineteen centuries ago, for the purpose of destroying him *by that process*. How comes it then, that the devil is clerically represented to be alive and busier than ever in the work of hunting immortal souls with gin and snare, and exporting them to his own grim domain?

In the fourth place, what an extraordinary proposition that the popular devil has the "power of death!" It can only be received on the supposition that the devil acts as God's

policeman: but this will not square with the Miltonic and popular view, that God and the devil are sworn enemies, the latter delighting to thwart the former to the utmost extent of his power. Who made Adam mortal? Who punishes the infraction of divine law? It is He who says, "*I kill*, and I make alive" (Deut. 32:39). God, and not the devil, reigns. God dispenses retribution, and enforces His own law; not a hostile archangel, presumed to be at eternal enmity with Him.

John says, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, *that he might destroy the works of the devil*" (I John 3:8). Will Jesus effect the purpose of his manifestation? If so (and who will deny it?) will he not accomplish the overturn of all that is done by the Bible devil? Will he not destroy all his works? If so, it follows, if the Bible devil is a personal devil, with a blazing hell choke full of damned souls, that Christ will put out his hell, liberate his wretched captives, and abolish himself. If the Bible devil is the orthodox devil, and human beings are immortal souls, universalism is undoubtedly Scriptural; for Christ has come to destroy the devil and all his works' but there is no devil of the supernatural order, and there are no immortal souls. The devil Christ has come to destroy is sin. If anyone doubts this, let him reconsider Paul's words quoted above. What did Christ accomplish in his death? Let the following testimonies answer:—

"He put away SIN *by the sacrifice of himself*" (Heb. 9:26).

"Christ *died for our sins* according to the Scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3).

"He was wounded *for our transgressions*; he was bruised *for our iniquities*" (Isa. 53:5).

"His own serf bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (I Pet. 2:24).

"He was manifested to take away OUR SINS" (I John 3:5).

Christ, through death, destroyed, or took out of the way, "the sin of the world". In this, he destroyed the Bible devil. He certainly did not destroy the popular devil in his death, for that devil is supposed to be still at large, but in his own person, as a representative man, he extinguished the power of sin by surrendering to its full consequences, and then escaping by resurrection, through the power of his own holiness, to live for evermore. This is described as "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned *sin in the flesh*" (Rom. 8:3). Sin in the flesh, then, is the devil destroyed by Jesus in his death. This is the devil *having the power of death*, for it is sin, and nothing else but sin that causes death to men. Does anyone doubt this? Let him read the following testimonies:—

"By one man sin entered into the world, *and death* BY *sin* (Rom. 5:12).

"*By man* CAME DEATH" (I Cor. 15:21).

"*The wages of sin* IS DEATH" (Rom. 6:23).

"SIN hath reigned *unto death*" (Rom. 5:21).

"SIN … *bringeth forth death*" (James 1:15).

"The sting of death is SIN" (I Cor. 15:56).

Having regard to the fact that death was divinely decreed in the garden of Eden, *in consequence of Adam's transgression*, it is easy to understand the language which recognises and personifies transgression, or sin, as the power or cause of death. The foregoing statements express the literal truth metonymically. Actually, death, as the consequence of sin, is produced, caused or inflicted *by God*, but since sin or transgression is the fact or principle that *moves God to inflict it*, sin is appropriately put forward as *the first cause* in the matter.

This is intelligible to the smallest intellect: but what has a personal devil to do with it? He is excluded. There is no place for him.

And if he be forced into the arrangement, the result is to change the moral situation, alter the scheme of salvation, and produce confusion: for if the power of death lies with a personal power of evil, separate from and independent of man, and not in man's own sinfulness, then the operations of Christ are transferred from the arena of moral conflict to that of physical strife, and the whole scheme of divine interposition through him is degraded to a level with the Pagan mythologies, in which gods, good and bad, are represented to be in murderous physical-force hostility for the accomplishment of their several ends. God is thus brought down from His position of supremacy, and placed on a footing with the forces of His own creation.

But, the objector may say, True, sin is the cause of death; but who prompts the sin? Is it not here that the devil of popular belief has his work? Nothing can be more directly met by a Bible answer:—"Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of HIS OWN LUST, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, *it bringeth forth sin*, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14, 15). This agrees with a man's own experience of himself; sin originates in the *untrained natural inclinations*. These, in the aggregate, Paul terms "another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind." Every man is conscious of the existence of this law, whose impulse, uncontrolled, would drive him beyond the restraints of wisdom. The world obeyeth this law, and "lieth in wickedness." It has no experience of the other law, which is implanted by the truth. "ALL that is in the world" John defines to be "*the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*" (I John 2:16).

When a man becomes enlightened in the truth, and is thus made aware of God's will in reference to the state of his mind and the nature of his actions, a new law is introduced. This is styled "the Spirit," because the ideas upon which it is based have been evolved by the Spirit, through inspired men. "The words that I speak unto you," says Jesus, "*they are spirit*, and they are life" (John 6:63). Hence the warfare established in a man's nature by the introduction of the truth is a warfare of the two principles—the desires of the flesh and the commands of the Spirit. This is described by Paul in the following words:—"*The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh*: and these are contrary the one to the other" (Gal. 5:17). "Walk in the Spirit," says he, "and ye shall not fulfil *the lust of the flesh*" (verse 16). He says in another place, "Let not SIN therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it *in the lusts thereof*" (Rom. 6:12). These principles are brought to a focus in the following extract from his letter to the Roman ecclesia:—

> "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally-minded is death, but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his … Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:5–9, 12–14).

In view of these declarations of Scripture, the suggestion that the personal devil's work is to suggest sin, has no place. It is idle, false, and mischievous. It puts a man off his guard to think he is all right if the devil let him alone. There is no devil but his own inclinations, which tend to illegitimate activity. These are the origin of sin, and sin is the cause of death. Both together are the devil. "He that committeth sin *is of the devil*" (I John 3:8).

But why, it is asked, should such a plain matter be obscured by personification? No other answer can be given than that it is one of the Bible's peculiarities to deal in imagery where

the principles involved are too subtle for ready literal expression. The world, which is merely an aggregation of persons, is personified: “If ye were of the world, the world would love HIS own” (John 15:19).

RICHES ARE PERSONIFIED:

“No man can serve two MASTERS … Ye cannot serve God and Mammon” (Matt. 6:24).

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SIN IS PERSONIFIED;

“Whosoever committeth sin is *the servant of* SIN” (John 8:34).

“SIN hath *reigned* unto death” (Rom. 5:21).

“Know ye not, that 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?… Being then made *free front sin*, ye became *the servants of* RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Rom. 6:16, 18).

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THE SPIRIT IS PERSONIFIED:

“When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, HE will guide you into all truth: for HE shall not speak of himself” (John 16:13).

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WISDOM IS PERSONIFIED:

“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.… *She* is more precious than rubies, and all the things that thou canst desire are not to be compared unto *her*. Length of days is in *her* right hand, and in *her* left hand riches and honour” (Prov. 3:13, 15, 16).

“Wisdom hath builded HER house; she hath hewn out HER seven pillars” (Prov. 9:1).

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THE NATION OF ISRAEL IS PERSONIFIED:

“Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, *O Virgin of Israel*; thou shalt again be adorned with thy tablets” (Jer. 31:4).

“I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning *himself* thus: Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord my God” (Jer. 31:18).

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THE PEOPLE OF CHRIST ARE PERSONIFIED;

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto A PERFECT MAN" (Eph. 4:13).

"There is ONE BODY" (Eph. 4:4).

"Ye are THE BODY OF CHRIST" (I Cor. 12:27).

"Christ is the head of the church, and he is the saviour of the body" (Eph. 5:23).

"He is the head of THE BODY, the church, … I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for HIS BODY'S SAKE, which is the church:" (Col. 1:18, 24).

"I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as *a chaste virgin* to Christ" (II Cor. 11:2).

"The marriage of the Lamb is come, and HIS WIFE hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7).

THE NATURAL DISPOSITION TO EVIL WHICH A MAN FORSAKES ON BECOMING CHRIST'S, AND ALSO THE NEW STATE OF MIND DEVELOPED IN THE TRUTH, ARE PERSONIFIED:

"Ye have put off THE OLD MAN with his deeds" (Col. 3:9).

"Put off concerning the former conversation the OLD MAN, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts … put on the NEW MAN, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:22, 24).

"Our OLD MAN is crucified with him" (Rom. 6:6).

THE SPIRIT OF DISOBEDIENCE WHICH DWELLS IN THE WORLD IS PERSONIFIED:

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to *the Prince of the power of the air*, THE SPIRIT THAT NOW WORKETH IN THE CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE, among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the *lusts of our flesh*, fulfilling *the desires of the flesh and of the mind*" (Eph. 2:2, 3).

"Now is tho judgment of this world. Now shall THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. *This he said, signifying what death he should die*" (John 12:31–33).

Now these proofs and examples of personification furnish an answer to the question why sin in the abstract should be personified. They show, first, that principles and things *are* personified in the Bible; and, second, that this is done with great advantage. A metaphorical dress to abstractions gives a palpability to them in discourse, which they would lack if stated in precise and literal language. There is a warmth in such a style of speech, which is wanting in expressions that conform to the strict proprieties of grammar and fact. This warmth and expressiveness are characteristic of the Bible in every part of it, and belong to the Oriental languages generally. Of course it is open to abuse, like every other good, but its effectiveness is beyond question. The subject in hand is an illustration. Sin is the great slanderer of God in virtually denying His supremacy, wisdom, and goodness, and the great ground of accusation

against man even unto death. How appropriate, then, to style it THE ACCUSER, THE SLANDERER, THE LIAR. This is done in the word devil; but through the word not being translated, but merely Anglicised, the English reader, reared with English theological prejudices, is prevented from seeing it.

There is an historical aspect to the question, which greatly tends to place the matter in an intelligible light. We refer to the incidents connected with the introduction of sin into the world, in the contemplation of which, we shall see a peculiar fitness in the personification of sin in the word *devil*. Adam's sin was not spontaneous. It was suggested by his wife; but neither on her part was the disobedience self-suggested. She acted at the instigation of a third party. Who was that? The answer is, in the words of the record, "THE SERPENT *was more subtle than any* BEAST OF THE FIELD *which the Lord God had made*." The natural serpent, more observant than other animals, and gifted for the time with the power of expressing its thoughts, reasoned upon the prohibition which God had put upon "the tree in the midst of the garden;" and concluding from all he saw and heard that death would not be the result of eating, he said, "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:4, 5).

Thus the serpent was a slanderer, a calumniator of God, in affirming that what God had said was not true. Thus he became a devil, and not only *a* devil, but *the* devil, inasmuch as he originated the slander, under the belief of which our first parents disobeyed the divine command, and introduced sin and death to the world. He was, therefore, the natural symbol of all that resulted from his lie. "*That old serpent*, which is the Devil, and Satan," is the symbolic description of the world in its political totality at the time when Christ turns it into "the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ" (Rev. 20:2; 11:15). The serpent being the originator of the lie which led to disobedience, the fruits of that disobedience might well be said to be "his works."

The individual serpent itself has long since passed away in the course of nature, but the fruits remain, and the principle lives. The idea instilled by it into the minds of our first parents has germinated to the production of generations of human serpents. Mankind has proved but an embodiment of the serpent idea; so that they are all calumniators of God in disbelieving His promises, and disobeying His commandments. Hence, Jesus could say to the Pharisees, "Ye serpents … how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matt. 23:33); and again, "Ye are of your father the devil (slanderer, serpent), and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning (he brought death upon mankind by inciting Adam and Eve to disobedience), and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). All who are in the first Adam, are "the children of the devil," because they are the progeny of a serpent-devil contaminated paternity. Their mortality is evidence of this, whatever be their moral qualities, because mortality is the fruit of the serpent-devil conceit operating in Adam to disobedience. But those who, upon a belief of the promises of God, are introduced into "the second Adam" (who in his death destroyed the bonds of the devil in taking away sin), are emancipated from the family of the devil, and become sons of God.

Progeny is according to paternity; like produces like; "Children of the devil" must be devil; and hence it is that the world of human nature as a whole is regarded as the devil, because it is the embodiment of the devil principle. That principle originated in a personal agent; and for that reason, the principle retains the personality of the originator in common discourse, for the sake of convenience; and thus by a very natural process, the abstract principle which lies at the bottom of human misery and mortality is personified. Hence, Jesus destroying the devil and his works, is Jesus taking away the sin of the world, which will ultimate in the complete abolition of human nature on the Adam or serpent basis, and the

swallowing up of death in victory. It will be the suppression of the prevailing order of things, and the establishment of a new one, in which righteousness and peace will reign triumphant, and the knowledge of God will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

The temptation of Jesus is usually cited in opposition to these conclusions; it is supposed that this incontestably proves the personality and power of the Bible devil. The great feature of the narrative relied upon, is the application of the word "devil" to the tempter; but this proves nothing. If Judas could be a devil and yet be a man (John 6:70), why may the tempter of Jesus not have been a man? His being called "devil" proves nothing. But what about taking him to the pinnacle of the temple? it is asked: does it not require something more than human power to carry a man through the air to the top of a steeple? If this was what happened, it would, doubtless, be a little difficult to explain; but this is not so. The pinnacle of the temple, as we are informed by Josephus, was an elevated court or promenade, which, on one side, overlooked the depths to the valley of Jehoshaphat to a depth of 200 feet, and offered the facility for self-destruction which the tempter asked Jesus to wantonly brave, on the strength of a promise made in reference to inevitable suffering. To this court, the tempter, doubtless, walked with Jesus, and made the vain proposal suggested by the circumstances. The objector will then point to Christ's conveyance to "a high mountain," from which the devil "showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time." It is obvious that this must be taken in a limited sense; for the fact of *ascending a mountain, to see what was to be witnessed*, shews that the field of vision was in proportion to the altitude. The tract of country seen would be Judea and neighbouring provinces. The offer of power would therefore relate to these. If it be contended that Christ was absolutely and miraculously shown "all the kingdoms of the world," what shall be alleged as the reason for the tempter ascending an *elevation* to shew him then? This would have been no assistance to see "ALL" the countries on earth. If there was anything supernatural in it, there was no necessity for going up a hill at all.

But *who was* the devil who thus busied himself to subvert Jesus from the path of obedience? The answer is, it is impossible to say positively who he was. As in the case of Job's Satan, we can only be positive as to who he was *not*. Various probabilities are suggested by the circumstances of the temptation according to the phase in which they are contemplated. Some think the devil in the case was Christ's own inclinations; but this is untenable in view of the statement that "When the devil had ended all the temptation, he *departed from him for a season*" (Luke 4:13). It is also untenable in view of the harmony that existed between the mind of Christ and the will of the Father (John 8:29). It has been suggested, from the fact that the tempter had power to allot the provinces of the Roman world, that he was a leading functionary of state, or the Roman emperor himself. Others have contended that, not the Roman emperor, but the angel controlling his position, could say concerning "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them," these "are delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give them." A fourth suggestion has been that the temptation took place in vision or trance.

Be these suggestions true or false, the temptation affords no real countenance to the popular theory which it is brought forward to prove. In fact, there is no *real* countenance to that theory in any part of the Bible. The countenance is only apparent; it is all an appearance, the chief power of which lies in the fact that there is a personal-devil theory of pagan origin extant, and taught from the days of infancy. Bible words and pagan theories are put together and made to fit; and superficially considered, the result is striking and impressive, and highly demonstrative of a personal devil. It is, however, a mere juggle and a deception of the most mischievous kind.

DEMONS

It would be unwise to conclude the subject without a few words on "devils," in which the reader may see some lurking evidence of personal supernatural diabolism. As to the Old Testament, the word is only found four times, viz., in Lev, 17:7; Deut. 32:17; II Chron. 11:15; and Psalm 106:37. These passages only require to be read for the reader to see, that so far as the Old Testament is concerned, the word "devils," in Bible use, is applied very differently from that which popular views of the subject would indicate. For instance:—

> "They sacrificed unto *devils*, not to God; TO GODS *whom they knew not*, to NEW GODS that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not" (Deut. 32:17).

Here the "devils" sacrificed to by Israel, were the idols of the heathen. This is still more apparent from Pslam 116:35–38:—

> "They were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works; and they served their *idols*, which were a snare unto them—yea, they *sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils*, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, *whom they sacrificed* UNTO THE IDOLS OF CANAAN."

It is needless to say that the idols of Canaan were "lifeless blocks of wood and stone," and that, therefore, their designation as "devils" shows that the Old Testament use of the word gives no countenance to the idea that "devils" are personal beings, of a malignant order, aiding and abetting, and serving the great devil in his works of mischief and damnation.

But it is to the New Testament that the orthodox believer will point, as the great stronghold for this belief. Thither we shall go, and with a result, we shall find, as unavailing for the popular creed, as that which has attended all the foregoing endeavours. In the first place, Paul's use of the word in the same way as it is used in the Old Testament, suggests that Paul ignored the Pagan view of the matter. He says:—"The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice *to devils*, and not to God, and I would not that ye should have fellowship with *devils*. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of *devils*; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of *devils*" (I Cor. 10:20, 21). Now, that "devils" here applies to the idols of Pagan worship is manifest; first, from the fact that the sacrifices of the Gentiles were offered at the shrines of the idol-gods of their own superstition; and second, from the following words of Paul *in the same chapter*:—"What say I then? that the *idol* is anything? *or that which is offered in sacrifice* TO IDOLS is anything?" (verse 19). This is conclusive. Paul applies the word "devils" to idols, of which he says:—"We know that an idol is NOTHING in the world" (I Cor. 8:4). Thus the word "devils" as used by Paul, lends no countenance to the popular view.

The reader must understand the "devils" in the original Greek, is a different word from that translated "devil." The distinction between the two must be recognised, in order to appreciate the explanation applicable to "devils," as distinct from "devil." While "devil" is, in the original *diabolos*, "devils" is the plural of *daimon*, which has a very different meaning from *diabolos. Daimon* was the name given by the Greeks to beings imagined by them to exist in the air, and to act a mediatorial part between God and man, for good or evil. These imaginary beings would be expressed in English by demon, evil genius, or tutelar deity, all of which belong to Pagan mythology, and have no place in the system of the truth. We quote the following observations on the subject from Parkhurst's Greek Lexicon in exemplification of the origin of the idea:—

> "DAIMONION, from *daimon*—a deity, a god, or more accurately, some power or supposed intelligence, in that grand object of heathen idolatry, the material heavens or air. Thus the word is generally applied by the LXX., who use it, Isa. 65:11, for the destructive troop or powers of the heavens in thunder, lightning, storm, etc., in Deut. 32:17; Psa. 116:37, for the pourers forth or genial powers of nature; and, as by the midday demon, Pas. 91:6, we may be

> certain they intended not a devil, but a pernicious blast of air—Comp. Isa. 28:2—in the Hebrew; so from this and the forecited passages, we can be at no loss to know what they meant, when in this translation of Psa. 96:5, they say, All the gods of the Gentiles are *daimonia—i.e.*, not devils, but some powers or imaginary intelligence of material nature.… Most expressive are the words of Plato in Sympos, 'Every demon is a middle being between God and mortal men.' If you ask what he means by 'middle being,' he will tell you, 'God is not approached immediately by man, but all the commerce and intercourse between gods and men is performed by the mediation of demons.' Would you see the particulars? Demons are reporters and carriers from men to the gods, and again from the gods to men, of the supplications and prayers of the one, and of the injunctions and rewards of devotion from the other. Besides those original material mediators, or the intelligence, residing in them, whom Apuleius calls a higher kind of demons, who were always free from the incumbrances of the body, and out of which higher order Plato supposes that guardians were appointed unto men—besides these, the heathen acknowledged another sort, namely, the souls of men deified or canonised after death. So Hesiod, one of the most ancient heathen writers, describing that happy race of men who lived in the first and golden age of the world, saith that 'after this generation were dead, they were, by the will of great Jupiter, promoted to be demons, keepers of mortal men, observers of their good and evil works, clothed in air, always walking about the earth, givers of riches; and this,' saith he, 'is the royal honour that they enjoy.' Plato concurs with Hesiod and asserts that he and many other poets speak excellently, who affirm that when good men die, they attain great honour and dignity, and become demons. The same Plato, in another place, maintains that 'All those who die valiantly in war, are of Hesiod's golden generation, and are made demons, and that we ought for ever after to serve and adore their sepulchres as the sepulchres of demons.' 'The same also,' says he, 'we decree whenever any of those who were excellently good in life, die, either of old age or in any other manner.' … According to Plutarch tom 1, p. 958, E. edit. Xylander, it was avery ancient opinion that there were certain wicked and malignant demons who envy good men, and endeavour to disturb and hinder them in the pursuit of virtue, lest remaining firm (unfallen) in goodness, and uncorrupt, they should, after death, obtain a better lot than they themselves enjoy."

In view of the heathen origin of this "doctrine of demons," it is a natural source of wonder that it should appear so largely interwoven with the gospel narratives, and receives apparent sanction both from Christ and his disciples. This can only be accounted for on one principle; the Grecian theory that madness, epileptic disorders, and obstructions of the senses (as distinct from ordinary diseases), were attributable to demoniacal possession, had existed many centuries before the time of Christ, and had circulated far and wide with the Greek language, which, in these days, had become nearly universal. The theory necessarily stamped itself upon the common language of the time, and supplied a nomenclature for certain classes of disorders which, without reference to the particular theory in which it originated, would become current and conventional, and used by all classes as a matter of course, without involving an acceptance of the Pagan belief. On the face of it, the nomenclature would carry that belief; but in reality it would only be used from the force of universal custom, without any reference to the superstition which originated it. We have an illustration of this in our word "lunatic," which originated in the idea that madness was the result of the moon's influence, but which nobody now uses to express that idea. The same principle is exemplified in the phrases "bewitched," "fairy-like," "hobgoblin," "dragon," "the king's evil," "St. Vitus's dance," etc., all of which are freely used denominatively, without subjecting the person using them to the charge of believing the fictions originally represented by them.

Christ's conformity to popular language did not commit him to popular delusions. In one case, he apparently recognises the god of the Philistines: "Ye say that I cast out demons through Beelzebub: if I *by Beelzebub* cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out?" (Luke 11:18, 19). Now, Beelzebub signifies the god of flies, a god worshipped by the Philistines of Ekron (II Kings 1:6), and Christ, in using the name, takes no pains to dwell

upon the fact that Beelzebub was a heathen fiction, but seems rather to assume, for the sake of argument, that Beelzebub was a reality; it was a mere accommodation to the language of his opponents. Yet this might, with as much reason, be taken as a proof of his belief in Beelzebub, as his accommodation to popular speech on the subject of demons is taken to sanction the common idea of "devils."

The casting out of demons spoken of in the New Testament was nothing more nor less than the curing of epileptic fits and brain disorders, as distinct from bodily diseases. Of this, any one may be satisfied by an attentive reading of the narrative and a close consideration of the symptoms, as recorded:—

> "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is *lunatic*, and sore vexed, for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not *cure* him.… And Jesus rebuked the *devil* (demon) and he departed out of him (Matt. 17:15–18).

From this the identity of lunacy with supposed diabolical possession is apparent. The expulsion of the malarious influence which deranged the child's faculties was the casting out of the demon.

> "Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb; and he *healed* him, insomuch that the *blind and dumb both spake and saw*" (Matt. 12:22).

> "And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a *dumb spirit*" (Mark 9:17).

There is no case of demoniacal possession mentioned in the New Testament, which has not its parallel in hundreds of instances in the medical experience of the present time. The symptoms are precisely identical—tearing, foaming at the mouth, crying out, abnormal strength, etc. True, there are no exclamations about the Messiah, because there is no popular excitement on the subject for them to reflect in an aberrated form, as there was in the days of Jesus, when the whole Jewish community was pervaded by an intense expectation of the Messiah, and agitated by the wonderful works of Christ.

The transference of "the devils" to the swine, is only an instance in which Christ vindicated the law (which prohibited the culture of the pig), by acting on the suggestion of a madman in transferring an aberrating influence from the latter to the swine, and causing their destruction. The statement that the devils made request, or the devils cried out this or that, must be interpreted in the light of a self-evident fact, that it was the person possessed who spoke, and not the abstract derangement. The insane utterances were attributable to the insanifying influence, and, therefore, it is an allowable liberty of speech to say that the influence—called in the popular phrase of these times, demon or demons—spoke them; but, in judging of the theory of possession, we must carefully separate between critical statements of truth and rough popular forms of speech, which merely embody an aspect, and not the essence of truth.

It is needless to say more on the subject: enough has been advanced to show the unfounded mischievous nature of popular views, and to furnish a key for the solution of all Scripture texts which appear to favour those views. This accomplishment, if successfully achieved, will suffice for the present effort. The doctrine of a personal devil, or devils, is a spiritual miasma; it is itself an evil spirit, of which a man must become dispossessed before he can become mentally clothed, and in his right mind. It obscures the shining features of all divine truth from the gaze of all who are subject to it. It is companion to the immortality of the soul, to which, with other fables of heathen invention, men have universally turned

according to Paul's prediction (II Tim. 4:3, 4); and, in accepting which they have necessarily rejected the truth proclaimed by all the servants of God, from Enoch to Paul.

Lecture 8

THE KINGDOM OF GOD NOT YET IN EXISTENCE, BUT TO BE ESTABLISHED VISIBLY ON THE EARTH AT A FUTURE DAY

ON NO subject will Christendom be found to have gone more astray than on the subject of the Kingdom of God—a subject which, without exaggeration, may be said to constitute the very backbone of the divine purpose with the earth and its inhabitants. What is the Kingdom of God? It is one of the most important questions that can be asked, from a Scriptural point of view: for this reason: *whatever the Kingdom of God is,* IT WAS THE GREAT SUBJECT-MATTER OF THE GOSPEL PREACHED BY JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES. This we prove by the following citation of testimonies:—

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, *and preaching the gospel of the kingdom*" (Matt. 4:23).

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, *and preaching the gospel of the kingdom*" (Matt. 9:35).

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, *preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God*" (Mark 1:14).

"He (Jesus) said unto them, I must *preach the kingdom of God to other cities also*; for therefore am I sent" (Luke 4:43).

"And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, *preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God*" (Luke 8:1).

"Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. *And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God*" (Luke 9:1, 2).

"And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. And the people, when they knew it, followed him; and he received them and *spake unto them of the kingdom of God*" (Luke 9:10, 11).

The ministers and clergy of the present day believe that they preach the gospel in setting before the people the death of Christ. The death of Christ, in its sacrificial import, doubtless becomes an element in the apostolic testimony of the gospel; but in considering whether this was the whole gospel of first century preaching, we must remember that Christ and his disciples preached the gospel *three years before the crucifixion*. Not only so, but we have evidence that the apostles, while so engaged—while they "went through the towns, preaching the gospel" (Luke 9:6)—*were not aware that Christ had to suffer*. Christ told his disciples that he should "suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day" (Luke 9:22); but it is said, "*They understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not*" (Luke 9:45). The fact that, while in this state of ignorance concerning the sufferings of Christ, they "preached the gospel," is proof of the most positive character that the gospel, as preached by them, must have been something very different from the gospel of modern times, which consists *exclusively* of the death of Christ on the cross. The difference is manifest in the foregoing testimonies, which tell us they preached "THE KINGDOM OF GOD."

The following passages prove that the Kingdom of God was also preached by the apostles after Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, and that it, therefore, continues a valid and essential element of the gospel to this day:—

> "But when they (the Samaritans) believed Philip PREACHING THE THINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women" (Acts 8:12).
>
> "He went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, *disputing and persuading* THE THINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD" (Acts 19:8).
>
> "*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).
>
> "And received all that came in unto him, *preaching* THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 28:30, 31).
>
> "Among whom *I* (*Paul*) *have gone* PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD" (Acts 20:25).

Now, Paul was exceedingly zealous that *the same gospel which he himself preached*, should continue to be preached to the end of the world. "If an angel from heaven," said he, "preach *any other gospel* than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8). Hence the gospel, of which he said it was the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth (Rom. 1:16), embraces the doctrine of the Kingdom of God, whatever that may be; for he himself continually preached it to both Jews and Gentiles.

We repeat that, in these circumstances, the question we have propounded is the most important to which attention can be invited.

What, then, is the Kingdom of God? Different answers will be given by different classes of people. Some conceive it to consist of the supremacy of God in the hearts of men—a sort of spiritual dominion existing co-extensively with secular life. Others recognise it in the ecclesiastical organisations of the day, styling them, as a whole, Christendom, or the kingdom of Christ, while a third party behold it in universal nature, continuing from generation to generation.

The holders of the first idea find a sanction for their belief in the words of Christ: "The kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). They overlook the fact that these words were addressed to the Pharisees, of whom Jesus said, "Ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, *but* WITHIN *ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity*" (Matt. 23:28). This is not the state of mind that exists where the kingdom of God is supposed to dwell; and the fact that the statement in question was addressed to men of this character, shows that it had not the significance generally claimed for it. If the reader will examine any marginal Bible, he will find that "among" is given as the true rendering of the word translated "within"; which alters the

significance of the verse. What Christ meant to intimate was his own presence among them as "the Royalty of the heavens," in answer to the mocking enquiry of the Pharisees.

Romans 14:17, is also quoted: "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost"; but this only affirms one truth, without destroying another. It is true the kingdom of God when established, will be characterised by the qualities enumerated by Paul; but it does not therefore follow that the kingdom of God will not be a real and glorious manifestation of God's power on earth through the personal intervention of His Son from heaven.

The second idea, that the Kingdom of God is to be found in the religious systems of the day, as "the visible church," is without even the semblance of Scriptural foundation. Its existence is traceable to the times succeeding the overthrow of Paganism, in the beginning of the fourth century, when Constantine delivered Christianity from its persecutors, and exalted it for the first time to the throne of prosperity and power. In the joy of the great change, the bishops said the Kingdom of God had come in the establishment of the Church. But we must go to the New Testament—not to ecclesiastical historians—for a Scriptural idea of the Church. The Church, we find to be composed of *the heirs of the Kingdom*, in probation for coming exaltation. They are not the Kingdom itself. We refer, for proof, to the argument to follow in the present and succeeding lectures.

The third view, which regards the universe as "the kingdom of God," has more of truth in it than the first or second, and yet we shall find as much of error. Nature is certainly the dominion of the Deity in a very exalted sense; but it is not that which in the Scriptures is spoken of as "the kingdom of God." We are bold to make the assertion, because of abundant Scriptural testimony forthcoming.

In endeavouring to ascertain the meaning of this phrase, "The Kingdom of God," we cannot do better than look at it in its origin. It is a Bible phrase, and originates there. We find it used in contrast to "the kingdom of men," which occurs three times in Daniel 4, —see verses 17, 25, 32. The "kingdom of men" consists of the aggregate of human governments. It is an appropriate designation for them all. They are all the embodiment of one principle—namely, the rule of man by himself. Whether it be the despot or free Parliament, the same is exemplified—self-government. This has been the alpha and omega of all political faith, since man was first sent forth an exile from Eden to take care of himself. Its form has varied in different ages and countries, according to the views and inclinations of men, but men have agreed with marvellous unanimity as to the mainspring of the system. There has been no difference between the bitterest factions as to the source of the power they respectively claimed to exercise, namely, the will of man—whether royalist or republican, despotic or constitutional.

The will of man is the cornerstone of every political edifice that exists—the foundation of the vast system of nations that covers the face of the earth. No one ever questions the legitimacy of human authority as politically embodied. The fact is, the world knows of no other authority. If it believe in God, a false theology has excluded Him from any influence in the minds of men in things practical. They confine His jurisdiction to "spiritual things," to which an artificial significance has come to be attached; and even in these they only yield him a constrained and occasional deference. In reality, they acknowledged Him not. They own no higher authority than themselves. They assert the right to be their own masters, to dispose of this world's wealth as they think fit, and to make such laws as they please.

This spirit is embodied in all the kingdoms of the world. It is the germ from which they are developed; so that in a particular and emphatic sense, human government, as multifariously manifested on the face of the globe, is THE KINGDOM OF MEN. It is the presumption of man politically incorporated, the organised enforcement of human dictate, irrespective of the authority of God. It is permitted of God as, in the circumstances, a

necessary evil; and He overrules it with a view to His future purposes. “The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will” (Dan. 4:32).

This conception of the present situation of things prepares us for the apprehension of

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Jesus taught his disciples to pray “Thy kingdom come.” It is not yet come. If it were, the kingdom of men would not be in existence, for “the kingdoms of this world” are to cease when the kingdom of God comes. They are to become His; and the prophets show us that when this comes to pass the government of the world will no longer be in the hands of unauthorised, ambitious, erring kings and rulers. When the kingdom of God comes, it will displace and overthrow every power in the world, and visibly establish God’s power on the earth, by the hand of Christ and his saints—all of which will be made manifest to the reader in what is to follow.

For a general view of the subject, we cannot do better than turn to the second chapter of Daniel. To advise the general reader to do this is to provoke a smile, perhaps, as if referring him to Daniel were like referring him to Jack the Giant Killer. Few people realise as they ought, that Daniel is a prophet whose authority rests on no less a sanction than that of the Lord Jesus himself. Christ said to his disciples, “When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, *spoken of by Daniel the prophet*, standing where it ought not (LET HIM THAT READETH UNDERSTAND),” etc. (Mark 13:14). Not only does Christ specifically endorse the divinity of Daniel in this way, but he recognises it in the general appeals to the Scripture as the word of God, which, he said, “cannot be broken” (John 10:35). Daniel was a part of this Scripture, and therefore partakes of every confirmation given to the whole. In view of this, let us address ourselves, without the least reservation, to the reading of the chapter referred to.

It is a revelation of the most important kind. It is, in fact, the history of the world condensed in the form of a prophecy into a single chapter. To understand its bearing, we must transport ourselves into the past by upwards of a score of centuries, and take our stand, in imagination, with Nebuchadnezzar, the representative of the first great Babylonian dynasty. Taking him as he appears in the chapter, we find the monarch in reverie. He is thinking of his past achievements; of his brilliant career, and the fame and the dominion which he has established. While reviewing the past, his mind turns to the future. “Thy thoughts,” says Daniel, “came into thy mind, upon thy bed, *what should come to pass hereafter*.”

Should the great empire, which he had founded, be a haven for nations throughout all generations? or should some one rise after his death, and cause disruption and ruin? What would be the fate of the usurper? Should his power continue? or should it share a similar fate to his own? Should the world be a constant battle-field? Should history be an eternal record of strife and bloodshed? Should mankind for ever be cursed with the rivalries of potentates, and the devastations caused by military ambition? In this frame of mind, the monarch falls asleep; and while his slumbers are upon him, a dream is impressed upon the tablets of his brain by the Great Artificer, who hath the hearts of all men in His hands. The dream is for the purpose of answering the questions which had started in his mind, and of enlightening future generations as to the purpose of the Almighty.

The king awakes; the dream imparted was instantly withdrawn. It is gone. The king only knows that he has had a dream of unusual impressiveness, but cannot recall its faintest outline. He is distressed. The dream has left behind it the impression that it was no ordinary dream, but by no effort can he bring it back. In his distress he has recourse to the magicians of his court, who, according to the traditions of their order, ought to be able to tell him the dream and the meaning. But the demand is beyond their resources. They confess their

inability to supply information which was beyond everyone's reach. The king is irritated: regards their inability as evidence of imposture, and issues a decree for their death.

This decree involved Daniel, who was a royal captive at Nebuchadnezzar's court, and who had been assigned an honorary position among the king's wise men, because of his capacity and culture. Daniel, hearing of it and the cause, asks respite, in the hope of obtaining a knowledge of the king's secret from God. That night, he and certain fellow captives made it the subject of special request and prayer, and that night Daniel was communicated a knowledge of the king's dream and the meaning. Daniel is called in, and the king's difficulty is at an end. Now, let us take notice of Daniel's first statement to the king: "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, *and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in* THE LATTER DAYS" (chap. 2:28). This is to be noted. It shows that the vision goes up to and finds its culmination in the *"latter days,"*—a phrase employed in Scripture to describe the closing period of human affairs. This gives it a special interest to us, as affecting our own and future times.

Daniel described the dream. The royal dreamer beheld a towering image of great size and imposing appearance. As the beholder looked, a second independent object appeared. A stone hewn by mysterious agency from an adjoining mountain came whizzing through the air; struck the great image on the feet with such violence, that the image was overturned, and fell in fragments. The stone growing larger, rolled among these fragments, and ground them to powder, which the wind carried away. Then the stone went on enlarging until it became a great mountain, filling the whole earth.

Thus the vision consisted of two objects—separate and independent—and one appearing before the other. It is well to realise this. The image is first seen towering in its metallic splendour, then the stone is revealed, not as a passive co-existent, but as a directly antagonistic body. There is no affinity between the two things; the stone does not move softly up to the image, and gradually incorporate itself with its substance. It dashes at it with violence, and at once brings it to the earth in ruins; and *when* the wind has cleared away the atomic residuum, the stone grows into a great mountain, to the filling of the whole earth. In doing so, it does not appropriate any of the substance of the demolished image, as that has all been driven away; but grows by its own inherent force.

Now, the things signified are explained by Daniel, and bear the same mutual relations as the symbols:—

> "Thou, O King, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory … Thou (or thy dynasty) art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise *another kingdom*, inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things, and as iron that breaketh all these shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; … it shall be partly strong and partly broken.… And 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. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold."—2:37–45.

Before considering these statements, it will be of advantage to take into account the 7th chapter of Daniel, where the same things are revealed in another form. If the reader will take the trouble of reading the chapter through, he will be rewarded by a clearer comprehension of the scope of the argument. It narrates a vision seen by Daniel himself, and interpreted to him by the angels. In the vision, beasts are substituted for Nebuchadnezzar's metals, and the stone

finds its counterpart in the "judgment that shall sit, and consume and destroy the fourth beast unto the end."

In the two, we have a double representation of the same thing. Their great prophetic teaching is, that there were to arise in the earth four successive phases or forms of universal government, and that the whole should be superseded at last by an everlasting kingdom, to be established by God. The visions are of the broad and comprehensive type. They deal not with local manifestations. They take the civilised world as a whole, and present us with a general view of the great successive political changes of the world's history, without touching upon the infinitude of detail which constitutes the material of historical writing. They were given to gratify the profitable curiosity that seeks to know the ultimate of history, and the destiny of the human race. The revelation was made in almost the earliest historic age, viz., during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. That is now twenty-five centuries ago; and it is our privilege to be able to trace its verification in the course of history, and thereby be prepared to look with confidence for its glorious consummation.

The empire established by Nebuchadnezzar was in existence at the time of the visions; we recognise it in the golden head of the image, and in the eagle-winged lion of Daniel's dream, both of which are appropriate symbols of the Babylonian power—the one representing the splendour and magnificence of the empire, the other its supremacy among the nations.

"After thee," said Daniel, "shall arise another, kingdom inferior to thee," and, therefore, represented by the inferior metal—silver. This prediction was fulfilled. An insurrection took place under Darius the Mede, in the days of Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, which resulted in the complete overthrow of his dynasty, and in the establishment of the Medo-Persian empire. Darius died in two years, without a lineal successor, and the vacant throne was peacefully filled by Cyrus the Persian, the rightful heir. The Persian phase continued 204 years and nine months, so that the Persian phase of the silver empire was of a very much longer duration that the Median phase of the same empire. This is signified by the bear in the second vision *raising itself up on one side*; and in Daniel 8, by a ram with two *unequal horns*, of which it is said (verse 3), "one was higher than the other, and *the higher came up last*"—that is, the Persian phase of the second empire, which was the longer, was last in order. The reader is referred to the chapter itself for further detail. The bear, which in Daniel's vision is chosen to represent the Medo-Persian empire, is said to have had "three ribs in the mouth of it, between the teeth of it." The political peculiarity symbolised by these ribs is thus identified, it is:—

> "It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom, and over these THREE PRESIDENTS, that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage" (Dan. 6:1, 2).

Darius Codomanus, the last occupant of the Medo-Persian throne, was defeated by Alexander, the Macedonian, otherwise "the Great," who entirely overthrew the power of the Persian empire. Then came the rule of the brazen-coated Greeks: Alexander became the sole emperor of the world, establishing "the third kingdom of brass." His dominion did not long remain intact. It had been written in explanation of another vision seen by Daniel (chap. 8:21–22):—

> "The rough goat is the king of Grecia, and the great horn that is between his eyes ia the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, *four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power*."

The same thing had been predicted in the following words (Daniel 11:3, 4):—

> "A mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion … and when he shall stand up *his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven*, and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled."

The fulfilment of these predictions was very remarkable. On the death of Alexander, his empire was divided among his *four* generals, and became established in *four independent divisions*, "not in his power," as the angel had foretold; for his power was not perpetuated by descendants, but shared among strangers.

The fourth kingdom is predicted—"strong as iron, breaking in pieces, and bruising." In one case, it is represented by the iron legs, feet, and toes of the image, and in the other by a fourth beast with ten horns, which Daniel describes "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, with great iron teeth, devouring and breaking in pieces, and stamping the residue with its (brazen-clawed) feet." Here again, history supplies an entire verification of the prophecy. The Roman empire rose into powerful existence, and vanquishing the power of Greece became mistress of the world, extending her dominion beyond the limits of any former empire, and establishing one of the strongest despotisms the world has ever seen. Her political qualities corresponded in every respect with the strong figures employed. She was "strong as iron," and "great, and dreadful, and strong exceedingly." The sagacity of her rulers, the vigour of her imperial administration, the military skill of her generals, the discipline of her army, the strength of her laws, and the unlimited extent of her resources, combined to make Rome the strongest piece of political machinery the world has ever seen. Her strength, however, though great and prolonged, was not everlasting. The language of the vision required that days of weakness should come. "Partly strong and *partly broken*;" this is the prediction, and so the days of universal Roman power passed away.

Then came the *"partly broken"* state. Strong first, as signified by the *iron legs* of the image, and the corporate strength of the fourth beast of Daniel s vision, she entered in her later stages the phase represented by the clay-sand-iron mixed ten-toed feet of the image, and the antagonistic horns on the head of the fourth beast. Broken at last by the repeated blows of the barbaric invasions from the north, we behold her now in a state of weakness and division. The European nations as we see them today are the latter-day divided phase of Roman power. The old imperial strength has gone. Rome no longer rules the world. She no longer sways the destinies of mankind with the most formidable of despotisms. She is broken, divided, weakened, a ricketty, disjointed, system of nations, which hardly holds together for very weakness: a mixture of iron and clay of brittle cohesion, destined ere long to be smashed to atoms by the invincible stone from heaven.

Rome has never been superseded. She has been changed by many vicissitudes. She still lingers in weakness. The present political arrangements on the continent of Europe are but a prolongation of her existence in another form, corresponding to the requirements of the vision. They exhibit to us the last stage of the fourth kingdom, and tell us that we approach the time when a change will come over the world—when the fifth kingdom shall be manifested in destructive antagonism to all human power.

This suggests the consummation. The exactness with which this prophetic revelation has been verified in history supplies a clue and inspires entire confidence with respect to the unfulfilled part of the vision. History has brought us to the feet of the image, and the last of the four beasts; that is, to the close of the fourth great dominion, which it was predicted should arise in the earth. But what lies beyond? Let any one sit down and peruse the second and seventh chapters of Daniel attentively, and see if he do not, as a matter of self-evident testimony, come to the conclusion that the next step in the march of events is the visible interposition of divine power in human affairs.

Consider the stone: it is hewn from its bed by miraculous agency; it appears on the scene *after* the image has attained complete development; it descends upon the feet of the image with violence, and reduces the human-like structure to atoms, which are taken away by the wind; and THEN the stone expands into earth-occupying dimensions. Now, what is the interpretation of all this? We could almost work the problem unaided, so unmistakable is the

evident significance of the symbolism. But let the plain language of divine explanation decide (Dan. 2:44):—

> "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."

Can there be any difference of opinion as to the meaning of this language? It is addressed to us as an interpretation; therefore, it is not enigmatical. It is a plain and literal statement, declaring the purpose of God to set aside the existing arrangement of things on earth, and this not in an unseen, quiet, gradual manner, such as the expected spread of a spiritual millennium; but with the visibility, violent destructiveness, and suddenness of the stone's descent upon the image. The four kingdoms have destroyed each other; but inasmuch as they were of the same (human) stock, they are not represented in the vision of the image as separate conflicting objects, but as part and parcel of the same body politic. Yet they violently and completely superseded each other, though no violence is signified in the symbol.

The only violence represented is in connection with the crisis that has not yet arrived. It is employed by *the stone* toward the image, as representing the entire system of human government. This would lead us to anticipate violence of an unprecedented kind, when the event signified comes to pass; and the reader will see that the wording of the interpretation is strictly corroborative of this legitimate inference. "The God of heaven shall … *break in pieces and consume* all these kingdoms." Herein is predicted the entire disruption of all systems of human government, the complete and violent suppression of "the powers that be." This is not a "notion" or a "crotchet" founded upon an ambiguous symbol, but a simple reiteration of the unmistakable language of inspired interpretation. The same purpose is distinctly intimated in other parts of Scripture. For instance, in Psalm 2, Christ is addressed in the following language (verses 8, 9):—

> "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, and thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel*."

Again, Psalm 110:5, 6, where it is also the subject of inspired song:—

> "The Lord at thy right hand *shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath … He shall wound the heads over many countries*."

Again, Isaiah, portraying this same divine interference, says (chapter 24:21–23):—

> "It shall come to pass in that day that *the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth*. They shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited (*marginal reading* 'found wanting'). THEN the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."

Again, Hannah, on the occasion of Samuel's birth, uses the following words in her song (I Sam. 2:10):—

> "The adversaries of the Lord *shall be broken to pieces; out of Heaven shall He thunder upon them*. The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth, and He shall give strength unto His king, and exalt the horn of His anointed (or Christ)."

Again (Haggai 2:21–22):—

> "I will shake the heavens and the earth, and *I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen*."

There are many other statements of a similar import throughout the Scriptures: but these are sufficient to show that the teaching in the book of Daniel is not isolated or exceptional, but coincident with the general tone of prophetic testimony. That testimony destroys the popular idea of a millennium to be brought about by evangelical enterprise. It precludes the theory of gradual enlightenment and amelioration by human agency. It shows that all expectations of a day of perfection, consequent upon the ultimate triumph of Christianity in the world, are visionary as a dream, destined to receive effectual dissipation in the awful judgments by which the powers of the world will be overthrown.

Returning to Daniel, we find that there is not only a work of demolition, but a work of upbuilding and restitution. This is the most glorious feature of the divine purpose; "the God of heaven *shall* SET UP *a kingdom which shall never be destroyed*, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people … and it shall stand for ever." Now, let us consider, for a moment, what the setting up of a kingdom means, and we shall understand this statement better. A kingdom is not an abstraction. It is not any single thing; it is an aggregation of certain elements which go to make it up. A king in himself is not a kingdom; neither is a country, or people, or laws, separately; it requires them all combined to constitute a kingdom. This must commend itself to every man's judgment. A kingdom consists of, first, a king; second, an aristocracy; third, a people; fourth, a territory; and fifth, laws. Now, to set up a kingdom is obviously to arrange and combine these elements. To appoint a king is not to set up a kingdom: David was anointed years before he ascended the throne: but the kingdom of David was not established until David actually became king over the realm. To portion out a territory is not to set up a kingdom; a land without a king or inhabitants is no kingdom. To set up a kingdom is to put together with various parts that make one. Now, in the testimony before us, we have it declared that it is the purpose of the Almighty to do this very thing—to organise a kingdom of His own in place of those which now occupy the earth, after they shall have been swept out of the way. Hence, we are led to expect, as the inevitable result of testimony believed, that when the fourth kingdom, now existing, shall have been abolished of God, a new order of things shall visibly arise in the earth, in which there shall be a God-appointed king, a God-constituted aristocracy, a God-selected people, a God-chosen land, and God-given laws—altogether constituting a kingdom of God on the earth. Accordingly, we find that each of these elements is separately provided for in the course of prophecy. On the subject of the king, we need not go out of Daniel, chapter 7:13, 14:

> "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one like* THE SON OF MAN came with the clouds of heaven … and 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."

Here we have an explanation of chapter 2:44. But the main point to be noted is that Daniel supplies us with the first element of the kingdom, viz., the king, styled in chapter 9:25, "Messiah the Prince." This is Jesus Christ, spoken of in Revelation 19:16, as the "King of kings, and Lord of lords." This is a subject capable of much enlargement; but as a whole lecture will be devoted to it, we at present desist.

Daniel also supplies us with the aristocracy of the coming kingdom. We find them in the following verse from chapter 7:—

> "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to *the people of* THE SAINTS *of the Most High*" (verse 27).

These are referred to by Peter (I Peter 2:9), as "a chosen generation, *a royal priesthood*, an holy nation, a peculiar people"; and in Revelation 5:10, they are prospectively represented as singing, "Thou hast made us unto our God *kings and priests, and we shall* REIGN ON THE EARTH." In these, we recognise the brethren of Christ who are faithful to the end, and counted worthy to inherit the kingdom of God. Writing to such, Paul says, "God hath called you unto His kingdom" (I Thess. 2:12); and, again, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (I Cor. 6:2). Thus the aristocracy of the future age are neither more nor less than the poor men and women of this and all past ages who do the will of God, and hope for His salvation. They are "taken out from among the Gentiles as a people for His name." They are "called to His kingdom and glory," and "their citizenship is," therefore, "in heaven." They have here "no continuing city: they seek one to come." They are not known or recognised by the world. They walk in obscurity; they are among the humble of the earth; they are without name, standing, or wealth, but they are, nevertheless, the greatest among the sons of men. They are destined to be the rulers in a perfect age that shall be without end, the possessors of all the wealth that great men are now piling up with such diligence. They are monarchs of more illustrious degree than any of "the rulers of the darkness of this *aion* (age)." The time hastens when the Almighty will "put down the mighty from their seats, and exalt them of low degree." What a privilege to be among the latter, even if it does involve present obscurity and defame!

Next, the subjects of the kingdom; they also are plainly identified with the Jews to whom Moses said (Deut. 7:6):—

> "The Lord thy God *hath chosen thee to be* A SPECIAL PEOPLE UNTO HIMSELF, *above all people that are upon the face of the earth*."

The Jews are now in a scattered and afflicted condition; but they are to be gathered from their dispersion, and reinstated in their land as a great nation, there to constitute the subject-people of the Messiah when he returns. This is a subject by itself, and will be treated in a separate lecture. Meanwhile, it is necessary to make this passing mention of the subject, in order to complete the picture of the kingdom of God. It is necessary to add, in order to prevent misconception, that the subject-inhabitants of the earth in the future age are not restricted to the Jews. They also comprise "all people, nations, and languages." Yet there is a distinction to be marked. "The kingdom of God" is distinct from the "all people, nations, and languages," which it rules; just as the kingdom of Great Britain is distinct from Canada, New Zealand, and her other colonies. The Jews will be to the kingdom of God what Englishmen are to England, and other nations will form so many dependencies subject to, but not constituting, the kingdom of God, so that while all are the subjects of the kingdom, yet the Jews are so in a proper and exclusive sense. Hence we read, Zech. 8:23:—

> "In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that GOD IS WITH YOU."

And again, Micah 4:8:—

> "And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the FIRST DOMINION; *the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem*."

But all this will be made more apparent in another lecture.

The fourth element of the kingdom—THE LAND—is also frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, and often in such a way as directly to identify it with God's future purpose. It is repeatedly spoken of as "*my* land." For illustration of this, the reader is referred to Ezekiel 38:16; 36:5; Jeremiah 16:18; 2:7; Isaiah 14:25, etc. Moses says of it (Deut. 11:12), "It is a

land *which the Lord thy God careth for;* the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." This was Palestine, "that lieth between the river of Egypt and the great river Euphrates"—the land promised as a personal everlasting possession to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 13:14; 26:3; 28:13). The Jews occupied it under divine covenant for many centuries, but were ultimately expelled from it in shame, because they defiled it. At present the land is desolate and desecrated by every species of Gentile abomination: but we are told of a time (Deut. 32:43) when God "will be merciful unto His land and to His people." Of that time it is written (Zech. 2:12):—

> "The Lord shall inherit Judah, His portion *in* THE HOLY LAND, and shall choose Jerusalem *again*."

Again (Ezekiel 36:33, 35):—

> "Thus saith the Lord God; In the day that I should have cleansed you from all your iniquities, I will also cause you to dwell in the cities; *and the wastes shall be builded, and the desolate land shall be tilled*, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, THIS LAND THAT WAS DESOLATE IS BECOME LIKE THE GARDEN OF EDEN; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited."

As to the laws, it is written in Isaiah 2:3, 4:—

> "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and *He will teach us of His ways*, and we will walk in His paths; for OUT OF ZION SHALL GO FORTH THE LAW, AND THE WORD OF THE LORD FROM JERUSALEM. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they 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."

Here then is a summary of the Scripture testimony, in which the five constituent elements of the kingdom of God are made clearly manifest. It is needless to say that this kingdom is not yet in existence: such a proposition is self-evident. Its existence does not commence till human government is entirely abolished. Not until the great image—now standing upon its ten-toed feet in Europe—is broken to pieces, and "driven away like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors," shall the stone expand to the filling of the whole earth. That stone has not yet descended; Jesus Christ has not yet returned from the far country whither he has gone, to receive for himself a kingdom (Luke 19:12–27). He is waiting for the appointed time. When that arrives, he will be made manifest as "the stone which the builders rejected, become the head of the corner; on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder." He will go forth "to make war against the kings of the earth and their armies" (Rev. 19:11, 20); having overcome them, "*the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ*" (Rev. 11:15).

Then will commence a glorious reign, outdistancing, by infinitude, the most perfect government that has ever been conceived by man. One king at the head shall possess wisdom equal to all the exigencies of universal dominion—his mercy untainted by selfishness and unblemished by weakness, and his power omnipotent for the enforcement of his will. AN IMMORTAL KING, no apprehension of death will haunt his court or mar the joyous confidence of the rejoicing peoples who will thank God for his righteous sway. His government will be firm, direct, and absolute—no vacillation—no circumlocution—no doubtfulness and indecision. "The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and might; the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with

righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (Isaiah 11:2–4).

Absolute authority, backed by omnipotence, will rule mankind with simplicity and vigour. Righteous law, emanating from its legitimate Source, will be enforced with resistless authority. Innocence will be protected, poverty banished, rapacity restrained, arrogance brought down, and the rights of all secured in everything. The King's government will be administered by the King's associates, his immortal, incorruptible, perfected brethren, who having undergone previous moral preparation in circumstances of great trial, will have been fashioned like unto the glorious body of their Lord and Master. The power will be permanently in their hands, not by popular suffrage, but by royal commission of the true type. The power of the people will be a myth in those days. All assertion of political birthright will be suppressed. An iron administration, with superhuman powers at their command, will vigorously put down rebellion in every form, and maintain the only government that will have blessed the world with peace and righteousness in the name of divine right. Then shall the glory of the Lord cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Then shall be fulfilled the words of the angels: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men."

THE BEARING OF THESE THINGS ON THE GOSPEL OF OUR SALVATION

Now, we made it evident to start with, that this glorious purpose was announced in the gospel preached by Jesus and his apostles; it was proclaimed for belief. "Go," said Jesus, "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that *believeth* and is baptised shall be saved." Thus belief was made the first condition of salvation, that is, belief in the things set forth in the proclamation to which the commission had reference. These things comprised the doctrine of the kingdom. Hence, no man believes the gospel who is ignorant of the prophetic disclosures concerning the kingdom of God. Be it observed, Paul preached the kingdom of God *out of the prophets*.

PROOF:—

> "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).
>
> "I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying *none other things than those which* THE PROPHETS AND *Moses did say should come*" (Acts 26:22).
>
> "So worship I (Paul) the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law AND IN THE PROPHETS" (Acts 24:14).
>
> "Paul, *as his manner was*, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days *reasoned with them out of* THE SCRIPTURES" (Acts 17:2). (There were no other Scriptures at the time than the Old Testament.)

Previous to the death of Christ, the crucifixion formed no part of the Gospel. Subsequently, however, it came to be preached as a supplement to the things concerning the kingdom of God. This appears from the distinction observed in the phrases by which the preaching of the apostles is designated at these two different periods. In the gospel narratives, the proclamation is described as simply relating to "the kingdom of God"; whereas, in the Acts of the Apostles, the phrase runs, "the things concerning the kingdom of God, AND the name of Jesus Christ." Now, the things concerning the name of Christ comprehend the doctrinal teaching as to how the sons of Adam may put on that "one name which is given under heaven, whereby men may be saved." This involved the teaching concerning Christ's sacrifice; for had he not died for our sins, and "risen again for our justification," it would

have been impossible for us to have "put on his name," since his name would not otherwise have been provided. This element of "the mystery of godliness," then, was super-added to the things concerning the kingdom of God, in order to make them of practical value. The glad tidings of the kingdom would have been no gospel to us unless a way had been opened up for our personal participation in the glory to be revealed.

This way was opened in the death and resurrection of Christ; and the announcement of this fact, with explanation as to the manner in which we might enter this "way," naturally became a constituent part of the glad tidings. One part was incomplete without the other. The only difference between the gospel preached by Christ before his death, and that proclaimed after his ascension, was that the latter comprehended the teaching concerning the name of Christ, in addition to the subject matter of the other. There was no alteration; there was simply addition. The kingdom was presented for belief and hope; the sacrifice, for faith with a view to the hope. Both went together. They were never disjointed. United, they constituted the one gospel preached to the world by the apostles of Christ, as the means of human salvation. Disjoined, each is inefficacious to enlighten any man unto salvation.

Now, it is a remarkable fact that, in this century of boasted Christian knowledge, we hear nothing at all, in pulpit preaching, about the first and main element of the gospel—the kingdom of God. If it is spoken about at all, it is with a significance totally different from that which it possesses in the Scriptures. As used by the commonalty of religious people, it means different things in different mouths, but never refers to that glorious manifestation of divine power on earth, which is destined shortly to upset the whole system of human misgovernment, and establish a glorious kingdom in the earth, in which God will be honoured and man happy. Furthermore, with whatever meaning the phrase may be used, the kingdom of God is never spoken of to the people or preached about as in any way forming a part of the good message from heaven, which men must believe unto salvation.

Thus there has been a great departure from the original example. As the Jews of ancient times would only receive the doctrine of the kingdom, and that in a carnal and corrupted form, so the Gentiles of modern times, full of boast and confidence, will only hear of a suffering Messiah, whom they contemplate with perverted gaze. Thus we have two extremes—equally far from the truth. The Bible lies between them: and before any of them can be in a safe position they must meet in the blending of "the things concerning the kingdom of God, AND the name of Jesus Christ." At present there is a great and vital lack in popular preaching. The people are led to hope for translation to heaven at death as the great object of a religious life, and as the great burden of the promises of God, when, indeed, such a hope is utterly delusive, having no place at all in the Scriptures; while, on the other hand, the glorious gospel of the blessed God is hid from their eyes.

If we look into the practical teaching of the New Testament, we shall find that it is thoroughly interlaced with the doctrine of the kingdom of God. We begin with the exhortation of the great Master himself—"Seek *ye first* THE KINGDOM OF GOD and his righteousness" (Matt. 6:33). Here are plain words. We hear nothing like them in the religious teaching of this age; no such counsel ever falls from the lips of clergy or ministers. With all their zeal for the dissemination of the truth of Christ in the world, they actually neglect the inculcation of its first principle as expressed in the words before us. They never tell men to "seek first the kingdom of God"; they don't even tell them that such a thing is coming. The fact is, they are ignorant on the subject themselves; for surely, otherwise, they would speak of it. They exhort their hearers to seek "mansions in the skies," to "prepare for death," to "fit themselves for heaven," and save their immortal souls from the torments of hell; thus proclaiming fictitious doctrine, while in all their preachings they make no mention of the great central prospective truth relating to the kingdom of God. They thus disprove themselves to be the ministers of truth and light.

Christ not only warned men to "seek first the kingdom of God," but he taught his disciples to pray for its coming, saying, "THY KINGDOM COME; *thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven*." No prayer like this ascends from the pulpits of our churches and chapels. It is true that in the churches the "Lord's Prayer" is repeated as a form of devotional exercise; but when the occupants of the pulpit are left to frame their own petitions, they breathe no requests that the kingdom of God may come. True, they pray for "the *extension* of the Redeemer's kingdom"; but by this they mean "*the propagation of the visible church*," which is a very different thing from the establishment of the Almighty's (not now existing) divine kingdom on earth, for the glorification of His own great name, and the blessing of humanity. Such a prayer is, in fact, a tacit declaration of unbelief in the coming kingdom of God's revealed purpose, because it assumes that kingdom to be already in existence; and, ignoring His future plans, asserts a system to be the kingdom of God, which is only the ecclesiastical embodiment of error and opposition to His truth.

Christ has said, *"Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."* (Luke 18:17). This is a solemn statement, deserving, nay, demanding, most attentive consideration. It is a certain decree of exclusion against all who do not humbly and joyfully believe in the glad tidings concerning the kingdom of God. It is fatal to the sceptic, whatever be his excellence of character. It shuts out the man who is so engrossed in the business and pleasures of this life, as to be indifferent about the future, blindly trusting that all will be right if he pays twenty shillings in the pound. It debars the pseudo-liberal man of the world, who, in the supreme wisdom of a scientific cramming, talks contemptuously about "theology."

But it is equally fatal to another class, who think they have nothing to fear. What do professing orthodox Christians say to it? How does the Churchman, the Independent, the Baptist, the Methodist, stand related to this principle? What say they to the kingdom of God? Do they receive it as a little child? Let them be told about the purpose of God to send Jesus Christ to earth again (Acts 3:20), to raise again the tabernacle of David that is fallen down, and to build it as in the days of old (Amos 9:11); to pull down the mighty from their seats, and exalt them of low degree (Luke 1:52); to humble all kings of the earth, and compel the homage of their peoples (Isa. 24:21; Psalm 72:8–11; Dan, 7:14; Psalm 2:9); to establish Him in the city of Jerusalem, as universal king on earth (Isaiah 24:23; Jeremiah 3:17; Micah 4:2–7); to give power to His accepted people, as royal co-rulers with Him of the nations of the earth (Rev. 2:26, 27; 5:9, 10; Psalm 149:5, 9; Dan. 7:27).—Let them be told of the mission of Jesus Christ to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel (Isaiah 49:6), to gather again the children of Israel from all nations among whom they are scattered, and to bring them to the land of their fathers, now waste and desolate (Ezek. 37:21, 22); and there to constitute them a glorious nation, served and honoured by all, even as they are now oppressed and despised (Zeph. 3:19, 20; Isa. 61:5, 7; 60:10, 14).

Let them be told of all these things, which are plainly written in the word of truth, and what will they say? What *do* they say? Do they receive them as a little child? Do they not rather reject them with scorn, and throw all the ridicule which their mouths can frame upon those who direct their attention to these things? Let them beware lest they come into condemnation, and realise the words addressed by Jesus to the Pharisees: "Ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in *the kingdom of God;* and you then *yourselves thrust out* shall come from the east and the west, and from the north and the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." Wiser far will it be to receive the kingdom of God with the meekness and gratitude of a little child, that at the end of the days, they may hear the words of welcome addressed to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, *inherit the kingdom* prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

We read in Acts 1:3, that Jesus was seen of his disciples forty days after his passion, *speaking unto them* THE THINGS PERTAINING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Here is an example for our religious teachers. The Great Master considered the things of the kingdom of so much importance, that he devoted his last days on earth to their exposition. How much then does it behove those who profess to be his ministers to instruct the people therein.

In Matthew 7:21, we find the following words: "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven." (*Note*—The Kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are the same thing; because God who sets it up is the God of heaven, and the kingdom when established will be a kingdom that will have come from heaven to earth.) Wordy profession will not avail anything in securing an entrance into the kingdom of God. A mere assent to Christian doctrine—an intellectual recognition of gospel truth—will not qualify a man for that high honour. *Belief* must be accompanied by a hearty performance of the will of God, as made known in the preceptive department of the truth; and this is what few men are equal to. The moral courage that is not frightened at singularity is a scarce thing, especially in matters of principle. Men will rather wink at tricks in trade, and conform to dishonourable practices without end, than boldly avow conscientious conviction, and be considered "soft." Fashion, reputation, and other influences at work in society, briefly summarised by the apostle John, as "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," are too powerful with the common run of mortals, to allow of many entering the kingdom of God. "The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6:9). "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it." Again, in Mark 10:24, we read, "How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God."

James presents the other side of the picture in chapter 2:5; "Hearken, my beloved brethern, hath not God chosen *the poor of this world*, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love him"? Riches come not alone to a man. They surround him with circumstances which are unfavourable to spiritual perception. For this reason, a rich man has very little chance of ever becoming an heir of the kingdom of God; not from the simple circumstance of his happening to have riches, but because he becomes subject through them, to many influences of an unfavourable character. It is different with the poor. They may take comfort. To them pre-eminently the gospel is preached; and to them it cannot fail to present many more attractions than to the rich man, because in this life they have little to comfort them. Their days are spent in labour. They manage with difficulty to "provide things honest in the sight of all men," and are strangers to the elegances and luxuries by which the rich sweeten their lives. They are held in small reputation, have few friends and few pleasures. To them the gospel is glad tidings indeed: it promises them deliverance from all the imperfections and drawbacks of the present life, and possession of fiches and honour in the kingdom of God—far greater and more enduring, and certainly not less real than those which are now inherited by the great men of the earth; and in the affectionate belief of this promise, and the moral elevation and spiritual improvement which the contemplation thereof induces, he is blessed with the peace of God that passeth all understanding—a peace that the world knoweth not of—a peace that the world cannot give and cannot take away.

From what has been advanced it will be manifest that the gospel of Jesus Christ, as made known in the New Testament, is not preached in our churches and chapels. To account for such a state of things, it would be necessary to say more than the limits of this lecture will allow; but there is a certain prediction of Paul's which may throw some light on the subject. It will be found in II Tim. 4:3, 4:—

> "*The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine*, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, (they) having itching ears; AND THEY SHALL TURN AWAY THEIR EARS FROM THE TRUTH, AND SHALL BE TURNED UNTO FABLES."

This prediction requires no comment. We observe its fulfilment in the present state of Christendom, and the warning voice to every earnest mind is, in the words of Peter, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Like the Christians of old, *"Gladly receive the word and be baptised."* Steadfastly continue in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers; and when the time appointed arrives, "an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into *the everlasting kingdom of our lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*" (II Peter 1:11).

Lecture 9

THE PROMISES MADE TO THE FATHERS (ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB), YET TO BE FULFILLED IN THE SETTING UP OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD UPON EARTH

NO ATTENTIVE reader of the New Testament can be ignorant of the prominence given in the apostolic writings to "THE PROMISES MADE UNTO THE FATHER." He may not understand what is meant by the phrase, but he can scarcely avoid acquaintance with the phrase itself, as a thing of importance, because it is used in such a way as to show that whatever it refers to, it expresses something that has a fundamental relation to the scheme of truth apostolically delivered.

Those who are not New Testament readers, or Old Testament readers either, will know nothing about it. For their benefit and the general elucidation of the subject, we call attention to the state of the matter, by quoting Paul's statement that "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, *to confirm* THE PROMISES MADE UNTO THE FATHERS" (Rom. 15:8). This at once brings the subject to a point, declaring a connection between the mission of Christ and that which is styled "THE PROMISES"; and thereby imposing upon us the necessity of recognising the importance of the stem and branch of truth so expressed, instead of turning away from the subject with indifference, as is the custom with the majority of religious people, not excepting those professing to be *New Testament Christians*. If Christ came to "confirm the promises made unto the fathers," it is obviously of the first importance that we know something about these promises, and we need have no difficulty in getting the

knowledge desired. Paul incidentally declares that whatever they are, the promises belong to the Jews:—

> "My kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, *to whom pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, AND THE PROMISES" (Rom. 9:3–4).

Speaking more definitely on the subject, he says:—

> "*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 … And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:16, 29).

From this, it is evident that if we would know something about "the promises" which Paul had in his mind, we must refer to the history of Abraham, from which he derived his information. With this history most people are familiar; but as a rule, they are ignorant of anything in connection with it which answers to Paul's words in Gal. 3:16, 29. They know that Abraham emigrated from Chaldea, by divine command, became a settler in Canaan, and that God promised to greatly multiply his posterity, and make them a great nation in the country where he was then a stranger; they believe that it was promised to him that Christ, the Saviour of the world, should come in his line, and that in this way, through the preaching of the gospel, all nations should ultimately be blessed through him; but they have no idea of any promises which form the groundwork of the Christian faith, or the subject-matter of the gospel. They admit there were promises, but, practically, they consider them past and done with. They consider them as applicable only to the now insignificant events of Jewish history.

They certainly have no idea of any "promises made unto the fathers," in which they can hope to have any personal interest, or from which, indeed, Abraham himself can have any future benefit. They have no idea of themselves or any one else "inheriting the promises" made 3,000 years ago to the fathers. The promises, in their estimation, are an affair of the past, a part of the first dispensation which, having waxed old, has vanished away. The thing to be looked for from their point of view, is the thing that, in their opinion, has happened to the fathers themselves and to all righteous men ever since—an event before which all parties are on a dead level, promises or no promises; and that is, going to heaven when death comes, if righteous. They sing and teach their children to sing—Where is now the prophet Daniel? *Safe in* THE PROMISED LAND.

In their estimation, the promised land is heaven; thither they sing of all the faithful having gone—the "souls" having according to their creed, "departed to glory," when death laid their bodies low. They consider that the promises made to them have been amply realised. It is evident there is a great mistake in this. Paul says:—

> "These all died in faith, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES, but having SEEN THEM AFAR OFF, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:13).

This affirms that the fathers died without receiving what had been promised; in direct opposition to orthodoxy, which says they died and *thus* received the promises, being one and all "safe in the promised land." Paul repeats the statement at the end of the chapter. He says:—

> "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).

What were the promises made to the fathers, the substance of which they did not recieve, and which Paul here declares they will not receive until the totality of the chosen ones "from every nation, kindred, people, and tongue" is completed? In answer to this, we affirm that they relate to matters forming the very essence and foundation of the salvation offered through Christ. We do so on the strength of the following testimonies, to begin with:—

> "And now I (Paul) stand (before Agrippa's judgment-seat) and am judged *for the hope of* THE PROMISE MADE OF GOD UNTO OUR FATHERS" (Acts 26:6).

> "He hath shewed strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled tho hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy, as HE SPAKE *to our fathers*, TO ABRAHAM, and to his seed for ever" (Luke 1:51–55).

> "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David (that is, Jesus—see context); as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began; that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us; *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).

> "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).

These passages show that the promises made to the fathers were unfulfilled at so recent a date as the first century—that is, *nearly two thousand years after they were made*—and further, that they have reference to the things to be accomplished, through Christ, instead of having, as the generality of religious people suppose, been fulfilled in Jewish history.

But, for the better discussion of the question, and to come closer to the subject, let us look at the promises themselves. In seeking for them, we act under the guidance of Paul, who says, "*To Abraham* and his seed were the promises made." This is an infallible clue: we go to the history of Abraham, and find the following promises recorded:—

> "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; AND IN THEE SHALL ALL FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED" (Gen. 12:1–3).

> "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For *all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed* (*Christ*) *for ever*. Arise, *walk through the land* in the length of it and in the breadth of it; FOR I WILL GIVE IT UNTO THEE" (Gen. 13:14–17). (See also 12:7; 15:8–18; 17:8).

> "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and *thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies*. And IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED, because thou hast obeyed My voice" (Gen. 22:16–18).

Paul styles Isaac and Jacob "the heirs with him (Abraham) of the same promise" (Heb. 11:9). It will therefore lay the foundation more securely to quote the promises made to them,

which it will be seen are, as Paul's words give us to understand, identical with those made to Abraham:—

> "And the Lord appeared unto him (Isaac) and said … Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; *for unto thee and unto thy seed* I WILL GIVE ALL THESE COUNTRIES, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father" (Gen. 26:2, 3).

> "And God Almighty bless thee (Jacob) … and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to *thy* seed with thee; *that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger*, which God gave unto Abraham" (Gen. 28:3, 4).

> "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: THE LAND WHEREON THOU LIEST, TO THEE WILL I GIVE IT, AND TO THY SEED … and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 28:13, 14).

Now, in analysing these "promises made to the fathers," it will be found that they consist of several distinct items, which it will be well to enumerate for the sake of clearness, and the consideration of each of which separately will enable us to see the truth of the proposition that stands as the subject of the lecture, viz., that these promises will only be fulfilled when Christ, having returned from heaven, and raised his people from the dead, reigns in Palestine as universal ruler, to whom all nations will bow in blessed allegiance.

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1 st.—*That Abraham's posterity should become a great and mighty nation*.—This has not been fulfilled in the sense of the promise. It is true that Abraham's descendants, according to the flesh, have multiplied and filled a large place in history; but this is not the only event contemplated in the promise, as is evident from Rom. 9:6–8. The natural Jews from the day that they murmured against Moses and Aaron, in the wilderness, till now, when they reject the prophet like unto Moses, have ever been a stiff-necked, disobedient generation, walking after the ways of the heathen, and persecuting and slaying the servants of God sent to bring them to the right way. This is not the "great nation multiplied above the stars of heaven," that was promised to Abraham; it were no blessing to surround a man With such a race of flesh-born rebels. Paul says, "*They are nor all Israel which are of Israel, neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children*; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, *they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God*, BUT THE CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE ARE COUNTED FOR THE SEED)" (Rom. 9:6–8).

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob pleased God by their faith and obedience: those of their descendants who were not of this disposition, were not of Israel, although they inherited their flesh and blood, and, therefore, were not "counted for the seed." They were not reckoned as constituents of the great nation promised to Abraham. The great majority of the Jews have been of this class, and are, therefore, rejected. Whence, then, comes the promised race of children? The principal part of them will be furnished by the Jewish nation after the flesh; for in all their history, there has been a remnant, that were truly Abrahamic, not only in blood, but in faith and obedience: these are "the children of the promise," and will be raised at the coming of Christ. The other part will come from the Gentiles, who, after ages of darkness, were visited in the apostolic era, with an invitation to become adopted into the stock of Abraham. This fact is made known in the following words:—

> "God at the first did visit the Gentiles, *to take out of them a people for His name*" (Acts 15:14).

> "By revelation He made known unto me (Paul) the mystery … which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men … *that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body*, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph. 3:3, 5, 6).

> "And he (Abraham) received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised, that he might be *the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised*; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and *the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also* WALK IN THE STEPS OF THAT FAITH OF OUR FATHER ABRAHAM, WHICH HE HAD BEING YET UNCIRCUMCISED" (Rom. 4:11, 12).

Hence those who embrace the faith of Abraham, and become circumcised by putting on Christ in baptism, thus partaking imputatively of the literal circumcision of which Christ was subject under the law, become the children of Abraham, and heirs of the promises made to him. This is Paul's testimony:—"For as many of you as have been BAPTISED INTO CHRIST have put on Christ … And if ye be Christ's, *then are ye Abraham's seed*, and HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE" (Gal. 3:27, 29). Of those in that position, Paul says:—"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (Gal. 4:28).

This is the class contemplated in the promise made to Abraham; but the point of time at which they are contemplated is not the present time, when they are a weak and scattered family, and the great bulk of them in the dust. It is the time referred to in John 11:52, when Christ will "*gather together* IN ONE the children of God that are scattered abroad"; and in II Thess. 2:1, "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ *and our gathering together unto him*." Speaking of this time, Jesus says:—

> "*Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with* ABRAHAM, and ISAAC, and JACOB, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11).

When this takes place, Abraham will behold the fulfilment of the promise that he should become a great and mighty nation, above the stars of heaven in multitude; his children of the royal order, raised from the dead of all ages, will be "a great multitude which no man can number" (Rev. 7:9); and his descendants according to the flesh, disciplined and renovated as a nation, by trial in the wilderness a second time, will be the mightiest people on the globe, all righteous, and inheriting the land (Isa. 60:21), and having "praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame" (Zeph. 3:19). This will be when the Kingdom of God is established in the manner set forth in the last lecture.

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2nd.—*That Abraham and his seed should receive possession of the land indicated in the promise, viz.*, "THE LAND *from the river of Egypt Unto the great river Euphrates," styled in the promise to Abraham, "the land wherein thou art a stranger"* (Gen. 17:8). That this part of the promise is unfulfilled, requires but a feeble effort to see. First, Moses records that Abraham had to buy a field of the original possessors of the country, wherein to bury his dead, and said to them, "I am *a stranger and a sojourner with you*" (Gen. 23:4). Secondly, Paul says, "*He sojourned in the land of promise*, AS IN A STRANGE COUNTRY" (Heb. 11:9). Thirdly, Stephen says, "*God gave him none inheritance in it*, NO, NOT SO MUCH AS TO SET HIS FOOT ON: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession" (Acts 7:5). If Abraham was a stranger and a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a strange country, and received none inheritance in it, not so much as a foot-breadth, surely, so far as he is concerned, the promise is unfulfilled. If so; it remains to be fulfilled at a future time. "Not so," says the orthodox objector: "the promise has been fulfilled in Abraham's descendants; the Jews possessed the country for many centuries, and this was the fulfillment of the promise." The answer to this is found in Gal. 3:16–18:—

> "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*. And this I say, that 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. For if the inheritance be of the law*, it is no more of promise; BUT GOD GAVE IT TO ABRAHAM BY PROMISE."
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> "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).

Now, let the reader observe that the Jews occupied the land *under the law of Moses*, which stipulated in the most stringent terms that their occupation should depend upon their conformity to its requirements (Deut. 28:15–68). Their inheritance of the country was altogether "of the law"; it provided that if they kept the law, they should dwell in the land in prosperity; and that if they broke it, they should be dispersed among the nations in suffering. History records how continually they failed in the matter, and how repeatedly they were subject to foreign yoke and captivity in consequence, and how at last, when hopeless rebellion had established itself in the whole house of Israel, culminating in the rejection of "the prophet like unto Moses," the Romans came and "took away their place and nation," scattering them in the wide dispersion of the present day.

It is impossible in the face of these facts to maintain that the Jewish occupation of Palestine was a fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham: for Paul says, in the words quoted, that the promise was not to Abraham or his seed *through the law*, but through the righteousness of faith. God gave it to Abraham by promise, free and unconditional. Therefore, says Paul, if they which are of the law be heirs, *the promise is made of none effect* (Rom. 4:14). It follows that the promise that Abraham and Christ should possess the land of Palestine is wholly unfulfilled, but will have its fulfilment when Abraham rises from the dead to enter the kingdom of God, then and there to be established. A consideration of what Paul says in Heb. 11, will shew this:—

> "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place WHICH HE SHOULD AFTER RECEIVE FOR AN INHERITANCE, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in THE LAND OF PROMISE, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, *the heirs with him of the same promise*. FOR HE LOOKED FOR A CITY WHICH HATH FOUNDATIONS, WHOSE BUILDER AND MAKER IS GOD.… These all died in faith, not having received the promises, *but having seen them afar off*, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. *But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly*" (verses 8–16).

Let the reader carefully peruse and re-peruse this quotation from Hebrews, and having done so, let him realise its purport. Abraham, says Paul, was called to go into a country *which he should afterwards receive for an inheritance*. What country was this? Let the reader consult Gen 12:4, 5, and he will have an answer: "So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him … and *into the Land of Canaan they came*." To make the matter certain beyond dispute, we will quote the words of Stephen:—

> "Get thee (Abraham) out of thy country and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran, and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into THIS LAND, WHEREIN YE NOW DWELL" (Acts 7:3, 4).

The land which Abraham was "after to receive for an inheritance," was the land inhabited by the Jews in the days of the apostles, modern Syria. He lived in it as a stranger, with Isaac and Jacob, to whom the promise of possession was afterwards renewed. This sojourn was the result of faith. But for this, on finding, as years rolled on that he was not put in possession of the land, but left to wander without inheritance, he would have returned in disgust to his native country, and spent his days among his kindred. Paul says he and his sons "had opportunity to have returned"; but they did not avail themselves of the opportunity, but steadfastly remained in the country to which they had been commanded to emigrate. Paul says the reason of this was, that they were "persuaded of the promises and embraced them." Notwithstanding that appearances were against them, they believed that God would in time fulfil His words, and give them the promised possession, and believing this, they were able to crucify the natural desire to go back to a country where they would have had both inheritance and friends, but in going back to which, they would have forfeited the promises. They saw that the thing promised was more worthy than "the country from whence they came out." They looked for a city (polity) which had foundations, and desired a heavenly country. The country from which they came out was without foundation; based upon flesh, which is of earth, earthy, it was ephemeral and passing away: as John says: "*The world passeth away*, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever" (I John 2:17).

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob saw in the promises the guarantee of a heavenly order of things in which, God being the founder, there would be the stability of "foundations" that could never be removed; therefore, they consented to live as strangers in a foreign land, waiting in faith for the things promised. They saw that the promises were "afar off"; they, therefore, in faith, accepted exile, confessing themselves for the time strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Paul says, "*They died without receiving the promises."* What is it, then, but that they must rise to receive them? When? At the time described in Rev. 11:18, as "the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and *that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets*"—[Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were prophets— Psalm 105:15]—the time, the reader will perceive by the context, when "*the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*" (verse 15). It is the epoch mentioned by Paul in the following words: "Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead *at his appearing and his kingdom*" (II Tim. 4:1). When Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob come forth from their graves to judgment and reward, they will "receive the land for an inheritance," according to the promise.' On doing this, they will inherit the kingdom of God, for the kingdom of God is to be establshed there. Hence, says Jesus to the Pharisees:—

> "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).

If any one doubt that this will be in the very land promised to the fathers, and in which they wandered as strangers, let him read the following testimonies from the prophets:—

> "The Lord shall inherit Judah *his portion in the Holy Land*, and shall choose Jerusalem again" (Zech. 2:12).

> "But upon *Mount Zion* shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions … And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel shall possess that of the Canaanites, even unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south. And saviours shall come up on Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau; AND THE KINGDOM SHALL BE THE LORD'S" (Obadiah 17, 20, 21).

"In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted. And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation; and the LORD SHALL REIGN OVER THEM IN MOUNT ZION FROM HENCEFORTH, EVEN FOR EVER. And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, *unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion: the kingdom shall come to the daughter of* JERUSALEM" (Mic. 4:6–8).

"Then will I remember My covenant with Jacob, and also My covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham will I remember; AND I WILL REMEMBER THE LAND" (Lev. 26:42).

"Then will the Lord be *jealous for His* LAND, and pity His people" (Joel 2:18).

"*Fear not*, O LAND; be glad and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things" (Joel 2:21).

"A LAND which the Lord thy God careth for; the eyes of the Lord thy God are *always upon it*, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year" (Deut. 11:12).

"And *the desolate land shall be tilled*, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by; and they shall say, *This land that was desolate is become* LIKE THE GARDEN OF EDEN, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord *build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate*; I THE LORD HAVE SPOKEN IT, AND I WILL DO IT" (Ezek. 36:34–36).

"For the Lord shall comfort ZION; He will comfort all her waste places; and He will *make her wilderness* LIKE EDEN, *and her desert* LIKE THE GARDEN OF THE LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody" (Isa. 51:3).

"*Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall* THY LAND *any more be termed Desolate*, but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, *and thy land shall be married*" (Isa. 62:4).

"Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee *an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations*" (Isa. 60:15).

When the state of things depicted in these testimonies passes out of the domain of prophecy into that of accomplished fact, the "city having foundations" and the "heavenly country," which were the objects of faith with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the subject of promise to them, will be realised. The Scriptural meaning of these phrases will then be exemplified. Orthodox interpreters of Paul make them apply to "heaven above the skies" they overlook the fact, that the promises related to the land in which the fathers sojourned; and forget the absurdity of calling heaven a "heavenly country." Palestine will be a heavenly country when Christ, having re-established the kingdom of David, rules in it as monarch of the whole earth: and his kingdom will be "a city having foundations," for it will stand upon a rock which no rude assault of rebellion whether of democrats or kings, will be able to shake.

It will be observed that Abraham's "seed" is joined with Abraham himself in the promises. Paul says that this seed is Christ (Gal. 3:16), and all who are Christ's (verse 29). In view of this, we are bound to give an application to the promises which may be a little startling to those who have hitherto read the Bible with an orthodox bias, but which is the only application that a rational reading and a child-like belief in the promises can admit, and that is, that Christ and the saints are destined, in conjunction with Abraham, who, in fact, will be one of them, to possess and occupy "the land of Israel." From this conclusion, the orthodox mind will doubtless recoil with horror. This is owing to the perverted condition of the orthodox mind, and not to the nature of the conclusion itself. What is there in the

conclusion to justify horror? Is it not a beautiful and a fitting conclusion? If it is the purpose of God to rule mankind by Christ and his people, it is meet that they should have a centre of operations and headquarters somewhere on the earth. And where could a more appropriate spot be found than the land promised to Abraham?

Palestine is situate at the conjunction of the three great continents of the eastern hemisphere, and can be approached from any quarter on the great oceans. It is the natural centre of universal government; both for commerce and law-giving, it stands in the finest situation there is on earth. In addition to this, it is the locality that has witnessed all God's operations in the past, down to the very crucifixion of His Son, and the sending forth of the gospel; and what more fitting than that it should be the place fixed upon for the resumption of His great and mighty acts? The scene of Christ's humiliation; what more befitting than that it should witness his exaltation as monarch of all the earth? But these considerations pale before the strength of the promise. Nothing is needed after the testimony:—

> "The law shall go forth of ZION, and the word of the Lord from JERUSALEM" (Mit. 4:2).
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> "The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing UNTO ZION; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away" (Isa. 51:11).
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> "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her; rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her, that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.… As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted IN JERUSALEM" (Isa. 66:10, 13).
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> "Thine eyes shall see JERUSALEM a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.… For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our king; He will save us" (Isa. 33:20, 22). "He will destroy *in this mountain* the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.… In that day shall this song be sung *in the land of Judah*" (Isa. 25:7, 8; 26:1).
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> "The Redeemer shall come to ZION, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob" (Isa. 59:20).
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> "At that time they shall call JERUSALEM the throne of the Lord" (Jer. 3:17).
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> "Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall offer *an oblation unto the Lord*, AN HOLY PORTION OF THE LAND; the length shall be the length of five and twenty thousand reeds, and tho breadth shall be ten thousand. (English measurement, 43 miles by 17). This shall be holy in all the borders thereof round about … the sanctuary of the Lord shall be in the midst thereof" (Ezek. 45:1; 48:10).
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> "And they (the nations at the end of the thousand years) went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed THE CAMP OF THE SAINTS about, and the BELOVED CITY; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them" (Rev. 20:9).

These quotations from the Scriptures illustrate the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham as regards his seed—"Christ and the saints." They show the sense in which the promise is to be understood, and that is the obvious sense, the plain sense, viz., that when the kingdom of God is established, and Abraham inherits the land, his seed, constituting the divine encampment, will be in the land with him, and in a particular part of it, to be allotted for that purpose. This allotment, which will include the territory of Judah and Jerusalem, will, as we

shall see in another lecture, contain an area of about 1,784 square miles, which will be ample enough for the pavilions of the king to be spread on a scale becoming the grandeur and majesty of the kingdom. Abraham's seed—the bride, the Lamb's wife—the totality of those who, being "called, and chosen, and faithful," are "the first fruits unto God and unto the Lamb," and found worthy of reigning with Christ, will be a numerous progeny; but not too numerous for the country allotted. "Many are called; but *few are chosen*." "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and *few* there be that find it."

True, John describes this few as "a great multitude which no man could number": but this must be taken as expressing the aspect which a large assembly of people would present to the eye, and not as the statement of an arithmetical fact. The expression could never be true in the absolute sense, for numbers can be computed indefinitely; but in the sense of a crowd being so large and dense as that a man could not reckon them, it is quite appropriate. How many people does the reader think could be accommodated with standing room in the section of country to be set apart, according to Ezekiel, for "an holy oblation"? Nearly half the population of the globe: that is to say, about five-hundred millions. The calculation is very simple; it is easy to ascertain how many people could stand in a square mile; multiply that number by the number of square miles—1,784—and you have the result stated. We make these apparently unnecessary remarks on account of the objection raised to the Bible teaching concerning the inheritance of the Holy Land by Jesus and the saints, on the score of the impossibility of such a little place holding them all.

The objection arises from two mistakes; first, the place is not so little; and, second, the number who will be with Christ is not so great as popular tradition presumes. At the end of the thousand years, there will be a great harvest to be reaped, as the result of the thousand years' dispensation of light and knowledge; but at the beginning, the number to be associated with Christ as the seed of Abraham, to co-operate with him in the blessing of the nations, will be on the limited scale of "first fruits"; they are styled "the *first fruits* unto God and to the Lamb" (Rev. 14:4).

3rd.—*That Christ, the seed of Abraham, is to conquer the world*.—This is the third feature of the promise made to Abraham. It is expressed in the words "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." To apprehend the significance of this statement, it is necessary to remember that in Oriental countries, in ancient times, the gate of a city was the seat of authority. It was the place where consultations were held, decrees issued and registered, and where the rulers showed themselves to receive the obeisance of the people. For an enemy to possess this place, then, was to give evidence of having conquered and deposed the original holders of power.

Now it must be evident that the promise that Christ should possess the gate of his enemies has not been fulfilled. In no sense can an orthodox interpreter make it out that Christ has displaced his enemies from the seat of honour, glory, and power. Ungodly men rule the world. Christ's own country—the land promised to Abraham—is enslaved by the Moslem power, which administers authority and perpetrates its religious abominations in the very city which was called by God's name, and which Jesus is to make the throne of Jehovah in the future age. Instead of Christ possessing the gate of his enemies, the enemy may be said to tread down Christ in the gate. The horns of the Gentiles have lifted themselves up over the land of Judah to scatter it (Zech. 1:21), and all pertaining to Abraham and his seed is now in waste and desolation. But when the kingdom of God comes, this will be changed. God shall speak to the nations in anger, and have them in derision; Christ shall break them in pieces like a potter's vessel (Psa. 2:9; Rev. 2:27); He shall come forth as a man of war—as the Lion of the tribe of Judah—to fight the confederated power of his enemies (Rev. 19:19; Zech. 14:3;

Ezek. 38:21–23). He shall punish the kings of the earth upon the earth (Isa. 24:21). He shall put down the mighty from their seats, and send the rich empty away (Luke 1:52, 53). He shall then possess the gate of his enemies. All kings shall bow down before him, and all nations shall serve him (Psalm 72:11). All people, nations, and languages shall serve and obey him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed (Dan. 7:14). Then will the proclamation be sounded in loud pæans of joy throughout the whole earth:—

"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).

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4th.—*That all nations shall be blessed in Abraham and his seed*.—This is the gospel in a sentence; so Paul gives us to understand in Gal. 3:8. The attentive reader will be able to discern in it the substance of what Jesus and the apostles preached. They preached "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8:12; 28:29–31). The announcement made to Abraham is neither more nor less than these "things" compressed into a sentence, for it announces in a general form what the others disclose in particulars. It tells of universal blessing in connection with Abraham and Christ; while these make plain the process by which the blessing is carried into effect' first, in relation to individuals, and then in relation to nations. It must be evident that it is not yet realised. The nations are not in a state of blessing. Not only groaning under misrule, they are in a state of poverty, ignorance, and misery, which is the opposite of blessedness. The world lieth in wickedness. Abraham and his seed are unknown, except as objects of derision. Even in "happy England" unbelief and vice are the order of the day. There is an external appearance of godliness: much church and chapel building, Sunday school teaching, sermon hearing, prayer saying, collection making, bazaar holding, etc.; but what is there inside but rottenness and dead men's bones? The people who do these things are either selfish, superstitious, or ignorant. There is little fear of God or regard for His word. There is much fear of man and love of the world. People are befooled and degraded: their brains are bemuddled with Paganism in regard to Christianity, and their hearts eaten out by the exigencies of social caste and filthy lucre.

All nations are not yet blessed in Abraham and his seed: but they will be; for we read:—

"Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment … and the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly" (Isa. 32:1, 3, 4).

"In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book; and the eyes of the blind shall sea out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity am cut off" (Isa. 29:18–20).

"Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance; even God with a recompence; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing" (Isa. 35:4–6).

"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).

> "The battle-bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen, and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:10).
>
> "Many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord" (Zech. 8:22).
>
> "Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be My people" (Zech. 2:11).
>
> "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).
>
> "They shall fear Thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth. In His days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth … He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. Ho shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in His sight.… His name shall endure for ever. His name shall be continued as long as the sun, and *men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed*" (Psa. 72:5–7; 12–14, 17).

These testimonies illustrate the blessing guaranteed for "all families of the earth" in the promises made to Abraham: they show what the blessedness consists of in its full development. It is no imaginary blessedness; but the bestowal of just those substantial boons which the whole world is yearning after, but knows not how to compass. These, however, will not be realised till the kingdom of God comes. They cannot be attained before that time; for it requires a righteous and resistless despot to eject all other rulers from place and power, before they become practicable. It requires power, wisdom, righteousness, and humanity to concentre in a universal king, before the nations can be made righteous, prosperous, and happy. In a word, it requires Christ, the seed of Abraham, to take the world's affairs into his own hands, before there can ever be "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." This blessing of Abraham is realised individually, at the present time, in proportion as people lay hold of the promises by faith, and become heirs of future exaltation, through present submission to Christ; but the state of things covenanted to Abraham in the promises, will never be realised until Abraham himself inherits the land, and his seed possesses the gate of his enemies.

In view of the evident conclusion that the promises to Abraham give an unconditional guarantee of "good things to come," it may be asked, why the law of Moses, and the bitter national experience of the Jews, have been allowed to intervene between them and their fulfilment? Paul anticipates and answers this question in Gal. 3:19: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." If we wish to know the purpose it served, we find the information fives verses down: "The law was our *schoolmaster* unto Christ" (verse 24). On account of the almost undisturbed reign of ignorance and sin in the times when the promises were delivered, it was necessary to institute a schoolmaster administration of the divine mind, which should inculcate those first lessons concerning God, without which nothing good could be accomplished, since their existence in the human mind is the very basis of that communion between God and man which honours Him and saves them. It was necessary to engrain those first principles on the mind of the chosen nation, by way of paving the way for the development of the state of things promised to the fathers.

This was done by the establishment of the law of Moses in the midst of Israel—a system which, in itself, was a mere allegory of divine truth, as was meet in the training of children

(Gal. 4:1, 2), but which, by its exactions, severities, and scrupulosities, engraved in deep and lasting characters the estimate of the Deity's relation to mankind, which even now prevails in a mild degree wherever Mosaic tradition has reached. The power, supremacy, and holiness of the Deity were made palpable by it, even to those who were disobedient; and, in the course of centuries, that conception of God was formed which existed in the days of Jesus, as the foundation on which to push forward the operations by which the seed of Abraham (faithful believers) should be provided by the promulgation of the word of faith.

Without the law, there is no doubt that the knowledge of God would have perished from the earth, and mankind would have been wholly enslaved by foolish and unenlightened speculation, and abandoned to the wickedness which prevailed before the flood; the little light of the promises would soon have been extinguished, and the world would have been sunk in the darkness of incurable barbarism—ripe for as complete a destruction as that which overtook it in the days of Noah. This great catastrophe was prevented by the establishment of a system which, while (superficially considered) it offered an obstruction to the glorious consummation promised to Abraham, was potently influential in developing the moral situation among mankind which was necessary to the bestowment of the promised blessing.

The promises form the groundwork of what is termed "the Christian dispensation." It was necessary that God should create a title to the blessings of His love, for men to lay hold of; because, as sinners, they were without hope, and could not establish a title for themselves. It was necessary He should make the first advance; and He did so, by bestowing an unconditional promise upon Abraham, whom He selected for his faithfulness. These, by the belief of them, gave Abraham a right to the things promised, and vested in him and his seed the sole title. Hence the necessity for becoming Abraham's seed by connection with Christ before a Gentile can have any hope of a future life and inheritance.

Something in addition to the promise was, however, necessary to secure to Abraham the blessings covenanted: this is styled the "confirmation" of the promises. The precise meaning of this will be apparent on a review of the facts of the case as affecting Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It was promised to them that they should possess the land of Palestine for ever. For this promise to be carried out, it is necessary that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob be raised from the dead, and made to live for ever. Hence it may be taken that the promises carry this feature with them; that, in fact, they bear upon the face of them an undertaking on the part of God, that, at the time appointed for the realisation of the promise, He would bring them from the dust of death, and give them eternal life; how else can they inherit the land for ever?

That this was God's intention toward them was made evident by Christ's argument with the Sadducees on the resurrection. He says: "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:31, 32). Christ argued that the circumstance of God calling Himself the God of the fathers who had gone to the dust, was proof of His intention to raise them; and the argument overpowered the Sadducees, who were "put to silence." Thus, the inference that the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob involved the promise of resurrection and immortality, is established beyond question by Christ. This being so, we have to realise the fact that under the circumstances existing at the time of the promise, it is impossible the things promised could be bestowed Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were constitutionally under sentence of death. They were "in Adam"—sinners by descent and individual act, and, therefore, precluded from that resurrection to immortality, implied in the promise. Yet the inheritance was guaranteed by "two immutable things"—the promise and the oath—and as "it was impossible for God to lie," its bestowment was a matter of necessity. How was the impossibility of making sinners immortal to be reconciled with the necessity that God's promises should be fulfilled?

We find the answer in the work accomplished by Christ at his first advent. “He *confirmed* the promises made unto the fathers.” How? By making their fulfilment possible. And how did he do this? By “shedding his blood (which he styled “the blood of the new—or Abrahamic—covenant”) for the sins of many.” He took away sin by the sacrifice of himself, thereby unsealing the gates of death, and bringing life and immortality to light—opening the way for the fulfilment of all that had been promised beforehand to the fathers. Thus the impossibility vanished, and the necessity was placed on the triumphant basis of Christ’s accomplished work. This was the great event shadowed in the sacrifices of the law, which were not in themselves of any value, except as a means of connection between God and His nation, typifying a higher and a more enduring connection to be established over the body of the slain “Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”

It will be seen that the things declared in the prophets and preached in the aggregate by the apostles as “the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,” are but the elaboration of “the promises made of God unto the fathers,” in which they have their legal origin and efficacy. It is important to recognise this fact, so that the position of the saints as “children of Abraham” and “the seed of Abraham” may be clearly apprehended, and that we may see the harmony and completeness of God’s plan, as commenced in the days of Abraham, typified in the law, and gradually unfolded through the prophets, and consummated in the proclamation of Jesus and the apostles.

In view of all these things, well may we exclaim with Paul (Rom. 11:33–36):—“O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

Lecture 10

THE KINGDOM OF GOD THE FINAL INSTRUMENTALITY IN THE GREAT SCHEME OF HUMAN REDEMPTION

IN ALL God’s doings, there is purpose. Everything is planned; everything adapted with the utmost exactness of wisdom to the accomplishment of a pre-determined end. All His plans are characterised by illimitable comprehensiveness of bearing, like His own mind, which takes into account the infinitude of minute circumstance and remote contingency that

surround us, “knowing all things from the end to the beginning.” He is wise—He makes no mistakes; and He is economical—He wastes no effort. He accomplishes as much as possible with as little as possible. The result always transcends the means: the good always overtops and outnumbers the evil.

When, therefore, we are called upon to contemplate any declared purpose of God, we are presented with a subject of study which is sure to have in it a depth and fertility delightful to the mind to explore. This is true of God’s natural wonders in creation, where we see all these principles abundantly exemplified; how much more is it true of His schemes in relation to the intelligent creatures whom He has formed in His own image?

Now the testimony advanced in previous lectures clearly demonstrates the purpose of God to interfere in human affairs, to destroy every form of human government at present existing on earth, and to establish a visible kingdom of His own. It shows that when the time arrives, He will take the power out of the hands of the erring mortals who now possess it, and transfer it to Jesus Christ and his “called, chosen, and faithful” ones, who will administer the affairs of the world in wisdom and righteousness. This being the purpose, it now remains for us to enquire what is the object of the purpose, and what its consummation. To some, the idea of a literal governing of mankind upon earth will seem out of joint with the scheme which proposes the restoration of the human family to friendship with their Creator, and their exaltation to angelic existence. The question will be asked, Is the Almighty’s purpose with mankind to rise no higher than perfection in the government of mortal generations? Is this the glorious salvation which dwelt from everlasting in the bosom of the Eternal, which the prophets sung, and which the Son of God confirmed in tears and blood? The answers to these questions, derivable from the Scriptures, will allay the incredulity indicated by them, if the questioner be conscientious and devout.

The kingdom of God is itself but an instrumentality—another step in the march of God’s beneficent scheme—another stage in the accomplishment of His purpose to “gather together in one all things in Christ” (Eph. 1:10). It only lasts for a thousand years (Rev. 20:6). What is to be accomplished during this period? Paul says, “He (Jesus) must reign, *till he hath put* ALL ENEMIES *under his feet*. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (I Cor. 15:25–26). Hence the millennial mission of Christ is to subdue “all enemies,” which he will accomplish within the period of a thousand years. The “enemies” spoken of are not necessarily personal enemies, for death is mentioned as the last of them, which we know to be an event, and not a personal adversary. Hence, we may understand Paul’s statement to mean that “he must reign till he hath subdued every evil.” This being so, we have a starting point supplied to us in our endeavour to understand the mission of the kingdom of God. It is to subdue “all enemies,” or every evil.

Now the “all enemies” are of various kinds. The first class that will be subjected to the subduing power of the kingdom are the governments of the earth. “It shall break in pieces and consume *all these kingdoms*” (Dan. 2:44). This is the first operation—to break up the existing arrangement of things political—to take the government of mankind out of the hands of mortals, and place it in the hands of the King whom God has prepared as the all-wise, and all-just, and all-humane “governor among the nations.” Now it must be admitted that this will be a great thing accomplished, a great enemy subdued; for some of the greatest evils that affect the present state of man originate in bad government. This is true in a more extensive sense than is commonly apprehended, though the connection is beginning to be suspected, and in some countries loudly proclaimed. The crudest illustration of the subject is visible in what are called “savage” countries. There, for want of government, there is no civilisation Violence rules the day, and prevents the development of excellence of any kind; caprice and passion reign; might is right; brute force, under the guidance of selfish instinct, is in the ascendant; and mankind, instead of dwelling together in social unity and concord, herd in warring

factions, and disgrace the name of man by their ways. Human life and the possession of property are the uncertainties of the hour. “The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty” (Psa. 74:20).

Are semi-barbarous nations much better? In some respects they are worse. Ignorance and class interests provide and enforce laws which outrage justice, and multiply the evils of oppression. The uncertain barbarities of African life are, in some respects, to be preferred to the consolidated tyrannies of Asiatic rule; for, in the former case, encroachment may be resented with success—man against man—tribe against tribe; but there is no chance for the individual against organised oppression.

In Europe, things are a little more decent; but not much the better for their decency. There is “order” of a certain sort, but not the order of well being for the populations. It is the “order” of iron-handed repression—the military enforcement of despotism in all that relates to private life; and the consequent dwarfing of intellect, stunting of moral life. and withering of the enterprise of the population.

And do we find no bad government in our own favoured country? Some would answer, No. Enlightenment will give a different answer. Is there no class usurpation? No monopoly of the soil? No surfeiting of a pampered few at the expense of starving and groaning millions? No brutalising of the mass by perpetual toil and pinching? Ay, there are more evils than the neck accustomed to the halter is sensible of. There is more ill-being and misery and crime in this country than decent, well-to-do people, absorbed in their own little Concerns, can realise. In great part, as many are beginning to see, the evil comes from a system which keeps the wealth of the country in a few hands, and deprives the majority of the opportunity of realising the true objects and enjoyments of life. The law also is administered with a circumlocution and expense which defeat the true objects of justice. These are evils that cannot be remedied in the present age. They are the inevitable results of government by human fallibility and impotence. They will disappear only when the adequate means provided by the kingdom of God are applied.

Surveying the world of human government as a whole then, we see the greatness of the first enemy which the kingdom of God will subdue. The subjugation of the powers that be will be its first achievement, resulting in the “kingdoms of this world” becoming, “the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15). For one government will take the place of many: God in Christ will reign, instead of mortal man. “The Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one” (Zech. 14:9). The result of this will be the cure of all the evils enumerated. Savage countries, Asiatic countries, European countries, will all come under the sway of His “rod of iron,” which will “break in pieces the oppressor.” All inimical institutions and practices will fall before the vigour which destroys kingdoms; individual misdemeanours will be restrained, and individual ways regulated, by the indomitable power that breaks dynasties. A universal absolutism, wielded with wisdom and humanity, will rule in general and detail—nothing too vast for its scope, nothing too small for its notice: and thus will the world know the blessedness of true government for the first time:—

> “He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear Thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. In His days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him; and His enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him

> that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in His sight. His name shall endure for ever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed" (Psa. 72:4–14, 17).

But another enemy may survive when those of a political character are destroyed. The caste, ignorance, and depravity of the people would continue to be a great curse under the best political arrangements. Men are now trying to cure this by various agencies: educational works, Blue Ribbon movements, Mechanics' Institutions, Temperance Societies, Missionary Societies, "Salvation" Armies, Home Missions, etc., are among the instrumentalities by which reformers hope to improve the world, and bring about the "millennium." The idea is vain. The regeneration of the world is beyond human accomplishment. A partial benefit no doubt results from the educational and reformatory activities of the present century. Knowledge is extended; but that does not necessarily mean improvement. Morality and religion are not progressing with education. It is now admitted by the thoughtful among public reformers, who once thought more sanguinely, that the world, if getting more clever, is not growing better; and facts justify the belief. Robust and manly principle grows more stunted as knowledge increases. Flippancy is the order of the day; scepticism is leavening society with alarming progress; and instead of an approaching millennium, we are, to all human appearance, drifting upon an age when the exigencies of self-interest and commercial competition will have eaten out the moral sense, and blunted all generous feeling in the people; when morals will be practised merely for the purpose of keeping on the right side of the law, and religion professed with a view to customers.

But another and a different prospect appears when we turn to the Scriptures; when we contemplate the coming of the kingdom of God:—

> "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

When the earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, it follows that the ignorance and barbarism of the present time will have vanished. But how is this result to be practically attained? The machinery of the kingdom of God is the answer. When the governments of the earth have been overthrown, and divine authority established with firm hand in every part of the globe, it will be an easy matter to enlighten and emancipate the "people, nations, and languages" that will render allegiance to the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. This is done by a process which will afford pleasure and honour to the rulers of the age, while conferring benefit on the subject people. The centre of activity is Jerusalem, as in the case of the gospel in the first century. "At that time," says Jeremiah, chapter 3:17, "*they shall call Jerusalem* THE THRONE OF THE LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: *neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart*." Here is a turning from evil on the part of the nations as the result of their subjection to Jerusalem, when occupied as the throne of the Lord. What is the connection between the two things? How does the one result from the other? The answer is, because from Jerusalem emanates a teaching and a law which, divinely administered, works an intellectual, moral, and social reformation. This is evident from the following testimony:—

> "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and *He will teach us of* HIS WAYS, *and we will walk in* HIS PATHS: *for* OUT OF ZION SHALL GO FORTH THE LAW, AND THE WORD OF THE LORD FROM JERUSALEM. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they 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. 2:3, 4).

Jerusalem, once more the centre from which divine illumination will irradiate, will be so this second time, on a larger and grander scale, and with more glorious results:—

> "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts *make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined*. AND HE WILL DESTROY IN THIS MOUNTAIN THE FACE OF THE COVERING CAST OVER ALL PEOPLE, AND THE VAIL THAT IS SPREAD OVER ALL NATIONS. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God: we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isa. 25:6–9).

The feast is to be provided in Mount Zion; this is the reason why the nations gather there to partake of it. Their gathering, however, will not be simultaneous. "God is not the author of confusion," says Paul: the aggregation of the world's populations in such a comparatively small neighbourhood would certainly involve confusion. The prophetic testimony shows that there will be a pilgrimage from all parts of the earth from one year's end to the other in which all nations will take their turn. It will be periodical, and take place in every case once a year, as is evident, from Zech. 14:16, 17:—

> "And 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*. And it shall be, that who will not come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, *even upon them shall be no rain*."

This annual pilgrimage will be fraught with many blessings. To individuals it will be annual relief from the routine of common life (which routine, at the same time, will be vastly less laborious, both as to the duration and manner of occupation, than the present modes of life), and an annual refreshing physically by travel, and spiritually by contemplation of the objects of the journey, and by the actual instruction received at "the city of the great king." Nationally, it will be a yearly riveting of the bonds of happy and contented allegiance that will bind all people to the throne of David, occupied by his illustrious son—Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, and King of the Jews. This glorious epoch in the world's history finds the following fore-shadowing from Psalm 102:13–22:—

> "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glow. *When the Lord shall build up Zion*, HE *shall appear* IN HIS GLORY. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord. For He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary: from heaven did the Lord behold the earth: to hear the groaning of the prisoner: to loose those that are appointed to death; *to declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and His praise in Jerusalem, when the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord*."

Thus will the earth become filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and thus will be realised the petition, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Then for the first time will be fulfilled the prophetic song of the angels, chanted at the birth of him who is to be its accomplisher, "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOODWILL TOWARD MEN."

"And the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Death will continue during the thousand years' preliminary phase of the kingdom—not among the rulers, Jesus and the

saints, who are immortal, but among the subject nations who continue as they are now, the death-stricken descendants of the first Adam. “The child SHALL DIE an hundred years old” (Isa. 65:20). Death may happen at a hundred years, but, even then, a man will be considered a child. As for an “old man,” the term will never be applied to any one that has not run his centuries, as of old. By reason of the certainty of life, and the stability of the new order of things in the hands of Christ and his brethren, the houses they (Israel) shall build, they shall inhabit; the vineyards they shall plant, they shall eat the fruit of (Isa. 65:20, 22). It will not happen as it frequently has happened in past times, that the work of their hands has been enjoyed by others, even as Moses foretold to them, saying, “Thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein; thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof” (Deut. 28:30). As the days of a tree (which flourishes for centuries) shall be the days of Jehovah’s people; they shall wear out the works of their hands.

But more blessed still shall be their rulers and the rulers of the nations; for they shall not die any more (Luke 20:36), and they shall inherit the land for ever. But, ultimately, death will be abolished in all the earth. Its subjugation, however, comes last in order: all other enemies are got out of the way first; and then the greatest and most formidable is removed for ever. On what principle? Seeing that all the saved pertaining to this and past dispensations will be admitted to eternal life at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and associated with him in the government of the world, on what principle are the mortal subjects of Messiah’s reign to be dealt with, so as to admit of their participation in the glorious gift of immortality? We are admitted to the answer in Rev. 20. We shall quote entire that part of the chapter which relates to the point in hand, verses 7–15:—

> “And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

Here we have a predicted insurrection at the close of the millennium, which is allowed to gather strength, and come to a head, and which is then to be summarily suppressed by an outburst of divine judgment at “the beloved city”—Jerusalem. This is followed by a general judgment. Now who are arraigned at this judgment? It cannot be the saints who have been associated with Christ in government during the previous thousand years, who at the beginning of his reign have been welcomed as “good and faithful servants” into his joy. These have been judged already. They appeared before his judgment-seat at his coming, and gave an account, and were dealt with accordingly.

Who, then, are thus to be judged at the close of the thousand years? Obviously those who have lived during the thousand years. The subjects of Messiah’s kingdom will be placed under a different system from that which we are connected with, and no doubt it will be of such a nature as to call for the exercise of faith, notwithstanding the visible manifestation of divine power among them, for, “without faith it is impossible to please God.” However that

may be, the result of their judgment is that many of them are found "written in the book of life," and receive eternal life.

But what becomes of the remainder? The answer is, "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life *was cast into the lake of fire*." This lake of fire is one of the symbols employed in the Apocalypse. The Apocalypse is full of symbol. It is "the revelation of Jesus Christ … SIGNIFIED by his angel"—a revelation indicated by sign, as the sequel shows. The prophetic facts intended to be communicated are portrayed in symbol, and an occasional hint of interpretation is dropped to enable "his servants" to decipher the hieroglyphs employed. The hint dropped in this case is this (chapter 20:14): "This is THE SECOND DEATH"; or, to make the matter more certain (Rev. 21:8), "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, WHICH IS THE SECOND DEATH." Here, the lake of fire is introduced to us as a symbol signifying the second death.

What is the *second* death? "Second" implies a first. We cannot conceive of a second without the antecedent figure—one. Where, then, shall we look for the first death? Obviously to that "accident of life" which overtakes all the living; "It is appointed unto men ONCE to die." A wicked man dies in the natural course of events; but, if amenable to judgment, he is raised again—restored to life for punishment. And what follows judgment? Condemnation—few stripes or many stripes. And what after the stripes? Death a second time; but a death different to the first, inasmuch as it is directly inflicted by divine displeasure, and consigns its victims to an oblivion from which there is no reclaim by resurrection. It is a death that wipes away every vestige of their being from God's creation. "The day that cometh," says Malachi (chapter 4:1), "shall burn them up, *that it shall leave them neither root nor branch*." And David's declaration is, that "The enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs. They shall consume; *into smoke* shall they consume away" (Psa. 37:20).

How appropriate a symbol of such a fate is a lake of fire. The only conception we can have of such a thing is supplied by the pools of incandescent iron to be seen at blast furnaces. Throw an animal into one of these pools, and what is the result? Instant annihilation. Not a vestige of the creature's substance survives the action of the destructive element. Complete, and immediate, and irretrievable destruction, then, is the idea suggested by a lake of fire; and how appropriate is such a symbol to signify the second death, which will destroy, with double destruction, even "soul and body" (Matt. 10:28).

When every one not found written in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire, what remains but the fulfilment of Paul's statement, that "death shall be destroyed?" All that are sinful, and, therefore, deathful, are destroyed, and death is, therefore, literally destroyed with them, because there will then be none left upon whom it can prey. And, death being destroyed, what is the picture? A population of deathless beings, reclaimed by God's intervention from the sin and death which now curse our planet. With these considerations in view, the following testimonies will be fully appreciated:—

> "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, *to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth*" (Psa. 34:16).
>
> "Let the wicked be ashamed and *let them be silent in the grave*" (Psa. 31:17).
>
> "*For evil doers shall be cut off;* but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth; for yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be; *but the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace*" (Psa. 37:9–11).
>
> "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*" (Psa. 37:34).

"*Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth*, and let the wicked BE NO MORE" (Psa. 104:35).

"The upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it; *but the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it*" (Prov. 2:21, 22).

"As the whirlwind passeth, *so is the wicked no more*: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.… The righteous shall never be removed, *but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth*" (Prov. 10:25, 30).

"Blessed are the meek, *for they shall inherit the earth*" (Matt. 5:5).

The idea has been suggested that although the subject-inhabitants of the kingdom will not be immortal, the obedient among them may "live on" to the end of the thousand years, and then be immortalised. This idea assumes that the judgment scene of Rev. 20:11–15, is at the beginning and not at the end of the thousand years. Even if this were granted, it would not remove the general objections to the idea of no death during the thousand years.

The work of immortalising mankind is spoken of as a harvest in its final form. This being so, analogy would require us to find the nature of the harvest in the first fruits—Christ and his brethren. They are the "sample of the bulk." Are the first fruits produced on the principle of "living on" till the time of change?

He (Christ) was the first of the ripe fruit of the life-harvest which God proposes to raise for His own glory in the earth (I Cor. 15 23: see the shadow in Lev. 23:10–20, in the presentation of the first sheaf of fruit, which coincided in point of time with Christ's ascension). Now the rest of the harvest must follow in the same process of raising. Christ attained to life by faith and obdience (Phil. 2:9; Heb. 5:7). His brethren of the present dispensation attain it in the same way through him. They do not "live on to the end" of the times of the Gentiles. They die as other men. The principle observed in the process of their development requires this. This principle is faith, which is confidence in the promise of God. If, the moment a man believed in the gospel, his mortal life were made sure till the coming of Christ and the change to the incorruptible, the principle of faith, by which a man honours God, "against hope, believing in hope," would be destroyed: for all the world would "see" that there was advantage in the way of the gospel, and they would flock to the gospels not because God had promised, but because they perceived an actual present advantage in believing. It is, therefore, an absolute necessity for the exercise of faith that there should be no present apparent difference between those who serve God and those who serve Him not, but that this difference should only be perceived in the day of recompense (Mal. 3:18).

Now, what is true of the "called" in the time of the Gentiles is true of the called of the millennial age. It is necessary that they should not "live on to the end" of their particular dispensation, for faith is just as necessary for them as us, and if they did not die like other men, there would be no scope for faith and they would be an exception to Abraham and all who have gone before. They would not be of the same harvest. It would be a different crop altogether, raised upon a different principle. Though men will live longer than they do now, death will continue indiscriminately, as the law of faith requires, till the grand final triumph, when the great enemy will be destroyed for ever, and every inhabitant of ransomed earth be able to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

There is this difference between the introduction of death and the introduction of resurrection unto life: death passed upon all men *at once*, whereas in resurrection, there is a gradual order of development, marked by three stages. Paul states this order in the following terms: "But every man in his own ORDER: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming: then the end ('*cometh*' is not in the original), when he shall have

delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (I Cor. 15:23–26).

Here we have a "first," an "afterwards," and a "then," as the "order" of resurrection. The introduction of the word "cometh" interrupts the "order." There is resurrection at "the end," for the end is introduced expressly in connection with the order of the resurrection, and not only so, but Paul makes the reign of Christ result in the putting down of all enemies, including "death," which he makes the "last."

That this destruction of death involves resurrection, is illustrated in the case of "those that are Christ's at his coming." Death in their case is "swallowed up (or destroyed) in victory," in their being raised from the dead no more to see corruption. The nature of the case demands that there should be resurrection at the close of the thousand years; for when Christ comes, those only are immortalised who are his own. And if the rest are not immortalised, they must die as Abraham and all the saints have died, for it is the nature of mortality to die. And dying in faith, how are they to receive the promise if they rise not? And when should they rise but at "the end" of the millennial dispensation, where Paul places it? The figure that likens the 144,000 to "first fruits," requires that they should be followed by a harvest in the resurrection of all who come to moral ripeness in the age, but physically fall asleep, as all the fathers have done.

The fitness of things requires this. "To whom much is given, of them is much required." The first-century believers enjoyed the privilege of the Spirit gifts and the company of personal acquaintances of the Lord; and they were required to prove their faithfulness in confiscation and prison, and at the executioner's block. We of the latter days have no open vision or witness of the Spirit in its wonder-working power. We have but the written and historical evidence of God's operations in the past. Having received "less" than our brethren of old, we are not called upon, like them, to go to prison and to death, but have times of liberty and peace wherein to manifest our love. In the age to come, privileges such as have never fallen to the lot of mortal man will be enjoyed by the peoples, nations, and languages, who will rejoice in the rule of Christ and the saints. Instead, therefore, of their position calling for exemption from death, it rather requires that their faith and obedience should be developed and tested by its prevalence until the time for its destruction as the "last enemy" arrives, in the resurrection and glorification of all who in that blessed age secure the approbation of God.

The performance of sacrifice in that age (Zech. 14:21; Mal. 3:4; Isa, 60:7; Ezek. 44:29, 30), involves the conclusion that death is in operation among the offerers. The existence of priesthood (for the saints are priests as well as kings) carries with it the same conclusion; for priesthood arises out of the existence of sin, and sin brings death. If there were no death, it would argue the absence of sin—a fact which would exclude sin-offerings from the office of priesthood. But death continues until it is destroyed at "the end."

There is express recognition of the existence of death in Ezekiel's description of the temple service of the future age. Thus, of one order of priests it is said, "They shall come at no DEAD PERSON to defile themselves" (Ezek. 44:25). Again, in the selection of wives, they are prohibited from marrying "a *widow* or her that is put away," but may take "a widow THAT HAD A PRIEST BEFORE" (22), from which it follows that death is a common occurrence at the time.

It cannot be suggested that the dead in these cases die for contumacy: for the people shall be all righteous (Isa. 60:21). Death prevails in common, whence springs the necessity for resurrection at the end—that is the end of the thousand years; for how otherwise are the highly responsible dead of those times to be dealt with according to their deeds? "Old men that have not filled their days" belong to that time (Isa. 65:20) with staff in their hands for

very age (Zech. 8:4), which argues death at the completion of their natural term without any idea of judicial infliction. Children DIE an hundred years old (Isa. 65:20). The time of judgment for those then in probation for eternal life is “when the thousand years are expired.” The dead, small and great, come forth multitudinously—we may say universally, as times of universal knowledge will have required. The sea gives up the dead: death and hades give up the dead which are in them, and they are judged every man according to their works (Rev. 20:12–13). Every one not found written in the book of life is given over to the second death (15). We can understand, on this principle, how it is that the casting of the rejected into the lake of fire is the casting of death and hell (*hades*—the grave) there; for with the rejected will for ever perish from the earth all trace of death and the grave.

This post-millennial resurrection is mentioned in connection with the resurrection of the first fruits—those who “live and reign with Christ a thousand years,” and who are, therefore, raised at the beginning of that period. John seeing them enthroned after their resurrection, says, “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished” (Rev. 20:5).

Some think the idea of a post-millennial resurrection of the righteous is excluded by the next statement: “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” They understand this to mean that all are cursed who rise at the end of the thousand years. A close consideration of the verse, however, will show that the statement bears exclusively on *those who rise and are approved* when Christ comes, and not at all on those who rise at the third and last stage.

Some read this “first resurrection” as “resurrection of the first fruits.” No doubt, those who rise then are “the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb,” but this is not a translation of John’s words. John wrote “the first resurrection,” ἡ αναστασις ἡ πρωτη. Whichever way this is treated, it implies another resurrection besides itself. Understood as first in rank, it points to another lower in rank. “Resurrection of the first fruits” would refer by implication to resurrection of harvest. First in order would necessitate another or others in order. So that no sublimation or modification of the phrase can dispense with the conclusion that John contemplated another resurrection besides the one represented before his eyes in the enthroned multitude of accepted saints.

A true construction would combine all these ideas, and point to the resurrection that takes place at the coming of Christ as the one that will exceed in blessedness all other resurrections. It will introduce those who have part in it to the highest honour in store for mortals—the honour of leading mankind from their present miseries to the blessedness promised in Abraham. As Christ will always be the head of his people in the endless ages, so, doubtless, the saints that govern the millennial age will always occupy a position of glory and dignity over the ransomed multitude that will by their means enter into eternal life at the close of the thousand years.

Rev. 21, first four verses, introduces to view the post-millennial blessedness on earth, when death is abolished. “No more sea” points to this, whether taken symbolically or literally. There will be both literal ocean and “many waters” of nations during the thousand years. After the thousand years, there is no more sea of nations, for there is then but one nation, and that the immortalised multitudinous Israel of God.

But even supposing these verses were held to be descriptive of what takes place at the beginning of the thousand years, they could not be used to sanction the idea that there is to be no resurrection at the close of the thousand years. The proclamation, “There shall be no more death!” could in that case only be understood as an intimation that the abolition of death would be the ultimate effect of the New-Jerusalem government of men. The cases already cited of death during the millennium, and above all, the wholesale infliction of death on

myriads at its close—(see Rev. 20:8–9)—would preclude the absolute significance which the argument in question would seek to attach to it. It would in that case be on a par with the proclamation of the angels at the birth of Christ: "On earth peace, and goodwill toward men," which, taken by itself, would seem to intimate that peace was to begin immediately Christ was born; but, as experience has taught us, it only meant that peace would come on earth at last through the Deliverer then cradled at Bethlehem. But the wording of the glorious verses in question clearly relates to a time when "the former things" of sin and sorrow shall have passed for ever from the face of the earth.

We have to note another feature of the change that takes place at the end, indicated by Paul in the following words:—

> "Then cometh the end, *when he* (*Christ*) *shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,* when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power; for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death* … 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*" (I Cor. 15:24–28).

From this we learn that Christ at the end of the thousand years is to abdicate the position of absolute sovereignty, which he occupies in the earth during that period. It would seem as if, on the accomplishment of his mission in the complete redemption of the world, that God Himself is manifested (without a medium) as the only eternal Governor. The idea will be apprehended in the light of Paul's statement that "the head of every man is Christ, and *the head of Christ* IS GOD." During the thousand years, it is Christ's headship that is the institution of the day: after that, it is the headship of the Father in some specially manifested form. The headship of the Father is the fact now, but it is in the background. The state of things upon the earth does not admit of its manifestation or even its recognition. During the thousand years, the headship of the Father is a visible fact in the headship of Christ. But at the end of the thousand years, the headship of the Father is manifest direct.

It, therefore, seems that the change to take place then is more a change in the aspect of things as they appear to man, than as they exist in themselves. Though no longer the supreme ruler of the earth, Christ will continue in his position of peculiar preeminence as "Captain" of the "many sons" whom he will have been instrumental in "bringing to glory." God will be "all in all." He will be manifested as the power, and supporter, and constitutor of all, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and ending, the only self-Almighty one. He will no longer work by interposition. He will no longer deal with man *mediatively*: He will establish direct communication with His perfected children; and the world—freed from sin and death—will become a happy, loyal, glory-giving province in that already universal dominion which extends to the utmost bounds of space, reflecting the wisdom and the goodness of the Highest. The divine scheme of redemption will then have been consummated: and earth's glorified inhabitants in holy gratitude—exalted employment—and an eternity of unbroken felicity lying before them, will realise the perfection and glory and gladness of life as it is in God.

It will thus be seen that the kingdom of the thousand years is but a transitional period between the purely animal and purely spiritual ages. It will blend the elements of both. It will exhibit the perfection of the eternal ages in the Lord Jesus and the saints who will be immortal and incorruptible, and the imperfection of the human age in the mortal population who will constitute the subjects of their rule. Both will co-exist for a thousand years, and will constitute a state of things as superior to the present dispensation as it will be inferior to the glory ages beyond. The Kingdom of God will lead us by a bridge of a thousand years from the age of sin and death defection to the age of restoration to the bosom of the Deity, in righteousness and life eternal.

Lecture 11

CHRIST THE FUTURE KING OF THE WORLD

THE OBJECT of this lecture is to prove that the time is coming when the Son of God, now in the heavens, shall return to the earth in visible person, to dispossess all human governments of their power, secular and ecclesiastical, and establish himself in their stead as the universal ruler of mankind. The essential constituent of the Messiahship of Jesus Christ, and the most prominent element of his character, as portrayed in all the Scriptures is his KINGSHIP. Therefore, any faith which ignores this phase of his character, is vitally defective, to which let everyone see for himself as a matter of the highest individual concern.

There is a great deal more said in the Scriptures about the kingship of Christ than anything else. In the Old Testament, particularly, we find very little mention of the shame and the suffering to which he was to be subjected on account of sin. His sacrificial character is kept pretty much in the background. That which stands out in brilliant prominence is the glory which is to cover the earth when he shall reign in righteousness. This is true also of the New Testament, though it tells us more of "the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" than the other.

Every professed believer in Christ is prepared to admit that he is a king. It must be obvious, however, that this admission is only valid *in so far as it recognises the true idea of that office*. If a man say that Jesus is the Christ, or anointed one, while having an entirely erroneous idea of what the statement means, his words are an empty sound. When words do not mean the thing they properly stand for, they have no value. That this is the case with the popular recognition of the kingship of Christ will certainly appear. The popular recognition of the kingship of Christ both expresses a view which is untrue, and ignores the view exhibited in the Scriptures. By the kingship of Christ, it means the present exercise by him of a spiritual authority in heaven; therefore, it is no recognition of Christ's Messiaship at all, in the true sense, as we shall presently see.

It is admitted that the Jewish expectation of the Messiah was that he should appear upon the earth in person, and visibly exercise the power of a king over all nations: and it is also admitted that the disciples themselves shared the same view. The real controversy is as to whether this view is right. Our religious teachers take upon themselves to say that so far from being right, it was a mistaken view of a gross and carnal nature. They severely condemn the idea of a visible kingdom on earth as opposed to the very spirit of Christianity, calling it Judaical, grovelling, "earthly, sensual, and devilish"; and as the teachers teach, so the people believe: so the untruthfulness of the Jewish national hope and the expectation of the disciples, has passed into an unquestioned article of popular creed; and people look surprised and incredulous when they are gravely defended.

Now let the merits of the case be candidly considered. Were the expectations of the disciples erroneous and carnal? If they were, how is it that they were not so pronounced by Christ? and how is it that none of the apostles made confession of the error in the epistles which some of them wrote subsequently to the time when they are supposed to have their errors removed? Those who affirm the misguidedness of the Jews and disciples in the belief in question, go against the evidence. There is not only no Scriptural countenance for the

popular condemnation, but all Scriptural testimony is directly in favour of the doctrine which it is so common to condemn.

Jesus said to those who heard him, "I am not come to destroy the law or the prophets, *but to fulfil*" (Matt. 5:17). Now with this statement in view, we shall look at a few of the statements of the prophets concerning him. We read in Micah 5:2:—

> "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, *that is to be* RULER IN ISRAEL."

Who came out of Bethlehem? Jesus of Nazareth. Here then is a prophetic warrant for regarding him as the future "ruler in Israel":—

> "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and A KING SHALL REIGN AND PROSPER, AND SHALL EXECUTE JUDGMENT AND JUSTICE IN THE EARTH: in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely" (Jer. 23:5, 6).

What could be more calculated to inspire the Jewish national hope? and what more likely to create the expectations which the disciples are condemned as "carnal" for entertaining? Who is the Righteous Branch of David? None other than Jesus: for he claims the designation. He says:—"I am the root and the offspring (or BRANCH: 'offspring' being the antithesis to 'root') of David, and the bright and morning star" (Rev. 22:16). If Christ be the Righteous Branch raised up unto David, and be come to fulfil the law and the prophets, he must "*reign and prosper, and execute judgment and justice* IN THE EARTH": for so the prophet hath declared the Righteous Branch shall do. The idea is not confined to one or two statements, but appears in the face of many testimonies, at a few of which we shall look. In Jeremiah 33:14, 15, we read:—

> "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel, and to the house of Judah. In those days and at that time, I will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and *he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land*."
>
> "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. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6, 7).
>
> "Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place … and *shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne*" (Zech. 6:12, 13).
>
> "*He shall judge among the nations*, and shall rebuke many people; and they 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).
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> "*And the Lord shall be king over all the earth*: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name One" (Zech. 14:9).
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> "*Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness*, and princes shall rule in judgment" (Isa. 32:1).
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> "The Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously" (Isa. 24:23).
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> The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. *And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious*" (Isa. 11:9, 10).

"Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel *in the midst of thee*" (Isa. 12:6).

"I will make them (the Jews) one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; *and one King shall be King to them all*" (Ezek. 37:22).

"The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; He will not turn from it; *of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne*" (Psa. 132:11).

"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion. Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies*" (Psa. 110:1, 2).

"I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psa. 2:8).

"*He shall have dominion also from sea to sea*, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; *all nations shall serve him*" (Psa. 72:8, 11). (See also Dan. 7:14).

These are a few out of many testimonies of a common import, and the question for us to consider is whether they do not amply justify the expectations which the Jews are admitted to have built on them. Nay, could they have consistently professed a belief in such testimonies, and not have entertained such expectations? It is not possible to conceive of language more designedly adapted to express the one idea of Christ's visible manifestation as a king on earth; and if the Jews were wrong in looking for such a manifestation, it was no fault of theirs. It was not because they were carnally minded; but because the language of the holy men of old, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, was so framed as to preclude every other but the one idea which they derived from it.

It may be suggested that the New Testament interpretation throws another light upon the statements of the Old Testament, and deprives them of the warranty which they seem to afford to the Jewish doctrine of the Messiah's kingship. It is customary to assume that this is the case; but the result of an examination will prove that a more unfounded assumption could not be entertained, and that the New Testament unmistakably corrobarates the teaching of the prophets on the subject. We are met on the very threshold by the message delivered by the angel Gabriel to Mary, in announcing the birth of Christ:—

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; *and 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 1:31, 33)

Here is a distinct New Testament intimation that it is the purpose of God to give to Jesus "the throne of his father David." If we would apprehend the import of this statement, we must know what is the throne of David. Of David we know something. He was the most renowned of Israel's God-anointed kings, holding sway over the twelve tribes of Israel in the Holy Land, and ruling many tributary nations. He was a mighty warrior, a distinguished prophet, and a poet of the highest type. He was the progenitor of Christ, through Mary, who was descended from the royal house; and was a fitting type of his illustrious son, whom he acknowledged as "My Lord" (Matt. 22:44). But what of his throne? Peter said, in his address to the Jews, on the day of Pentecost:—

"Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, *that of the fruit of his* (David's) *loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ* TO SIT ON HIS THRONE" (Acts 2:30).

There is, therefore, a connection between Christ's mission and David's throne. Had David a throne? He had. In what did it consist? Not in the material structure which he occupied as a seat in dispensing justice; that has long ago crumbled into dust. The throne of a kingdom is

not the literal seat occupied by royalty on state occasions. When we speak of the throne of England, we mean the office of position of monarch in this country. So with the throne of David; it is said of Solomon, on the occasion of his accession in the room of David (1st Kings 2:12), "Then sat Solomon *upon the throne of David his father*." Yet we read in 1st Kings 10:18, that "he made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold," so that while sitting on the throne of David his father in the political sense, Solomon really occupied a different royal seat. "The throne of David" points to *something that pertained to Saul's successor*. There is no getting away from this; and any explanation of the promise that ignores this as its fundamental element, must be rejected as unworthy.

Of this character is the view that Christ is *now* on David's throne. Christ is in heaven, and cannot now be sitting on that throne; for nothing that David ever possessed is in heaven. David himself is not there; for Peter said in his address on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:34), "David IS NOT ASCENDED INTO THE HEAVENS." When the time arrives, the throne of David will be set up again in the earth; and Jesus will share it with his faithful ones, as intimated in Rev. 3:21. "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen" (Amos 9:11). That time he spake of when on earth. He said (Matt. 25:31), "*When the Son of Man shall come in his glory*, and all the holy angels with him, THEN shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." Hence, before Jesus sits upon David's throne, he will return to earth, appear in Palestine, and assume the position which David occupied when he swayed the sceptre of Israel; that is, he will become king of the Jews.

Look at Ezekiel 21:25–27. The prophet was sent to Zedekiah, an unworthy prince, who was the last to occupy David's throne. He was sent to tell him of coming retribution, and in the course of his prophecy, he uttered the following words:—

> "And 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 I will give it him*."

Here was a diadem to be removed, a crown to be taken off, and a national polity to be completely abolished, as indicated in the triple repetition of the verb "overturn," and as expressed by the phrase, "it shall be no more." The prediction related to things Jewish, even to the things which constitute the throne of David; and its fulfilment is notorious to every reader of Jewish history. About a year after its delivery, Zedekiah was uncrowned by Nebuchadnezzar. The nobles were put to death; the nation was partly massacred, and partly carried away captive, and the land given over to desolation. Seventy years after, a partial restoration took place under Ezra and Nehemiah, but not of the throne of David. The Jews existed as a vassal people thenceforward; and after varied political fortunes, were overtaken by a storm which swept away every vestige of their national existence.

The Romans, under Vespasian, invaded the country, and subdued its fortified places; and Vespasian having transferred the command to Titus, the latter laid siege to Jerusalem, which at that time was crowded with people from all parts of the country. The details of that awful siege are familiar to every one. The city was tediously beleaguered for months; famine arose among the inhabitants; civil dissensions divided their counsels, and led to mutual slaughter, and, finally, the place was sacked and given to the flames, and upwards of 1,000,000 of Jews perished. The remainder were sold as slaves, and scattered throughout the Roman empire as fugitives; and scattered they remain to this day. So awfully has the prophecy been fulfilled, that for the last twenty centuries, the throne of David has been a mere idle phrase—a tradition of the past; his kingdom has been overthrown, his land in desolation, and his people wandering as homeless exiles, unpitied and unpitying.

But is this condition of David's throne to be perpetual? Are the Gentiles for ever to exalt their proud horns over the fallen kingdom of the Lord? (See I Chron. 29:23; II Chron, 9:8; 13:8; which affirm the kingdom of Israel to have been the kingdom of God). Nay, saith the prophecy: desolation shall only continue UNTIL—until what? *"Until* HE COME *whose right it is"*. Who is this? None other than Jesus Christ, to whom the throne pertains of right, both by lineal descent, and special divine bequest. Observe, then, what is distinctly proved, *that the things overturned are the things to be given to Christ at his coming*. Now, what things were those? The diadem, crown, throne, and Kingdom of David. Hence, when HE COMES whose right they are, he will enter into their possession in as real a sense as they were held by Zedekiah. He will become King of the Jews, and Lord of the whole earth. We thus perceive a striking significance in the words of the angel:—

> "The Lord God shall give unto Jesus 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*."

Going a step farther in our New Testament enquiry, we come to the birth of Christ, and we note the following incident:—

> "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, *Where is he that is born* KING OF THE JEWS" (Matt. 2:1).

The enquiry of the wise men was intelligible in view of all that the prophets had foretold of him who was to be ruler in Israel; but if Christ is *only* the spiritual Saviour of mankind, in a universal general sense, their words have no meaning. In what sense could Christ be "king of the Jews," if he only stood in broad spiritual relationship to the human race as a whole? It may be suggested that he is king of spiritual Jews, who are not Jews outwardly, but in the heart. The reply to this is, that Christ is not king of his own people. Of them he says, *"I call you not servants, but friends."* They are his brethren, "joint heirs *with* Christ" (Rom. 8:17), destined to reign *with* him a thousand years (Rev. 20:6). They are not his subjects, but aggregately his bride, "the Lamb's wife"—signifying the closest communion and identity of relational interest. Christ, therefore, cannot be king of the Jews in any spiritual sense. He is king of those Jews of whom David was king; for he is heir to his throne. That this was the nature of his claim, as understood by his contemporaries, is obvious from what followed the enquiry of the wise men:—

> "When Herod the king had heard these things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet—and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel … *And* (*Herod*) *sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under,* according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men" (Matt. 2:2, 3, 6, 16).

Now, whence all this commotion? If Christ was merely to be a spiritual ruler in the popular sense—exercising power from heaven in the hearts of men, without at all interfering with the temporal concerns of kings on earth, it is not conceivable that Herod should have been so jealous of him; because Christ's spiritual dominion would not in any way have conflicted with Herod's jurisdiction as a king.

Assuming, however, that the enquiry of the wise men imported the verity of Christ's character as a king, appointed of God to sit on David's throne, Herod's procedure appears in a natural light. He was at that time ruler in Israel. He was, in fact, "King of the Jews," in the

name of the Roman Caesar. For him, therefore, to hear of the birth of a rival to that position, was to be touched in the tenderest part, and to have all his jealousy aroused. He would see plainly that if he allowed this infant king to live, the people's allegiance might become diverted, and his own throne would be endangered. He therefore conceived the inhuman project of slaughtering the entire babyhood of Bethlehem, in the hope of destroying the object of his jealousy—a proof that he recognised in Christ, a prospective claimant of the literal kingship of Israel.

If we trace the career and note the sayings of Christ, as further recorded, we shall find constant indications of the correctness of the view entertained by the apostles concerning his kingship. For instance, in the course of his sermon on the mount, he said:—"Swear not by Jerusalem, for it is *the city of the great King*." Now it would be difficult to attach a likely significance to these words on the popular supposition. If Christ is never to return to earth again, except for the purpose of plunging it in the "judgment fires" and blotting every vestige of its existence from creation, what possible connection can exist between him and the city which witnessed his humiliation, since in that case it must perish in the universal destruction? In the passage before us Jesus affirms a connection with it, and accounts that connection so sacred that he prohibits us from using the name of the city on oath. He is "the great King,"—the "greater than Solomon." Jerusalem is the city. It existed at the time that Christ uttered the words under consideration; only in the time of Christ, it was a great, prosperous and magnificent centre of royalty and learning, whereas now it is an insignificant abomination-infested, and comparatively ruinous and neglected town in the heart of a petty Turkish province. Divine regard, however, is no less now than ever it was. The testimony is, "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands: thy walls are continually before me" (Isa. 49:16). For a period it has been in desolation. This was predicted by the Lord Jesus. He said:—

> "They (the Jews) shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; *and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles*, UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

He also said:—

> "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together; even as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate, for I say unto you, ye *shall not see me henceforth* UNTIL THE TIME COME, *when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*" (Matt. 23:37–39; Luke 13:34, 35).

Here was a treading down and a desolating foretold. That this referred to Jerusalem in Palestine is universally granted. Let it be noted then, that the place involved in the prediction of ruin, is the same which is related to the "UNTIL" by which that prediction is limited. If Jerusalem has been trodden down of the Gentiles, and left "desolate," she will as certainly, by the same prediction, recover from her fall when the period indicated by the word "until" arrives. In one case "until" arrives with the expiration of "the times of the Gentiles"; in the other, when the time comes that the Jewish nation will recognise the crucified Jesus as the name-bearer of God. The declaration is, that *at that time*, down-treading and desolation shall cease. Now both events are certain. The termination of the times of the Gentiles, or the age of Gentile domination is decreed (Dan. 7:25–27; 9:24–27; Rom. 11:25), and we are informed, in the following testimony, that the day is coming when Christ will yet be received by his penitent nation the Jews:—

> "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; *and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they*

shall mourn for him as one mourneth for an only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born" (Zech. 12:10).

When these have been accomplished, what then for Jerusalem? Let the following testimonies give the answer:—

"The Lord shall inherit Judah, his portion in the Holy Land, and *shall choose Jerusalem again*" (Zech. 2:12).

"The Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody" (Isa. 51:3).

"Awake! awake! stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His fury. Thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.… Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted and drunken, but not with wine: Thus saith thy Lord, the Lord, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of His people. Behold I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury. *Thou shalt no more drink it again*" (Isa. 51:17, 21, 22).

"Awake! awake! put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; *for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean* … Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted His people, *He hath redeemed Jerusalem*" (Isa. 52:1, 9).

"*The Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion*, and *in Jerusalem*, and before His ancients gloriously" (Isa. 24:23).

"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem. Neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart" (Jer. 3:17).

"*For the law shall go forth of Zion*, and *the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*; and he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they 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" (Mic. 4:2, 3).

Here, then, we learn that the city of Jerusalem has an important place in the purpose of God. It is destined to be the seat of that divine government which is to bless the world in the future age. It will, in fact, be the capital of the coming universal kingdom, constituting the centre of power, of law, of enlightenment, for the gladsome nations who will repair thither for instruction in that glorious age; for it is written:—

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and *He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*" (Isa. 2:3).

This going-up of nations will be periodical, as we learn from Zech. 14:16:—

"And 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."

If any nation become refractory, and refuse to pay this annual homage to the king of all the earth, they will be summarily dealt with. No need for armies and lazy process of military

subjugation; a word from the King will stay the supplies of heaven, and compel submission. It is written—verse 17:—

> "And it shall be that whoso shall not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem, to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, *even upon them shall be no rain*."

Now the Lord Jesus was aware of this glorious destiny in store for the city of Jerusalem, and well knew the intimate relationship he should sustain to it when the time should come when his countrymen would say to him, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;" and, with this on his mind, he could say with an appropriateness which can only be appreciated by those who understand the purposes of God—"Swear not by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King." She is the city of the great King, though now but a despised ruin; and those who laugh at the promises of her future glory, are guilty of a heinous crime against God, for which they may be called upon to answer. The great King would not allow His friends to swear by her name; much less will he forbear the jibe of the scornful. He cometh to His city anon to rule the world in righteousness, and woe to the despiser; but blessed are all they who are looking for redemption in Jerusalem (Luke 2:38). To them the words of the prophet are addressed:—

> "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, *all ye that love her*. Rejoice for joy with her, *all ye that mourn for her*; that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations: that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory" (Isa. 66:10, 11).

Thus we are enabled to extract from the words of Christ in his "sermon on the mount," evidence of a powerful kind of the reality of his kingship in relation to the earth. Nathanael, the "Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile," adds to that evidence in the recognition of Christ to which he gave utterance on meeting him (John 1:49)—"Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; *thou art the King of Israel*." That the conviction expressed in these words was generally impressed on the minds of the people by the teaching of Christ, is evident from the fact that "they wanted to take him by force, to make him a king" (John 6:15). Their language, on the occasion of his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, is evidence to the same point:—"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! *Blessed be the kingdom of our Father David that cometh in the name of the Lord*" (Mark 11:10).

Christ gave them reason for that conviction in the parable of the vineyard, contained in Luke 20, beginning at the 9th verse. The vineyard, says Jesus, was planted by a certain nobleman, and let out to husbandmen; and at the time of the fruit, the nobleman sent his servants to the husbandmen to get of the fruits of the vineyard: but they maltreated and killed them one after another (verses 13–15). "Then said the Lord of the vineyard, what shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be that they will reverence him when they see him; but when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying: *This is* THE HEIR; come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him." This parable related to the nation of Israel, and the rulers thereof. This is evident from the 19th verse, and also from a statement in Isaiah 5:7:—"*The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the House of Israel.*"

This being so, let us note the tendency of its teaching. In the rejected servants we recognise the prophets who shared the fate indicated in the words of Christ:—"O Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest *them that are sent unto thee.*" The "Son" was the Lord Jesus Christ, as is evident from the words of Paul in Heb. 1:2, which might be almost accepted as a commentary upon the parable under consideration:—"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers *by the prophets*, hath in these last days spoken unto us *by His Son*."

If Christ, then, be the "son" of the parable, of necessity he is also the "*heir*". Of what? This is the important point. Answer:—*Of the inheritance held by the husbandmen*; for said they, "This is the heir come, let us kill him, *that the inheritance may be ours*." Now, if that inheritance be the land and nation of the Jews, of which the Pharisees were the rulers or "husbandmen," and Christ be the heir of these things, there is no escape from the conclusion sought to be established throughout this lecture. He is the rightful claimant to David's throne. "*He came unto* HIS OWN, *and his own received him not*" (John 1:11). Why did they not receive him? What motive prompted the chief priests and rulers to destroy Jesus? It was not merely their hatred of righteousness. If Christ had simply been a teacher of religion, according to modern notions, doubtless they would have been among his admirers; but then he was "THE HEIR." He was the divinely sent of God to occupy David's throne, and put down all opposing authority and power; and his assertion of this character brought him into instant collision with them, because they had the inheritance in their possession. Therefore, said they, in their insensate short-sighted jealousy—"Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours."

So they plotted his destruction, and succeeded in their nefarious plans. They brought him before Pilate, who finding no fault in him, was willing to release him (Luke 23:13–16). This inflamed their animosity, and developed the true nature of its origin. They cried out saying—"If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: *whosoever maketh himself* A KING speaketh against Caesar" (John 19:12). This had the desired effect: Pilate gave judgment; and Christ was crucified, and according to the Roman custom, the nature of the charge against him was specified in writing over the cross: "*Jesus of Nazareth* THE KING OF THE JEWS" (John 19:19).

Here again the kingship of Christ came out in circumstantial prominence. He was crucified because he *"made himself a king."* This is the declaration of the superscription. That superscription was not sufficiently definite for the chief priests. We read (John 19:20, 21), "This title then read many of the Jews.… Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that HE SAID, I am King of the Jews." Here is an important testimony from the chief priests as to Christ's own assertion of his royalty. In fact the closing scenes of our Lord's life on earth, altogether constitute the most decisive proof that prospective Jewish royalty was the essential feature of his character as the Messiah,—a feature which is entirely omitted in popular preaching. The teaching of the Apostles after our Lord's ascension was the same on this important point. We read that the Jews of Thessalonica accused them to the rulers of the city after this fashion:—

> "These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also, whom Jason hath received; and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying THAT THERE IS ANOTHER KING—ONE, JESUS" (Acts 17:6, 7).

Paul made the same proclamation to the Athenians, in his address on Mars Hill, recorded in Acts 17:30, 31:—

> "And the time of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because *He hath appointed a day in which He will judge* (which, in its political application, means *rule*) *the world in righteouness* BY THAT MAN WHOM HE HATH ORDAINED, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised him from the dead."

In fact, the great burden of the New Testament teaching concerning Jesus is, that he is *"the Christ,"* that is, the Anointed One foretold by the prophets as the future king of the world. If you deny to him this kingship, you deny that he is the Christ—for the anointing refers, not only to his character as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," but to his future development as God's vicegerent on earth. His "Christing" is prospective,

culminating in “the glory that shall be revealed,” which shall “cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.” Whosoever, therefore, is ignorant of this, and denies the future manifested Christship of Jesus, cannot Scripturally or acceptably confess that he is the Christ, inasmuch as that confession is empty sound when it does not import the things signified.

That Christ is the future king of the world is one of the most gladsome truths of revelation. What hope else is there for this sin-afflicted world? It has groaned under ages of mis-rule. The riches of the earth are hoarded away in the halls of a surfeited few, and the great mass of humanity are left to welter out a degraded existence of poverty, ignorance, and misery. God’s goodness has been fraudulently squandered. The provision, sufficient for competence to all who breathe this mundane atmosphere, has been rapaciously plundered by the unprincipled and the strong, and stored away in accursed garners from famishing millions. This is as true in the present latter-day civilisation as it was in the ruthless days of yore; only the system—venerable by its antiquity—is more respectable, has the protection of the law, and is recognised as the indispensable institution of a well-governed country.

And among the people themselves, what barrenness and hideousness we behold! How intellectually empty! How morally destitute! How ignoble and selfish! How small and grovelling! Some say the world is getting better. It is a mistake. Intellectual acuteness is on the increase; but real character is dwarfing with the increase of years. Mankind is deteriorating with the spread of civilisation. Flimsiness and frivolity are the order of the day. Thorough-going good sense and earnestness of moral purpose are confined to a despised minority. The word of God is of light esteem, and faith hath almost vanished from the earth.

Where shall we find comfort for the future? The world is incurable by human agency. Its only hope lies in the truth expressed in the title of this lecture. A great Deliverer is waiting the appointed time of blessing; Christ at God’s right hand is the future king of the world; he who endured the shame of a malefactor’s cross is coming to wear the honour of a universal crown; and though dark be the clouds that usher in his august advent, and fierce the convulsions that will attend the earth’s deliverance, great will be the glory of the day he will bring, and everlasting the repose that will settle on the everlasting hills.

Lecture 12

THE COVENANT MADE WITH DAVID TO BE REALISED IN THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL UNDER CHRIST

WE HAVE seen that "the promises made unto the fathers," in remote Old Testament times, form the groundwork of the scheme which God is developing through Christ.

Of these, orthodox religion takes no cognisance. Who ever hears of them in modern sermons, or religious tuition of any kind?

We now propose to consider another matter, having an equally essential reference to the scheme, and of which there is a similar entire absence in all systems of modern religion.

We refer to the covenant made with David, which may be considered in the light of a clause in the greater covenant established with the fathers, settling an important matter of detail which is covered by, but not expressed in, the older general promises on which the whole scheme of God's purposed goodness towards mankind rests.

The fact that God made a covenant with David, having reference to Christ, is placed beyond all doubt by the statement of Peter on the day of Pentecost:—

> "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*" (Acts 2:30).

Preliminary to a consideration of the subject, we invite attention to the following further alusions to the oath referred to by Peter:—

> "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" (Psa. 89:3, 4).
>
> "The Lord hath *sworn in truth unto David*; He will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne" (Psa. 132:11).
>
> "*My covenant will I not break*, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that *I will not lie unto David*. His seed shall endure for ever, and HIS THRONE AS THE SUN BEFORE ME" (Psa. 89:34–36).
>
> "Of this man's (David's) seed hath God ACCORDING TO HIS PROMISE, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus" (Acts 13:23).
>
> "And hath raised up an horn of salvation for US IN THE HOUSE OF HIS SERVANT DAVID, *as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets*, which have been since the world began" (Luke 1:69, 70).

These quotations of Scripture establish the fact—first, that God entered into some pledge or undertaking with David, king of Israel, to uphold His kingdom in an unlimited future; and, second, that the pledge, covenant, or oath had reference to Jesus. David's "last words" (II Sam. 23:1–7), confirm this conclusion—"HE HATH MADE WITH ME AN EVERLASTING COVENANT, ordered in all things, and sure; *for this is all my salvation and all my desire*." The identity of this covenant with that referred to in the Scriptures quoted above, is evident from the immediate context:—

> "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me; HE THAT RULETH OVER MEN must be just, ruling in the fear of God. *And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth*, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining, after rain. Although my house be not so with God, yet—"

Then follows the declaration first quoted.

David was an old man when he penned these words *by the Spirit*, and it is evident that, *to the mind of the Spirit*, the covenant was not realised in the state of things prevailing at the time. Solomon, a young man of promise, was about to ascend the throne, but although David

himself recognised in this a preliminary fulfilment of the covenant, it is evident that this was not the event contemplated. The Spirit in David points forward to a period when it would be fulfilled in the rule of one who should rise upon the world, like a morning without clouds; and when "all David's salvation and all his desire" would be accomplished in connection with that great event. This did not come to pass in David's day. We have the testimony of the words immediately succeeding those quoted. David's house was not at that time in the position guaranteed by the promise: "Although my house BE NOT SO WITH GOD, *yet* He hath made with me an *everlasting* covenant."

Solomon's reign was, doubtless, the meridian of Israel's glory; but it was not a morning without cloud—it was not the realisation of the covenant. Solomon sinned and led Israel astray, and ultimately dealt injustice to the nation. David's salvation was not in any sense secured in Solomon's achievements. Contrariwise, his crown was tarnished and his kingdom rent, through the perversion of a son who departed from God, multiplied wives, and turned aside to the worship of heathen gods. His very name was brought into abhorrence with the bulk of the nation, through the oppressions of one who falsified the expectations created by the commencement of his royal career as the wisest of men.

It was not to such a feature that "the last (spirit) words of David" had reference as the consummation of "the everlasting covenant" in all David's salvation and all his desire. There was visible to the mind of the spirit, in the dim distance, far beyond the days of Solomon, the form of one *whose name should endure for ever*—who should descend like the gentle rain upon the new-mown grass, diffusing life and fragrance, in whom men should be blest all the world over (Psalm 72:17), who, while the destroyer of the wicked, the conqueror of kings, the avenger of injustice, should be a refuge for the poor, a shadow from the heat, a covert from the tempest, and rivers of water in a dry place (Isaiah 32:2).

Let us now look at the covenant itself. We cannot do better than quote entire that passage in the history of David in which it occurs:—

> "And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies, that the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.
>
> "And Nathan said unto the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee.
>
> "And it came to pass that night, that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, Go, and tell my servant David, thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me a house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel, spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me a house of cedar?
>
> "Now, therefore, so shalt thou say unto my servant David, thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be a ruler over my people, over Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thy enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. Moreover, I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as before time; and as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies.
>
> "Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee a house. And 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 a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul,

whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever" (II Sam. 7:1–16).

Now, before proceeding to look narrowly at the significance of these words, it will be well to meet a preliminary objection which is sometimes urged with considerable force, viz., that as they were fulfilled in the reign of Solomon, they cannot be legitimately understood of Christ. That the things affirmed had a parallel in the events of Solomon's reign cannot be denied. Both David and Solomon apply them in this way (see I Kings 5:5; 8:20; 11:38; I Chron, 22:7; 28:3). Solomon was David's son; God, in a sense, was his Father, for He took him under His special care, and endowed him with a degree of wisdom that made him famous above kings. He sat on the throne of David "before" (that is, in the presence of) David, being elevated to the crown before David's decease, by David's own instructions, and continued after David was gathered to his fathers. He built the temple of God at Jerusalem, according to plans drawn out by David under the influence of inspiration (I Chron. 28:12, 19). He was a man of peace. He committed iniquity and was chastened in the divine displeasure by means of adversaries raised up toward the close of his reign; but God's mercy did not depart away from him as it did from Saul, for he was allowed to reign till death removed him.

To this extent, the covenant with David was verified in the days of Solomon; but to say that this parallel was the substance of the things promised, is to go in the teeth of Scripture testimony, both Old and New. David and Solomon's application of the covenant, as recorded in the Scriptures referred to, does not interfere with this testimony. David and Solomon may be presumed not to have known its full scope. The prophets generally did not understand the full effect of their words (I Peter 1:10–12). Paul applies the terms of the covenant to Christ in Heb. 1:5: "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son." Peter, as we have already seen, expressly says that the covenant had reference to him (Acts 2:30). Jesus applies David's language to himself: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Psa. 110:1), and furthermore, he says of himself, "I am the root and *the offspring of David*" (Rev. 22:16), and that he has *the key of David* for the purpose of opening that no man may shut (Rev. 3:7). In the days of his flesh, he was known and described as "the son of David"; the whole nation of the Jews looked for a son of David to be the Messiah; all the prophets speak of him as a descendant of David, variously styling him "a rod out of *the stem of Jesse* (father of David)" (Isa. 11:1); "a righteous Branch raised unto David" (Jer. 23:5); "a child born and a son given to sit upon the throne of David and his kingdom" (Isa. 9:6), and so on.

It is, therefore, a vain thing for anyone to attempt to avert the application of the "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," to Jesus, David's son and Lord, the "greater than Solomon," on the mere strength of a view taken by David and Solomon, which does not exclude this application, but which merely declares that the covenant made with reference to Jesus was incipiently fulfilled in Solomon.

It may be a question for consideration how it is that a prediction can have two fulfilments, so far separated by time and the nature of the event. The fact is evidence of the comprehensiveness of the divine word, but no disproof of the fact that the prediction in its ultimate and complete bearing has reference to Jesus. This is proved in too many ways to leave room for a moment's doubt.

Assuming this to be settled, let us see, first, how much of the covenant has been fulfilled in the career of Christ, as so far developed; and, second, what Christ will have to do at his future manifestation, in order to fulfil that part of the covenant which was, unquestionably, not realised at his first appearing.

The facts bearing on the first point may very briefly be summarised: David's days having been fulfilled, and he being "asleep with his fathers," Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the city of David, of Mary, a virgin, descended in the line of David, and espoused to a man named

Joseph, who was of the house and lineage of David. The event was announced by an angel to shepherds in the neighbourhood, watching their flocks by night, in the following language:—

> "Fear not; for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, *in the city of David*, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10, 11).

Zacharias, the father of John, notices the event in the following language:—

> "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people; and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us *in the house of His servant David*, as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began" (Luke 1:68–70).

Jesus, as we have seen in a previous lecture, was born without human paternity; his conception was due to the power of the Holy Spirit overshadowing Mary. "Therefore," said the angel, "he shall be called the Son of God." Thus, in a sense far transcending the case of Solomon, were the terms of the covenant realised—"I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son." In fact, the divine sonship of Jesus is the crowning feature of his position as the Messiah. No man can Scripturally believe that he is the Christ, while denying that he is the Son of God. A Scriptural confession of his name involves the recognition of the two facts expressed in the words of Nathaniel—"Thou art *the Son of God*; thou ART THE KING OF ISRAEL" (John 1:49). John says, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus *is the Son of God*?" (I John 5:5). The divine testimony to Jesus, uttered at his baptism, and again at his transfiguration, was couched in these words—"This *is my beloved Son*, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5). Hence, the most striking feature in the covenant made with David shines out in Jesus, who was both Son of God and Son of David and in view of it, it is easy to understand the language of David in the 110th Psalm, in reference to which Jesus confounded the Pharisees so that they could not answer again. He said:—

> "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How, then, doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call hun Lord, how is he his Son?" (Matt. 22:42–45).

This was a question which the Pharisees could not answer from their point of view, because, on the supposition that the Messiah was merely to be a natural son of David, on no principle admissible in Jewish practice could David have addressed him as Lord, for that would have been to accord to him a position and a deference which could never be recognised as proper to be yielded to a son by a father. But in view of the truth, the question admits of an easy solution: Christ is the son of David by the flesh of Mary; but he is also David's Lord, because of a higher parental origin than David; "God hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father" (John 5:22, 23).

The next feature in the history of Christ corresponds to the next feature in the covenant made with David. He did not commit iniquity; but he was "chastened with the rod of men," and with the stripes of the children of men. The original Hebrew of this part of the covenant, according to Dr. Adam Clarke, is more correctly translated as follows:—"Even in his suffering for iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the stripes of the children of men." This is intelligible as applied to the death of Christ:—

> "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for

our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.… The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:4, 6).

But the mercy of God did not desert him as it did Saul, who was rejected, and as we might presume it did in the case of Solomon, whose last days, so far as we have any record, were spent in disobedience. Christ was forsaken on the cross; but it was only for a moment; God's favour returned with the morning which saw his deliverance from the grave of Joseph of Arimathea, and was to him an eternal river of joy. His relation to Deity in the whole transaction cannot be better expressed than in the words of the 16th Psalm, which Peter, on the day of Pentecost, applied to him:—

"I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh, also. shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer three holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psa. 16:8–11).

In Psalm 89 the covenant with David is repeated in substance, and here the following language is used, which could not be applied to Solomon:—

"Also I will make him *my firstborn*, higher than the kings of the earth; my mercy will I keep for him for evermore … his seed also will I make to endure for ever; and *his throne as the days of heaven*" (verses 27–29).

In no sense was Solomon Jehovah's firstborn; while of Jesus, the following statements are made:—

"He is the Head of the body, the Church, who is the beginning, THE FIRSTBORN from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18).

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be THE FIRSTBORN among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29).

"Christ the FIRSTFRUITS" (I Cor. 15:23).

In this respect, he fulfils a condition of the covenant made with David, which is in no sense satisfied in Solomon. And he is indeed "higher than the kings of the earth," for Paul says:—"God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Phil. 2:9–10).

But when we pass on to consider other things said in the covenant of the son promised to David, we find that Jesus has not yet fulfilled them. The first item may be stated in the words of Peter, "That he should sit upon the throne of David." In no sense can Jesus be said to have done this. The throne of David is in ruins. Its condition is described in the following language:—

"Thou hast cast off and abhorred; Thou hast been wroth with thine anointed. Thou hast made void the covenent of thy servant; *Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground*. Thou hast broken down all his hedges; Thou hast brought his strongholds to ruin. All that pass by the way spoil him; he is a reproach to his neighbours. Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; Thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice. Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle. Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground" (Psa. 89:38–44).

This state of things was predicted by Ezekiel in the following terms:—

> "And 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 COMES WHOSE RIGHT IT IS, AND I WILL GIVE IT HIM" (Ezek. 21:25, 27).

This prediction was uttered in the reign of Zedekiah, the last Israelitish king in the line of David, 593 B.C.; and ever since that time the kingdom has been overturned. It was overthrown by Nebuchadnezzer in the lifetime of Zedekiah, and was afterwards trampled down by Greece and Rome. Since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, it has had no existence. The land is in the possession of the enemy, and the people are scattered as fugitives throughout the earth.

In view of this, what conclusion is to be drawn from the covenant made with David, which expressly guarantees the perpetual continuance of David's throne and kingdom, under that son of his who was to be the firstborn of Jehovah? There is only one conclusion admissible in the premises, and that is, that at some future time, Jesus must return and re-establish the kingdom of David, and preside therein for God, as David did: and to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written: "*After this* I WILL RETURN, AND WILL BUILD AGAIN THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID, WHICH IS FALLEN DOWN; and I will build again the ruins thereof; and I will set it up" (Acts 15:16). The testimony confirmatory of this conclusion is very express. There are the well-known words of Isaiah:—

> "For 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).

Then there are the words of the other prophets, of which the following are only a meagre sample:—

> "In those days, and at that time, will I cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, *and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land, " etc.* (Jer. 33:15).

> "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel, and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. *And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them,* TO BUILD AND TO PLANT, saith the Lord" (Jer. 31:27, 28).

> "For thus saith the Lord; like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, *so will I bring upon them* ALL THE GOOD THAT I HAVE PROMISED THEM" (Jer. 32:42).

> "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform *that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah*" (Jer. 33:14).

> "In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; and I will make her that halted, a remnant, *and her that was cast off,* A STRONG NATION; *and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth even for ever*" (Mic. 4:6, 7).

> "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).

> "And they shall *build the old wastes*, they shall *raise up the former desolations*, and they shall *repair the waste cities*, the desolations of many generations" (Isa. 61:4).

These predictions will not be realised in the absence of Jesus Christ from the earth. This appears upon the face of the testimonies themselves, but is proved in a way that excludes the possibility of mistake, by Peter's declaration, recorded in Acts 3:20–21:—

> "*He shall send Jesus Christ*, which before was preached unto you; 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."

From this it follows that the work of restoration so abundantly described by the prophets does not occur till Jesus returns and reappears on earth. This will account for Paul's connecting Christ's appearing and kingdom as coincident events, in the words "Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead *at his appearing* AND *his kingdom*" (II Tim. 4:1). When he appears, his kingdom will come; for it is his return to the earth that causes his kingdom to be established. Hence we can understand the statement that "when the Son of man shall come in his glory, THEN *shall he sit upon the throne of his glory*" (Matt. 25:31). This statement Jesus repeats in another form, which only makes its identification with the re-establishment of the kingdom of Israel more certain. He said to his disciples:—

> "Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the re–generation (which is equivalent to the restitution spoken of by Peter) WHEN *the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory*, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL" (Matt. 19:28).

When this comes to pass, there will be fulfilment of the words addressed to Mary: "*And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever*; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:33). And when these words are verified, the covenant made with David will find a fulfilment over which no obscurity can be cast.

The covenant guarantees the Messianic establishment of David's kingdom *in David's presence*. The words are, "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee." As we have seen, this was partially fulfilled in David witnessing Solomon's ascension to the throne before his own death; but it is easy to see how much more completely and substantially it will be fulfilled in the kingdom of David in the hands of Jesus. The kingdom of Israel, as ruled by Christ, will be the kingdom of God. The promise to all the faithful is that they shall inherit the kingdom of God (Luke 22:29, 30; Matt. 19:28; James 2:5; Luke 13:28, 29; 12:32, 36; II Peter 1:11). Hence David, who was a man after God's own heart, will be among those of whom Jesus says, in one of the foregoing list of references, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets—of whom David was one—will be seen in the kingdom of God.

This cannot mean heaven; for Peter expressly says, "David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:34). It is the kingdom to be set up in the territory of the Promised Land, when the little stone descends from heaven to break in pieces all other kingdoms. David, looking forward to this time, said in prayer, immediately after hearing the words of the covenant, "Thou hast spoken also of Thy servant's house *for a great while to come*.… Therefore now let it please Thee to bless the house of Thy servant, *that it may continue for ever before Thee*" (II Sam. 7:19, 29). This prayer is answered in the words of Jeremiah (chapter 33:17, 25, 26); "For thus saith the Lord: DAVID *shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel* … If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then will I cast away *the seed of Jacob; and* DAVID MY SERVANT, So that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them."

The time for this is now not far off, and David himself will be in the land, rejoicing in the greatness of his Son, who will be a triumphant witness of the truthfulness of Jehovah's word. Every nation will come to an end, except the nation of Israel (Jer. 30:11), and every royal family will disappear and be forgotten, except the family of David, which will be in everlasting remembrance, because an everlasting and glorious institution, by the ransomed inhabitants of the globe. Thus will be fulfilled the promise that the house of David shall continue for ever.

We have next to observe a feature of the covenant which few modern readers of the Bible have been able, in any sense, to apply to Jesus. We refer to the first clause of the thirteenth verse; "*He shall build an house for my name*." Understanding this to mean the erection of a place in the earth for the worship of Jehovah, it may be considered incredible that such a performance should form any part of Christ's work. At first sight, such a thing may seem preposterous and degrading to the dignity of Christ, but, looking closely into the subject, we discover a different complexion in it. We shall see that not only is the building of a temple, to which nations may periodically repair for worship, one of the incidents of the age to come, but that the performance of this work is connected with the noblest mission of the kingdom of God.

We will first call the reader's attention to the evidence which proves that what is affirmed in the covenant made with David will be realised in the kingdom of Christ. It begins with a statement in Zech. 6:12, to the following effect:—

> "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* … and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne. And he shall be a priest upon his throne."

The applicability of this to Jesus might be doubted from the context were it not that the statement cannot be understood of any other than he who bears the title occurring in it. The Messiah is uniformly described as THE BRANCH, and he alone is to be "a priest upon his throne," combining in himself, like Melchizedek, the double function of rule in temporal matters and intercession in things pertaining to God. Were this the only consideration, however, to justify the application of the prophecy to Jesus, it would fall short of proving the point. We therefore proceed to weightier considerations.

It is said of the time when Jesus shall reign on the throne of his father David, that "many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord" (Zech. 8:22). This is expressed by Jeremiah as a gathering of the nations to the name of the Lord to Jerusalem; in consequence of which they walk no more in the imagination of their evil heart (Jer. 3:17); and by Isaiah, as the going of many people, saying, "Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, TO THE HOUSE OF THE GOD OF JACOB; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths," etc. (Isa. 2:3). Zechariah describes this in the following language:—

> "And 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).

That these things are true of Christ's reign on earth and nothing else, must be evident from the fact that they are associated with a time when the nations shall cease from war, and when men shall no longer follow the bent of their evil inclinations. Such a state of things has never been realised in the history of the world. If, then, nations are to go periodically to Jerusalem for the purpose of worship, it stands to reason that there will be a place in which

this act can have suitable effect. It is not to be imagined that a motley assemblage of people could conveniently, comfortably, or profitably bring their devotion to bear without those customary means of approach, which, in all past times God has furnished to those whom He has invited to do homage to Him. Why should nations come to Jerusalem, if there were no temple there? If their worship was simply to consist of the sentiment of devotion, this could as well be cultivated in the countries they inhabit as at the holy city.

The necessity of the case requires that there should exist a machinery of worship adequate to the grandeur of the dispensation, in which Jerusalem is the religious metropolis of the whole world. It is evident from attention to the limited testimony quoted, that this will exist. Mark, for instance, the expression, "Let us go up to *the house of the Lord*." Again, "the pots in *the Lord's house* shall be like the bowls before the altar" (Zech. 14:20). "The glory of THIS LATTER HOUSE shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and IN THIS PLACE *will I give peace*" (Hag. 2:9). "*Then shall Jerusalem be holy*.… And a fountain shall come forth of THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim" (Joel 3:17, 18).

We quote these indirect evidences not so much to prove the point in question as to introduce the great and crowning evidence before which all others pale into insignificance. We now refer to the vision of Ezekiel, contained in the last nine chapters of the book bearing his name. This portion of the Scripture has baffled all Bible commentators, for the simple reason that popular theology can make no use of it. To what purpose is the establishment of a temple ritual at Jerusalem, if death sends men for final weal or woe, to God or the devil, and if the presumed millennium is simply to be a prevalence of "evangelical religion"?

The chapters referred to were written after the destruction of Solomon's temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and disclose a state of things which has never since that time existed under heaven. The temple was rebuilt at the return of the Jews from Babylon. But Ezekiel's prophecy was not realised in that event, as may be seen by a comparison of Ezekiel's prophecy with the facts connected with the second temple. The rebuilt temple, so far from being greater than the first, was vastly inferior to it. This cannot be better proved than by quoting the following passage from Ezra 3:12, 13:—

> "But many of the Priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, *who were ancient men, that had seen the first house*, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, WEPT WITH A LOUD VOICE; and many shouted aloud for joy; so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people; for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off."

Ezekiel's temple is to be contemporary with a division of the promised land to the twelve tribes of Israel (Ezekiel 48). The educated reader does not require to be informed that this has never taken place since the day of the Babylonish captivity. The restoration from Babylon was but a return of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and but a small portion of them. The ten tribes constituting the Kingdom of Israel, were removed by Shalmaneser the king of Assyria, to countries beyond the river Euphrates, and have never returned. The conclusion is self-evident; the land has never been divided to the twelve tribes of Israel, as it is to be when Ezekiel's temple is reared.

Another fact proving the futurity of the prophecy, is, that at the time foreseen by Ezekiel a portion of the country, measuring at the least forty miles by forty, is to be set apart for divine purposes as "a holy oblation" (Ezek. 45:1, 4). In this stand the temple, the holy city, and the habitation of the priests. Such a thing, as everyone knows, has never happened in the history of the Holy Land; from which it follows that the state of things depicted in the chapter under consideration lies in the future. This conclusion is established beyond all question by the concluding statement of the prophet; that "the name of the city *from that day shall be*, THE LORD IS THERE."

In view of the certainty that Ezekiel's prophecy is unfulfilled, it becomes interesting in the highest degree to glance at what Ezekiel describes. He says, in the visions of God he was brought into the land of Israel, and set upon a very high mountain, from which he beheld the frame of a city to the south. He finds himself in the company of a man, "whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed." This man, whom he sees standing in the entrance gate of the temple enclosure, addresses him as follows:

> "Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee, art thou brought hither; declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel" (Ezek. 40:4).

Ezekiel then becomes attentive to his guide's operations, and beholds him proceed with a series of measurements which he records with great minuteness, in the first five chapters. Without following the intricacies of these, let us briefly state that Ezekiel is shown a temple exceeding anything ever realised in the history of Israel or any other nation. The temple is a gigantic building, with every appliance required in the worship of which it is the centre. The outside wall (measuring about a mile-and-a-quarter each way), is pierced with many gates, each gate being flanked with chambers for the temple service, and entered by an upward flight of steps. Mounting the steps, the prophet sees an inner wall, about 150 feet nearer the temple; the space lying between the inner and the outer wall being described as "the outer court," and forming a spacious promenade or pavement. The inner wall has gates after the pattern of those in the outer wall. These gates open by eight steps into the inner court, in which stands THE TEMPLE—an immense circle of lofty arched and latticed building, capable of holding a million worshippers. This is the centre-piece of the vision. For height, breadth, and elaborateness, it exceeds anything devised in human architecture, and is only surpassed in interest by the event which the prophet witnessed after surveying the external approaches to the building. This event, which he saw from the eastern gate of the outer wall, he describes in the following language:—

> "*Behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east*, and His voice was like a noise of many waters, and the earth shined with His glory … And the glory of the Lord *came into the house* by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east" (ch. 43:2, 4).

Ezekiel is then conveyed by the spirit into the inner court, standing in which he beholds the house filled with the glory of the Lord. He then hears the divine voice addressing him as follows:—

> "Son of Man, the place of my throne, and *the place of the soles of my feet*, where I WILL DWELL IN THE MIDST OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL FOR EVER, and my holy name shall the house of Israel no more defile; neither they nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcases of their kings in their high places" (verse 7).

Afterwards, Ezekiel is taken back by the way of the eastern gate, and observes that it is shut, in reference to which the following explanation is given:—

> "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because *the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it*, therefore it shall be shut; it is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it, to eat bread before the Lord. He shall enter by the Way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same" (ch. 44:2–3).

At a later stage, Ezekiel received the following information in reference to the same gate:—

> "The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the Sabbath it shall be opened and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened. And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate. And the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings; and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate; then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening. Likewise the people of the land shall *worship at the door of this gate before the Lord*, in the Sabbaths and in the new moons" (ch. 46:1, 2, 3).

The temple, we are informed, stands in the centre of an area of country measuring forty-two miles from east to west, and about seventeen miles from north to south; which is to be occupied by a class described as "the sons of Zadok," who were faithful in ancient times. To the south of this, there is a similar tract of country measured off for the Levites, whose duty it will be to perform the menial and laborious duties connected with the temple worship. Again, to the south of this, measuring forty-two miles from east to west, and between nine and ten miles from north to south, a strip of country is allotted for the city and land for fields and gardens.

The measurements of the city show it to be the most extensive and magnificent that has ever been built. Lying four-square, it will occupy an area of about eighty square miles. Each wall, east, west, north, and south, measures about nine miles, the total circumference being, therefore, about thirty-six miles. In each wall, there are three gates, at equal distances, each gate being named after one of the tribes of the land. The land lying east and west of the city, appropriated for the raising of produce, contains about two-hundred-and-seventy square miles, forming an adequate provision for the wants of the stupendous city, which will be known from that day by the name—Jehovah-shammah, *the Lord is there*.

The temple stands on the site of ancient and modern Jerusalem, crowning the hill of Zion; of which it is testified in Psalm 132:13–14:—"The Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it." The city lies about thirty-two miles to the south of the temple. The whole territory apportioned is a magnificent square, measuring about forty-two miles each way, and forming the tabernacle of Jehovah, as it will be pitched in the age to come.

These details leave no doubt as to the reality of the temple to be erected in the day when the fallen tabernacle of David is upreared by the Son of David. The reason that orthodox interpreters are unable to see this, is, that they are ignorant of the kingdom of which the temple and its service form a part.

Another reason is probably to be found in the fact, that the sacrifices superseded by the death of Christ are in this temple found restored; burnt offerings and sin offerings, of "bulls and goats," are required with all the minute ceremonial observed under the law of Moses. This, to the majority of people, is a great stumbling block. They reason against the possibility of sacrifices being restored after the accomplishment of the anti-typical sacrifice of "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

A little reflection, however, will dissipate the force of this difficulty. It is evident that the reign of Christ on earth is a priestly one. This is stated in the testimony that "he shall be a priest upon his throne"; and is further evident from the statement in Rev. 1:6: "He hath made us kings AND *priests* unto God and his Father," a double function which appears from Rev. 5:10, to have reference to the time when Christ shall reign on earth: "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign *on the earth*." If, then, the millennial dispensation is a priestly one, it is according to the fitness of things, that the people should have somewhat to offer in token of their obedience; and the priests, something to present on their behalf.

But it will be asked, how can the sacrifice of animals be revived, when he who was slain is present in the earth as a perfected mediator between God and man? and since Christ's

priesthood is in force even now, without the use of material sacrifices on the part of those for whom he officiates, viz., his own household, why need there be material sacrifices in the age to come, when his priesthood is but transferred from his own household to the world?

The answer to this must take a general form. As the sacrifices under the law of Moses pointed forward to the death of Christ, so the sacrifices under the "prophet like unto Moses," may point backward to the death of Christ. In the law of Moses, the sacrifices were prospective and typical of that which was to come. Under the law of Christ, they may be retrospective and commemorative of that which has been: after the manner of the Lord's supper, which, in Christ's absence, is a standing memorial of his broken body and shed blood. Whatever explanation of the fact may be suggested, there can be no doubt of the fact itself, that sacrifices form part of the institution of the age to come. We gather this, not only from Ezekiel, but from a variety of Scripture testimony, of which we cite the following examples:—

> "For 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).

> "The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come, they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; *they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar*, and I will glorify THE HOUSE OF MY GLORY" (Isa. 60:6, 7).

> "And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall *do sacrifice and oblation*; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it" (Isa. 19:21).

> "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and *without a sacrifice*, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. AFTERWARD shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days" (Hosea 3:4, 5).

> "Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of Hosts; and *all they that sacrifice* shall come and take of them and seethe therein; and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the House of the Lord of Hosts" (Zech. 14:21).

> "God is the Lord, which has shewed us light. *Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar*" (Psa. 118:27).

At first sight, it may appear incongruous that the glorious administration of power and righteousness characteristic of the reign of Christ should be mixed up with a ritual which has been obsolete for centuries, and between which and the truth there scarcely exists the element of affinity. There is, however, a view of the matter which reveals wisdom in the arrangement.

It is part of eternal truth that without faith and trial, it is impossible to be accepted with God. This principle is unaffected by time or circumstances; it will be as true in the future age as now. Men and women, who live as subjects of the Messiah's kingdom, will have to obtain a right to eat of the tree of life by faith and obedience, as much as those who now have to struggle in the absence of an open vision. But how can their faith be exercised, and how can their obedience be tested in the presence of the overpowering fact of God's visible government of the nations through Jesus and the saints? Does it not seem as if all scope for faith would be shut out by the sublime and incontestable facts of the time? And as if

obedience would be eclipsed and superseded by the practical compulsion brought to bear upon men by the existence and supervision of divine government?

As it appears to us, the restitution of sacrifice supplies an answer to the question. Called upon to perform acts in the worship of God, which in themselves appear needless and unsuitable, the faith and obedience of men will be put to as powerful a test as in ancient days, when similar things were required at the hand of Israel. Their minds will be educated to submit to the divine will, and to have faith in the divine intentions by a ritualism unreasonable enough to have no hold upon the mind, except such as arises from a recognition of divine authority; while, at the same time, their intellects will be enlightened by the lessons taught by it in allegory. We must remember that in the age to come, the nations subject to Christ and his people will be composed of men and women constituted as men and women are now: and, therefore, standing in need of spiritual education.

The kingdom of God, in its millennial phase, is an adaptation to this necessity. By the aid of this fact, we are enabled to see the wisdom of a dispensation which would be out of keeping in a generation spiritually perfect. Nations will have to be disciplined in first principles, and exercised continually in a divine direction. Left without external stimulus or object of occupation, the human mind becomes listless and retrogressive. The most brilliant moral impressions will fade in a state of inactivity. Degeneration of this description will be effectually prevented by a system of universal compulsory religion, which will require the presence of every man once a year at the centre of divine government and worship, and which, for every offence against the laws, will exact the token of penitence afforded in the sacrifice of an animal of his property. The mind of all the world will be kept in continual motion in a spiritual channel. By this means, mankind, as a whole, will be turned from the ways of ignorance and evil, while the powerful hand of governmental repression, brought to bear upon everything antagonistic to the temporal and spiritual welfare of the people, will secure a situation admitting of the full and effective operation of these ameliorating influences.

Thus we see a beauty and a force in that clause of the covenant made with David, which assigns to the Messiah the duty of building a house to the Lord of all the earth. The mechanical part of the process will, of course, be performed by the alien. The manual labour required to elaborate the splendid and spacious architecture exhibited to Ezekiel, will be furnished by the stranger; but the work will be executed under the supervision of Christ, as the temple of Solomon was built to David's directions:—

> "The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls and their kings shall minister unto thee; for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee … The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas, thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations" (Isa. 60:10, 14, 15).

> "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen, and your vine-dressers" (Isa. 61:4, 5).

> "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet: and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me" (Isa. 49:22, 23).

It will be the peculiar honour of Jesus to bring all nations to worship before God: and this he will do in virtue of the covenant made with David.

Little remains to be said in illustration of the remaining provisions of the covenant. That God will establish the throne of His kingdom for ever, in the hands of Jesus; and, under Him, give to Israel the sure dwelling-place from which they shall never be removed, has been made evident in other lectures. These two conclusions are amongst the most copiously attested doctrines of the Word of God. In the light of them all prophecy is intelligible; without them, the Old Testament is what orthodox people practically find it to be—a dark vision, and a dead letter.

For this, the Apostasy is responsible. By intermixing pagan dogmas with the doctrines of revelation, it has succeeded in mystifying the oracles of God to an extent which is hopeless as regards the majority of people. It' has drawn a thick veil over their faces; it has made the Bible unintelligible, and brought it into ridicule and contempt with many who, with a better understanding, would bow before the sublimity and splendour of the scheme it unfolds for the redemption of this fair planet from the evil that now reigns. This lamentable result cannot be remedied to any material extent at present. A few here and there will surrender to the power of judgment and testimony; but the great majority will continue in bondage to the power of error numerically supported.

Seduced by the deception practised upon their senses by the circumstances existing in society, they are deaf to the voice of reason; they look around them, and behold a crowd walking in the stereotyped ways of popular religion; and, though, taken man by man, they could estimate their opinions at their proper value—which, in the majority of cases, from the ignorance that prevails, is no value at all—yet the mere deadweight of numbers gives the collective sentiment a power which they cannot resist, and they allow themselves to be dragged like manacled slaves at the chariot wheels of a system of faith which will not stand for a moment when tried on its own merits. Every one man in the crowd sees the rest as a crowd, and overpowered by the sight of the crowd, he bows to the collective opinion, though it be but a mere traditional bias, and not a conviction on evidence. In this way, each man in the great orthodox communities, is held in bondage by all the rest, and the bondage is rivited hard and fast by the influence of the church, chapel, college, vestry, school, bazaar, tea party, private interest, and the whole machinery of the system.

Nothing will break into this intellectual slavery but the iran rod of the Son of David. When he comes to vest, in his single person, the authority now exercised by all the kings and parliaments of the world; when he lays hold, with unsparing hand, upon the vested interests which obstruct the path of general progress; and shivers to atoms the rotten fabrics of respectable superstition; when he overturns the institutions which foolish crowds fall down and worship, through the mere power of antiquity; when he sends forth to all the world the decrees of a divine and omnipotent absolutism; when he sets up a system of worship to which he will command conformity on pain of death; and demands the allegiance of every soul to be personally tendered at Jerusalem, the city of the great king; when he comes to sweep, from the face of the earth, the tangled cobweb of existing institutions which shelters ignorance, vice, and misery; while professedly based on right, religion, and morality; and to deal, with even hand, the swift and powerful awards of unerring justice; when he, in fact, breaks in pieces the whole constitution of human society, as now put together, and substitutes for it a new order of things, having the revived kingdom of David, in the land of Palestine, as its centre and basis of operations—then, and not till then, will mankind see their folly, and "come from the ends of the earth, and say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit" (Jer. 16:19). There is no hope till then. He will "judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth" (Psalm 67). "In that day there shall be one Lord, and his name One." (Zech. 14:9).

Lecture 13

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST THE ONLY CHRISTIAN HOPE

HOPE IS the peculiar feature of the Gospel. Other systems boast of ethical principles which it is expected the judgment will sanction, and the enlightened will apply to the formation of character; but the gospel excels these in its power to produce the results aimed at by them, through the power of an element of which all systems of human wisdom are necessarily destitute.

Theoretical morality may practically influence superior minds; but it is powerless to raise the fallen or develop moral fructification in naturally barren minds. Its appeals are to trained intellect and moral aspiration; and for that reason, it is impotent with the vast majority of mankind.

The gospel approaches human nature, not with hard reasonings and lifeless aphorisms, but with personal love and inspiring promises. Laden with tenderness and cheer, it subdues the obduracy, and dissipates the lethargy of human hearts, and bears them upward to moral perfection by the influence of its affections and hopes. It is exactly adapted to the necessities of human nature, present and prospective. It only requires to be received with full assurance of faith; and then, unlike human systems of philosophy, it satisfies the heart while enlightening the intellect, and tranquillises the spirit, which can elsewhere find no rest in this world of anxiety and care.

Nevertheless, it develops these results by an intelligent process. It operates by means of the ideas which it communicates to the mind. There is nothing unaccountable in its mode of operation. Its love is a matter of specific assurance, to be realised by faith, and not a mysterious influence stealing miraculously over the heart. Its hopes grow out of definite promises, understood and assuredly believed, and are not shapeless ecstacies of incomprehensible origin. Its operations are altogether effected on truly rational principles. Designed for human nature, it is adapted to its mental constitution, and powerful on natural methods, to elevate and purify all who submit themselves to its teachings, and give earnest heed thereto.

Now, in the present lecture, we purpose to make manifest the truth of the proposition, that the great hope of the gospel relates to the second (personal) coming of the Lord Jesus; that that event is the central object upon which enlightened anticipation lays hold as the climax of desire, the crisis of reward; and that, therefore, this truth is one of the main influences by which the heart is purified, and the believer himself prepared and made “meet for the Master’s use.”

By the second coming of the Lord Jesus, is meant the event obviously signified by the language, viz., the return from heaven to earth of our Saviour, who is now at the right hand of God. It will be admitted that Christ was really on the earth during his sojourn among men, and that he ascended *bodily* to heaven after the resurrection. The proposition, then, is, that at a certain time, he will descend just as really as he ascended, and appear in person on the earth, as the same Lord Jesus who sojourned in Judea among the Jews and Romans. We assert this to be the teaching of the word of God, and are more especially anxious to demonstrate its essentiality as the true Christian hope.

First, let us realise that the apostles declare there is only "one hope," as there is only "one faith and one baptism." This is the teaching of Paul, in Ephesians 4:4, 5: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in ONE HOPE of your calling." That this "one hope" is an essential constituent of the gospel, is evident from Paul's words to the Colossians, chap. 1:5, where, speaking of "the hope which was *laid up for them in heaven*" (Christ being there), he says, "*Whereof ye heard before* IN THE WORD OF THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL." He even goes the length of saying, "We are saved *by hope*" (Rom. 8:24), and solemnly assures the Hebrews that their ultimate salvation was contingent upon their adherence to that hope. His words are, "Whose house are we, *if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of* THE HOPE *firm unto the end*" (Heb. 3:6). His language to the Colossians is equally striking on this point:—

> "He will present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight: IF *ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from* THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL" (Col. 1:22, 23).

These testimonies ought to impress us with a sense of the gravity of the question about to be considered. It is no light thing to be doctrinally mistaken as to what we should hope for. What a misfortune to spend our spiritual energies in looking for that which God has never promised! Such a mistake implies ignorance of the real "hope of the gospel"; and this "ignorance," says Paul, "alienates from the life of God" (Eph. 4:18). What God has never promised no one will ever receive; for how should the idle longings of man divert the purposes of the immutable Almighty? especially when the gratifying of those longings will involve the failure of the promises really given. "According to your faith be it unto you." This is a divine principle (Matt. 9:29). If a man squander his faith upon that which has no foundation in truth, he sows to the wind. The faith which builds its house upon the foundation-rock of the assured promises of God, will alone withstand the storm that will sweep away "the refuge of lies."

Before adducing specific testimony as to the coming of the Lord, it will be of advantage to dwell for a little on the personal ministry of Christ when on earth. During his sojourn in the land of Judea, which he travelled constantly for three years, doing wonderful works in attestation of his divine mission, he proclaimed the things of the kingdom of God, and asserted his Messiahship in connection therewith, as has been proved in previous lectures. This proclamation had the effect of drawing around him many disciples, and of causing them to look upon him as the anointed king of Israel in a literal sense, and destined to effect "the redemption of Israel" from the Romans and all other nations, and to establish the kingdom of God in triumph over all the earth. This view of Christ, created in the minds of his disciples by his own teachings, is condemned by thousands of well-meaning but mistaken people. We saw in a former lecture how uncalled for is the condemnation, and how scriptural (with slight modification) is the view condemned.

We now desire to point out that the teaching of Christ on the subject had a further effect upon the minds of the disciples. It created in them an expectation that they themselves should *share the kingly honours of Christ at the time when his kingly mission should be manifested*. This is also universally admitted to be a fact, although condemnation is as freely administered here as in the other case. The disciples are reprobated as "carnally minded," for having looked for what is generally disparaged as "a temporal kingdom." Now, we shall find that there is as much injustice in this imputation against the taste and judgment of the disciples, as there is in the one which the last lecture was intended to refute. There was, no doubt, a good deal of unhallowed ambition among them, which their divine master repeatedly strove to repress; but this ambition did not show itself in inventing a false doctrine, or carnally perverting a true one. It rather manifested itself in the form of impropriety of spirit, *in relation to that which was true*. It gave them mistaken ideas as to the object of the kingdom

of God, and the principles on which admittance to it was to be granted; but it did not cause them to misapprehend the nature of that kingdom itself. There is a distinction here that is very important; the overlooking of which leads to lamentable conclusions. Their hope of inheriting the kingdom of God in substantial manner, like their estimate of the kingship, was founded both on prophetic testimony, and the express teaching of our Lord himself. In the prophets they had observed such testimony as the following:—

> *"The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever"* (Dan. 7:18).
>
> *"The time came that the saints possessed the kingdom"* (verse 22).
>
> "And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN *shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High"* (verse 27).
>
> "Let *the saints be joyful in glory*, let them sing aloud upon their beds. 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 judgment written: THIS HONOUR HAVE ALL HIS SAINTS" (Psa. 149:5–9).
>
> "Instead of thy fathers (referring to Christ), shall be thy children (viz., the saints, his people), *whom thou mayest make* PRINCES *in all the earth*" (Psa. 45:16).
>
> "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, *and* PRINCES *shall rule in judgment*" (Isa. 32:1).
>
> "I will gather the remnant of my flock (of Israel) out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase; *and I will set up* SHEPHERDS *over them which shall feed them,"* etc. (Jer. 23:3–4).
>
> "*And saviours shall come up on Mount Zion* to judge the mount of Esau: and the kingdom shall be the Lord's (Oba., verse 21).

And they had noted the teaching of our Lord himself to the same effect in the following recorded instances: "Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily, I say unto you, *That he shall make him ruler over all his goods*" (Matt. 24:46, 47). "And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, *I will make thee ruler over many things*" (Matt. 25:20, 21). "And he said unto him (that had gained the ten pounds), Well, thou good servant, because thou hast been faithful in a very little, *have thou authority over ten cities*" (Luke 29:17). Again, Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the Jews, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, *and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof*" (Matt. 21:43).

At the time Jesus used the last quoted words, the chief priests and rulers were in possession of the kingdom of Israel, which having been originally established by God, was called the kingdom of God. Now the generality of people can understand the meaning of this predicted taking of the kingdom from them. They know as a matter of history that the Jewish polity was abolished, and that in fulfilment of Christ's prediction, its rulers were deposed from their seats of authority, and in fact, "miserably destroyed" in the awful judgments that overtook the city of Jerusalem. But when directed to the second part of the statement, they stumble. *"It shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."* Most people understand the taking, but what about the giving? *The thing taken is the thing given*; so, the kingdom of Israel, which was taken from the chief priests and Pharisees, shall be given to "a

nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." This is self-evident. The only question requiring settlement is as to who are the fruit-producing nation; and this is easily answered. Jesus said to his disciples, "Fear not, little flock: *for it is your Father's good pleasure to give YOU the kingdom*" (Luke 12:32). He further said, in answer to Peter's question, "Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?"

> "I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, WHEN *the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory*, YE ALSO SHALL SIT UPON TWELVE THRONES, JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL" (Matt. 19:27, 28).

Again, when the disciples were assembled at the last supper, he said unto them:—

> "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And *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 22:28–30).

Here is a complete indentification of "the nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." That nation consists of the disciples of our Saviour, who is himself at their head as "THE HEIR." They are styled by Peter (I Epist. 2:9), "a chosen generation, a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, an holy nation, a peculiar people"; agreeing with the testimony that they will yet inherit the kingdom of God which was taken from the Pharisees, and which, though now in ruins, is to be restored in glorious plenitude.

If the disciples were so egregiously mistaken as they are supposed to be, in their idea of Christ's Kingdom, and the position which they should hold in it, it is remarkable that we never read of any correction by Christ of that mistake. There were three occasions which would have elicited such correction had it been required.

The first was when "the mother of Zebedee's children" came with her two sons—James and John—saying, "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). Now, according to the popular view, here was the time to launch forth in condemnation of the earthliness and carnal misdirected ambition supposed to be indicated in the request; and doubtless the Saviour, who was never slow to correct the misconceptions of his disciples, nor even to rebuke with severity, would have done so if the request had really been of the nature to call for it; but how different from anything of this kind is his answer. Not a word of censure! not the softest whisper of implied rebuke! Rather a direct and signal confirmation of the idea embodied in the fond mother's petition. "Ye know not what ye ask," says he … "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*." So that instead of pronouncing her request inadmissable, he actually declares that the position requested *will be given* to those for whom it is prepared (verses 22, 23).

The second occasion occurred after the resurrection. Jesus joined two of his disciples as they walked to the village of Emmaus (Luke 24:13), but held their eyes that they should not know him; and they conversed with him on the subject of his own death. In the course of conversation, one of them, giving expression to the view shared by the disciples generally, said: "*We trusted that it had been he* WHICH SHOULD HAVE REDEEMED ISRAEL" (verse 21). Here again was the time to explain their misconception, had it been such; but here again there is an entire absence of any remark of that nature. He uttered a rebuke, but it did not refer to what they did believe, but to what did they did *not* believe. "O fools," exclaimed he, "and slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (verses 25, 26). He reproached them for disbelieving in his sufferings, and not for believing in his kingly glory.

The third time was immediately prior to the ascension. It is stated in Acts 1:6, that when Jesus and his disciples were come together, the disciples asked him, saying, "Lord, wilt thou

at this time *restore again the kingdom to Israel*?" They had had their eyes opened to the fact and necessity of his sufferings; but seeing that these were now accomplished, and that he had been gloriously resurrected from the dead, they evidently thought that the time had at last arrived when their cherished hope of national restoration under the Messiah should be realised; and so they asked him if he would *at that time* bring their desires to pass.

Now it is a notable circumstance, that this question was put after Christ had spoken to the disciples of "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" *during forty days* (verse 3). This fact suggests the supposition that the question was based on the teaching they received during that time. At any rate, how was the question received? With discouragement and rebuke? Nay: but, as in the previous case, with confirmatory answer: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power" (verse 7). This was equivalent to affirming that "times and seasons" had been provided for the event contemplated in their question—that is, that the event, "the restoring again of the kingdom to Israel," would really come to pass in process of time, but that it was not proper for them to know when. How inappropriate would such an answer have been, had their supposition as to the fact of such restoration been mistaken.

But the fact is, there was no question as to the event itself. Jesus had been enlightening them during forty days, in reference to it. Their enquiry related purely to the time of the event, and his answer was confined to that same thing. They supposed the event would then transpire. "They thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear" (Luke 19:11). This was the peculiar error of early times. They did not err in believing that God would establish His Kingdom on earth, and that Christ should visibly manifest himself as the "king over all the earth" (Zech. 14:9); for these things have been abundantly testified in the prophets and proclaimed by Jesus himself. Their mistake lay in supposing that they would be accomplished in their own day.

The moderns have gone Just to the other extreme. *They do not look for the kingdom of God at all*. They magnify the sacrificial into unscriptural proportions, and omit the kingly altogether. They exclude the kingdom of God, knowing nothing of it, and believe in nothing concerning it, while the death of Christ over-shadows and ensanguines every doctrine in their religious system. The disciples only saw the *king* in Christ, and expected his manifestation in their own times; the moderns only see the *sacrifice*, and consider his mission accomplished in the saving of supposed immortal souls at death.

The mistake of the disciples was corrected in due time. The occurrence of Christ's crucifixion and subsequent resurrection and ascension, supplied the lack in their knowledge, enabling them to see that the promised glories of the future age were not attainable by mortal man without a sacrificial intervention—a tasting of death for every man, by which "many sons might be brought to glory." But this addition to their knowledge did not divert their attention from these glories. Far otherwise; the death of Christ, apart from its prospective relationship, had no attractiveness; its interest and importance arose out of its connection with the glorious result it achieved. So that instead of shutting out the kingdom from their mind, it only intensified their appreciation thereof, by showing them its value in the greatness of the sacrifice necessary to secure it. It gave eagerness to their ardency, leading them intensely to desire the consummation of "the glory to be revealed." They therefore said, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" They evidently had no idea of Christ leaving them again. They had forgotten the many parables in which he had taught them his approaching departure into "a far country" from which he should afterwards return, to take account of his servants. (Luke 19:12; Matt. 25:14, etc.). Only one feeling was uppermost in their minds—a desire that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

When, therefore, "he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight, they looked steadfastly toward heaven," evidently struck with wonderment at the unexpected and

inexplicable occurrence. Christ taken away from them again! They were utterly unable to understand the new disappointment. Their hopes had been raised to the highest pitch by a companionship of forty days, and the grief which had overwhelmed them during their master's incarceration in the tomb, had been effaced by a sweet communion on "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God"; and now again, their Lord and Master, their best friend, their hope and salvation, he on whom their whole affection and the most yearning desire were concentrated, had left them. What were they to do? They were again cast upon the world; again thrown into perplexity. But this time relief was at hand:—

> "Two men stood by them in white apparel, which also 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 1:10, 11).

And here begins the specific testimony in support of the proposition of the lectures. The disciples were comforted in their perplexity by being assured that *Jesus would come again*; this was the balm administered to their troubled spirits; this, the hope by which they reconciled themselves to the absence of their Lord and Master. From that day forward, it became the central doctrine around which all their teaching revolved, the constantly prominent and essentially distinguished feature of the glad tidings they proclaimed.

Jesus himself had repeatedly taught them the doctrine of his return, even previous to his crucifixion. The parable of the nobleman (Luke 19:11, 12) was intended for this very purpose, for it is said that he used it *"because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear."* Its teaching is very manifest:—

> "A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom AND TO RETURN. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come … And it came to pass that WHEN HE WAS RETURNED, having received the kingdom, then he commanded those servants to be called unto him."

By this the disciples were informed that Jesus should be taken up to heaven to do a work of preparation, and be invested with power, and should afterwards return to the earth, and THEN judge his servants; awarding to them the rulership of ten cities, or the ignominy of a shameful rejection, according to their deserts (see rest of the parable). It was an amplification of his other statement: "*Thou shalt be recompensed* AT THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST"—a resurrection which does not take place until "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout" (I Thess. 4:16). The parable of the ten virgins is to the same purport. The absent bridegroom is put for the ascended Christ, and the waiting virgins for those who "look for his appearing." Besides other parables of a like effect, Jesus had plainly said, "*The days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them* (the disciples)" (Matt. 9:15); and had assured them without a figure: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I WILL COME AGAIN AND RECEIVE YOU UNTO MYSELF" (John 14:3).

But they were not able to understand the simple lesson, for the reason that *Christ was with them, and they never expected him to leave them*. They could not see what his *"return"* could mean, when they knew nothing of a going away; but when the days came that the bridegroom was taken from them, "then remembered they his words." The announcement of the angels would doubtless revive the many lessons which Jesus himself had taught them as to his purposed departure and his intended return to establish the kingdom; and thenceforward did the second coming of the Lord become their cherished hope—*the great event to which they looked for salvation*. It was the thing they preached and wrote about, the thing they hoped and prayed for, the top-stone of the system of faith which they promulgated.

Of course, it did not, and could not exclude, but rather involved and necessitated the doctrine of Christ's sacrifice for sin, and the necessity for contrition and personal

regeneration; for the second coming of the Lord was only good news to those who loved him, and who were prepared to meet him, and were fitted to be with him. Yet it was the great doctrine to which the others were subordinated. We find Peter teaching it in one of his first addresses after the ascension of Christ:—

> "*And He shall send Jesus Christ*, which before was preached unto you, *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 3:20, 21).

And the same apostle, in writing to the elders among "the strangers scattered abroad," repeated the doctrine in the following connection:—

> "The elders who are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ; and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. Feed the flock of God … AND WHEN THE CHIEF SHEPHERD SHALL APPEAR, *ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away*" (I Pet. 5:1, 2–4).

Thus, as regards the immediate disciples of our Lord, it is proved beyond all question, that his second coming was their great hope,—in fact, their *only* hope, for what other hope could they have? They loved their master dearly, and knew that his return to them would be their own deliverance from the imperfections of a sinful body, and the afflictions of wicked men, and not only so, but the establishment on earth of "glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men." To what other event, then, could they look with *Christian* hope than to the coming of *Christ*?

To what other event could they look with any hope at all? No event in their lifetime had promise for them; and what was there in death except a lightning-bridge to the resurrection? For them it had none of the fascination with which modern preaching has invested it. They did not recognise in "sudden death" "sudden glory." Death to them, instead of being the "portal of bliss," was "the gate of corruption." It was the bondage of that hereditary mortality from which Christ had come to deliver them—the bereaving grave-sleep in which they should deeply slumber till the return of their master to wake them to an incorruptible resurrection, when they should say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

No; their hope was not death, but the return of the Lord, to which all their personal hopes and fears, and all their expectations concerning the fulfilment of God's promises, inevitably directed them. Now, as it was with the apostles, so did it become with those who were afterwards converted to the Christian faith. The gospel preached, conveyed the same hopes which filled the bosoms of the preachers. Having proffered immortality for its basis, Christ's sacrifice as the means presented for faith, and the promised kingdom as "the inheritance" in which immortality would be enjoyed, it naturally led their minds to the coming of Christ as the great realising event; for all the promises contained in it go forward to "the revelation of Jesus Christ" as the time of fulfilment. Did Paul desire to attain to the resurrection from among the dead? (Phil. 3:11). He expected to be included among "they that are Christ's AT HIS COMING" (I Cor. 15:23). Did he look forward to "a crown of righteousness" to be received from "the Lord, the righteous judge"? (II Tim. 4:8). He did not expect its bestowment till "HIS APPEARING *and his kingdom*" (verse 1), referred to as "that day," in verse 8.

Now, were not these the hopes communicated in the Gospel to all who embraced it? Resurrection to eternal life, and inheritance in the kingdom of God, is the salvation offered to every son of Adam without distinction of age or station. If a man receive that promised salvation in the sense of believing it, he "rests in hope." Of what? Of its fulfilment. He may labour in the work of self-preparation with great devotedness—working out his own salvation with fear and trembling; he may follow righteousness with ardour, nursing moral life with

enthusiasm; he may busy himself in the prosecution of every benevolent work, and take delight in pressing the gospel upon the attention of his fellow men; not only may do, but *must* do, if he would be an accepted servant when his Lord comes to take account of his stewardship; but what is the inmost feeling of his nature, if he be a true man? Hope—nay, constant longing desire—for the salvation he preaches to others. That is, tired of his own imperfections and faults as a perishable human being, he yearns for the immortality promised, and grieved with prevailing perversion and injustice, as politically and socially exemplified around him, he longs to be a witness of and partaker in, the perfection of the kingdom of God.

Now as these "things hoped for" cannot be attained till the coming of the Lord to bring them to pass, is it not plain that that coming will be the uppermost anticipation in his mind? It matters not that it is unlikely to occur in his lifetime; because, whether he live or die, it will be the time of his deliverance, and equally important as a matter of prospective contemplation a thousand years before the event, as to a Christian contemporaneous with it.

It is only the popular dogma of immortal-soulism, as involving the belief in a conscious death-state in which spiritual destinies are sealed, that deranges the harmony of New Testament teaching on this point. If Christians at their death are really transported to heaven, to enjoy reward in the presence of the Saviour, the doctrine of his return to the earth cannot have any practical interest for them, because their salvation is altogether independent of it. They *die*, and are SAVED, according to the common teaching; they go to heaven and see Christ; therefore, their attention is naturally concentrated on death, as the great revealing event, and diverted from the coming of Christ, which they come to look upon as a sort of profitless and even questionable doctrine. In fact, the great majority of religious people go the length of rejecting it altogether, as a carnal conceit, and interpret all references to it in the New Testament as meaning the occurrence of death.

What a mighty perversion! What fatal unbelief!—Yet the natural fruit of the corrupt tree on which it grows. If popular belief as to the death-state be correct, then the other is the logical result, and "orthodox" people who go to that extreme, are only consistent. But take away the doctrine of the immortality of the soul—the root of all evil in a theological sense—and harmony is restored. We see the righteous dead asleep in corruption, and perceive the necessity of the Redeemer's advent to wake them to incorruptibility and life, and the essential importance of that event as the object of hope during their lifetime.

We are endeavouring to show that the second coming of Christ was the hope of Christians converted by the preaching of the apostles. We shall now follow up the arguments advanced by quoting a number of passages from the epistles addressed to them in which the doctrine is set forth with a plainness which must carry conviction to every ingenious mind:—

> "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world, *looking for that blessed hope and* THE GLORIOUS APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD AND OUR SAVLOUR, JESUS CHRIST" (Titus 2:11, 12).

> "For our conversation is in heaven, *from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ*, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Phil. 3:20, 21).

> "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; *and unto them that look for Him* SHALL HE APPEAR THE SECOND TIME, without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28).

> "*When Christ, who is our life*, SHALL APPEAR, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4).

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that WHEN HE SHALL APPEAR, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2).

"Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, *and to wait for His Son* FROM HEAVEN, whom He raised from the dead" (I Thess. 1:9, 10).

"Ye come behind in no gift, *waiting for* THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST" (I Cor. 1:7).

"Be patient, therefore, brethren, *unto the coming of the Lord* … stablish your hearts, *for* THE COMING OF THE LORD *draweth nigh*" (James 5:7, 8).

"That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, AT THE APPEARING OF JESUS CHRIST … Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind; be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is brought unto you AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST" (I Pet. 1:7–13).

"The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, *and into the patient waiting for Christ*" (II Thess. 3:5).

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love, one toward another, and toward all men; even as we do toward you; to the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, AT THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, *with all his saints*" (I Thess. 3:12, 13).

"Keep this commandment without spot unrebukable, *until* THE APPEARING *of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (I Tim. 6:14).

"And now, little children, abide in him, that *when he shall appear*, we may have confidence, and *not be ashamed before him at his* COMING" (I John 2:28).

"It is a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels*" (II Thess. 1:6, 7).

"The Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at HIS APPEARING and his kingdom.… Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me AT THAT DAY; and not to me only, but *unto all them also that love his* APPEARING" (II Tim. 4:1–8).

It is superfluous to comment upon these eloquent testimonies. Their scrupulous explicitness leaves no room for argument. They show that the hope of the early Christians was different from that of modern professors; that it laid hold of the coming of the Lord as an object of personal solicitude. Jesus himself had exhorted them to be watchful:—"*Behold, I come as a thief; blessed is he that watcheth*" (Rev. 16:15). He had also said:—

"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.… Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, *and to stand before the Son of Man*" (Luke 21:34–36).

Now, in the professing Christian world of the present day, we see none of this anxiety about the second coming of Christ. There is a universal indifference to it. One is reminded of the statement in the parable, "While the bridegroom tarried, *they all slumbered and slept*." Very few care about the approach of the bridegroom; very few believe in it. When spoken to about it, their language is practically that of the scoffers of whom Peter wrote, "Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from

the beginning of the creation." Ah, but the day comes when this apathy shall be rudely dispelled. "As a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth," said Jesus (Luke 21:35).

How is it that men are so blinded to the most obvious doctrine of the New Testament? Because, under the guidance of a false theory, they look upon death as the eternal settlement of every man for weal and woe, whereas death settles nothing. It consigns us to darkness and silence, to await the coming of Christ. That is the great settling time "when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ" (Rom, 2:16). Blessed are all they who are prepared for its arrival. Happy are they who "look for his appearing"; thrice happy they who "love it"; for it is only to such that he is to "appear the second time unto salvation."

Oh reader! repent thee of thy worldly follies! Give heed to the good message that speaks to thee out of thy Bible! Learn the truth from its neglected pages, and casting thine errors and thy thoughtlessness behind thee, give obedience to the heavenly requirements; and then wait with hope for the coming of the Son of Man, that thou mayest be His in the day when he maketh up His jewels.

Lecture 14

THE HOPE OF ISRAEL, OR, THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS, A PART OF THE DIVINE SCHEME, AND AN ELEMENT OF THE GOSPEL

OF THE DIVINE SCHEME AND AN ELEMENT OF THE GOSPEL.

IT WILL seem a strange suggestion to most in these days, that there is any connection between the gospel hope and an event so local in its character as the restoration of the Jews to their own land (Palestine). Nevertheless, such a connection exists, if we are to be guided by the Scriptures, rather than by learned opinion or venerable tradition.

The interest taken by "Christians," as a body, in the Jews, is purely sentimental in character, and it is very weak and purely retrospective. It arises from the history of the Jews—from their national relation to the Deity in former times; from their ancient mediumship as the channel of revelation; and from their flesh-and-blood connection with the Messiah. It does not stretch into the future, except in the form of professed solicitude for the spiritual interests of the nation, in common with those of mankind in general. It recognises no

connection between their future and the salvation to be manifested in the earth, but is rather in a mood to thank God for a future in which the Jew has no place as such.

Now, we shall see, before we get through this lecture, that the truth of God justifies an interest of a much more practical kind than this. We shall find that in the purpose of God, the salvation of the world is bound up in the destiny of the Jews; that apart from their national glorification, such salvation is a dream, to be realised neither by nations nor individuals, spiritually nor temporally,—and that the man who is either ignorant or sceptical of this coming future development, is darkened in his understanding on one of the essential features of Christian teaching.

We look at the evidence. Jesus said to his disciples, "I am not sent *but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*" (Matt. 15:24). That he meant the Jews is evident from another statement—"*Go not into the way of the Gentiles*, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but *go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*." He further declared to the woman of Samaria, at Jacob's well, "SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS" (John 4:22). These passages alone show the national restrictedness of the salvation proclaimed by Jesus and his apostles. Jesus was a Jew, born in the house of David as the God-appointed heir of David's throne, and the apostles who laboured with him were also Jews. They proclaimed a message which came from the God of the Jews, and which according to the original instructions of Christ was only intended for the Jews. Therefore, Paul could emphatically characterise the gospel as "THE HOPE OF ISRAEL, " which he did in the words recorded in Acts 28:20, "FOR THE HOPE OF ISRAEL I am bound with this chain." He could also make the following statement with peculiar emphasis, in defending himself before Agrippa:—

> "*And now I stand and am judged for* THE HOPE OF THE PROMISE *made of God unto our fathers*; unto which promise *our twelve tribes*, instantly serving God day and night, HOPE TO COME; FOR WHICH HOPE'S SAKE KING AGRIPPA, I AM ACCUSED OF THE JEWS" (Acts 26:6, 7).

He could also say with a truthfulness not generally appreciated:—

> "My kinsmen, *according to the flesh*, who are Israelites, to whom *pertain the* ADOPTION, *and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God*, AND THE PROMISES" (Rom. 9:3–4).

Thus it is evident that the salvation proclaimed for acceptance in the gospel is intensely Jewish in its origin, its application, and its future bearing; and it is equally evident that this was the light in which it was regarded by the disciples after the day of Pentecost; for we read in Acts 11:19, that "They which were scattered abroad … travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, *preaching the word to* NONE BUT UNTO THE JEWS ONLY." The reader will also remember that Peter required a special revelation to instruct him as to God's proposed admission of the Gentiles into the blessings of Israel, and even then he threw the onus of it upon God. He did not attempt to justify it himself, but apologised to his brethren for preaching to the Gentiles, saying, "What was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts 11:17). The fact is, the admission of the Gentiles was one of the "mysteries of the gospel." This is evident from the statement of Paul, in Ephesians 3:4–6:—

> "Ye may understand my knowledge in the *mystery* of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; *that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel*."

But this opening the way for the admission of the Gentiles did not destroy the Israelitish character of "THE HOPE." The effect was just the other way. Instead of the Gentiles converting

the hope into Gentilism by their reception of it, the hope converted them into Jews, conforming them to its essentially Israelitish character. Hence, says Paul, to those Ephesians who received it, "Ye were without Christ, *being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise* … Now therefore ye are NO MORE STRANGERS AND FOREIGNERS, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God" (Eph. 2:12, 19). He further said to the Romans, "HE IS A JEW *which is one inwardly*" (Rom. 2:29), that is, he who, being a Gentile by birth, has become a Jew in heart, and taste, and hope, is more of *a real Jew* than the reprobate natural son of Abraham. Referring to the admission of the Gentiles, he speaks of it as a cutting out of the olive tree, *which is wild by nature*, and a grafting contrary to nature, *into the good olive tree* (Rom. 11:24). Hence the Gentiles are "wild olive branches," without hope—without birthright—without promises—without a future portion of any kind; and if they would become heirs of the inheritance to come, they must cast off "the old man" of their Gentilism, and put on "the new man" of true Jewism, "which is renewed *in knowledge* after the image of Him that created him" (Col. 3:10).

But to come to a closer consideration of the subject: Paul says he was bound "for the hope of Israel," which is equivalent to saying that he preached it, seeing that it was for his preaching that he was put in bonds. Now, if Paul proclaimed "the hope of Israel," it is clear that he did not preach the set of ideas which now passes current in the popular churches as the gospel; for in what sense can these ideas be said to be "the hope of Israel"?

What hope has the gospel of orthodoxy for *them*? It promises them no special blessings in connection with its final development. On the contrary, it takes from them what hope they have. It tells them that their Messiah is not coming, and that their hopes of national reconstitution and aggrandisement under him, m their own land, are carnal and delusive. This alone shows it cannot be the gospel which Paul preached, for the one which he preached was "the hope of Israel." Its essential feature was to be recognised in *a Jewish national hope, founded upon certain promises made of God to the progenitors of the nation*. Those promises on which that hope was founded, constitute glad tidings, or gospel proclaimed by Jesus and the apostles for belief, and those who believed it derived a specific hope from the things so proclaimed. Now, as the one truly Christian hope arises from a reception of the doctrinal teaching of the gospel, and since that is the basis of a *Jewish national hope*, it must be very evident that there is an intimate connection between the Christian hope and the hope of Israel. It is the purpose of this lecture to point out that connection, and, in the doing thereof, to introduce certain matters relevant thereto, which are essential to be known by all who desire to attain to a true knowledge of what the Scriptures teach.

The Jews are a people whose origin and history are pretty well known to intelligent Scripture readers. Abraham, the member of a Chaldean family, was commanded to separate himself from his people, and go into a land *"which he should after receive for an inheritance"* (Heb. 11:8). He obeyed, and went out, "not knowing whither he went." He was afterwards informed that his descendants would become a great nation, with whom God should have special dealings, and who should be the special objects of His care. In the course of time Abraham's household went down into Egypt, and settled in that country as a friendly colony. In the course of events, the Pharoahs enslaved them, and subjected them to a bitter rule for more than two centuries. At the end of that time, they were delivered through divine interposition by the hand of Moses; and after various vicissitudes, they settled in the land of promise under a divine constitution, which provided that so long as the nation was obedient to its requirements, they would remain in the land in prosperity, but that so soon as they departed from the statutes of God who had called and constituted them, adversity would overtake them.

The subsequent part of their history is summed up in a sentence; they failed to observe the conditions of this national covenant, and were expelled from the national territory in disgrace, and scattered among the nations as fugitives, where they remain to this day.

Now, the intelligence of ordinary professing Christians does not go beyond this general outline of the history of the Jews. They look upon Jewish national history as consummated, and the national destiny as irrevocably sealed. They take no cognisance of any future in store for them, as affecting the world's interest in any form. They think that if the Jews turn orthodox Christians, and become the disciples of the missionaries sent to convert them, well, they *may* return to their land; but whether they do or not, it is no matter. "The Anglo-Saxons are the people leading the van—and destined to become the civilisers and enlighteners of the whole world. The Jews are nowhere; they are behind the age, and will very likely be absorbed by the dominant people, who are rapidly filling the world with fruit." This is a prevalent sentiment; and to suggest (as is done in the subject of this lecture) that the salvation of the world is in any way beholden to the contemptible race of the Jews, is to incur the displeasure of patriotism, and the patronising pity of the wise of this generation.

However, an intelligent regard for the Scriptures of truth enables a man to endure these unpleasant results. He is able to see the futility of human proposings when they come into collision with God's declared purpose. The great Disposer has said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways"; and this principle we see illustrated in the matter in hand. Human "ways" would have extirpated the Jews from the earth centuries ago; but the Higher ways have preserved them amid the fall of Gentile dynasties, and the annihilation of Gentile races; and to this day they remain a distinct and indestructible people though scattered among the nations of the earth. Human "thoughts" have alienated the Jews, as a nation, from all further divine relationship; but the Higher thoughts, while having for the time cast off Israel for their sins, have decreed the ultimate disappearance of every other nation under heaven, and the eternal preservation of the despised nation in closest communion with Himself (Jer. 30:11). This will be brought into stronger prominence hereafter. Meanwhile, the reader's attention is directed to the following testimonies regarding the national standing of the Jews before God:—

> "I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, *that ye should be* MINE" (Lev. 20:26).
>
> "Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God *hath chosen thee to be a* SPECIAL PEOPLE UNTO HIMSELF, above all people *that are upon the face of the earth*" (Deut. 7:6).
>
> "Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; and the Lord *hath chosen thee to be a* PECULIAR PEOPLE UNTO HIMSELF, *above all nations that are upon the earth*" (Deut. 14:2).
>
> "The Lord hath avouched thee this day to be HIS PECULIAR PEOPLE, as He hath promised thee; and that thou shouldest keep all His commandments, and *to make thee high above all nations* which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour: and that thou mayest be a holy people unto the Lord thy God" (Deut. 26:18, 19).

It would be difficult to give more emphatic expression to the idea of a special, deliberate, and unconditional selection by God of the Jews as a people to Himself. Who may cavil at it? "Hath not the potter power over the clay?" Hath not the Eternal Creator, in His infinite wisdom, the right to develop His own plans in His own way? The selection of the Jews is one feature of the plan which He has conceived in relation to this world. This is incontestably proved by the testimonies adduced. Nothing can undo that selection. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." The Jews *themselves* cannot nullify the decree. They may bring upon themselves, as they have done, the divine displeasure and the divine affliction by their

sins, but they cannot alter their position before God as His chosen nation. The very punishments which they have endured for many generations are proof of the divine speciality of their national character. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; THEREFORE *I will punish you for all your iniquities*." This is the language of Jehovah toward them in Amos 3:2, the very calamities which have befallen them are proofs of divine supervision and dealing. At present, they are in dispersion, because of their iniquities, but not for ever cast off, as the common idea is. Paul says, in Rom. 11:2, "God *hath not cast away* His people which He foreknew." The testimony of Jeremiah is still stronger. In chapter 30:11, we read:—

> "Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, *yet will I not make a full end of thee*; but I will CORRECT thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."

The national sufferings of Israel are but the *measured correction* to which God is subjecting them; they are not evidence that God has finally rejected them. The language of Jehovah, in Jeremiah 33:24–26, would imply that some, in ancient times, took a contrary view, and contended, as many who call themselves Christians now do, that God had for ever disowned His people, and intended their destruction. The answer is sublimely emphatic:—

> "Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the Lord hath chosen *He hath even cast them off*. Thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith the Lord, *If my covenant be* NOT *with day and night, and if I have* NOT *appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth,* THEN *will I cast away the seed of Jacob and David my servant*."

Again, in Micah 4:11, 12, we read:—

> "Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion. But *they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they His counsel*; for He shall gather them (the nations) as the sheaves into the floor. 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*."

Again, in Jeremiah 51:20:—

> "Thou art my battle-axe and weapons of war; for *with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms*."

These are the very words of the Almighty. They show us that though the Jews are now in a very feeble and degraded condition, they are destined to be the breakers of all kingdoms under heaven. So that even Britain herself, with all her national sensitiveness and pride, will have to submit to them, or be shivered by the stone which shall then be made the head of the comer.

At present, the Jews are suffering as a punishment for their sins. This was foreshown by all the prophets. The predictions are too well known to require quoting. The evidence of their truthfulness is before our eyes. We see it in the wide-spread dispersion of the nation which was once the sovereign people of the world; we behold it in the ignominy of their social position wherever they are to be found, and in the reproaches and insults which the mocking Gentiles heap upon them. Deep and heavy has been their draught of the cup of cursing and woe, at the hands of the Avenger. They cried, "His blood be on us and on our children," and with blood and fire has their terrible invocation returned into their bosoms. But are there no brighter days for Israel? Are their calamities to have no end? Is Jehovah's anger to burn against them for ever? Let us hear the prophet:—

> "Thus saith the Lord, *like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people so will I bring upon them* ALL THE GOOD THAT I HAVE PROMISED THEM" (Jer. 32:42).

Here is a complete answer to the question. Its affirmation is that *good* will suceed the *evil* which is now upon them, which implies that the present time of national adversity will come to an end. Let it further be noted, that the good predicted is declared to have been "promised": "All the good *that I have promised them*." Now the question immediately suggested by the consideration of this statement is, "what good has been promised them?" In answer to this, we read in Jeremiah 33:14, 16:—

> "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform THAT GOOD THING *which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah*. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David: and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. *In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely*."

Here the "good thing promised" is briefly summarised. Its two main features are,—a king to execute judgment and righteousness *in the land* and the salvation of Judah and Jerusalem *in his day*. This is neither more nor less than a promise of the Messiah to rescue them from their enemies, and to recover them from the oppressions to which they have been subject for ages, a promise which is repeated in the following words, in Ezekiel 37:22:—

> "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."

It is important to note the second element in the good thing promised: "*In these days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely."* It must be evident to the most obtuse intellect, that these days are yet to come; for, at present there is no Messiah executing judgment in the promised land, and no dwelling safely of Judah and Jerusalem, and never has there been such a state of things. Yet the promise is that this "good thing" shall "come to pass," with all the certainty of the evil which has overtaken the nation; and this promise is not confined to this part of Scripture, nor restricted to this language. We read in Jeremiah 31:28:—

> "It shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict, *so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, saith the Lord*."

This is to be in the days of the Righteous Branch, when "he shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" for we find in Jeremiah 3:17, 18, as follows:—

> "At that time, they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it; to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem, neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart. IN THOSE DAYS, *the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel; and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers*."

We further read in Ezekiel 37:21:—

> "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."

Again in Ezekiel 36:24:—

"*I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will* BRING YOU INTO YOUR OWN LAND."

There is no evading this language. It is too definitely worded to be spiritualised or misunderstood. As if to preclude such a thing, it is put in the following antithetical manner in Jeremiah 31:10:—

"Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off. *He* that SCATTERED *Israel will* GATHER *him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.*"

In the sense therefore, in which the Jews were scattered, will they be gathered. They were driven from their own land, and dispersed among the nations; this was the scattering. They will be collected from the lands among which they are now distributed in disgrace, and re-settled in their land as a great nation; this will be the gathering. Surely this is plain. The Jews are now a taunt and a proverb, according to the prediction of Moses; but in their restoration, it will just be the reverse. They will be supremely honoured in proportion as they are now despised. We read in Zeph. 3:19, 20:—

"Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee, and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and *I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame*. At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you; for *I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord*."

Again, Zechariah 8:23:—

"Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold *of the skirt of him that is a Jew*, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

This honour is connected with political supremacy. The Jews—the meanest, the weakest, the most despised people on the face of the earth, are to become the most powerful and renowned among the nations, having all people in subjection. This is evident from the following testimony:—

"The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising: … and the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee; for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. Therefore, thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day or night, that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. *For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee* SHALL PERISH; *yea, those nations* SHALL BE UTTERLY WASTED.… The sons also of them that afflicted thee *shall come bending unto thee*; and all they that despised thee *shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet*; and they shall call the the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations" (Isa. 60:3, 10–12, 14–15).

When this shall come to pass, the enemies of Israel will be confounded. Those who now deride them, and mock at their national hope, will be overtaken by the retribution to which they are rendering themselves liable. The approaching noontide of Jewish prosperity will be their destruction. The preliminary symptoms of the change will fill them with panic. This is the testimony of the following Scripture:—

"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, and shall fear because of thee" (Mic. 7:16, 17).

And the fate they dread will overtake them, as is evident from the words of Isaiah, chapter 49:25–26:—

"I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children: and I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know that I, the Lord, am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob."

Again, in Isaiah 41:11, 12, we read:—

"Behold all they that were incensed against thee *shall be ashamed and confounded*. THEY SHALL BE AS NOTHING; *and they that strive with thee* SHALL PERISH. *Thou shalt seek them and shall not find them*, even them that contended with thee. They that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought."

Here, then, is certain doom for all who now take part against Israel; but there is a blessing in store for those who befriend them. "Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee." This was the decree pronounced by Balaam under the influence of the spirit, and declared to Abraham centuries before. It is both individual and national in its application. Nations that have been least rigorous in their persecutions of the Jews will, in all probability, fare the best at the coming of Christ. England is first among this class. She was among the persecutors of the chosen nation in the early part of her history; but within recent centuries, she has loosened their bonds, and granted free protection to their persons and property, and latterly she has abolished their disabilities, and promoted them to the rank of citizenship, and even admitted them to Parliament. Individuals who have looked with interest and compassion upon the exiled race may expect a blessing when the scoffer's brazen voice is heard no more.

We look upon the Jews in their present condition, and find them destitute of much that is admirable. They seem the embodiments of sordidness and callousness. This is a difficulty in the case at which many honest minds stumble. They say, how is such a character to be reconciled with the coming blessing of Him who is no respecter of persons, and who gives to every man according to his work? There would be force in this inquiry if the restoration of the Jews were conditional upon the moral condition of the nation. That it is not is evident from Ezekiel 36:22, 32:—

"*I do not this for* YOUR SAKES, O house of Israel, *but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went*."

"NOT FOR YOUR SAKES *do I this, saith* the Lord God, be it known unto you; BE ASHAMED AND CONFOUNDED FOR YOUR OWN WAYS, O house of Israel."

At the same time, though national restoration as a purpose of God is not contingent upon national reformation, there will be a national purgation before that restoration is effected. Though they will be gathered from the countries irrespectively of moral condition, they will not necessarily obtain admission into the land. That admission is conditional with every individual of the nation. This is evident from Ezekiel 20:34–38:—

"I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God, *And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant*, and I WILL PURGE OUT FROM AMONG YOU THE REBELS

AND THEM THAT TRANSGRESS AGAINST ME. I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, *and they shall* NOT *enter into the land of Israel*."

In this we recognise a parallel to what occurred to them after leaving Egypt under Moses. They were then a rabble of untutored, unbelieving slaves; and a whole generation, with the exception of two persons—Caleb and Joshua—perished in the wilderness. They "entered not in because of unbelief," says Paul (Heb. 4:6). So the Jews contemporary with the return of Christ, will be unfit to enter the land; the event will find them in their present degraded and perverse condition; and the purging described in the testimony above will be necessary. That purging will take place in the wilderness, as in the days of Moses, and may occupy the same period for its accomplishment, from what is stated in Micah 7:15: "*According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt* will I shew unto him marvellous things." Possibly, however, this expression, "according to the days," may not refer to length of the time, but to the character of the days. Be that as it may, the following testimonies will, after the process, be fulfilled:—

"Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good; and shall *lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations*" (Ezek. 36:31).

"*Thy people also shall be* ALL RIGHTEOUS; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified" (Isa. 60:21).

It is sometimes objected that Palestine is too small to hold all the Jews. The objection, however, proceeds on the erronous supposition that previous generations of Israel, according to the flesh, will be resurrected for restoration. We have no reason to suppose that there will be such a resurrection. The resurrection that occurs at the manifestation of Christ the restorer, is limited to classes that cannot be brought within the national category—one too high and one too low, to be comprised in the restoration of mortal Jews, namely (I), those who rise to everlasting life, and to reign with Christ over both Jews and Gentiles; and (2), those who rise to be condemned in shame to punishment and second death (Dan. 12:2; Jno. 5:29). The promised restoration is restricted to the generation contemporaneous with the advent of the Messiah; and perhaps, even they, as we have seen, will only be gathered to perish in the wilderness like their forefathers in the days of the first exodus.

There is no injustice done to previous generations, for we must remember that the Jews are God's people, *only in a national sense*. They are His nation, whom He has chosen out of all other people on the face of the earth. He has not selected them with a view to special benefit individually. In respect of the salvation to be conferred through Christ, they are on equal footing with the Gentiles; yet nationally, their relationship to God is very special, as will be made manifest in the future age.

Now from the testimony advanced, we learn:—

1.—That the Jews are God's chosen nation.

2.—That they are the repository of God's promises.

3.—That they are dispersed at present as a punishment for their iniquities.

4.—That they are to be restored from their dispersion, and reinstated as a people in their own land.

5.—That all the enemies of Israel are to be destroyed, and

6.—That the remnant of the nations are to become subject to the restored kingdom of Israel, and to repair periodically to Jerusalem to do homage to the King of all the earth, and to learn his ways.

This is a summary of the things constituting "the hope of Israel," for which Paul was bound with chains; and who can fail to perceive that they are also the bases of the believer's

hope, as set forth in previous lectures? The hope of the believe is the coming of Christ, and the establishment of the kingdom of God, involving the restoration of Israel. The hope of the Jew is the coming of Christ, and the establishment of the kingdom of God. Hence their hopes are identical, though their relation to it is, at first, slightly different. The apostolic gospel is truly "the hope of Israel." That gospel was, in reality, a proclamation of a coming re-establishment of the kingdom of Israel under the "greater than Solomon," and an invitation to all to become partakers of Israel's glory, on certain specified conditions. No one, therefore, can Scripturally understand the kingdom of God, which is the gospel hope, who is ignorant of the prophetic teaching concerning the restoration of the Jews, for that restoration is a most essential element of its establishment. Were it Omitted, no kingdom of God, such as is revealed, could be set up in the future age.

Yet a certain class of well-meaning persons oppose the doctrine zealously. Taking their stand upon certain statements in the New Testament, they maintain, with great tenacity, that the restoration of the Jews is impossible. Now, we may accept it as a first principle, that any New Testament deduction which is diametrically opposed to the plain statements of the prophets, is erroneous, for the writers of the New Testament said "none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come" (Acts 26:22), and appealed to them as their authorities. There can be no contradiction in writings dictated by one and the same eternal Spirit; and, in fact, there is none. The New Testament arguments against the restoration of Israel, are all based on misconceptions of the statements on which they are founded. One of these is Rom. 9:6, 7:—

> "They are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of promise are counted for the seed."

Now, this statement is in strict agreement with the prophets, without in any way diminishing the force of their teaching in reference to the speciality of the Jews as a nation, and their future natural restoration. It is *absolutely true* that all of Israel are *not* Israel—that thousands of the seed of Abraham are *not* CHILDREN—and that the divine principle is to count "the children of the promise" for the seed; and this is exemplified individually and nationally. In the case of the Jews, requirements such as circumcision, sacrifice, reverence for the name of God, and numberless other things specified in the law, were laid down as conditions of citizenship in the nation, and transgression was visited with expulsion. The penalty attached to almost every statute was, "*That soul shall be* CUT OFF *from his people*." Transgressors, therefore, though *of* Israel, were not *Israel*, even under the law. A whole generation of such non-Israelites perished in the wilderness; but this did not nullify the national election of the seed of Abraham (through Israel). It only showed that fleshly descent from Abraham did not of itself constitute accepted Israeliteship—that it required Abraham's faith as well as Abraham's blood.

Individually, as well, in reference to the heirship of the kingdom, "the children of the promise are counted for the seed." No fleshly son of Abraham has a natural title to the honour, glory, and immortality of the kingdom, covenanted. These are reserved for a class developed on the principle of believing the *promises*. In this respect, "the flesh profiteth nothing"; and even in respect of mortal citizenship, it profiteth nothing, for, as we have seen, that privilege is not to be granted on mere fleshly title. "I will bring you into the bond of the covenant, and I will purge out from among you the rebels." This is the prophetic declaration. Thousands of Jews will be gathered from the countries who will never enter the land. Yet this will not destroy their national relationship. Being Jews, whom God has specially chosen as a

nation, with a view to the development of His ultimate purpose, they will every one be gathered in the preliminary restoration. This is the declaration of Moses, who says:—

> "If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will He fetch thee" (Deut. 30:4).

Isaiah gives similar testimony; he says:—

> "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*" (chap. 11:12). "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt; and *ye shall be gathered* ONE BY ONE, O ye children of Israel" (chap. 27:12).

Thus there will be an indiscriminate national restoration, without any reference to moral condition, just as in the case of the tribes when delivered from Egypt by the hand of Moses; because the nation, as a whole, is God's by sovereign election, and cannot alienate themselves from that relation, though they may be rebellious, and render themselves obnoxious to His destroying judgments. Yet, having been thus indiscriminately gathered, they are not at once settled in the land, but, like their forefathers, in the day that they came. out of the land of Egypt (see testimony already quoted from Ezekiel 20), are subject to an expurgating process in the wilderness, from which none who are morally unfit for the privilege of citizenship under the Messiah, shall escape. "I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they *shall not enter into the land of Israel*."

Thus, even in the future national restoration of the Jews, the mere children of the flesh are not counted for the seed, but those of faith who shall be developed by the probation in the wilderness. It must then be obvious that it is a very short-sighted construction of Paul's words, indeed, which would use them to destroy the doctrine of Jewish national restoration. It is a construction to which he himself would strenuously object, were he now alive; for he has left his mind on the subject on record. Speaking of his "kinsmen *according to the flesh*, who are Israelites" (Rom. 9:3), he says:—

> "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, UNTIL *the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*; and so *all Israel* SHALL BE SAVED; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness *from Jacob.… As touching the election*, THEY ARE BELOVED FOR THE FATHER'S SAKE; for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.… If the fall of them be the riches of the world and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, *how much more* THEIR FULNESS? If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, WHAT SHALL THE RECEIVING OF THEM BE, *but life from the dead*?" (Rom. 11:25, 26, 28, 12, 15).

Here Paul contemplates an approaching Jewish "*fulness*, " "a receiving again," a national change, "when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," and warns the Gentiles in view of this not to boast against the Jews in the wisdom of their own conceit (verse 25). This lets us into Paul's views on the subject of the restoration of the Jews. The prophets and Moses as we have seen, foretell the glorious restoration and national restitution of the veritable nation that has suffered the vengeance of the Almighty for nearly twenty centuries. How then could Paul, who spake none other things than they (Acts 26:22), inculcate principles entirely subversive of their teaching? It is only partial knowledge or positive ignorance that leads men to erect a system of doctrine on the New Testament that contradicts the plainest testimonies of the "holy men of God," who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

There are other objections frequently urged of an equally baseless nature, but the limited space at disposal prevents the notice of them. Enough has been said to show that the

restoration of Israel is one of the main features of the divine purpose to be developed in the future—that the kingdom of God cannot be established without its accomplishment, and that, in fact, it is an element in the grand event on which the world's salvation depends. "Salvation is of the Jews," nationally and individually. It is important then to understand this element of the truth of God, that by our enlightenment, we may be enabled to put off our Gentilism, and become related to a higher polity—even the commonwealth of Israel—in which, being "*Abraham's seed*," we shall be "HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE."

Lecture 15

COMING TROUBLES AND THE SECOND ADVENT

THE SUBJECT of this lecture is one that has no charm for the generality of mankind. Men do not like to think of coming judgment. It is not congenial to their tastes. The expectation of them, still more the enunciation of them, is regarded as indicative of a low-born and vulgar fanaticism. Refinement is supposed to be shown by the more popular idea that the world will gradually hush into millennial tranquillity without disturbance to the present order.

It is possible to give a perfectly reasonable hypothesis of this state of public sentiment. But it is not particularly worth the time necessary. It will be a better plan to show that a belief in coming troubles, as the precursors of Christ's approaching manifestation on earth in power and great glory, is the inevitable consequence of practical faith in the Bible as the revealed will of God. Any imputation therefore, arising from such a belief, is against the Bible, and not against the subject of the belief; for there is a marked difference between gratuitous fancy, and intelligent conviction arising from credence accorded to authority.

In former lectures, we have seen that it is the purpose of God to send Jesus Christ to the earth again for the purpose of destroying all kingdoms that exist, and setting up a kingdom of His own that will be universal and never ending. Our attention is now directed to the circumstances attendant upon this prodigious change in the world's history. Will the change from the kingdom of men to the kingdom of God be instantaneous, or the slow result of a universal process? Will Christ steal upon the earth in a time of peace, and quietly destroy the powers of the earth, with their armies, in a single night, as in the case of the Assyrians in the days of old? Or, will he be manifested when wars are rife, and trouble abroad? The testimony is very explicit on this point:—

> 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).

> "Upon the earth (shall be) distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth" (Luke 21:25, 26).
>
> "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Behold, *evil shall go forth from nation to nation*, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day, from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth" (Jer. 25:32, 33).

These testimonies answer the question. They show that the change which will introduce the kingdom of God on earth will be accompanied by troubles on a scale without parallel in history; that the whole world will be involved in political difficulties, and suffer from the many evils incident to such a condition. But we shall find that another element of trouble will characterise the times of the second advent—that God Himself will operate in visible judgment upon the nations of the earth—that natural perplexities will be supplemented by miraculous retributions. The testimonies to this effect are numerous and emphatic; and as the entire argument hinges upon them, they deserve the most thoughtful consideration. We read in Jeremiah 25:30, 31:—

> "Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon his habitation. He shall give a shout as they that tread the grapes, *against all the inhabitants of the earth*. A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; *for the Lord hath a* CONTROVERSY *with the nations; he* WILL PLEAD WITH *all flesh, he will give them that are wicked to the sword*."

Here is a direct pleading with "all flesh," on the part of the Almighty, and the extirpation of the wicked from among men. History supplies no record of such an awful transaction. The time of its accomplishment will appear from the next testimony:

> "Behold *the name of the Lord* COMETH FROM FAR, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy; *his lips are full of* INDIGNATION, *and his tongue as a devouring fire*; and his breath as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity" (Isa. 30:27, 28).

Who is "the name of the Lord" personified in this quotation from Isaiah? We hear the answer when we listen to him who said, "I am come *in my Father's name*" (John 5:43), and of whom it is written, "There is NONE OTHER NAME under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"; viz., Jesus the Christ, the anointed God-with-us—the Word made flesh—a name of God provided for the investiture of the naked sons of men. The prophecy represents him as "coming FROM FAR." What is the meaning of this? We find it explained in Christ's parable to his disciples, which is recorded in Luke 19:12–27—"A certain nobleman went into a FAR COUNTRY to receive for himself a kingdom, and to RETURN." Hence, Jesus (the nobleman), returning from heaven (the far country), is "*The name of the Lord coming from far*."

Now in what character is he revealed, according to the prophecy? "His lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire." Or take Paul's representation: "*The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire* TAKING VENGEANCE *on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*"; which is in agreement with the statement in Isaiah 11:4: "He shall *smite the earth with the* rod of his mouth: and with the breath of his lips shall he *slay the wicked*." Finally, we contemplate the picture symbolically elaborated in Rev. 19:11–16:—

> "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth. judge and make war. His eyes were as

a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns: and he had a NAME WRITTEN that no man knew but he himself; and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his NAME is called the WORD OF GOD. And their armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean; and out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should *smite the nations*; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; *and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God*. And he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

Having seen that "the name of the Lord coming from far, burning with his anger," answers to the approaching advent of Christ to take vengeance, it will be profitable to cite other testimonies to show that this doctrine of coming judgment is the uniform teaching of the Spirit in the word, and not a mere inference from some isolated expressions. We read in Isaiah 66:15, 16:—

"Behold the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, *to render* HIS ANGER *with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and* THE SLAIN OF THE LORD SHALL BE MANY."

Again, Psalm 1, 3–6:—

"Our God shall come and shall not keep silence: *a fire shall devour before him*, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is judge himself."

Further, in Mal. 4:1, 2:—

"Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; *and all the proud, yea, all that do wickedly*, SHALL BE STUBBLE; *and the day that cometh shall* BURN THEM UP, *saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch*. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise *with healing in his wings*."

To a similar purport, Jer. 30:23, 24:—

"Behold the whirlwind of the Lord shall go forth with fury—a continuing whirlwind; *it shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked*. The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return until he hath done it, and until he hath performed the intents of his heart; IN THE LATTER DAYS YE SHALL CONSIDER IT."

Again, Psalm 21:9:—

"Thou shalt make them (his enemies) as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger; the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath; and the fire shall devour them."

"Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup" (Psa. 11:6).

"And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the Isles: and they shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezek. 39:6).

"*And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth*. They shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried. They shall be dung upon the ground" (Jer. 25:33).

Surveying these testimonies as a whole, we find that they reveal two separate stages in the "coming troubles." First, there is "distress of nations"—"evil going forth from nation to nation"—and "men's hearts failing them for fear," etc.—which may be designated as the natural stage; and second, a divine manifeststation in the person of the Son of Man (who is

"the name of the Lord") accompanied by sweeping judgments of fire and sword which will destroy large masses of mankind: which may be considered as the supernatural. The former precedes the latter. Hence, as the first indication of the approach of the end, we must look for times of trouble and commotion on the earth.

When natural trouble has advanced to a certain point, the Lord Jesus will be revealed, no longer as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,"—"a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," but as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, treading the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God,"—taking vengeance on this unbelieving generation. The vengeance in relation to mankind as a whole will be destruction to the majority, and discipline to the remnant. Multitudes will perish by war and pestilence; multitudes more will fall victims to the fire which will descend, after the manner of the judgments upon Sodom and Gomorrah; and the flames that consumed the military companies that went to bring Elijah from the top of the mount. "The slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth."

The earth's population will be greatly thinned; its reprobate elements expurgated, leaving a residue composed of the meek and submissive, and well-disposed of mankind, who will constitute the willing subjects of Messiah's kingdom, referred to in Isaiah 2:3; Jeremiah 3:17; Micah 4:2; and Zechariah 14:16, as the nations which shall go up "to the house of the God of Jacob," at Jerusalem, to learn of His ways, and walk in His paths, walking no more after the imagination of their evil hearts.

But this result will not be at once developed. The subjugation of the world is a matter of time. When Christ comes, the powers will league themselves against him. This is evident from Rev. 19:19: "I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together *to make war* AGAINST *him that sat on the horse*, and against his army." This is after his descent from heaven (see verse 11). It may be thought incredible that nations should be so infatuated as to attempt to oppose the movements of omnipotence. The answer is, that what has been may be again. The Egyptians did not succumb before the unmistakable evidence of divine working, but madly pursued Israel after they left Egypt, and came to perdition in the Red Sea. It is not at all improbable that the powers on the Continent may look upon Christ as some new Mahomet—some fanatical caliph bent upon the project of universal conquest. Under this impression they will combine to put him down; but their misguided efforts will recoil upon their own heads to their destruction:—

> "The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters, but God shall rebuke them: and they shall flee afar off; and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind; and like thistledown before the whirlwind. Behold at eventide trouble; and before the morning HE IS NOT" (Isa. 17:13, 14).

> "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure" (Psa. 2:4, 5).

> "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen; he shall fill the places with dead bodies. He shall wound the heads over many countries" (Psa. 110:5, 6).

> "It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. They shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison (viz. the grave: Zech. 9:11); and confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously" (Isa. 24:21–23).

> "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall be thunder upon them (then the sequel). The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed (or Christ)" (I Sam. 2:10).

Also, let Zeph. 3:8, and Haggai 2:6, 22, be consulted, as well as other Scriptures, which may be found on search. Thus the attempt on the part of the "constituted" powers to resist the new-risen Eastern monarch, will result in their utter discomfiture. Their audacity will meet with terrible retribution. The entire system of human government which they represent will be shivered to atoms, and the invincible autocracy of the Greater than Solomon will be asserted and universally established.

This, however, will not be accomplished in an instant. God could annihilate the power of the enemy in a moment, and at once clear the ground for the erection of His own power in the earth; but there would then be no scope for the intended punishment of this wicked world, and no depth in the moral effect upon "the remnant." God could at once have destroyed the Egyptians and liberated the captive Israelites; but then the lesson which was intended to be wrought for all time would not have been graven sufficiently deep; the Jews would have carried away but an indistinct idea of the greatness and omnipotence of Jehovah; and the historical name of God, which is one of the buttresses of our faith, would have been ill-remembered. The divine workings are always characterised by comprehensiveness of aim, and it is only ignorance of the purpose that engenders contempt for the means. In the collision, then, which will take place at the end, between the powers of this world and Christ, the man whom God hath appointed to judge the world in righteousness, man will be allowed to go his utmost length, and to put forth his power in the vain attempt to vanquish unsuspected omnipotence. This will give time for the moral operation of the judgments which will be brought to bear in their suppression:—

> "WHEN thy judgments are in the earth, *the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*" (Isa. 26:9).

> "All nations shall come and worship before thee; FOR THY JUDGMENTS ARE MADE MANIFEST" (Rev. 15:4).

Many laborious campaigns will probably take place before complete subjugation is effected. The governments of the earth will struggle with desperation to preserve the human *regime* from threatened annihilation. They will fight to the last, and will hope till expiring hope goes out in the complete triumph of the Lamb, "who shall overcome them." During the interval which will thus be occupied, a righteous and submissive people will be developed by means of the judgment manifested who will be glad to hail the inauguration of the new government, which will be universally established upon the ruins of "the kingdoms of this world."

What will be the position of Christ's own people at this crisis, those who now and in all ages "look for his appearing," being "like unto men that wait for their Lord"? It is clear that they are not left among the nations during this dreadful time of trouble; they are with "the Lamb," as is evident from Rev. 17:14: "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for He is the Lord of lords and King of kings, *and they that are* WITH *him* are called, and chosen, and faithful." Who are "they that are with him"? The answer appears in the next testimony: "The Lord my God shall come, *and all* THE SAINTS *with thee*" (Zech. 14:5).

The saints co-operate with Christ in executing the judgments written. This honour is in reserve for them all. It will be their privilege "to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have ALL HIS SAINTS" (Psalm

149:7–9). This "honour" will be sustained at the time contemplated in the words of Daniel, chap. 7:22: "JUDGMENT *was given to the saints of the Most High*; and the time came that *the saints possessed the kingdom*." Paul reminds the Corinthians of this approaching elevation of the saints to the judgment-seat: "Do ye not know that *the saints shall judge the world*? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life"? (I Cor. 6:2, 3). It is also seen by John in vision, as recorded in Rev. 20:4: "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and *judgment was given unto them*."

Thus it is obvious that in the closing judgment-scenes of this dispensation, the saints will be associated with the Lord Jesus in destroying the political, ecclesiastical, and social systems which aggregately constitute "this present evil world." This is a work of devastation for which the mere religious sentimentalists of the age would be unfit. It will involve much destruction of life, after the wholesale example of the flood, and develop a time of trouble, such as never has been witnessed since there was a nation on earth—"a day of darkness and gloominess—a day of clouds and thick darkness—the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Widespread will be the desolations produced; bloody and scathing the judgments ministered at the hands of Jesus and the saints. "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; for the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low.… They shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth" (Isa. 2:11, 12, 19).

It must be obvious, then, that before this judgment period commences, the saints will be removed from the spheres which they occupy in the world; otherwise they would not be with Christ, and would be involved in the general troubles, which is contrary to the words in which they are addressed in Isaiah 26:20, 21:—

> "Come, my people, *enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee*: hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, *until the indignation be overpast*; for, behold; the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth, also, shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

The mode of this "entering into the chamber, and shutting the door" to hide, is made apparent in the New Testament; first, by reference to Matt. 25:10, where we read "They that were ready went in with him to the marriage, *and the door was shut*": and second, by reference to Rev. 19:7, 8, where we find that this marriage is the reunion between Christ and his people at his coming. This is further manifest from the teaching of Paul in I Thess. 4:16–17:—

> "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then, WE WHICH ARE ALIVE AND REMAIN, *shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air*; AND SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD."

This is referred to in II Thess. 2:1, as "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, *and by our gathering together unto him*." The first event that takes place, then, after the return of the Lord from heaven, is the "gathering together" of all His saints to him, including the dead of past ages, who shall have been raised for the purpose. This gathering together is to judgment. Paul says: "We (brethren) must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10); and the parables which Christ spake on earth, illustrative of his then approaching departure to heaven, and his subsequent return, have this characteristic: "And it

came to pass that *when* he was returned, having received the kingdom, *then he commanded these servants* TO BE CALLED UNTO HIM, to whom he had given the money." (Luke 19:15).

From all this, it appears, that on his return, his dead servants will be raised, and his living servants gathered with them from every part of the earth where they may be scattered, to be arraigned before him, that he may "take account of them" (Matt. 18:23). He will approve of some, and reject others: the latter will be sentenced to share in the judgments which will descend upon the apocalyptic "beast and his armies," or sin, as politically and ecclesiastically incorporate in the powers that will "make war with the Lamb" and his army; the former will be admitted to the marriage ceremony, in which they will be confessed, "before the Father and all the holy angels" (Matt. 10:32; Rev. 3:5), and will thenceforward "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth" (Rev. 14:4), and co-operate with him in the infliction upon the nations of that "judgment written" which was treated of in the earlier part of the lecture.

All this takes place before divine judgments commence, but not before that "distress of nations with perplexity," which is the preliminary symptom of the approaching "time of trouble, such as never was." That state of political embarrassment will, probably, prevail for a considerable time before the saints are called away to the reckoning, and men will only consider it a repetition of commotions that have many times recurred in the course of history. They will only look to its proximate cause. They will never suspect that a divine hand is guiding the development of events, or that "the judge is nigh, even at the door." They will never dream that the world is on the verge of the most awful crisis that has ever occurred in its history—that divine indignation, long restrained, is about to visit the world in destroying judgments that will break up the entire system of human society, as politically, ecclesiastically, and socially organised.

But like the little hand-cloud presaging the coming storm, the saints will be removed at a particular juncture of affairs without previous intimation. In all probability, the event will be so inconspicuous as to attract little attention. All that the world in general will know of it will be that a few obscure individuals, holding "fanatical" doctrines, have mysteriously disappeared; few will ever seriously suppose that there is anything supernatural in the occurrence. Theories of the phenomenon will be ready to hand, and the incident will be forgotten—at least by the majority. Some who happened to know that this expected removal was part of the doctrine of these fanatical people, may be unable to quell a certain feeling of uneasiness which will trouble their breasts; but the world at large will be unaffected, and will move on to the destruction that awaits it at the revelation of Jesus with all his saints.

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For the sake of clearness, it will be well to summarise the events already spoken of, in their chronological order:—

1st.—"Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity," arising from the complication of international politics, described as "evil going forth from nation to nation," and producing a failing of heart among men (Luke 21:26; Jeremiah 25:32).

2nd.—The coming of Christ as a thief (Rev. 16:15), after the development of certain events to be spoken of hereafter.

3rd.—Resurrection of "the dead in Christ."

4th.—The gathering of the saints to Christ from all parts of the earth, including the living and those who have been dead.

5th.—The judgment of His servants, comprising the rejection of the unworthy; and acceptance of the "good and faithful"; the sending away of the former into the territory of the nations on whom judgment will descend, and the uniting of the latter as "the bride made ready," in glorious marriage, to the long absent but then arrived bridegroom.

6th.—War between the "powers that be," and the Lamb, who shall overcome them.

7th.—Heavy judgments inflicted on the nations by Jesus and the saints, producing great slaughter over all the earth, and resulting in the complete abolition of the existing order of things, and in the teaching of righteousness to men.

8th.—Setting up of the kingdom of God, which will last for a thousand years, and then undergo a change in its constitution, adapting it to the necessities of the eternal ages beyond.

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This is a general outline of the events which will occur at "the end," in connection with the establishment of the kingdom of God. It is deficient, however, in one important respect; it does not embrace those events which constitute the *occasion* of the Messiah's thief-like advent, and takes no note of the political signs which are revealed in Scripture as the premonitory indications of the near approach of the end. These, with the question of how near the world probably lies to the great crisis, will be dealt with in the next lecture.

Lecture 16

TIMES AND SIGNS: OR THE EVIDENCE THAT THE END IS NEAR

(*The reader is referred to the Foreword to this edition regarding the time periods mentioned in this lecture*)

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THERE ARE many signs abroad indicative of the near approach of that interference of God in the affairs of men, which will result in changing the kingdoms of this world into "the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" (Rev. 11:15). To discern them, history and prophecy must be known and understood to some considerable extent. These are the two great lights which reveal the bearing of current events. Without them, a man will neither recognise nor be interested in "the signs of the times."

Our first inquiry must be in reference to "times and seasons." This is the key to the whole subject, for if we have no clue to our whereabouts in the Gentile era, and no knowledge of the length to which that era will run, it is obvious we have no reason for believing ourselves in the neighbourhood of the end, and nothing to justify us in seeking to find in contemporaneous events the signs that attend and usher in that end. On one point there can be no difference of opinion, and that is, that whether understood or not, there are in the Scriptures distinct

specifications of time in relation to the events of the future. The best proof of this is to be found in the following quotations:—

> "Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favour her, yea THE SET TIME is come" (Psa. 102:13).
>
> "The vision is yet for an APPOINTED time, but *at the end* it shall speak and not lie" (Hab. 2:3).
>
> "AT THE TIME APPOINTED, *the end shall be*" (Dan. 8:19).
>
> "He (the little horn) shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws, and they shall be given into his hand until *a time and times, and the dividing of time*" (Dan. 7:25).
>
> "How long shall be the vision?… And he said unto me, *Unto two thousand and three hundred days*; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (Dan. 8:13, 14).
>
> "From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days*" (Dan. 12:11).
>
> "The holy city shall they tread under foot *forty and two months*" (Rev. 11:2).
>
> "To the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place where she is nourished, *for a time and times and half a time*, from the face of the serpent" (Rev. 12:14).

These passages prove two things: first, that "a set time" exists in the mind of the Deity for the consummation of His purpose—a conclusion which must commend itself to every mind realising the fact that God knows all things from the end to the beginning; and, second, that He has given a revelation of "times and seasons." This revelation may at first sight be obscure, but the fact of its having been given cannot be denied in view of the before-cited quotations. This being so, there arises the presumption that they are capable of being understood, since, as a matter of revelation, they could be given for no other purpose.

We have, however, to notice the qualifications with which this conclusion is divinely associated. We refer to the words addressed to Daniel: "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand" (Dan. 12:10). This would imply not only that uprightness is necessary, but also that the matter is not communicated in such a form as to be apprehended on the surface of it, but requires the qualification of "wisdom" to elucidate the hidden meaning.

We would also quote words of similar purport occurring in the Apocalypse: "Here is *wisdom*; let him that hath *understanding* count the number of the beast"; showing that the matter as presented was an enigma requiring to be unlocked by the keys of knowledge. In view of this, we need not be surprised at the mistakes that have from time to time been made in the interpretation of the times and seasons. Numberless and outrageously absurd theories have, in all ages of the world, been put forward on the strength of what is written on times and seasons. Dates have been fixed, and events predicted which time has falsified. This fact has staggered weak minds, and induced contempt and scepticism in reference to the whole subject. Even many of the devout have become disgusted, and refuse to give credence to anything advanced on the subject; but this must surely be admitted to be evidence of short-sightedness rather than of wisdom.

There is a great difference between incompetent interpretation and essential absurdity in the nature of the matter interpreted. No devout mind, receiving the word of God in all sincerity, as the manifestation of His mind for the enlightenment of His servants, will be content to accept the fooleries of the past as a disproof of the intelligibility of what God has

made known; but under the conviction that underneath the misunderstood enigmas of His word, there lie important facts which He would have us understand, will anxiously endeavour to penetrate the obscurity which has baffled others, and get at the mind of God in a matter so important in its bearings on our mental relation to the purposes of God.

Some people imagine that the New Testament bars the way against all enquiry on the subject of times and seasons; but on examination this will appear to be a mistake. It is true that Jesus said to his desciples, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power" (Acts 1:7); but this had a special bearing on the time and the persons in reference to whom the words were uttered, in no way conflicting with the present enquiry.

They were spoken to the disciples on the eve of his ascension at a time when they needed such words. Their minds were filled with solicitude for the manifestation of the kingdom. They had asked, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" They did not know that the time for the kingdom was yet afar off. They were apparently ignorant that a great interval had to elapse, even "the times of the Gentiles." They did not know that the hard work of preaching the Gospel had to be done; and the harder work of developing a people for God by the faith preached involving much suffering for His name, much long and weary waiting through a long night of centuries, for his coming.

The idea that the kingdom was then to be established was an obstacle in the way of the work on which they were about to enter, and therefore Jesus dispels it by telling them it was not for them in their circumstances, to be thinking of times and seasons, but to return to Jerusalem, and there await the effusion of the Spirit which was to qualify them to give testimony for him as his witnesses throughout all Judea and Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth. This was reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances; but to construe what was said appropriately to the time and circumstances, into a discountenance and prohibition of all subsequent research on the subject would evince a short-sighted judgment, and introduce an element of discord into the Word, which would thus be made to discourage in one place the study of that which it revealed in another.

Reliance is also placed on I Thess. 5:1, by those who disparage the study of prophetic times. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians:—

> "Of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. *But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.* Ye are all the children of the light, and the children of the day. We are not of the night, nor of darkness" (I Thess. 5:1–5).

But so far from answering the intended purpose, these words of Paul show that the subject of "the times and seasons" was not a proscribed one. Paul intimates that he would have written on the subject to them, but he says, "YE HAVE NO NEED that I do so, and the reason is *yourselves know* that when the day comes, it will come as a thief—unexpected and undesired—upon the world, but not upon you, for ye are all the children of the light and of the day." The sense in which they were the children of light may be understood in two ways. It may mean "You, Thessalonians, are ready for the day of the Lord; therefore it does not matter when the day comes; it is needless to speak of times and seasons when you are prepared for the event."

This is, evidently, the view the Thessalonians took of it; for Paul's second letter to them found them expecting the immediate manifestation of Christ. But that this was the wrong construction of his words, appears in what he said in his second letter to the same church. He says (ch. 2:1), "We beseech you. brethren … that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be

troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. *Let no man deceive you by any means*: FOR THAT DAY SHALL NOT COME, EXCEPT THERE COME A FALLING AWAY FIRST." From this it is evident that the second way of construing Paul's words, in the 1st Epistle, is the correct one, viz., "It is not necessary for me to write about times and seasons, for ye are the children of the light, and ought to know about them." Why should Paul assume they knew all about it? He gives us his reason in the 2nd Epistle: "Remember ye not, that *when I was yet with you, I* TOLD YOU THESE THINGS?" (verse 5). If they were ignorant, it was because they had forgotten what Paul told them; for Paul had told them that Christ could not be manifested until certain events foretold in the prophets had transpired.

At the same time, it cannot be denied, that their ideas of the times and seasons would, necessarily, be more imperfect and confused than ours: first because of the great distance of time which divided them from the end; and, second, because of the then impending visitation of divine judgment upon Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, foretold by Jesus, which had the effect of concentrating their interest to some extent upon their own generation, and in many cases, of creating the expectation that as God was about to come on the scene in judgment, He would not leave it without effecting their deliverance, the more especially as Jesus associated the latter with the former, as regards the succession of events, though, as time has shown, not as regards chronological sequence.

A statement in Daniel (12:4), seems to indicate that it is in our own times more particularly that the prophetic visions are to be understood, both as regards their events and times: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and *seal the book even to the time of the end*: many shall run to and fro, and *knowledge shall be increased*." There is a reason why the words may be understood at the time of the end. In "the words" are prophetically delineated historical events extending over centuries, and at the time of the end, we have the facts of accomplished history as the infallible interpreters of these words. By the aid of those facts, we are enabled to comprehend the prophetic scheme, both as regards its events and times, and so to gauge our position as to determine where we stand in relation to the wonderful consummation of the end itself.

Coming to the question of "How long?" it will be observed that in the passages quoted, the times defined are measured for the most part by "days." The first question to be considered therefore, is, what are we to understand by the word so used? Are we to read it as a representative of so many days of 24 hours' duration? A class has arisen and multiplied considerably, who say "Yes," with all confidence. But we ask them if that is so, how it is that Daniel did not understand; "I heard, *but understood not*" (Dan. 12:8), when informed of the duration of the vision in days. And how is it that the wise alone are to understand? If it mean literal days, there is no wisdom required. To read it as literal days is a simple method of interpretation, which may be accepted with relief by minds incapable from disuse of going below the surface of things, and of rising to heights of knowledge through stepping-stone indications on the level; but the fallacy of the principle becomes apparent on the merest attempt to interpret the statements in question in accordance with it.

For instance, Daniel saw a vision (chap. 8) in which the following events are comprehended; the beginning and rise of the Persian empire, its overthrow by Alexander the Great, the partition of the Grecian empire, at that monarch's death, into four parts, and the appearance of the Roman power in the southern section of the divided empire, resulting in the death of Jesus, the disruption of the Jewish commonwealth, and the final casting down of the destroying enemy. The vision having passed before Daniel, he hears the question asked, "HOW LONG *shall be the vision*?" in answer to which, the statement was made, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed (or avenged)."

Now, if we interpret this to mean that the events represented in the vision should only occupy 2,300 natural days, we turn the vision into absurdity. We make it compress into little more than six years, events, the first of which, viz., the rise and development of the Persian empire alone took nearly 250 years! The literal-day theorists attempt to get out of the difficulty by applying the period mentioned in the vision to the ravages of Antiochus Epiphanes, who suppressed the daily sacrifice for something like seven years, at the end of which it was restored by the Maccabees; but this suggestion is entirely set aside by the statement of the angel (verse 17), that "AT THE TIME OF THE END *shall be the vision*." Even if we had not this distinct intimation, the suggestion would be negatived by the improbability of such a minor event being made the subject of prophecy for the wise of all time; but it is effectually precluded by the scope of the exents, represented in the vision to which the statement of time applies, and by the further declaration of the angel that the vision should be "*for many days*" (verse 26).

In the 11th chap. we have a prophetic message angelically communicated to Daniel, "in the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia." This message commences with the date given, and, bridging all subsequent history, goes down to the destruction of "the king of the north," on the mountains of Israel, at the manifestation of Jesus when the resurrection takes place. As in the other case, Daniel hears the question asked, "How long shall it be *to the end of these wonders*?" The answer is, *"For a time, times, and an half."* Daniel says, "I heard, but I understood not." A time was a Jewish period made up of 360 days. "Time, times, and an half" were, therefore, equivalent to "one time, two times, and half a time," or "three times and a half," or 1,260 days. It was, therefore, no wonder that Daniel failed to understand, because the events he had witnessed in vision were on such a scale as required centuries for development. The measure of such events by days might well baffle his understanding.

This mode of measurement is repeated in answer to Daniel's beseeching question, "O, my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" (Dan. 12:8). "From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days*. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days (45 days more). But go thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at *the end of the days*." It is evident that literal days are not meant in these expressions. Centuries have elapsed since the events to which they apply commenced to transpire; and the period defined, taken literally, has multiplied itself hundreds of times, and yet there is no arrival of the end foretold.

The question then is, what is meant by these prophetic days? We affirm, on the strength of the following evidence, that each day represents a year.

Moses sent spies to search the land of Canaan, in the second year after the children of Israel came out of Egypt. The spies were away forty days, and returned, at the end of that time, with a discouraging report as to the probabilities of a successful invasion of the country, and advised a rejection of Moses, and a return of the whole congregation into Egypt. The people, ever prone to distrust God, hearkened to the counsel of the spies, and were about to put it into execution, when God interfered, and vindicating Moses, gave sentence against the whole congregation, in the following words:—

> "Your carcases shall fall in this wilderness, and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upwards, which have murmured against me, doubtless ye shall not come into the land … and your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness. *After the number of days in which ye searched the land, even forty days*, EACH DAY FOR A YEAR, *shall ye bear your iniquities*, even forty years" (Numbers 14:29, 30, 33, 34).

This is an historical transaction, in which a literal day was made the basis of a literal year. We now cite a case of prophecy.

Ezekiel was commanded to make a miniature representation of Jerusalem, and conduct a mimic siege against it, for the purpose of signifying to the people of Jerusalem that God intended to punish them for their iniquity. He was then instructed to signify the times in relation to the events represented:—

> "Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it; according to the number of days that thou shalt lie upon it, thou shalt bear their inquity; *for I have laid upon thee* THE YEARS *of their inquity* ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF THE DAYS, 390 days: so shalt thou bear the inquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: *I have appointed these EACH DAY FOR A YEAR*" (Ezek. 4:4–6).

Here was a symbolical transaction, in which "times and seasons" were to be represented; and it is expressly directed that the symbolisation of time should be on the scale of a day for a year.

That this is the scale on which the prophetic periods of Daniel are fixed, is evident from a well-known case in which his prediction of time has been historically verified. "Seventy weeks" are employed to define the period that was to elapse from the issue of the final Persian edict for the restoration and rebuilding of Jerusalem, to the accomplishment of the following objects in the death of Messiah: 1st, to finish the transgression; 2nd, to make an end of sin; 3rd, to make reconciliation for iniquity; 4th, to bring in everlasting righteousness; 5th, to seal up the vision and the prophecy; and 6th, to anoint the Most Holy. Seventy weeks are 490 days: hence, "seventy weeks" is but another way of expressing 490 days. In view of this, how significant is the fact that from the edict in question (Artaxerxes, B.C. 456), to the crucifixion of Christ, there elapsed *a period of exactly* 490 *years*. A dispute among chronologists, as to whether the period reached exactly to the 490th year, does not detract from the weight of the evidence furnished in the fulfilment of this prophecy of the truth of the day-for-a-year principle, as applied to the solution of the prophetic periods; the fact that there is a dispute, only illustrates the obscurity of ancient history where precise dates are involved.

Adopting the year-day principle, we shall proceed to point out the evidences which show that we have now reached nearly the utmost limit of the times of the Gentiles, and stand upon the verge of the future foretold by the prophets. There are four or five distinct methods of demonstrating this conclusion; four or five independent modes of computation, which lead to an identical result; four or five separate chronological lines which converge on a single epoch in the world's history, uniting to tell us the grand and awful tidings that the moment is nearly on us when the Most High, inhabiting eternity, having long holden His peace, is, in the person of Jesus, about to stir Himself up like a mighty man of war, and to enter into controversy with the nations of the earth, breaking their ungodly power, bringing down their strength to the earth, teaching them righteousness by angry judgments, and subduing them to the sceptre of the kingdom of David, under the yoke of which they will taste the blessedness that all the generations of Adam for a weary 6,000 years, have yearned and sighed after, but which they cannot have and never will realise until "that man whom God hath ordained" is manifested in the earth as a "hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. 32:1).

The first is not in itself a conclusive mode of reckoning; but its coincidence with those that are certain, shows there is truth in it. We refer to the tradition, which is of very ancient origin, that as God effected the reorganisation of the world physical in six natural days, and consecrated the seventh as a day of rest and blessing, so will he occupy six days, of a thousand years each, in setting in order the political heaven and earth of human affairs, and

set apart the seventh millennium, or period of a thousand years, as a Sabbatical era, in which righteousness and peace will prevail, as the waters cover the sea.

This theory is not expressly affirmed in the Word, but it is not altogether without countenance. The duration of the kingdom, for instance, happens to be the exact length of the supposed Sabbatical era; and this period—the kingdom prepared of God for them that love Him—is expressly spoken of by Paul as a Sabbatical rest, and, therefore, in some sense a seventh period (Heb. 4:9). Peter's expression, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day)" (II Pet. 3:8)—is quoted by some writers in favour of the tradition in question, but much stress cannot be laid on it. The theory rests on other grounds; and the strongest of these is its chronological agreement with the minor prophetic periods.

Assuming it to be a correct method of reckoning, how far are we on this principle from the end of the human era? The answer to this question depends upon the age of the world (not geologically, but since the Adamic creation). The process by which this point is ascertained, is necessarily a long and laborious one. We must refer to the results achieved by those who have gone through the process, and who have demonstrated every link in the chronological chain. We rely particularly on the deductions of Dr. Thomas, who has given a great deal of attention to the subject, and who has placed the results of his research in such a form before the general reader—(see *Chronikon Hebraikon*—that the process which has cost him much time and labour can, in a moment, be verified or impugned.

The general result is to show that the world was 4,090 years old at the birth of Christ, instead of 4,004, as commonly supposed. Add to 4,090 the present A.D. 1905, and we get 5,995 as the real age of the world at the present time. If this be so, there wants only about five years to complete the 6,000 years of the great world-week, and therefore we are that number of years from the time when the blessing of Abraham shall prevail over the whole world through Christ.. But we are not, therefore, that number of years from the advent. The coming of Christ is one event; the setting up of the kingdom another. The former event must necessarily precede the latter by a considerable period. The constitution of human society cannot be broken up in judgment and reorganised in righteousness in a day. This is a work which will take time. It is natural to suppose that there must be years of divine operation in the earth before the final inauguration of the Sabbatical millennium, and this, therefore, admits of Christ coming before the end of the 6,000 years.

The next period is the one known as "The Seven Times of Daniel," which arises in connection with a brief and familiar history recorded in Daniel 4. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, saw in a dream a stately tree affording shelter to the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven; and while he beheld, an angel descended, and gave orders that the tree should be hewn down, but that the stump should be left in the earth and banded with iron and brass, and that seven times should pass over it. Daniel interpreted this to mean that Nebuchadnezzar should be driven from his kingdom, and should herd with the beasts of the field, for a literal period of seven times, or nearly seven years, in accordance with which, it came so to pass, and at the end of the period, Nebuchadnezzar's reason returned, and he blessed the Most High.

On a superficial view of the case, it would appear as if there was nothing but the literal in this narrative, and as if the import of the vision terminated with the restoration of Nebuchadnezzar, at the end of seven literal times; but a deeper insight will reveal a splendid political allegory on the face of the literal narrative. In political symbolism, a tree represents a kingdom (see Ezek. 31, and Matt. 13:32). The tree of Nebuchadnezzar's dream would, therefore, represent Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, though standing primarily for himself. On this principle, we can understand the banding of the tree stump with iron and brass; because when the Babylonian dominion was shorn away, the kingdoms that succeeded it were but a

political bandaging of the power of Babylon with the brazen and iron or Greek and Roman elements.

Furthermore, in standing for Nebuchadnezzar personally, the tree necessarily stood for the kingdom of Babylon, for Nebuchadnezzar was himself but the representative of the kingdom. This is apparent from the second chapter. Nebuchadnezzar is there addressed by Daniel (verse 38) as the dynastic representative of the golden dominion. "THOU art this head of gold; and after thee shall arise ANOTHER kingdom," as if Nebuchadnezzar were a kingdom. So he was, representatively, in the second chapter; and so we may presume he was in the fourth chapter, and went through the transactions therein narrated, as the dramatic personator of the fortunes of his kingdom.

At any rate, the narrative bears an extraordinary allegorical correspondence to the historical sequel. The seven times allegorically computed would commence with Nebuchadnezzar's ascension to the throne of Babylon. This was in 610 B.C. Now, by adding seven times of years 360 × 7 = 2,520 years to that date, we come to the ending of the 6,000 years of the world's age. Thus:—

SEVEN TIMES—commencing Nebuchadnezzar's reign, 610 B.C.	2,520
To find the conclusion of this period, A.D., deduct the years that elapsed before Christ	610
Giving as the expiry of the seven times A.D.	1,910
World, 6,000 years old A.D.	1,910

This result is remarkable, and confirms the supposition arising on a close consideration of Dan. 4, viz., that the seven times that literally measured Nebuchadnezzar's banishment from the empire, are also intended symbolically to measure the era of the world's alienation from God, from the time of the vision. At the end of the seven literal times, Nebuchadnezzar says, "Mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever." How strikingly this represents the change that will come over the kingdoms of the world at the close of the symbolic seven times, when:—

> "The Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit" (Jer. 16:19).
>
> "All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy name" (Psa. 86:9).
>
> "Neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart" (Jer. 3:17).

> "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths" (Isa. 2:3).
>
> "When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms to serve the Lord" (Psa. 102:22).
>
> "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles" (Mal. 1:11).
>
> "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun" (Isa. 59:19).

The next period is one mentioned in connection with a vision recorded in Dan. 8. The vision was communicated in symbol, and the features of it were these:—A ram with two unequal horns was seen prevailing in a western, northern, and southern direction, when having "become great," its career was interrupted by the advent of a he-goat from the west, with a great horn between its eyes. A collision between the two symbolic animals resulted in the utter discomfiture and down-trampling of the ram, and the aggrandisement of the goat. The goat's notable horn, however was broken immediately afterwards, and in its place, there sprang four horns, out of one of which came a fifth horn, which prospered to the destroying of all things Jewish.

The interpretation is supplied along with the vision itself, so that the symbols become highly interesting. The ram with two horns is stated (verse 20), to be the joint dynasty of Media and Persia; and the goat the kingdom of Greece, under the leadership of its "first (imperial) king" or Alexander the Great. This being so, the fight between the animals represents the war between the two powers, which resulted in the subjugation of the Persian empire, and the establishment of Grecian rule over the civilised habitable. The breaking of the notable horn is the death of Alexander, just as he completed his military triumphs; and the up-growth of four horns, the division of Alexander's empire among his four generals Ptolemy, Seleucus, Cassander, and Lysimachus.

Out of one of these was to appear a power which should "destroy the mighty and the holy people," or the Jews. This identifies it as the Roman power, which, in relation to the Jewish state, made its first appearance in the territory allotted to Seleucus, and afterwards completely uprooted the Jewish power in a series of campaigns culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the nearly total extermination of the race of Jews. The vision closes with this triumph, and leaves the future in darkness, with the exception of a general intimation that the power thus destroying the mighty and the holy people should be "broken without hand."

In the vision itself, there was nothing to represent to Daniel the length of time during which this little-horn power of the goat (described as of fierce countenance) should prevail over the kingdom of Jehovah. In a word, the length of "the times of the Gentiles" was not indicated in the symbols. This defect, however, was supplied before the vision finally closed:—

> "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot? And he said unto me, UNTO TWO THOUSAND AND THREE HUNDRED DAYS; *then shall the sanctuary be cleansed*" (verses 13, 14).

Now it happens that the Vatican MS. of the Suptuagint reads, "2,400 days," which, it is said, agrees with certain MSS in possession of the Jews of Bokhara. And it is to be noticed that an "evening morning" is 24 and not 23 hours, which seems to favour the "2,400." We

have, therefore, to choose between the two. Five hundred years ago, it would have been difficult to make an election, except in so far as other (conterminous) dates, with which this must have been made to agree, might have assisted us in the choice. Now, however, we are enabled to decide, for the simple reason that the first reading is negatived by historic failure in the date. "2,300" days expired over 100 years ago, and no avenging of the sanctuary took place. But it may be said, How do you know that "2,300" ended over a hundred years ago? The answer is very simple. Find the commencement of any term of years, and the termination follows of itself.

Now the commencement of the period in question, is identical with the commencement of the vision itself. The question is "*How long* shall be THE VISION, " etc., that is, over what time will the vision just witnessed extend? This being so, we have only to ascertain the date of the first event seen in the vision, and from that date reckon the currency of the period defined as the duration of the events represented. By consulting the vision, the reader will perceive that the first event is the appearance of the Medo-Persian empire, in that particular aspect of it signified by the greater altitude of one horn of the ram over the other. The two horns are expressly declared to be representative of the two elements of the ram kingdom—the Median and the Persian. This being so, it follows that the increase of the second horn over the first in size (for it is said "the higher came up last") represents the more prolonged ascendency of the Persian element, which was the last to come to the throne. Darius, the Mede, reigned two years, and, dying without issue, he was succeeded by his nephew, Cyrus, the Persian, whose family retained power till the empire was overthrown by Greece 200 years later.

When Daniel saw the ram, it would appear at first, that both horns were on its head, from which it might be argued that the date of the vision's commencement would be indefinitely somewhere at the beginning of the Persian monarchy; but the supplementary statement that "the higher came up last" would suggest that Daniel was a witness of the first shooting out of the second or over-topping horn. If this is a correct deduction, "the times of the vision" would commence with the ascension of Cyrus to the throne; he being the inception of the higher horn that came up last. This would be 540 B.C. as the beginning of the days. Certainly the days did not begin earlier. They may have begun later. If the statement "the higher came up last" is an explanation, and not a description of what Daniel actually saw, the date of commencement would have to be sought for at the time when Cyrus had reigned long enough to constitute the Persian horn, as a matter of fact, the higher of the two.

Adopting 540 B.C. as the date of commencement, the erroneousness of the 2,300 reading is at once apparent; for it would. give A.D. 1760 as the termination of the vision, and the time for the avenging of the sanctuary. Adopting 2,400 we get 1860 as the date of the expiry. Some may think that this must be equally a mistake with the other, as no steps, such as are contemplated in the predicted "avengement," have yet been taken. To this it can only be remarked that supposing this to be the case, it does not show the "2,400 days" to be wrong, but only that they have been commenced too early in fixing upon the first year of Cyrus's sole reign as the commencement, which would favour the suggestion already thrown out, that the commencement ought to be dated later on in Persian annals, when the second horn had, as a matter of history, waxed greater than the Median horn, with which the Empire commenced.

But it is not certain that nothing marks the epoch commencing 1860, as affecting the land and interests of "the holy people." On the contrary, it is a fact of the greatest notoriety, that this is a period of great activity in connection with Palestine and the Jews.

In France, in 1860, was established "The Universal Alliance of Israelites," a society now numbering many thousands of subscribers. In England, in 1871, "The Anglo-Jewish Association" was established in connection with the older society. And in Vienna another branch was established. Thus began that international strengthening of the bonds of brotherhood in Israel that is so notable a phenomenon of our times.

These things arose out of the earlier necessities of the Jews. In Damascus, in 1840, there was considerable robbery and persecution of the Jews by the Turkish officials, culminating in massacre. Sir Moses Montefiore went out to the East in connection with this, and received the personal thanks of Queen Victoria and a knighthood for so doing.

There are other evidences of revival in relation to Jewish affairs, which it would occupy much space to notice. Whether 1860 or a later date be the true termination of the 2,400 period, there is no doubt about the epochal ending of the period falling in the lifetime of the present generation. This is the broad fact to which we desire special attention. The period must end on this side of the marginal period already mentioned, for the simple reason that that period witnesses the process by which the result mentioned in the 2,400 vision is accomplished, viz., the cleansing or avengement of the sanctuary.

The next period can be demonstrated with greater certainty and exactitude, and coincides with the result to which the 2,400 vision leads us, thereby affording powerful collateral evidence of the correctness of the millennary-week theory, and the "seven times" method of computing the duration of the kingdom of men, and, at the same time, establishing, with a strength that is almost irresistible, the general conclusion that in 1905 we stand in close proximity to that wonder of historic wonders, the advent of Jesus in power and great glory, to destroy them that destroy the earth, and establish "glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will toward men."

We refer to the four-beasts vision of Daniel. The four beasts, like the four metals of the image, are explained to mean the four great imperial dynasties, under which mankind should successively be ruled with something like universal dominion (Dan. 7:17, 23). Attention is specially directed to the forth beast, as it is in connection with it more particularly that the chronological considerations of the vision arise. This is universally admitted to be representative of the Roman empire, which, m relation to the Babylonish, was "the fourth kingdom" (verse 23).

On the head of the fourth beast were ten horns. This number was augmented by the appearance of an eleventh, which, however, by its aggressive acts, speedily diminished the whole number to eight. The eleventh horn was distinguished from its neighbours in having eyes and mouth, a "stout look," and a hostile propensity about it, which displaced three of the first horns to make way for itself. It employed its mouth in "speaking great words against the Most High" and used its power against the Almighty, ultimately bringing about the perdition of the whole body corporate of which it formed a part. This, however, was not an instantaneous result; the horn prevailed for a period before retribution came. The testimony is:—

> "He shall speak great words' against the Most High and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws, *and they shall be given into his hand* UNTIL A TIME AND TIMES, AND THE DIVIDING OF TIME" (Dan. 7:25).

The conclusion of this period is marked by an event as follows:—

> "I beheld, then, because of the voice of the great words which the hem spake; I beheld even till *the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame*" (verse. 11). "The same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them, *until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High,* and the time carne that the saints possessed the kingdom" (verses 21, 22). *"The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end"* (verse 26).

Now the import of this symbolism is evident enough. The body of the beast being the Roman empire, it follows that the Roman empire (notwithstanding historical vicissitudes) was in some form to continue till the arrival of "the Ancient of Days" to destroy it, an event

still in the future: but as an undivided kingdom it was not to continue: the ten horns on the head of the beast show this. The interpretation is: “the ten horns out of this kingdom *are ten kings that shall arise*.” Kings represent dominions, and hence the appearance of ten kings in the head of the beast shows that, ultimately, the Roman empire of undivided magnitude, instead of continuing to be controlled by a single imperial will, as the body of a beast is by its head, was to be broken up into ten separate royalties or kingdoms, obeying so many separate political wills, and sustaining independent political existence, though forming part and parcel of the Roman system of nations.

This fact is not less clearly apparent in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of the image. The legs of iron represent the autonomy of the empire in its prosperous days: the feet, a mixture of iron and clay, and divided into ten toes, symbolise the later stage of Roman history—a stage embracing the “modern” era up to the present time, and a little beyond—a stage in which the power and territory of the Roman empire are distributed among rival states and monarchs who have sprung out of her political embers.

The chronology of the fourth-beast symbol is determinable by the career of the little horn. The fourth-beast system was to continue, at least, a time, times, and a half, *from the time the little horn made its appearance*, after the end of which, it was to be destroyed by divine judgment, and the dominion transferred to the saints. Hence, if we can identify the little horn in history, and fix the date of its appearance, we shall be enabled to arrive at a correct conclusion as to the arrival of the time of the fourth-beast destroying judgment to take effect in the coming of the Ancient of Days, in the person of Jesus to put an end to the arrogant blasphemies which prevail for time, times, and a half. To do this, we must give a little attention to the appearance of the ten horns of the fourth beast, as the ten horns precede the advent of the little horn power. This takes us back to what is called “the fall of the Roman empire,” when “the fourth kingdom” passed from its imperial to its divided and multiregal phase.

Here we contemplate a protracted period of bloody revolution. The Roman arms, after centuries of resistless prowess, had lost their terror through the effeminacy of a race accustomed to victory and luxury, and the misgovernment of emperors, who ruled for private advantage instead of the public weal. The consequence was, that the rapacious hordes of Northern Europe and Asia, attracted to the tottering empire, like birds of prey to a rotting carcase, came down in clouds upon the fertile and cultivated countries of the south, and though held back for a time, ultimately broke through every barrier, and defeating the Roman armies, capturing the Roman fortresses, and ultimately sacking the proud empire city herself, put an end to the mightiest dominion that ever ruled the civilised habitable. This, however (which took more than a century to accomplish), though a destruction of what was considered the Roman empire, was but the introduction of the clay amongst the iron, not the displacing of the iron by the clay.

The northern nations were too lacking in genius, either social or political, to substitute a new order of society for that which they found among the civilised peoples of Rome. They were a vigorous, but an uncivilised race, and substantially fell in with the Roman order of things. True, there was an attempt by the Vandals, to abolish everything Roman and assimilate the conquered empire to the institutions of its barbarian conquerors; but this movement soon gave way before a reaction, which demanded and hastened the restoration of Roman civilisation.

The clay intermingled itself with the iron, and was, ultimately moulded into shape by the stronger element. This is the time at which we are to look for the ten horns; for the ten horns in the beast vision represent the same aspect of the fourth kingdom, as the clay and iron ten-toed feet of the image vision. It is reasonable to assume that as soon as the Roman beast ceased to be controlled by its own head it passed into the ten-horned state of government; that

is, as soon as imperial Rome fell, as soon as the central government of the empire was destroyed, the empire passed into the dismembered state represented by the ten horns. If this be a reasonable assumption, we ought to find in her dismemberment a number of political divisions answering to the number of the horns.

In considering this matter, we are met with the fact that the barbarian nations, on overturning the Roman Empire, did not unite themselves under one government, and set up a new empire. They scattered themselves among the provinces of Roman Europe, and settled in such countries as were according to their liking, each nation setting up its own government independently of all the rest. In this way there sprang up a number of separate kingdoms in the territory formerly ruled by the undivided Roman sceptre; that is, several distinct horns sprang out of the head of the beast. The question is how many? Daniel says ten, and history says ten.

Sir Isaac Newton gives the following enumeration of the states that sprang up under the barbarian nations after the overthrow of Rome: 1—Vandals and Alans (under one government, occupying Spain and Africa); 2—Suevians (another part of Spain); 3—Visigoths; 4—Alans (France); 5—Burgundians; 6—Franks (separate from the Alans); 7—Britons; 8—Huns; 9—Lombards; 10—Ravenna. This enumeration is broadly taken and confined to Roman territory. It takes no account of minor divisions, such as the dukedoms (dignified by the name of kingdoms) into which Britain was divided, or the petty factions that were here and there to be found in connection with other States. It only takes note of the conspicuous and great divisions of political power, properly considered "kingdoms," that followed the downfall of Rome, in Roman territory. It takes no cognisance of Asiatic dominion, or of any political phenomenon beyond the limits of the fourth-beast territory; and in this the discerning reader will say Sir Isaac Newton only adhered to the necessities imposed upon all interpreters of the vision itself.

Dr. Brewster, in his "Life of Sir Isaac Newton" (pp. 227, 228), paraphrasing Sir Isaac's views on the subject, observes: "Some of these kingdoms at length fell, and new ones sprang up; but, whatever was their subsequent number, they still retain the name of *the ten kings* from their first number."

Machiavelli, in his history of Florence, enumerates ten kingdoms, into which the Roman empire was dismembered by the incursions of the northern nations. This list is as follows: 1—Ostrogoths (in Moesia); 2—the Visigoths (in Pannonia); 3—Suevis and Alans (in Gascoigne and Spain); 4—The Vandals (in Africa); 5—the Franks (in France); 6—the Burgundians (in Burgundy); 7—the Herlui and Turingi (in Italy); 8—the Saxons and Angles (in Britain); 9—the Huns (in Hungary); 10—the Lombards (at first upon the Danube, and afterwards in Italy). This enumeration appears to differ a little from that adopted by Sir Isaac Newton, but a close comparison will reveal a resemblance between the two, amounting to identity.

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The only substantial difference is the exclusion of the Ostrogoths in Moesia (answering to the southern border of the empire of Austria) from the list of Sir Isaac Newton; but this difference is more a difference in the way of reckoning than in the actual enumeration of the ten kingdoms. Machiavelli's may be the true list, and Newton's may be reconcilable with it, by reckoning the nations of the Alans one kingdom instead of two, as Sir Isaac counts them, which would make room for the Ostrogoths as one of the ten. On the other hand, it is possible, though less likely, that the Ostrogoths may have been part and parcel of the adjoining Visigoth state of Pannonia, on the eastern shore of the Adriatic, answering to the Mediterranean seaboard of Austria.

In any case, the identification of the ten horns is complete. The process is not circumvented by minor difficulties, arising from the obscurities of ancient records, which can never overthrow the broad fact that the territory of the Roman empire, after the overthrow of the Roman Imperial power, was divided into a number of political sections, more or less answering to the number ten. The diversity of race and tribe existing in Europe at the time, in no way interferes with the fact of a decimal division of political power. There were, no doubt, many more nationalities than ten; but this no more disproves their political division into ten parts, than does the existence of the English, Scotch, and Irish in Great Britain disprove the political unity of the three kingdoms.

The vision predicts the uprise of ten kingdoms in the territory of the Roman Empire. We would, therefore, argue *a priori*, that there must have been that number in the States that made their appearance when the unity of the empire was dissolved, whatever the obscurity of history might indicate to the contrary. But, fortunately, we do no violence to history in believing that the vision was realised. History shows us a number of kingdoms, so nearly approximating to the prophetic number, that two independent historical writers give us the exact number; and it must be remembered that one of these two—Machiavelli—was not writing for the illustration of prophecy—of which there is no reason to believe he knew anything—but simply in exercise of his function as an impartial recorder of historical facts.

The ten horns appeared about the fifth and sixth centuries, but were afterwards reduced and multiplied in number by the revolutions of war. It is evident, however, that they reappear at the time that the fourth-beast system as a whole is destroyed by divine judgment. This is apparent by the later visions, seen by John in the Isle of Patmos, in which the fourth beast of Daniel is divided up into several beasts, for the purpose of illustrating subordinate and internal features of the system represented. According to these, we find that ten horns figure conspicuously at the end, as well as the beginning, of the little horn (time, times, and a half) era (Rev. 17:12, 14). “The ten horns which thou sawest (on the head of the scarlet-coloured beast, verse 3) are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them.”

Here there is no mention of an eleventh horn plucking up three of the ten by the roots, because it refers to an entirely different period of history from that represented by the ten horns on the head of Daniel’s fourth beast. It shows us the constitution and attitude of the beast at the time the Lamb, as the Ancient of Days, comes to give its body to the burning flame of destroying war, from which it appears that the original ten-horned phase of Daniel’s fourth beast is to be resuscitated, at the era of its destruction, and not only resuscitated, but established on the basis of corporate unity. That is to say the ten kingdoms into which the fourth beast system is to be divided at the end, are to unite in a unanimous policy, under a single head. They are to give their power and strength to the little horn blaspheming power (separately symbolised as a scarlet-coloured beast), for the purpose of carrying on war against Jesus when he has manifested himself in the earth as the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

The beast will thus act once more as a living unity, but this time, a ten-horned unity—a confederacy of the kings of the Roman territory, formed for the purpose of mutual self-defence against the power which will have threateningly appeared in the east, and of whose real nature they will be entirely ignorant, until overwhelmed in the fearful whirlwind of His destroying anger (Jer. 30:23, 24).

These facts enable us not only to reconcile Daniel’s fourth beast with the visions of John, but to make use of all together, in forming a complete picture of the purpose of God, as unfolded in the past, and yet remaining to be fulfilled in “the end afore determined.”

They teach us that the ten-horned phase of the Roman system of nations has relation to two epochs in its existence; first, when its imperial unity disappeared in the “fall of the

Roman Empire," and the second, when that unity is restored, for the purpose of a united effort against "that determined," which is to be "poured upon the desolate."

We have now to enquire if history affords any parallel to the uprise of an eleventh political power in the Roman system, subsequent to the appearance of the ten, and of the uprooting by it of three of its predecessors, and the assumption by it of an arrogant dictatorial attitude toward the other powers, as symbolised by the eleventh horn, having a stout look and a mouth speaking great words of blasphemy.

The merest retrospective glance affords the answer. The eye falls upon a power answering all the requirements of the prophecy; and the eye has not to search for it. It is not a second-rate object in the historical retrospect. It looms up in the past with over-shadowing breadth; it fills the whole picture with its imposing figure; which though no longer a recognised power in the political system of Europe, by reason of the termination of its allotted "time, times, and an half," is still conspicuous as a religious element. Do we require to mention the power to which these remarks apply? Its name will instinctively spring to the reader's lips—THE PAPACY.

The Papacy appeared in the territory of the Roman or fourth beast, *after* the division of the empire by the barbarians of the north—that is (symbolically), after the ten horns had appeared. It was not till the beginning of the seventh century, that the Bishop of Rome—till that time a mere diocesan, an ecclesiastic among other ecclesiastics—was constituted by imperial edict, universal bishop or pope—the supreme pontiff of the State religion. The decree which finally elevated him to this position was issued by the emperor Phocas, from Constantinople (the mouth of the Dragon which gave the Papistical beast his power, and his seat, and great authority: Rev. 13:2).

The date of the decree is given by one as A.D. 606, and another A.D. 608, which gives two years' uncertainty as to the beginning, and, therefore, ending of the period. But the date is sufficiently definite and exact for all practical purposes. The appearance of the eleventh horn is, doubtless, to be reckoned from the date of the edict which constituted it a power in Europe. It is true it was at first merely an ecclesiastical power, but history shows that it very soon became a political power, exercising secular authority in the territory provided for it by the displacement of three of the original ten horns, and, in addition to that, claiming and exercising imperial jurisdiction over contemporary "crowned heads."

The plucking up of the three horns did not precede the advent of the eleventh horn, but followed as the consequence of it. An interval would elapse between the one thing and the other. The eleventh horn would be some time erect before the three fell: how long is not stated. It would necessarily be very short in the symbol; but then the events and times represented by the symbol were on the historical scale; and, therefore, a momentary interval on the head of the beast, would represent an interval of years in the course of history. It is not stated that the three horns were plucked up before the commencement of the time, times and a half; it is stated the eleventh horn prevailed for that time; but this does not exclude the self-evident conclusion that the plucking up of the three horns would be within the period of the eleventh horn's prevalence. The plucking up of the three horns was, in fact, part of its "prevalence" and, therefore, would necessarily transpire within the period of its ascendency. Hence, we do not find that three kingdoms were given to the Pope the moment he appeared, but we do find that he received them about a century afterwards.

In a work published in 1782 entitled, *"The History of Modern Europe, with an account of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, and a view of the progress of Society, from the rise of the Modern Kingdoms to the Peace of Paris, in* 1763," there occurs the following statement, on page 47:—

"Before Pepin returned to France, he renewed his donation to St. Peter, yielding to Stephen and his successors the Exarchate; Æmelia, now Romagna; and Pentapolis, now

Marca d'Ancona, with all the cities therein, to be held by them for ever; the kings of France, as patricians, retaining only an ideal superiority, *which was soon forgotten*. THUS WAS THE SCEPTRE ADDED TO THE KEYS, THE SOVEREIGNTY TO THE PRIESTHOOD, AND THE POPES ENRICHED WITH THE SPOILS OF THE LOMBARD KINGS AND THE ROMAN EMPERORS. In the three states here mentioned, the reader will recognise three of the ten kingdoms that appeared on the declension of the empire, viz.:—1—Ravenna (the Exarchate); 2—Heruli and Turingi (Æmelia, now Romagna); and 3—Lombardy (Pentapolis)."

Dr. Keith's version of the matter is as follows:—

"The Exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of the Lombards, and the State of Rome, were subject to the secular dominion of the church of Rome, and mainly form, to this hour, 'the States of the Church,' over which the Pope, as a temporal sovereign, exercises sovereignty, and wears the 'TRIPLE CROWN, ' as if in obvious token that *three of the first kingdoms were rooted up before him."—Signs of the Times*, page 22.

The eleventh horn had eyes: it could, therefore, see the other horns; while the other horns being without eyes, could not see it. What political peculiarity of the Papacy corresponds with this symbol? Obviously its priesthood. The institution exists in the territory of all the other horns, and by means of it Rome is made privy to the concerns of every power in Europe; while these powers are unable to penetrate the secrets of Rome, on account of the fidelity which the priesthood have always maintained to their ecclesiastical chief. History affords perpetually-recurring illustrations of the political power which Papal Rome was enabled to exert in all the realms of Europe, through this system of espionage, which she was enabled to maintain through her priests. It is remarkable that the Papal Power should be known in diplomatic language as "The HOLY SEE."

The eleventh king was to be "diverse from the first (ten)" (Dan. 7:24). It required no ingenuity to make out the diversity between the Pope and the crowned heads of Europe. The Pope does not belong to the order of kings. His appearance in Europe was a new political phenomenon. Such a personage had never appeared before as a sacerdotal imperial despot, claiming not only the actual sovereignty of the three territories transferred to his secular dominion, but divinely-conferred jurisdiction over every sovereign in Europe. This character was not assumed by the Roman Pontiffs all at once, but it had grown to full development before the Papacy was more than two centuries old.

In the days of Pope Gregory VII it ripened to maturity. Of this Pope it is recorded that "he engaged the Church in an open war with the sovereigns of all nations." He formed a purpose to "engage in the bond of fidelity and allegiance, to the Vicar of Christ, as king of kings, and lord of lords, *all the potentates of the earth*, and to establish at Rome an annual assembly of bishops, by whom the contests which might arise between kingdoms and sovereign states were to be decided—the pretensions of princes to be examined, and the fate of nations and empires to be determined." So far did he succeed in his scheme of supremacy, that Henry IV., Emperor of Germany whom he had summoned to his presence as a delinquent, applied for absolution at the Gates of Canosa, a fortress in the Appenines, where Gregory happened to be resident at the time, "and being stripped of his robes, and, wrapt in sackcloth, he was obliged to remain in an outer court three days, in the month of January, bare-footed and fasting, before he was permitted to kiss the feet of His Holiness. The haughty pontiff condescended to grant him absolution, after he had sworn obedience to His Holiness in all things."

Gregory, elated by his triumph, and now looking upon himself, not altogether without reason, as the lord and master of all the crowned heads in Christendom, said in several of his letters which were written at the time, that it was his duty to "pull down the pride of kings." In accordance with this sentiment, he wrote to Solomon, a refractory king of Hungary, "You ought to know the kingdom of Hungary belongs to the Roman Church; and learn that you will incur the indignation of the Holy See, *if you do not acknowledge that you hold your*

dominions of the Pope, and not of the Emperor." He subsequently deposed Henry IV., in the words "In the name of Almighty God, and by your (the council's) authority, I prohibit Henry, the son of our Emperor Henry, from governing the Teutonic Kingdom, and italy; I release all Christians from their oath of allegiance to him, and I strictly forbid all persons from serving or attending him as king."

He appointed a successor to Henry, one Rodolph, and sent him a golden crown, with an address, in which, after depriving Henry of *strength in combat*, and condemning him *never to be victorious,* he delivers himself of the following apostrophe to Peter and Paul, in which the nature of his pretensions as their pretended successor becomes apparent: "Make all men sensible that as you can bind and loose everything in heaven, you can also upon earth TAKE FROM OR GIVE to every one, according to his deserts, *empires, kingdoms, principalities*. Let the kings and princes of the age then instantly feel your power, that they may not dare to despise the orders of your church."

These sentiments Gregory VII left as an heritage to his successors, and they have continued to be the animating spirit of the Roman See to the present day, illustrating the statement of the vision that the eleventh horn, with eyes, should be "diverse from the first (ten)," and should have a "look *more stout than his fellows*."

The horn had a mouth. This indicates that it would in some sense presume to speak to the others, and the speaking could not be for the purpose of mutual deliberation, because the others had no mouths, and, therefore, no conversation could take place; the speaking, therefore, could only take the form of legislative dictation: the eleventh horn would presume to make law to the others. The applicability of this to the Papacy is abundantly manifested in the last paragraph.

The words it spoke were "great words against the Most High," not words in the verbal sense: "words" here has a more comprehensive signification than the dictionary meaning. It imports the policy of the power spoken of, as represented and expressed by its utterances over the whole period of its existence. These are "the words" by which the indignation that destroys the beast is evoked. Now these words, in order to be "against the Most High," need not to be verbally directed against Him. They need not take the form of denunciations of the Almighty.

In the Scriptural sense, everything uttered against the truth is uttered against the Almighty, though it may be couched in the language of allegiance. Hence, for the Papacy to "speak great words against the Most High," it is not necessary for her to have formally fulminated her denunciations against the Deity. If her ecclesiastical creed and her ecclesiastical policy have practically involved the repudiation of His truth, and His people, her "words" have been none the less, but all the more, "against the most High" for being framed in the language of sanctimonious pretence.

We have only to enquire whether the policy of Rome has or has not been one of arrogant presumption and destructive opposition to everything in which the name and honour of God are involved; and we have not to go far for the answer. No one having any knowledge of history, and any understanding of the truth, can be ignorant that Papal Rome has, from the beginning of its days, "spoken great words against the Most High," and "made war with, and prevailed against, the saints." Her career, since the day her bishop was crowned universal Dictator-ecclesiastical, has been an unbroken chapter of enormities perpetrated against God and man. During the long period of her ascendancy, she has well merited the designation bestowed upon her by the Spirit in vision to John, in the Isle of Patmos. She has been the sum of all abomination—the hold of every foul spirit—the "MOTHER of harlots and ABOMINATIONS of the EARTH" (Rev. 17:5).

She is well-styled "MYSTERY, " and more appropriately still, the MYSTERY OF INIQUITY" (II Thess, 2:7). She has been iniquity mystified—iniquity veiled—iniquity dressed in a robe

of religious pretence—iniquity tricked out in the splendid paraphernalia of regal pomp and civil authority—iniquity of the deepest dye, draped in holy garments—a whited sepulchre of mystified iniquity, showing a beautiful exterior, and inviting all nations to worship at its cursed shrine of "rottenness and dead men's bones"; and all nations have gone and bowed the knee, and garnished this grave of the saints with costly things, proving themselves the seed of the accursed rejecters of Jesus, who honoured the tombs of the prophets, and thereby were held by Jesus to be proved accomplices of those who killed them, and put them in their graves.

THE LITTLE HORN imposture—this proud, wilful, stout-looking pretentious, audacious, blasphemous, saint-killing power, which has prevailed against all divine things for twelve centuries, in accordance with the words of Daniel—this depraved, hypocritical, corrupt, iniquitous, tyrannical, and murderous Church of Rome, with which it is now becoming fashionable at religious meetings to bandy compliments, and speak respectfully of, and which blinded and becrazed "charity" would make room for, and deal liberally with, as an institution "doing good" in its own way, and "advancing the cause of Christ under the banners of the Catholic religion"; this execrable mistress of witchery, whose cunning arts of simulated kindness, and ornaments of learning and fascinations of venerable pedigree, are, in England, entrapping thousands upon thousands into the bondage which it was the boast of this country to have escaped three hundred years ago—this system of unmixed iniquity is further introduced to our notice in Rev. 17:3, 4, as a gaudy, betrinketed, whorish woman, drunk with the blood of saints, and having in her hand a cup of abominable liquor, with which she intoxicates kings.

The appropriateness of this figure will be seen at a glance. The Church of Rome pretends to be the faithful spouse of the absent bridegroom; whereas she acts the part of a prostitute of the most profligate and abandoned type. She coquets with the kings of the earth, and administers to them free libations of her bemuddling doctrines, with which "all nations are drunk." She commits fornication with them, for her loves and her aims are confined to the worldly objects she can accomplish in her ecclesiastical dealings with them. She revels in lust and lucre, and is drenched in all her garments with the reeking blood of the righteous slain, whom she has put to death for their testimony.

This LITTLE-HORN blaspheming prevailing power, is further spoken of as a "king doing according to his will" (Dan. 11:36), exalting and magnifying himself above every power (Heb., *ail*), and speaking marvellous things against the God of gods; which is an exact description of the Pope's presumption, as historically illustrated. It is said he should not regard the God of his fathers nor the desire of women. This is also descriptive of him. The emperors of Rome—the "fathers" or predecessors of the Pope —were Pagans, and worshipped the deities of Pagan mythology. The Pope disregarded these, and set up a god which the emperors "knew not," viz., the triune God of their superstition, and the Virgin Mary, whom they "honoured with gold and silver, and precious stones," in erecting begemmed and garnished temples to their worship. He was to "disregard the desire of women." He should be a celibate, "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats" (I Tim. 4:3). How signally this has been fulfilled, history testifies. The whole hierarchy of Rome, from the Pope in "the chair of St. Peter" to the mendicant friar, are under a bond to remain in bachelorhood, and thus they set at naught the "desire of women," and fulfil the prophecy. "He shall magnify himself above every God," and "*shall prosper till the indignation* be accomplished." His existence and supremacy will, therefore, continue till the return of Christ; for the indignation is not accomplished until he come to "tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. 19:15), and to pour out the wine of HIS wrath into the cup of His indignation, without mixture (Rev. 14:10).

These prophecies are reproduced by Paul in II Thess. 2:3–10. The church at Thessalonica had been agitated with ideas of the imminence of Christ's appearing. Paul writes to quiet their apprehensions on the subject, and reminds them of what he had told them while he was with them (verse 5), namely, that before that day of Christ would come, there should be a widespread departure from the truth, and a subsequent and consequent development of "that Man of Sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and EXALTETH HIMSELF ABOVE ALL THAT IS CALLED GOD, *or that is worshipped*, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

These words of Paul amount to a paraphrase of the words of Daniel. There is, however, a feature in them which is lacking in Daniel's representation of the matter. Paul connects the development of the "Man of Sin" with the "falling away" that was to come, and intimates by the concatenation of his words, that the one was to result from the other—that the revelation of the "Man of Sin" was to be the result of the falling away from the truth. This is an important addition to the information communicated by Daniel, without which, the identification of the power represented would not have been so complete as it is. There is nothing in Daniel to indicate that the appearance of the little horn of the fourth beast was to be connected with God's operations among men by the truth. For anything there is in Daniel to the contrary, the little horn might have represented a heathen power, like Babylon, or like the original ten horns, having no germinal connection with anything pertaining to God; but, by Paul's words, we are enabled to see that this little horn was to be the political offspring of *an apostasy which was to take place among those professing the truth of Christ*.

This leads us straight to the Papacy, for the fact is notorious that *the Papacy which has ruled the political and ecclesiastical destinies of Europe for twelve centuries, is nothing more nor less than the political incorporation of the principles developed as the result of a departure from the truth on the part of the early professing Christians*. In the Papacy, therefore, we behold the MAN OF SIN predicted by Paul, and the system which is to be "consumed with the spirit of his (Christ's) mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of his coming." So long as the brethren, as a whole, were faithful to the truth, it was impossible for this Man of Sin to be revealed, and, therefore, it was impossible for Christ's coming to take place, because the coming of Christ was to occur for the destruction of the Man of Sin.

There was another obstacle in the way at the time that Paul wrote. "Ye know," says he, "what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time." The "Man of Sin" was to be the supreme power in the state. Before this could be accomplished, Paganism in high places had to be abolished. The Pope, as the professed "Vicar of Jesus Christ," claiming to be "King of Kings and Lords of Lords," could never be politically developed in Europe until the Roman empire was revolutionised, and changed from a Pagan to a professed Christian power. The paganism of Rome was, therefore, an obstruction. It was that "withholding" the revelation of "the Man of Sin." But the hindrance was to be "taken out of the way," and "THEN shall that Wicked be revealed," etc. We know, as a matter of history, that Paganism, in due time, was taken out of the way, and that the way was thereby opened for the uprise of the Little Horn on the head of the fourth or Roman (symbolic) beast, which, as "a Man of Sin," should prevail against the saints for 1,260 years, and exalt himself in the earth above every object of worship.

There are some who hold that this "Man of Sin" is a particular person—an individual of extraordinary audacity and impiety, who has yet to appear and theoretically abjure the existence of the Almighty, and offer himself to all the world as the object of worship. But such take an extremely narrow and utterly untenable view of the matter. All they rely upon is the phrase "Man of Sin"; but this no more proves the personality of the power referred to, than do Paul's other words, "THE OLD MAN," prove that he meant a literal octogenarian, whose company we were to avoid, in "putting off the old man with his deeds." If the "he"

applied to the Man of Sin, prove the personality of the power referred to, what is to be made of the "he" applied to the "what withholdeth"? "HE *who now letteth* (*or hindereth*) will let (or hinder) *until* HE *be taken out of the way*." There was a "HE" existing in Paul's days, obstructing the development of the "Man of Sin," and who was in due time to be removed to make way for his impious successor. Who was this? Let the individualists answer. Was there *a particular man* living in Paul's day, whose death or deposition was necessary to the appearance of the "Man of Sin"? If the answer is "Yea," who was it? and how is it that eighteen hundred years have elapsed since his death, and yet the "Man of Sin" of the individualist has never made his appearance? A full confrontage of this difficulty will demolish the individual theory.

The obstruction in the way of Paul's Man of Sin was the faithfulness of the brotherhood, and the political supremacy of Paganism. Both these barriers vanished in course of time, and up rose, in the historical arena, that monstrosity which has overshadowed the historic page with records of transcendent cruelty and iniquity. Historically, the Pope is absolutely THE MAN OF SIN; for throughout all the generations of the Papacy, the Pope has been the only man in the earth in his position. The system of the Papacy is essentially a ONE-MAN system. The theory of the system does not admit of more than a single head. It has happened once or twice that there have been rival Popes, but this was an anomaly never sanctioned by the system. Politically the Pope is the "MAN OF SIN," whoever the Pope may happen to be. The individuality of the man is entirely absorbed in the position. No individual man is essential to constitute the *Popeship*. The Popeship has always found a man to fill it, whoever has lived or died, which shows that it is the office or position which Paul contemplated when he spoke of the revelation of the "Man of Sin." One man filled the "MAN-OF-SIN" office when that which hindered was taken out of the way; and another entirely different man will be in it when Jesus is manifested to destroy the whole system.

Those who individualise and futurise the "Man of Sin" are in the habit of literalising the period of the Little Horn's prevalence. "Time, times, and an half," to them are literal three-and-a-half years, at some undiscoverable time in the future, during which "the ANTI-CHRIST" of their theory will appear on the scene, rise to the summit of universal power, and come to his end by divine interposition. How this theory can be entertained by an intelligent mind on a full review of the bearings of the case, it is difficult to conceive. It involves several anomalies of the most palpable kind. In the first place, if the time, times, and a half of Daniel's fourth beast are literal and future, of course the little horn represents a power yet to appear; and, in that case, the political visions shown to Daniel and John *take no notice of the greatest political phenomenon of the fourth-beast period of the world's history*. Daniel is shown the fourth-beast, and told about the fourth-beast kingdom, and put in possession of details respecting it, but is withheld all information of the most prominent, extraordinary, and longest-lived feature of the system, viz., the PAPACY. The most astounding phase of the fourth-beast history is left out of the symbolism of the fourth-beast period! He receives no information of a persecuting regal imposture, which should lift its head and voice over all the kings of the Continent, for more than 1,260 years, and trample under foot the truth and the friends of the truth all that time; but he is particularly enlightened with reference to an insignificant three-years-and-a-half, during which a daring man is only to equal (for he could not surpass) the impiety and cruelty exhibited by the Roman Pontiffs for more than a half-score centuries!

The suggestion has only to be stated to be condemned. How utterly incongruous, that in a symbol, confessedly extending over a chronological period of 2,000 years, an incident of only three-and-a-half literal years' duration should receive a place as its most conspicuous feature—a period of utter insignificance as history goes. Again, such an assumption would make the vision teach that *the saints were not to be prevailed against in the course of history*,

EXCEPT DURING THREE-AND-A-HALF YEARS AT ITS CLOSE, and would place in a curious position the fact, that *as a matter of history, the Papacy has spoken great words against the Most High, and prevailed against the saints for a* PERIOD OF UPWARDS OF 1,200 YEARS. Besides, of what service would the vision be, if its applicability were confined to a single oppressor, and a period of three-years-and-a-half at the close of history? Especially as it is denied by those who maintain this theory, that there is any clue to the time when the Man of Sin may be expected to appear. As it could in that case only interest those contemporary with that epoch, it would throw the vision into the corner, as a thing destitute of spiritual utility for all time, and only possessing the kind of interest attaching to any prodigy—a view of the matter eminently derogatory to God, in view of the fact that it was communicated by Him for enlightenment, encouragement, and guidance.

The literal theory is puerile and untenable. It is utterly unworthy of consideration, and can never be entertained where a broad and competent view of the facts is taken. The historical view of the matter, which is "the truth of the matter," gives utility and importance to the vision. We read in it the consoling assurance that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men," and that the "practising and prospering" of human wickedness and presumption in the earth, has a determined end—that the triumphing of the wicked, like the waves of the sea, has an appointed bound that it cannot pass—that the times of the Gentiles are fixed and defined, and that standing where we are, we can look forward with intelligent expectation to their early expiry, and the glorious manifestation of the Ancient of Days, in righteousness to judge and make war, and destroy them that destroy the earth.

With righteous triumph may we hail the day of Rome's perdition. Her history shows a dark and dreadful retrospect. No language can adequately depict the enormity of her crimes. The Pagan murderer of the apostles, the Papal blasphemer of the truth, and destroyer of the saints, "Great Babylon," has heaped to herself wrath against the day of wrath. Her crimes are without number and without measure. For a long period of centuries, she has prevailed against everything divine. She has waged open war against the word of God. She has done her utmost to extirpate it from among mankind. She has made the study of it a crime, and the possession of it a capital offence. She has trampled the truth under her feet, and drenched the earth with the blood of unresisting victims, who loved it, and counted not their lives dear unto them in defence of it. She has invented and established every kind of abomination in doctrine and practice. For ages, she has held up a mortal man as an object of universal adoration, above all on earth called God, or worshipped. To this living idol, she has commanded the ascription of more than mortal honours, and ordered all who would not bow down to the image to be cast into the furnace of fiery affliction, of persecution, bonds, imprisonments and death.

She has deified the ghost of a dead woman, and commanded the world to worship "the Queen of heaven," under the blasphemous title of "the Mother of God." She has burlesqued and brought to mockery the truth of the miraculous conception. She has enjoined prayer to dead men, and taught men to look to them for guardianship. The world, drunk with the wine of her abomination, has responded to the injunction, and elected their "patron saints," to whom they address their ignorant devotions, and whose guardianship they invoke upon the temples of their superstition by calling them after their names.

She has changed the memorials of Christ's death into objects of worship, telling her dupes that the touch of her lying priests transmutes the emblematic bread and wine into the veritable essence of Christ's nature; and she has degraded the intelligent observance of the institution, commanded for the affectionate participation of all the members of Christ's household, into a scene of superstitious and meaningless mummery, enacted by her foul-handed priests. She holds up as objects of faith and acts of obedience, dead men's bones,

musty relics, crosses, genuflexions, bodily penances; and exacts money from the pockets of her dupes on the iniquitous pretence of imparting spiritual benefit.

She has descended to the unutterable infamy of selling licentiousness for gain—pretending to give liberty to sin with impunity, for money—blasphemously professing to avert the course of eternal justice for a consideration in cash! She has invented the chimera of purgatory, and befooled the deluded masses of mankind into the belief that she had power, for money, to liberate "departed souls" from its custody.

There is no religious folly of which she has not been guilty. She has arrogated the power to forgive sins, and by her priests in "the Confessional," has enforced the most execrable inquisition into the private affairs of her devotees, especially women, in whose "spiritual interests" her celibate scoundrels have professed a solicitude which has only been the cloak of their lust. She has established nests of infamy throughout the world, in the name of spiritual purity and seclusion; and in convents and nunneries, carries on secret abominations and cruelties, of which the unutterable heinousness will only be fully known when "Great Babylon comes into remembrance before God," and the time arrives to give unto her "double for all her sins." She has decreed the heathen fiction of the immortality of the soul to be the cardinal point of the Christian faith, and has exalted the Pagan dreams of Hell and Elysian Fields, to the same eminence. She has turned away from the truth, and given heed to fables. She has made lies her refuge.

From the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, she is one mass of spiritual putrefaction; and when to this is added her great swelling words of vanity, her proud looks, and rapacious deeds, her wicked principles and cruel acts, her malignant hostility to the truth in every shape and form, and her implacable persecution by rack torture, fire and death, of all who professed it, whom she could get into her power, the picture of her enormities is complete. Yet, like the adulterous woman, "she wipeth her mouth, and saith, I am innocent." In the language imputed to her in the Apocalypse, she says, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow" (Rev. 18:7).

Well might the servants of God be represented as crying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true?" Such a triumph of iniquity in the earth is well-nigh beyond the capacity of human forbearance; but our patience is strengthened by the word which God has sent, "that His servants might know the things which must shortly come to pass." Through it, as through a telescope, we see the coming retribution, and we hear the murmuring echoes of that mighty pæan of triumph, which will ascend from countless tongues, like the noise of a tumult of waters: "Alleluia! Salvation, and glory and honour, and power unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are His judgments; *for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand*." (Rev. 19:1, 2).

The sound of this song of triumph is very near, even at the door. In all probability, another generation will not pass before its joyous peals will burst upon the world. "Time, times, and a half" of years are up. 1866–70 (a margin covered by the French occupation of Rome) saw the end of the 1,260 years which commenced in 606–8, and with the end of her allotted time comes the swift and decisive sword of divine justice. "*Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities*.… Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her" (Rev. 18:5–8). "The Lord shall consume her with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy her with the brightness of HIS COMING" (II Thess. 2:8).

CONFIRMATORY SIGNS

Being at the end of the prophetic periods, are there any events extant in the world at the present moment indicative of the fact? In answering this question, we desire to draw attention to what has been revealed in reference to the events attendant upon "the latter days." We begin by quoting Rev. 16:12, 16, where this matter is the subject of symbol:—

> "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet; for they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. (Behold, I come as a thief: blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.) And he gathered them together into a place called, in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon."

The main feature of this testimony is a predicted gathering of nations to a war in which God Almighty (through the Lord Jesus Christ, who arrives on earth like a thief, before the conflict commences), is to take a part.

There are, however, certain signs preceding the gathering, which demand our attention. There is, first the drying up of the river Euphrates, "that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." Now, we cannot take this to mean the literal evaporation of the river known by that name; because there would be no connection between such an event and the preparation of "the way of the kings of the east," or sunrising, whoever we take these to be.

There are only two classes that answer to the designation, viz.:—the saints and the Jews: the first being the kings of a future age—having their origin and constitution in Christ, the great rising sun of righteousness, who is to reappear in the east, and subjugate the world from that quarter; and the second, being the royal eastern nation, or lords of the east. If we suppose that "the kings of the east" of the testimony are the saints, we are at once precluded from the literal view of "the river Euphrates," for how should the drying up of a river be necessary to make way for those who shall be *caught* (or snatched) away to meet the Lord in the air? If, on the other hand, we assume that it is the Jews who are meant (and the truth is, it means both, for they are part and parcel of the same system of things), the idea of literality of the river is equally untenable; because the Jews are principally scattered in Europe and America, and in their restoration will come in "the ships of Tarshish first" (Isaiah 60:9), and be brought "on horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts: for an offering, to the holy mountain of the Lord at Jerusalem" (Isaiah 66:20).

The question is, what does the statement of the prophecy mean? Turning to the prophets, we find rivers frequently chosen to represent nations, powers, armies, etc. We read in Isaiah 8:7, for instance:—"Behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them *the waters of the river*, strong and many, EVEN THE KING OF ASSYRIA, AND ALL HIS GLORY." In this case, the Assyrian power is figuratively represented by the river which irrigated the territory on which it was established, viz., the Euphrates, which was designated "the river." Again, in Isaiah 18, where the Jews are the subject of discourse, we find the following phrase, "whose land the *rivers* have spoiled," referring to the repeated military invasions of Palestine; for we never heard of watery inundations in that part of the world. Hence also, "many waters" are explained to mean "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (Rev. 17:15).

Now, in view of these considerations, it is legitimate to argue that "the river Euphrates" dried up by the sixth vial, is intended to signify that power which is located on the territory to which it pertains, at the time contemporary with the pouring out of the sixth vial. If this is admitted, the interpretation would at once fix upon Turkey as the power represented; because she occupies the territory in question at the present time, When the events of the prophecy are near their fulfilment. If so, the meaning of the symbol is that the political life of the Turkish

empire will die out as a necessary preparation for the way of the kings of the east. The fitness of this interpretation is at once apparent, when we remember that Turkey had held the land of the Jew in servile possession, precluding him from possessing soil in his own land, and refusing to guarantee him the ordinary privileges of his heathen denizens; because, until the Turkish power is removed out of the way—until this political Euphrates is dried up, the restoration of the Jews, in the complete sense required by other parts of the prophetic word, is not possible. Hence, the necessity for its evaporation predicted in the vision.

The next sign connected with the development of the end, was seen by John in the issuing of "three unclean spirits like frogs out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." The three sources of issue first demand attention. The beast is said to have had "seven heads and ten horns, and ten crowns upon his horns" (Rev. 13:1). This is interpreted in chapter 17:9, as follows: "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth (the woman being explained as that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth—verse 18), and there are seven kings … And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet," etc. (verse 12).

Here it is evident that "the beast" is representative of a *political organisation*, and not descriptive of the reptilious monstrosity suggested by a literal construction of the symbol. This being so, "the mouth of the beast" must also be political; and we must seek for its equivalent in the beast-system, as politically manifested. By this rule, we select the capital city as being the mouth of the state, both as to the exposition of its policy, and as to its corporate nourishment. Now on this principle of interpretation, which is suggested by the explanation contained in the vision itself, the mouths of the dragon, beast, and false prophet signify the capital cities of the political systems severally represented by these symbols; and all that is necessary to identify them is, to ascertain what systems are symbolised by "the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet."

This cannot be done without going largely into history, which is impossible within the short limits of a lecture. The dragon is demonstrably the Eastern Roman Empire, having Constantinople as its capital: the beast, the Holy Roman Empire of the middle ages, having Vienna as its representative mouth; and the false prophet, that absurdity, in Christendom, the ecclesiastical tyrant of Rome, from which, as "his mouth," he fulminates his blasphemous "bulls" and gives forth his false pretentions to spiritual unction and infallibility.

The mouths, then, from which the unclean spirits issue, are Constantinople, Vienna and Rome. What are those spirits? They are like frogs. This cannot mean a resemblance to the little mud reptiles which inhabit marshes; because these creatures are devoid of intelligent quality; hence, a policy issuing from a political mouth could never be said to resemble them. The mouths being political, the frog-likeness must have a political significance likewise; but where shall we seek for anything political connected with three frogs?

Well, it is a fact that the original arms of France consisted of *three frogs*, of which anyone may satisfy himself by consulting early French history. Here is a clue. If the Spirit has selected the dragon—the first heraldic symbol of the Eastern Roman Empire—to represent the modern phase of that empire, does it not seem appropriate that the original national symbol of France should be selected to represent her, when the occasion occurred to introduce her into the scene? Only one answer can be given, and that answer brings a moral certainty with it, that France is brought before us in the three frogs seen by John. This being so, the explanation of the phenomenon seen by John is this—that a French inspired policy should issue from Constantinople, Vienna, and Rome, causing a gathering of nations to the final war of the great day of God Almighty.

Here, then, are two notable signs to be looked for, as indicative of the approach of the end. First—The decadence of the Turkish Empire, and second—the predominance of French

influence at the great political council board of Europe. Who can fail to see that these two signs have been conspicuous for many years on the Continent? Turkey is rapidly falling to pieces; and Louis Napoleon, the French Emperor, was next to all-powerful during the principal part of his reign. He was instrumental in bringing about the wars that have led to the present development of the military system of Europe.

In the confidence inspired by French assurance of support, the Sultan of Turkey declared war against Russia; thus the unclean frog-like spirit proceeded out of the mouth of the dragon. Provoked by the belligerent attitude of the French Government as the instigator of Sardinia, Austria declared war against the latter; and thus the unclean spirit was caused to issue from the mouth of the beast. Supported by the French Emperor, the Pope made war upon the Revolutionists, who rose against him under Garibaldi, in 1866–7, when the French evacuated Rome, under the Franco-Italian Convention, and thus the unclean spirit went out of the mouth of the False Prophet. The general effect of all three operations has been to give politics an eastern direction. The Holy Land is now the centre of interest, and will become more and more so as the time for the gathering at Armageddon draws near. Russia must appear upon the scene as conqueror of Turkey. This appears from Daniel 11:40, 41, 44, 45; 12:1:—

> "At the time of the end … the king of the north shall come against him (viz., against the power mentioned in the previous verse, as occupying and dividing the Holy Land for gain, which is Turkey), like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships, and *He shall enter into the* COUNTRIES, *and shall overflow and pass over*. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and MANY COUNTRIES *shall be overthrown*.… He shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to take away many. He shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain; yet *he shall come to his end, and none shall help him*: (for) AT THAT TIME shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; *and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time*."

In proof that the victorious invading power described in this testimony as "the king of the north," is Russia, let it be observed that it comes against another power that is *in occupation of the Holy Land*. That power is Turkey, as must be obvious to everyone from the facts of the case. Now the king of the north, in relation to Turkey, and to every other country in the world, is the Emperor of Russia. In a peculiar and absolute sense, that potentate answers to the description of the prophecy; for his empire girdles the northern zone, almost of both hemispheres, constituting him, in an exclusive sense, "the king of the north." This is still more evident from Ezekiel 38, where we read, commencing first verse:—

> "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of Man, set they face against Gog, the land of Magog, *the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal*, and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: and I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws; and I will bring thee forth and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: *Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them*; all of them with shield and helmet; *Gomer and all his bands, the house of Togarmah, of the north quarters, and all his bands; and* MANY PEOPLE *with thee*. Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself thou and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and *be thou a guard unto them*.
>
> After many days thou shalt be visited: IN THE LATTER YEARS thou shalt come *into the land that is brought back from the sword*, and is gathered out of many people AGAINST THE MOUNTAINS OF ISRAEL, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely, all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou and all thy bands and many people with thee

(verse 9). In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it. And thou shalt come from thy place *out of the north parts*, thou and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses—a great company and a mighty army; and thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land: IT SHALL BE IN THE LATTER DAYS; and I will bring thee against *my land*, that the heathen may know me when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes."

The evidence that the potentate addressed in this prophecy is the Emperor of Russia is overwhelming. First, there is something in the use of the phrase, "Gog, the land of Magog." If you turn to any map of the ancient world you will find that the land of Magog—taking its name from Magog, the son of Japheth, who was the first settler—lies in the northern part of Europe, and is now embraced in the modern Russian Empire. Secondly, the phrase, "the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal"; you will find those ancient territorial names to be descriptive of countries now incorporated with Russia, and now modified in the names Muscovy and Tobolski. Thirdly, the remark, "Thou shalt come from thy place *out of the north parts*," shows that the land of Magog, and the provinces of Meshech and Tubal, are geographically situated in the realms of the Emperor of Russia

The points of coincidence between Ezekiel's "Gog, the land of Magog," and Daniel's "king of the north," are striking. The one appears "*at the time of the end*"; the other "*in the latter days*." The one is "*the king of the north*"; the other comes out of his place "*in the north parts*." The one "overflows *many countries*, and enters into the *glorious land*"; the other, "with *many people at his steps*, comes against *the mountains of Israel* like a cloud to cover the land"; the one "*comes to his end with none to help him*": the other meets with retribution described in the following words:—

"I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains; saith the Lord God; every man's sword shall be against his brother, and *I will plead against him with pestilence and with 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" (Ezek. 38:21, 22).

In both cases, the contemporary supremacy of Russia is foretold; in both, is the smiting of her power supernatural. She is to vanquish many countries, and hold a protectorate over them, as indicated by the words, "Be thou a guard unto them." Those countries include all the nations of the Continent. "Gomer and all his bands, the house of Togarmah of the north quarters," will be found, on reference to ancient geography, to embrace nearly every country in Europe; and, in addition to these, there are "Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them," showing that at the time, Russia will have attained to something like universal dominion.

Previous to this full development of her power, the Jews will have been the subjects of partial restoration. They are represented as having been "brought forth out of the nations," and as having gotten cattle and goods and "dwelling safely all of them without bars and gates." This is a state of things existing before the coming of Christ. Consequently it is to be brought about by natural means. What those natural means are may be inferred from the allusion, in verse 13, to "the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof," and from Isaiah 18. The probability is that the beginning of the return of Jewish prosperity is connected with British efforts to checkmate Russia in her designs upon India.

By establishing a Jewish colony in Palestine, the British Government will secure her communications with India—always vital to her safety. The motive of this northern Cæsar, in his advance upon the "mountains of Israel, which have been always waste," is apparent. In the attempt to sever British communications, he goes forth, "with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many" (Dan. 11:44). He comes "like a cloud to cover the land," with nations at his steps. But his course is suddenly interrupted. While his forces are encamped at

Bozrah, in Edom, the lion of the tribe of Judah breaks in upon them, and a great carnage takes place. The event is described in Isaiah 63:3, 4, 6:—

> "I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment; for the day of vengeance is in my heart, *and the year of my redeemed is come*.… I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."

The complete discomfiture of Gog is predicted by Zechariah in the following language:—

> "*Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle*; AND HIS FEET SHALL STAND IN THAT DAY UPON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, *which is before Jerusalem on the east*, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof" (Zech. 14:3, 4).

Ezekiel describes what follows (chapter 38:18–22):—

> "And it shall come to pass, at the same time … 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; so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall *shake at my* PRESENCE; and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground; and I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains; saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with 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."

Zechariah adds to this:—

> "This shall be the plague wherewith the Lord shall smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem. Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet; their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth; and it shall come to pass in that day that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour" (Zech. 14:12, 13).

The result of the conflict is the destruction of the assembled armies. A remnant escapes in flight (Ezek. 39:2), and carries the report of the supernatural defeat to the nations that "have not heard of His fame, nor seen His glory" (Isa. 66:19).

At this juncture, a manifesto, or imperial summons, issues from Jerusalem, calling upon the nations to submit to the God-appointed king of all the earth. This is represented in Rev. 14:6, as "an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel" (or glad tidings of the age), to preach unto them that dwell on the earth … saying "Fear God, and give glory to Him; *for the hour of His judgment is come*." The summons is unheeded; "the beast of the earth and his armies assemble to make war with the Lamb," and them "who are with him," who are called, and chosen, and faithful. The Lamb allows the gathering hosts to proceed to conflict. He could disperse them with a word, but there is a purpose to be served by their attempts to overthrow him. In the war that ensues, "The Lamb shall overcome," and afterwards the world will see the following prediction fulfilled:—

> "And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies.… Now

will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel; … neither will I hide my face any more from them, for I have poured out my spirit upon tho house of Israel, saith the Lord God" (Ezek. 39:21, 23, 25, 29).

Current events indicate the proximity of the crisis. The Papacy has wonderfully lost its power. Felled from its position of supremacy by the shock of the French Revolution, over seventy years ago, it has been steadily declining ever since that time. It was deprived of its last prop by the defeat of the Austrian forces, in the Austro-Prussian war, and the incorporation of the greater part of the States of the Church by the young kingdom of Italy. With the overthrow of France by Germany, the Pope's temporal dominion crumbled to the ground, and the Pope now complains on every suitable occasion that he is a prisoner in the Vatican, and that in the loss of the temporal power he has lost the dignity and independence necessary for the exercise of the Pontificate. Doubtless the final scene is at the door.

The attitude of Russia points to an early probable attainment to the position assigned to her by the prophets in the time of the end. Her recovery from the disasters of the Crimean War is notorious to all the world. Her territorial extension has never for a moment been suspended. During the last twenty years she has added large provinces in Central Asia, and conquered the great barrier that lay between her and Asia Minor, in the Caucasus, while as the result of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–8, she has penetrated to the heart of the Turkish empire. Her dark shadow is now looming ominously behind the Eastern question.

As to Turkey, as already said, she is rapidly falling to pieces. Herzegovina and Bosnia are annexed to Austria. Servia, Roumania, and Montenegro have been erected into independent kingdoms. Bulgaria is all but a Russian province. East Roumelia has become an autonomous province, ruled by a Christian governor. Egypt is in English occupation. The Christian populations throughout the whole of the dominions of the Sultan are in a seething ferment of rebellion, preparing to rise against him and throw off his yoke. The "sick man" is given up by the diplomatic doctors as incurable, and the papers are teeming with prognostications of the early downfall of the Turkish empire.

In the scramble for the spoil, Russia will come in for the lion's share; Britain will doubtless lay her hand on Syria, to protect the highway to her Eastern possessions. This will be the time for the Jews to realise the partial restoration which takes place before the invasion of the land by Gog. They have already begun to carry it out to a partial extent. Schemes for the colonisation of the land are in vogue among the Jews, and are received with increasing favour. Several societies exist to promote their return, and several colonies have actually been formed and are now in operation in the Holy Land. They have sprung into existence within the last twenty years, and have received a powerful impetus from the sentiment of nationality, which now prevails on the Continent, and regulates European politics:—

Italy for the Italians; Palestine for the Jews; these are political corollaries, and are on the eve of being placed side by side on the same basis of accomplished fact. The land of Palestine has come much under notice of late; and, as is well known, a society, with the Prince of Wales at its head, has made a complete ordnance survey of the country. This helps to pave the way for the political sequel, in which Britain, mistress and protector of the Jews, not from any love of them, but from her own political exigencies having reference to India, will be the enemy of Russia when she comes like a cloud to cover the land. England once in possession of the country, the restoration of the Jews will be the development of a day. The Jews are ready, in great wealth, and with prompt disposition, to return to the land of their fathers when the political obstacle presented by Turkey is finally removed.

As to the state of the world generally, the temper of the nations is highly significant of the predicted crisis. The Scriptures inform us that in the epoch of the end, the world will become highly belligerent. This is intimated in such statements as the following:—

"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).

"Evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth" (Jer. 25:32).

"Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear" (Luke 21:25, 26).

"The nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come" (Rev. 11:18).

Now, it is notorious that the present state of the world is one of preparation for war. Never was there a time of such military preparation. Universal military service by conscription has become the order of the day. Europe, in the language of a British statesman, has been turned into a vast entrenched camp. The war fever is universal. Peace is on the lips of rulers, but war in their hearts. The war-cloud that darkens will spread over all the sky and burst in terrible violence.

A time of trouble, such as never was, is in store for the world. The worst experiences of antiquity, when blood ran like water, and famine waited in the train of war, to kill its millions, will be repeated on a scale of magnitude that will strike the world with terror, and thin down its over-stocked and corrupt population to a purified remnant in sympathy with Christ. The storm of divine vengeance will relieve the atmosphere of the fœtid and oppressive elements with which it is charged. The relentless arm of righteous retribution—for "in righteousness he doth judge and make war," will lay the foundation for peace on earth, and goodwill to men.

When the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of Jehovah and of His Christ, His glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The smoke and carnage of judgment will pass, and the peaceful morning of righteousness and happiness will open with a smile upon the world. Jerusalem, at first the scene of destroying judgment, will become the centre of blessing for all nations. The king will reign, who shall "come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth." The sun will break through the quick-dispersing clouds of judgment storm, and fill the world with healing and gladness. After the thunderstorm of judgment, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. Earth's troubles will be hushed in the calm of universal peace. There will be glory to God in the highest heaven, over the earth peace and good-will among men.

Lecture 17

THE REFUGE FROM THE STORM: OR "WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

THIS subject follows the others in natural sequence; it overtops and comes after all the topics that have been discussed. It concerns the question raised in every healthy mind, by the discussion of these topics, the great solicitude created by a contemplation of the truth of God, as therein unfolded. If it be shewn that we are mortal in constitution, and that immortality and the undefiled inheritance of the future ages are conditionally attainable, the mind conceives a strong anxiety to learn the nature of those conditions on which so much depends, with a sincere desire to fulfil them.

"WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?" What are the conditions which we are required to fulfil, in order to a participation in the great salvation to be revealed at the coming of the Lord? Let it be premised, that such a question pre-supposes a disposition on the part of the questioner, to gladly receive any conditions which the great Lawgiver may think fit to impose. It indicates a conviction that the boon to be bestowed is at the absolute disposal of the Giver.

It is an admission that the petitioner has no natural claim upon it, and that the Bestower has the right to say upon what conditions it will be granted. In fact, when sincerely put, it shews the questioner to be in that childlike frame of mind which Jesus refers to when he says, "Whosoever shall not *receive the kingdom of God as a little child*, shall in no wise enter therein" (Luke 18:17). This is not the mental condition of moralists, who think that goodness of character *entitles* a man to future reward; nor is it the condition of those who decry the belief of the Gospel, which God has appointed as the initial "power unto salvation," to everyone believing (Rom. 1:16).

Both these forms of opposition have their origin in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. This may not seem to be the case at first sight, but thorough reflection will shew it. The immortal soul doctrine has this effect: It causes the believer thereof to look upon every human being as the inevitable subject of positive eternal destiny; and as their theology recognises only two places and two classes as related to that eternal destiny, viz., heaven and hell, and the inhabitants thereof respectively, he necessarily assigns fill mankind, in every age and country—of every state, stature, and condition—to one or other of those places.

Now, it is not conceivable to the ordinary orthodox believer that God should predicate entrance into heaven upon conditions which would have the effect of shutting out from it the great majority of mankind, or that He should in any case consign to hell those myriads of "good" people, who, though ignorant of the gospel, are not only harmless, but in some cases, positively admirable in the characters they develop. Hence the belief forces itself upon the mind, that general goodness and moral worth will be sure of acceptance, without reference to the understanding and belief of the gospel. Some even go the length of believing that all mankind will ultimately be saved. All this comes in logical consequence from the belief of a doctrine which (imputing to man an immortal nature) makes it inevitable that every class of mankind should be in a state of either eternal happiness or eternal misery. But take away immortal soulism, and what do we find? We behold all mankind perishing under a process of dissolution, from which they are unable to deliver themselves.

"Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). It has constituted them a race of mortals, incapable, in the absence of some divine pre-arrangement, of elevating themselves (by any act of their own) above the condition in which they are involved. Hence, morality cannot save. To know what can save, we must listen to the apostles. Jesus Christ

was sent for the purpose of *opening a way* of salvation; and having opened the way, he sent his apostles to tell mankind *how it might be entered*.

The object in sending this message to the nations was not to convert them *en masse*, and bring about the millennium, as many erroneously suppose. Jehovah never proposed such a result from the preaching of the gospel. Had He done so, we should have found a different state of things existing in this late period of the world's history. It is now nearly nineteen hundred years since the gospel was introduced into the world, and, instead of the world being converted through its influence, "the whole world lieth in wickedness" now as much as ever it did, though the wickedness may have changed form and hue somewhat. Men will greedily run after any kind of foolishness that will tickle the fancy and pander to the fleshly mind; but when the gospel is "reasoned out of the Scriptures" for the commendation of their judgment, and the obedience of a thereby enlightened conscience, they pronounce the matter "dry" and turn listlessly away, as from a thing of no interest.

Accepting Peter as a competent authority in the case, we find him reported by James to have said that the object which Jehovah had in view, in visiting the Gentiles, was "*to* TAKE OUT OF THEM *a people for His name*" (Acts 15:14). This is all, then, that is proposed in the preaching of the Gospel—the gathering "out of every kindred, tongue, and nation," of all generations, a people who shall constitute that great manifested name in the earth, when "there shall be one Lord in all the earth, and *His name* (in which all who bear it will be included) ONE." The gospel is, in fact, an invitation to all who accept it, to form part of that name, by putting it on in the appointed way; but the class who effectually comply is very small. "Many are called, but FEW ARE CHOSEN." "*Many shall strive to enter in, and shall not be able*." Jesus gave his commission to his disciples in the following words:—

> "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. *He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*" (Mark 16:15, 16).

Here is a clear indication of the principle on which the "people for His name" were to be selected. The gospel was to be proclaimed, and those to whom it was pre, claimed, were required to believe it. Without compliance, there could be no salvation; for whosoever would not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child should in nowise enter therein. The gospel was thus constituted the agency of salvation; hence, Paul styles it "*the gospel of your salvation*" (Eph. 1:13). He also says "(*the gospel*) *is the power of God unto salvation* TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH" (Rom. 1:16); and again, "It pleased God BY THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING *to save them that believe*" (I Cor. 1:21). Hence, if any man desires to be saved, the very first thing he has to do is to believe the gospel.

Cornelius was instructed by an angel to "send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter, *who shall tell thee words WHEREBY thou and all thy house shall be saved*" (Acts 11:13, 14). And the Philippian jailor was told by Paul, in answer to his enquiry, "What must I do to be saved?"—"*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (ch. 16:30, 31). Believing on the Lord Jesus, and believing the gospel, are exactly the same thing; for the gospel is made up of glad tidings concerning the Lord Jesus Christ: and if a man believe the gospel, he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. If he is ignorant of the gospel, he cannot believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, for "the Lord Jesus Christ" is not the mere name of the Saviour as a personage, but a grand doctrinal symbol, which can only be understood by those who are acquainted with the gospel in its amplitude.

The first thing a man has to do, then, in order to gain salvation, is to believe the gospel. To do this he must know the gospel, for as Paul says, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard"? (Rom. 10:14). Knowledge must always precede belief; for a man cannot believe that of which he has not previously been informed. Hence, the first inquiry on the part of man or woman anxious to be saved will be, WHAT IS THE GOSPEL? Until

they know this, they cannot go on to the second stage of *believing unto salvation*. The gospel is styled "the one faith," because it is made up of things which require faith to receive them—the act of the mind by which these are apprehended being metonymically put for the things themselves. It is laid down as a principle, "*Without faith* IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD" (Heb. 11:6), and it is affirmed of believers, "Ye are saved *through faith*" (Eph. 2:8), and "the just shall live *by faith,* " (Heb. 10:38). Now this faith, in scriptural usage, is not a mere abstract reliance on the omnipotence of Jehovah, but the belief of specific promise. It is said that "faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness" (Rom. 4:9). Now let us note the character of this righteousness-acquiring faith:—

> "*He staggered not at* THE PROMISE OF GOD *through unbelief,* but was strong in faith, giving glory to God: *and being fully persuaded that* WHAT HE HAD PROMISED, *he was able also to perform"* (Rom. 4:20, 21).

Hence, it is said that *faithful* Abraham was constituted *the father of them that* BELIEVE, by which it is evident that scriptural faith is *belief in the promises of God*; and thus by the consideration of terms of a more general nature, we arrive at the conclusion to which we were guided in a former lecture by specific testimony, viz.:—that the Gospel which must be believed m order to obtain salvation, is *made up of unfulfilled promises as its chief element*.

What is the Gospel which is so composed? As summarised by Luke, in Acts 8:12, where he describes the preaching of Philip to the Samaritans, it is "THE THINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST." It thus appears to be a compound of two elements—the one relating to the kingdom of God, and the other to the doctrinal import of "THE NAME" of Jesus, as affecting our individual salvation. Both of these must be known; and each must be understood before saving faith is possible. Of the first, we have already treated in Lecture's VIII. and X., and indirectly in Lectures IX., XI., XII., XIII., and XIV. To these collectively, the reader is referred for an exposition of "the things concerning the kingdom of God."

As for the things concerning "the Name," we are introduced to them in Acts 4:12; "There is none other NAME under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,"—which is equivalent to saying, that *there is only one name so given*, and that is, the name of Jesus the Christ. How this name has been "given" is illustrated in the events recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Begotten by the Holy Spirit, Jesus was "*made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and* sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30). He manifested in human nature a character with which the Father was well pleased. In his crucifixion, flesh and blood were sacrificially slain, and God's righteousness, in His dealings with Adamic nature, declared. In resurrection, the slain sacrifice was accepted, and Jesus lives, to die no more—a name which men may take upon themselves, and stand before God, accepted in him.

The way by which believers may take this name upon them exists in the ordinance of baptism, which, according to the divinely appointed formula, introduces "*into* the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." Says the Apostle, "*As many of you as have been baptised* INTO *Christ* have PUT ON *Christ*" (Gal. 3:27). Having put on Christ, they have put on the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, inasmuch as Jesus is a manifestation of the Father, in the Son, by means of the Holy Spirit. Those who are thus invested no longer stand in the nakedness of the natural man, but are "found in HIM, not having their own righteousness … *but the righteousness which is of God*, BY FAITH."

We must, therefore, understand "the things concerning the kingdom of God AND the name of Jesus Christ," before we can understand and believe the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. The one without the other is of no efficacy. To be ignorant of "the things concerning the kingdom of God," is to be ignorant of the gospel. A man may be well acquainted with the historical facts of Christ's crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension; but

unless he understands them in their *true* doctrinal significance, and *in their connection with* "*the glory that shall follow*," his knowledge of them conveys to him no enlightenment as to God's purposes.

This is peculiarly the case where the knowledge in question is associated with the doctrine of the immortality of the soul; for it then ceases to have any scriptural significance or efficacy what ever. This will be seen if we realise that Christ died to purchase *life*. "He brought life and immortality to light," by the sacrifice which he submitted to. By the grace of God, he tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9). But if we regard immortality as the essential attribute of human nature, we displace the sacrifice of Christ from its Scriptural position. We destroy its character as a *means of securing life*, and are compelled to transform it into that anomalous doctrine of pulpitology which regards it as substitutionary suffering of divine wrath, in order to save immortal souls from the eternal tortures of hell!—a suffering, which, after all, according to orthodox teaching, is awfully inadequate; for countless myriads of immortal souls, according to that system of teaching, still continue unreconciled, and are fated to spend an eternity of existence in raging, blaspheming torture!

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul must be removed from the mind before gospel truth can obtain a proper entrance, for it nullifies the whole system, by obliterating its foundation doctrine, that "by one man came *death*," and destroys its efficacy by entirely diverting attention from the salvation which it offers, and directing it to a reward which God has never promised. In fact, its effect is to pervert, vitiate, poison, nullify, and destroy everything pertaining to God's truth. It sends its jarring vibrations through the entire system of revelation, introducing confusion and absurdity where otherwise reign peace, order, harmony, and beauty. Theologically, it is an unclean spirit, of which a man must be exorcised, before he can become clothed and in his right mind in relation to divine truth. Previously to this, his mind is filled with truth-neutralising doctrine, which effectually prevents the entrance of a single ray of the truth.

The point at which we have arrived, is, that one of the fundamental conditions of salvation, is, belief of certain definite matters of teaching contained in the gospel, styled "the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ." Those "things" involve the whole circle of divine truth. They embrace the knowledge of the Creator himself; our relation to Him as sinful, worthless creatures; the teaching concerning Jesus Christ; Jehovah's dealings with our race, His promises, the means which he has provided for salvation, our duties towards Him, etc. What more fitting than that such a knowledge, and such a faith, should be required as a condition of fitness for an eternal existence of service based thereupon? It is only the merest ignorance that opposes "creed" as a means of present improvement and future salvation. How can the moral nature be developed without appropriate stimulus? If a man have nothing definite to hope for, how can his hope be active? If he have no particular object of faith presented to him, how can his faith be exercised? The very beauty of doctrinal Christianity is, that it supplies to the mind just exactly what is needed to draw out and satisfy its higher instincts.

Suppose a generation of untutored men who had never heard of the gospel—whose minds had never been exercised in hope of the promised salvation; whose affections had never been drawn out towards God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the saints past and present; whose natures had never been chastened into submission to divine will; but who might be amiable enough—suppose such were admitted into the kingdom of God, at the coming of Christ, what happiness could result to them, or glory to God? They would be thoroughly inappreciative. They would fail to experience the gratitude which years of definite expectation will create in the bosom of the saints, and be incapable of giving that glory to God which will burst with spontaneous outflow from the mouths and hearts of those who have been "looking for that blessed hope."

God purposes a higher consummation than this: He is making ready "*a chosen generation*, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, *to show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light,"* (I Peter 2:9). And this people He is preparing on the principle of "putting on the new man, *which is renewed in* KNOWLEDGE *after the image of Him that created him*" (Col. 3:10), "*filling them with* THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL, *in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*" (Col. 1:9). The means by which He is effectually accomplishing this work is the preaching of the gospel, and though the "enlightened" may sneer at "creed" and "points of doctrine," and the "charitable" may enlarge the breadth of their liberality, even to the obliteration of every distinctive feature from the system to which they profess attachment, no one whose mind is enlightened in the Word will be misled by their cavillings. "*The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God*."

Nothing will serve a man in the end, but an exact knowledge of the will of God as contained in the Scriptures, and faithfully carrying out the same. The wise may protest against the "dogmatism" and "bigotry" involved in such a course, but the enlightened conscience will approve. "Our faith standeth not in the wisdom of men, but in the word of God." Jesus has said (and let every man give ear!) "The WORDS that I speak unto you, THEY *are spirit*, and THEY *are life*" (John 6:63). That is, the gospel which he approved was "the power of God unto salvation," and therefore, "*the words of eternal life*, " as they are designated by Peter (John 6:68). And saith the Lord Jesus:—

> "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*" (John 12:48).

Here, then, is the standard by which our position will be measured when the great testing time arrives; and whether judged "uncharitable" or not, it is better to walk in "the *narrow* way" of the Words' exact teaching, with little company, than to be found in the "broad road" of either vague speculation or popular heresies, which the great multitude perambulate. The former leadeth unto life: the other leadeth to certain destruction:—

> "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? *For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of* MY WORDS, *of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he shall come in his own glory*" (Luke 9:23–26).

> "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, *let him become a fool that he may be wise*; for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (I Cor. 3:18, 19).

> "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. *He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*" (Mark 16:15, 16).

The all-in-all of "true religion" in these modern days, is fast resolving itself into abstract sincerity, goodness of character, piety of sentiment, etc.; belief in "doctrinal point" is at a discount. Only let a man be sincere in goodness of intention, and live a moral and exemplary life, and be he ever so ignorant, or mistaken as to the cardinal points of religious truth, he is sure of a goodly share in any inheritance that may be in store for the deserving; this is popular sentiment.

Now it is either true or false—safe or delusive. If it is true and safe, then the Scriptures are of no authority. It really comes to this. No man can consistently profess a belief in the divine authority of the Bible, and hold this loose sentiment on such a momentously important subject; because the Bible uniformly and distinctly narrows down salvation to a certain arbitary "narrow way" which few find, or care to walk in when found. Definite conditions are stated, and compliance required, involving something more than general goodness of moral

nature: and all who are intentionally or circumstantially on the side of noncompliance are excluded from the blessing.

The issue is, therefore, direct between the Bible and unbelief. We are on one side or the other in reference to this question; there is no neutral ground. If we have any. expectation of future perfection at all, it is because of promises contained in the Bible; for we can draw no expectation from any other source. If, then, we desire, or even dimly conceive it possible to realise this perfection, it can only be on the ground of a full compliance with the conditions upon which it is predicated; for what other ground of confidence have we?

If on the other hand, we discard the Bible altogether from the account as a book of questionable authority, we are without hope of any kind. There is no middle position. If a man hope to attain to the salvation of the Bible, he must comply with the Bible's own terms. It is not at his command on any terms he pleases. It is not purchasable by the shabby virtue of human character. It is special in relation to human life; and the means of attainment are, therefore, special. If you are not pleased with the speciality—"the contractedness of the affair—" you are at liberty to let it alone; you will not be compelled to take a part in a thing so distasteful to you; you will be allowed to make the most you can out of your ephemeral mortality, with all its petty concerns, which you hug with so much desire. Only remember that you will have nothing to hope for in the future, and that *you may have something to answer for*, in contemptuously refusing the proferred conditional goodness of God.

You may begin to talk about justice requiring the recognition and rewards of your virtue in a future life. Do you know whereof you affirm? On what principle do you make out your claim? You have uniformly refrained from crime; you have made it a practice to restore lost property to its owner; to bestow charity upon the poor; to show kindness to your equals. Very good. Have you thereby established a title to another life? A claim upon reward? Nay, my friend, philosopher as thou art, thou oughtest to know that such a course of virtue is, in its bearing, restricted to the life that thou *hast*. Thou hereby givest action to the noble qualities that distinguish thee from the brutes, and dost the more nearly approach the happiness of which thy nature is capable; but thou dost not necessarily secure a right to that other life, which is something special in relation to thy poor mortal existence, growing not out of it in natural course, but (to be conditionally) super-added to it by the creative power of God. It is vain for thee thus to hope for it as a reward of thy natural virtue. It is deposited in Christ Jesus for thy benefit; if thou wilt accept him, thou shalt have life (I John 5:10, 12); otherwise, thy poor virtue will profit thee nothing, but will vanish with thyself from the creation of God.

That there should be so much philosophical hostility to *belief* is matter for surprise. Belief is no invention of creed makers; it is the natural, constant, essential act of finite minds. We cannot exist without it. If we don't believe in religious creeds, we believe in something. We cannot help believing. It is the mainspring of all intelligent action—the source of every sensation of happiness and woe. What makes a man toil all day in the factory? Because he *believes* he will get his wages; would he do so if he did not? Why is the condemned criminal so overwhelmed and dejected? Because he *believes* his death will take place on an early day; but let him be told that a reprieve has arrived, and he flies into ecstasies of joy. Why? Because he *believes* he shall escape the doom that was impending over him. Our whole commercial system is based on belief, and the moment that society begins to be distrustful, that is, *unbelieving*, then we have a panic, and all the evils that come in its train. So in matters religious: belief is the first principle, the foundation of practical faith, the source of spiritual ecstasy, the cause of consistent action.

Now, what is belief? It is the assent of the mind to definite points of information. Before belief can take place, the mind must be informed; that is, it must first know or be aware of the subject of belief. Hence, knowledge (though only in the limited sense of information) is the foundation of belief. This principle is practically admitted in things secular; how inconsistent,

then, to deny its importance in things religious. How foolish to talk down "doctrinal points" as of no moment. Those "points," so much disparaged by the wise men of this generation, are, in reality, so many items of information on which our belief concerning the future is founded, and to run them down as undeserving of an intelligent man's attention, is to insult his judgment, and in reality, betray unbelief.

If they are untrue, they are something more than trivial, and deserve to be scouted; but if they are true, it is folly of a type bordering on insanity to treat them with indifference. The issue, therefore, lies between belief and unbelief—not between "bigotry" and "charity." Religious "liberality" sounds well, but what is it? It means indifference, for yourself and neighbour, to what God has required at your hands. Liberality is pleasanter for this life, than "the narrow way." In the broader road, in respectable company, with the delights of intellect, and the sweets of refinement, myriads of souls are delightfully escorted to destruction. God grant that some in the reading of these pages, may be enticed from the worldly throng, and induced to cast in their lot with a humbler people, who, in the spirit of profoundest regard for the word of the living God, are seeking to do His will according to His revealed requirements.

Belief of the Gospel is the first condition of salvation. This, however, is not all. A man may believe in all the glorious promises of God, and yet not be a participator in them. He must be baptised, as we have seen: "He that believeth, *and baptised*, shall be saved."

This is a feature of the apostolic system which is pretty generally ignored by the great body of those who claim the Christian name in the present day. How extraordinary that a loud profession of Christian allegiance should be allied to systematic violation of one of the plainest of Christian precepts! It cannot be said that there is any ambiguity in the manner in which the duty is set forth in the new Testament; for we find that Christ's general announcement on the subject is copiously illustrated both by exegetical comment and recorded example.

On the day of Pentecost, for instance, when the stricken-in-heart exclaimed, "Men and brethren, what shall we do"? the answer was, "Repent and *be baptised* every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ," and the narrative tells us that "*They that gladly received his word* WERE BAPTISED: and the same day there were added unto them about 3,000 souls" (Acts 2:37, 38, 41). Here is both precept and example. We are told in Acts 8:12, that "*when* (*the Samaritans*) *believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ*, THEY WERE BAPTISED BOTH MEN AND WOMEN." Again, in the case of Cornelius and his companions, we read in Acts 10:47, 48, that at the close of their interview with Peter, that apostle said, "*Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptised*, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? *And he commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord*." Again, in the case of Paul himself, we find the same course adopted after his conversion. "And now, why tarriest thou"? said Ananias to him (Acts 22:16); "*arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins*, calling upon the name of the Lord." "AND HE AROSE AND WAS BAPTISED" (Acts 9:18). Then we have the case of the Philippian jailor, recorded in Acts 16, in which the same lesson is enforced by the powerful argument of example. It is stated in 5:33, "(*He*) *was baptised, he and all his straightway*." Then we have to remember that even the Lord Jesus himself submitted to this act of obedience. We read:—

> "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, *to be baptised* of *him*; but John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptised of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. *Then he suffered him*" (Matt. 3:13–15).

Thus New Testament examples (numerous and decisive) shew that baptism in. water was a rite attended to by all who believed the truth in early times. Surely what was necessary or appropriate in the first Christians, is just as necessary and appropriate (and more so, if there

be any difference) in Christians of the nineteenth century. It is by no means fashionable, however to take this view. The generality of professing Christians argue against the neccesity of baptism in their case, and prefer to risk neglect on their own responsibility. It is clear, however, that the apostles looked upon the act in a much more serious light. Paul, in the words already quoted, is very expressive on the subject:—

> "As many of you as have been baptised *into Christ*, HAVE PUT ON CHRIST" (Gal. 3:27).

Again:—

> "Ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; BURIED WITH HIM IN BAPTISM, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God" (Col. 2:11, 12).

Again Paul says, in Rom. 6:3–6:—

> "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 so 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."

Finally, Peter makes the following allusion to it, which, though incidental, is unmistakable:—

> "In the days of Noah while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by (or as the marginal reading gives it, '*through*') water. The like figure whereunto even BAPTISM DOTH ALSO NOW SAVE US (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 3:20, 21).

There are other similar references to baptism throughout the epistles; but these are sufficient to shew that whatever may be the difficulty of modern professing Christians in discovering any significance or efficacy in the ordinance of baptism, the apostles saw much of both. They recognised in it a constitutional transition from one relationship to another,—a representative putting off of the old man, or Adam nature, and a putting on of the new man, or Christ, who is the ONE COVERING NAME, in which, when the naked son of Adam is invested, he stands clothed before Jehovah, and is approved in His sight. Of course this effect is imputative; that is to say, it is not brought about by the mere act of submersion in water, which in itself has no religious virtue whatever, but is *the result recognised by God* when the act is performed in connection with an intelligent apprehension and affectionate belief of the truth.

It may seem strange and incredible that God would connect such a momentous change with a trivial and (as some regard it) ridiculous observance. An earnest mind, however, will not stop to reason on the matter when once satisfied that it is the will of God, especially when he remembers that it is one of the characteristics of God's dealings with men, that He selects "weak things, things despised, yea, and things that are not" (I Car. 1:27, 28), by which to accomplish important results that it may be seen that the power is of God, and not in the means, and that true obedience may be secured in His servants. It was not the eating of the fruit *in itself*—apart from the divine prohibition—that constituted Adam's offence. It was not the mere looking at the brazen serpent in the wilderness that cured the serpent-bitten Israelites. It was not Naaman's mere immersion in Jordan in itself that cured him of his leprosy. It was the *principle involved* in each case that developed the results, viz., the

principle of obedience to the divine law, which is one prominent feature in all God's dealings with man. Obedience is the great thing required at our hands:—

> "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, *as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams* (I Sam. 15:22).

It matters not what the act may be; the more unlikely the thing required, the more severe the test, and the more conspicuous the obedience, even if it be the offering up of an only son, or the slaughtering of a whole nation. In any case, and at all hazards, obedience must be yielded. God is not less exacting in this respect under the Christian dispensation than He was under the law; but, if possible, more so. This appears from Paul saying in Heb. 2:1, 3:—

> "Therefore, we ought to give the moro earnest heed to the things which we (Christians) have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For *if the word spoken by angels* (viz, the law which was given through the disposition of angels—Acts 7:53) was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE *if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him*?"

So that although Christianity may be said, in its prescriptions, to be "a yoke that is easy and a burden that is light," yet in respect of its *obligation*, we are taught by the apostle that it exceeds the law in rigidness and responsibility. How perilous, then, to tinker with it after the fashion of modern "charity," saying that it is of no importance whether we believe its doctrines or not, and of no concern whether we attend to its ordinances!

God requires the one hope, the one faith, and one baptism, as the only acceptable offering which a poor son of Adam can present under the Christian dispensation; and to offer Him, instead, a mere sentimental piety of our own devising, is to offer "strange fire," which assuredly will bring death upon the offerer. God has required all believers of His truth to be immersed, as a means of transferring them from the dominion of the old mortal Adam to a life-giving connection with the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who is made a quickening spirit; and though it may be very humiliating to submit to an act in which the eye of sense can perceive no reason, yet in that very submission, obedience is more thoroughly tested and more God-honouringly exemplified than in the performance of that which necessity or a natural sense of fitness would dictate.

The change wrought in our position by baptism is "*through the faith of* THE OPERATION OF GOD" (Col. 2:12). If there be no such faith, of course there is no efficacy in the act; so that the view we take of baptism really depends on our condition of mind in relation to God. Child-like faith in His word and implicit obedience to His will (without which it is impossible to please Him), will at once lead us to regard it as an essential act, under the Christian dispensation, on the part of every one desiring to attain to the great salvation; for had it been unessential, it would never have been enjoined as a Christian dispensation and never attended to by the Lord Jesus, the apostles, and the early Christians.

Yet the character of the act depends upon the condition of the person attending to it; for as has been already observed, *in itself* it is nothing. An unenlightened person is not a fit subject for its observance, however sincere he may be in his desire to do the will of God. It is only prescribed for *those who believe the Gospel*; and in early times it never was administered to any other. Men were never exhorted to be baptised until they had arrived at a knowledge of "the word of salvation." For without such a knowledge, the act would have been a mere bodily ablution, as profitless, in relation to eternal life, as those performed under the law. *In every New Testament instance, the Gospel was understood and believed before*

baptism was administered. It requires the "one faith" to constitute the "one baptism." It was only *a "washing o[water* BY THE WORD" (Eph. 5:26).

But when the word was absent from the mind, the cleansing element was wanting, and the subject of the rite was still unwashed. This is the condition of vast multitudes in our own day, who have been immersed as a religious ordinance, but who are in total ignorance of the gospel preached by Jesus and his apostles. Their immersion in ignorance is worthless, if repeated a thousand times; and if ever they come to a true knowledge of the word, baptism will be just as necessary as if they had never gone into the water at all. For a scriptural case of re-immersion, see Acts 19:1–5, where twelve disciples, who had been baptised by John the Baptist, were re-immersed on having their faith rectified on a certain point by Paul.

As for those who give countenance to the sprinkling of babies as Christian baptism, the whole tendency of the foregoing argument is to shew that they are guilty of religious foolishness, of a type so palpable and self-evident, as to require no formal refutation; and their case must be dismissed with the remark that the doctrine of infant baptismal regeneration, like all the other absurdities of the apostasy, is indebted for its existence and support, to the one great central delusion which is the very life of orthodoxy—the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

To sum up the whole matter, a person instructed in "the word of the kingdom," enquiring what must he do to be saved, has only one scriptural answer to receive: *"Repent and be baptised into the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins"* (Acts 2:38). When he has yielded this "obedience of faith" he is "born of water" through the inceptive influence of the truth; and having entered "The Name," his sins are "*covered*"; his transgressions "hid"; his whole past life is cancelled, and he has commenced a term of probation in which he is a lawful candidate for that "birth of the spirit" from the grave, which will finally constitute him a "son of God, being of the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36), "waiting for the ADOPTION, *to wit, the redemption of the body*" (Rom. 8:23).

But his ultimate acceptance will depend upon the character he develops in this new relation. If he brings forth the fruits of the Spirit, viz., moral results proceeding from the spirit-words (John 6:63), which have obtained a lodgment in his mind, as the motive power, he will be approved by the Lord when he returns "to take account of his servants," as of those who "bring forth fruit, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundredfold." But if he continue to perform "the works of the flesh," or actions, whether "respectable" or otherwise, which are dictated by the mere fleshly instincts, apart from the enlightenment of the Word, of which his mind has been the subject—he will be adjudged of those "who, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection."

"HE THAT SOWETH TO HIS FLESH, *shall of the flesh reap corruption*, BUT HE THAT SOWETH TO THE SPIRIT, *shall of the spirit reap life everlasting*" (Gal. 6:8). The two classes are differently dealt with by the Father. "Every branch IN ME, " says Jesus, "that beareth not fruit, *He taketh away;* and every branch that beareth fruit, *He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit*." The names of the former are "blotted out of the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 3:5), in which they had been inscribed at their immersion; while the other become the special objects of divine training, by means of the circumstances around them providentially arranged—"all things working together for good, to them *who are the called according to His purpose*" (Rom. 8:28).

"Teach them to observe *all things* WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED" (Matt, 28:20). This was Christ's parting instruction to his apostles. On another occasion he said, "Ye are my friends, *if ye do* WHATSOEVER *I command you*" (John 15:14). Now there is a certain ordinance of which he has said "THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME" (Luke 22:19); and this being one of "all things whatsoever he has commanded," it is demanded as a sign of our friendship, that

we attend to it. The reference is to the "breaking of bread," or "the Lord's supper," in which we are informed the first Christians "continued steadfastly" (Acts 2:42). It was originally instituted when Christ and his disciples were met together for the last time to observe the Jewish passover. We read that on the occasion:—

> "He (Jesus) *took bread*, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, Saying, This is my body which is given for you: *this do in remembrance of me*. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:19, 20).

Here is an emblematic breaking of bread instituted by Christ for the observance of his disciples *during his absence*. It was to be attended to *"in remembrance of him,"* till he should return again as is evident from Paul's remark in I Cor. 11:26, "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, *ye do shew the Lord's death* TILL HE COME." The observance is a very appropriate one. The bread, according to the Master's direction, represents his broken body, and the wine his shed blood; and thus the scene which human nature is most liable to forget—the exhibition of Christ's personal love and the condemnation of sin in the flesh—memorialised before the disciples in partaking of those symbols. The observance furnishes a common centre, around which the brethren of Christ may rally in that capacity, and be spiritually refreshed by the contemplation of the great sacrifice to which he lovingly submitted on their account, while it affords a tangible mode of expressing their love for him who, though absent, has promised to come again. Though simple in its nature, it is profoundly adapted to their spiritual exigencies, necessitating assembly which might rarely take place, and calling forth exhortation and counsel, which might never be uttered; thus creating circumstances pre-eminently conducive to their building up in the glorious faith and hope which they possess, and counteracting the secularising and spiritually-corrosive effect of the business life which they have to live in the world.

Having been commanded, its observance is a binding duty which no really enlightened Christian will underrate in importance, or seek to evade. The Quaker runs to one extreme in the matter, discarding the use of all Christian institutions whatever and the Roman Catholic runs to the other—exalting them into *de facto* vehicles of spiritual virtue. But those who are intelligent in the Word will be preserved from both extremes.

As to the time at which the ordinance is to be attended to, or the frequency with which it must be waited upon, there is no command; but the practice of the first Christians may be taken as a certain guide, considering that they were under the immediate supervision of the apostles. We read in Acts 20:7, "*Upon the first day of the week*, when the disciples came together to BREAK BREAD, Paul preached unto them"; and again in I Cor. 16:2, "*Upon the first day of the week*, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him." The first day of the week was the Jewish Monday, and therefore our Sunday. It was the day upon which Christ rose from the dead, and, therefore, an appropriate occasion for the celebration of an event of which his resurrection was the glorious consummation.

It will be noted that there is no warrant in the facts and testimonies produced on this subject, for the stringent doctrine on the Sabbath as enforced in Christendom of the present day. The Sabbath was a Jewish institution. It was part of the yoke "which," says Peter, "neither we nor our forefathers were able to bear." It was no part of the Christian system. It was abolished with "the handwriting of ordinances that was against us"; and the fact of its incorporation with Christianity may be best explained by the fact, that in the days of the apostles, there were some who rose up and said "Ye must be circumcised *and keep the law of Moses*." But this doctrine was not a true one then, any more than it is now: for at a council of the apostles which was held to consider the matter, the following letter was adopted:—

> "The apostles, and elders, and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia. Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, *and keep the law,* TO WHOM WE GAVE NO SUCH COMMANDMENT; it seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you … to tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us, to lay upon you *no greater burden than these necessary things*: that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well" (Acts 15:23, 29).

Thus the apostles distinctly prohibited the imposition of any of the Mosaic enactments, except such as they specifically mention, upon the practice of the Christians of the olden times, and, therefore, the Sabbath amongst the rest, for, if it had been an exception, it would have been mentioned *among the exceptions*. But this authoritative prohibition did not extinguish the Judaising spirit which had crept in. Hence, we find Paul writing in the following strain to the Galatians:—

> "*Ye observe* DAYS, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (chap. 4:10, 11).
>
> Again, "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, *or of the* Sabbath" (Col. 2:16).

His teaching on the subject of the Sabbath is, "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. *Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind*" (Rom. 14:5); as much as to say, it is a matter of so little importance, that every one must be regulated by private conviction. Popular views on this subject, then, as illustrated in pulpit inculcation, are obviously mistaken. It is the privilege of Christ's brethren to rest from labour on the first day of the week, and to engage more especially in spiritual meditation than is possible on a week-day, but they are under no bondage. They are free to engage as expediency may determine, without the risk of infringing any law of God. Whatever is right to be done by him on a week-day, is not wrong to be done on Sunday, although it may not be expedient. He does not advocate the abolition of Sunday as a day of rest from secular labour, and attendance upon religion. He is only too thankful for the opportunity it confers upon him. He only protests against an error which binds a grievious burden on the backs of those who are its subjects, remembering that his Master hath said, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day," even if that well doing be the *pulling of ears of corn in the field* to gratify hunger, or *the rescue of an unfortunate sheep* which may have fallen into the pit on the Sabbath day.

In conclusion, let a man become acquainted with the truth expressed in the New Testament phrase, "the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ"; let him then be baptised into the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, the great covering name provided in the Lord Jesus; let him thenceforward wait with those "of like precious faith" upon the weekly memorial institution appointed by the absent master; and let him continue in the daily practice of ALL THINGS commanded by Christ, and in the daily cultivation of that exalted character which was exemplified in Christ himself, *waiting and anxiously desiring the return of the Lord from heaven*. If he put himself into this position, and faithfully occupy it to the end, he will certainly be approved when the Lord comes, and be invited as a "good and faithful servant," to enter into the refuge provided for the Lord's people against the day of storm, and to inherit his glorious kingdom.

Lecture 18

THE WAYS OF CHRISTENDOM INCONSISTENT WITH THE COMMANDANTS OF CHRIST

IN THE lecture last delivered, mention was made of the necessity disclosed in the Scriptures, of believers continuing in "the daily practice of all things commanded by Christ." Christendom, which has gone astray from the doctrines, has also forsaken the commandments of Christ, if ever it made them a rule of life. It has probably left the commandments as the result of losing the doctrines; for the force of the commandments can only be felt by those who recognise that salvation is dependent on their obedience. Popular theology has reduced them to a practical nullity. It has totally obscured the principle of obedience as the basis of our acceptance with God in Christ, by its doctrine of "justification by faith alone."

It is part of the modern restitution of primitive apostolic ways, to recognise distinctly, that while faith turns a sinner into a saint, obedience only will secure a saint's acceptance at the judgment seat of Christ; and that a disobedient saint will be rejected more decisively than even an unjustified sinner.

The rule or standard of obedience is to be found in the commandments of Christ. Christ speaks very plainly on this subject:—

> "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants but I have called you friends" (John 15:14).
>
> "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded" (Matt. 28:20).
>
> "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (John 13:17).
>
> "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom, but he that doeth the will of my Father" (Matt. 7:21).
>
> "Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22).
>
> "He that saith ' know him,' and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar" (I John 2:4).

These statements are summed up in the saying of Christ, "If yo keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (John 15:10).

We shall look at these commandments with the result of seeing that they are neutralised by the traditions and practices of so-called Christians of the modern era. But let us first realise that *the commandments of the Apostles are included in the commandments of Christ*. It is common to make a distinction. You will hear it said sometimes that while the commandments of Christ are all that is estimable and binding, the commandments of the apostles are marred by the weaknesses of the men who communicated them, and are by no means to be placed on a level with the precepts of their Master, who was without flaw. This plausible distinction is not founded on truth. The commandments delivered by the apostles were not of their authorship. They were as definitely divine as those that came from the mouth of the Lord. Paul distinctly claims this:—

> "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual *let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you* ARE THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD" (I Cor. 14:37).

This claim is only in harmony with what the Lord Jesus himself said on the subject. In sending his apostles forth to teach his doctrine after he should have departed from the earth, he did not leave them to their own resources as natural men for the execution of the work. He made specific promise of supernatural wisdom and guidance. This promise occurs in various forms, *e.g.*:—

> "*I will give you a mouth and wisdom,* which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist" (Luke 21:15).

> "If I depart, I will send him the comforter, … which is the HOLY SPIRIT, whom the Father will send in my name. *He shall teach you all things,* and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you (John 16:7; 14:26).

> "When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but *the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you*" (Matt. 10:19, 20).

The promise of Christ that he should send the Spirit to the apostles was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. Jesus told them not to begin their apostolic labours until the Spirit should come (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4). They were to "tarry at Jerusalem" till the promised "power from on high" came, by which they were enabled to give an effective testimony to the word. They had not long to wait. In ten days, while they were all assembled (the apostles and disciples to the number of 120), the Spirit came with sound of a rushing mighty wind, and filled all the place where they were, crowning each apostle with a visible wreath of flame, and manifesting its intelligent power in imparting to the apostles the power of extemporising the word in all the spoken languages of the day (Acts 2:1–13).

When the commotion caused by this wonderful occurrence had come to a head, Peter explained the nature of it to the bewildered spectators. He reminded the assembled multitude of the recent crucifixion of Jesus, which they were aware of. He then declared his resurrection as a fact within the personal eye-witness of the apostles, and added, "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, *and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit,* HE HATH SHED FORTH THIS WHICH YE NOW SEE AND HEAR" (Acts 2:33).

The spirit which was thus bestowed upon them remained with them as a guiding teaching presence to the end. It was this that justified Paul's claim to divine authority for the things he wrote, as above quoted; for although Paul was not among the apostles at that time, he was added to their number shortly afterwards, and in every way supernaturally endowed as the other apostles were. It was this that enabled John the apostle to take the same strong ground in his first epistle: "We are of God: *he that knoweth God heareth us:* he that is not of God, heareth not us. HEREBY KNOW WE THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND THE SPIRIT OF ERROR" (I John 4:6). When John said this he said no more in substance than Jesus said himself concerning John and his fellow apostles: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me" (Luke 10:16).

Here is Christ's own authority for placing the word of his apostles on a level with his own. He said concerning his own teaching, "The word which ye hear is *not mine but the Father's which sent me*" (John 14:24). On the same principle, the apostles could say with Paul, "The things which we write (and speak) are (not ours but) Christ's who sent us." The principle is this: the Holy Spirit was upon the Lord from the Father without measure, making him one with the Father, who is the eternal and universe-filling Spirit; through which he was enabled to give commandments that were as truly divine as if proclaimed direct from heaven in the hearing of all the world. (Luke 3:22; John 3:35; Acts 1:2). So the Holy Spirit was upon

the Apostles from Christ, who is one with the Father, imparting to their words a divine authority, equal to that which attached to his own words. Hence, it is a perfectly natural relation of things that Christ exhibits when he says, "He that despiseth *you*, despiseth *me,* and he that despiseth me despiseth *Him that sent me*."

It must be evident in the light of these considerations how grievously mistaken is the view which would treat with small respect the apostolic precepts, while according a high sentimental regard for those which come out of the actual mouth of Christ. The commandments of the apostles are the commandments of Christ, and the commandments of Christ are the commandments of God. And the keeping of the commandments of God is of an importance that cannot be represented in too extreme a light, in view of what is written in the Apocalypse: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).

When Jesus sent forth his apostles, he not only commanded them to preach the gospel, but he said, "Teach them to observe *all things whatsover I have commanded you*" (Matt. 28:20). It must be obvious that this extends the obligatoriness of the commandments delivered to the apostles, to all believers as well and this not merely in the sense of seemliness or suitability, but in the sense of imperative obligation. That is, the obedience of these commandments is essential to the believers. Christ said this plainly in concluding what is called his "sermon on the mount," which is nothing else than a long series of these very commandments—in fact, the most methodical and extensive collection of them to be found in the whole course of his recorded teaching. He said, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and *doeth them,* I will liken him unto A WISE MAN *which built his house upon a rock*; and every one that heareth these sayings of mine and DOETH THEM NOT, shall be likened unto A FOOLISH MAN *which built his house upon the sand,* and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it" (Matt. 8:24–26).

In no plainer way could Christ tell us that our ultimate acceptance with him will depend upon our doing of the things he has commanded. If he did say it more plainly, it was when he said, "Not everyone 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).

The idea thus explicitly enunciated is of very frequent occurrence in the Lord's teaching. It comes out in various connections and forms, but always with the same pointedness and vigour. There is never room for misconception. Once as he stood in the midst of a listening crowd, one said, "Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee." His rejoinder was, "Who is my mother and who are my brethren?… WHOSOEVER SHALL DO THE WILL OF MY FATHER which is in heaven, *the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*" (Matt. 12:47, 50). On another occasion, a woman in the crowd exclaimed, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked." His response was, "Yea, rather, blessed are they that *hear the word of God, and* KEEP IT" (Luke 11:27, 28). On another occasion he said, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and *do not the things which I say*?" (Luke 6:46); and on another, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, *ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*" (Matt. 5:20); and, again, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14).

Now, as to the relation of Christendom to these commandments, it is well described in the words which Jesus applied to the religious leaders of the Jewish nation: "Ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition" (Matt. 15:6). There is scarcely a commandment of Christ but what is systematically disregarded in the practice of the Christian world so-called. It is not merely that the commandments are not obeyed; they are not recognised. They have been explained away and nullified through the influence of human opinion and precept, traditionally received. We have seen how entirely the command to

believe the gospel has been set aside; to what a nonentity the command to be baptised has been reduced; and into what neglect has fallen the command to break bread from week to week in remembrance of him. It is not of these we would now speak.

Our illusion is to a class of commandments that run much more directly counter to human bias and inclination. By reason of their very aim to try, and purify, and chasten and discipline the mind into subjection to the divine will, there is a universal predilection in favour of that way of understanding these commandments that takes away their inconvenience for men called to serve Christ in the present world, and inclined perhaps to do so, though with no great amount of faith, or its resultant enthusiasm. Because of this "concensus of opinion," as it is the modern fashion to phrase it, the common run of men are afraid to think as the commandments, without sophistication, would lead men to think. But the commandments are not altered by the "concensus" They remain as the expression of Christ's will, however successfully they may be nullified by tradition: and it will be a poor apology for disobedience, in the day of judgment to say that we did not dare to comply with them, because they were not currently understood to have any practical bearing in modern times. The inclinations and traditions of the multitude have always been in antagonism to the will of God. The divinely recorded history of the world is proof of this. It is, therefore, the part of men who believe in God, to hearken to the voice of His word, and not to the opinions of the people and their leaders.

Of those commandments that are recognised though not acted on, it will not be in place here to speak. That God should be loved and served; that men should be true, just and kind; that our neighbour's interests should have as high a consideration at our hands as our own, no man considering himself a member of Christendom would deny, however little able he might be to give practical effect to these commandments in his life. These commandments are such as are beautiful in themselves, and commend themselves to the moral instincts of all men (not degraded to the very level of the brute) as the dictates of the highest wisdom.

It is of the commandments whose excellence is not so self-evident that there is need to speak; commandments whose aim is not to make the present life agreeable, but to subject obedient believers to a discipline that will subdue and mould them to the divine pattern in preparation for the perfectly agreeable state of existence to be established by Christ upon the earth in the day of His coming.

1. *Be not conformed to this world* (Rom. 12:2). There is not much danger of mistaking the meaning of this. The world is the people, as distinguished from the earth which they inhabit. Peter puts this beyond doubt in calling it "the world OF THE UNGODLY" (II Peter 2:5). Jesus also makes it plain in speaking of the world as a lover and a hater, "If the world hate you, ye know that it *hated me* before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love *his own*" (John 15:18). This could only apply to the people. The command is to be not conformed to the world of people upon the earth as it now is. Jesus plainly laid it down that he did not belong to such a world, and commanded his disciples to accept a similar position in relation to it. "The world to *come*" is the world of their citizenship. Of their position in the present world, Jesus said in prayer, "They are *not of the world* even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16). By John he commanded them, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; is not of the Father, but of the world" (I John 2:15). By Peter, he indicates their position in the world as that of "strangers and pilgrims" (I Peter 2:11), and their life in it as a "time of sojourning" (1:17), to be passed in holiness and fear (verses 14 and 17).

The world that hated Jesus was the Jewish world. Consequently, we are saved from the mistake of supposing that by the world is meant the extremely vile and immoral of mankind. The Jews were far from being such: they were a very religious and ostentatiously professing

and ceremonially punctilious people, among whom the standard of respectability was high in a religious sense. All their conversations with Christ shew this. That which led to the complete separation indicated in Christ's words and precepts, is indicated by Jesus himself, in his prayer to the Father, so wonderfully recorded in John 17: "O righteous Father, *the world hath not known thee*" (verse 25). It is the world's relation to God that cuts off the friends of God from the world (if the friends of God are faithful). The world neither loves, nor knows, nor considers God. They care for Him in no sense. His expressed will—His declared purpose—His intrinsically sovereign claims, are either expressly rejected or treated with entire indifference. His great and dreadful and eternal reality is ignored. Daniel's indictment against Belshazzar is chargeable against them all. "The God *in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways*, hast thou not glorified" (Dan. 5:23).

This is an all-sufficient explanation of the matter we are considering. If the world is God's enemy, how can the friends of God be friends with it? It is not without the profoundest reason in the nature of things, that it is written, "*The friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God*" (James 4:4). "No MAN CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS.… YE CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON" (Matt. 6:24).

The force of this reason increases tenfold when we contemplate the present situation in the light of its divine explanation and the divine purpose concerning it. We must seek for this explanation in the beginning of things—the beginning as Mosaically exhibited (an exhibition endorsed by Christ, and therefore to be trusted in the face of all modern theories and speculations). This beginning shews us man in harmony with God, and things "very good." Then it shews us disobedience (the setting aside of the divine will as the rule of human action—*alias*, sin), and as the result of this, the divine fellowship withdrawn, and men driven off to exile and to death, permitted only, thereafter, to approach in sacrifice, in token of the final way of return. The present world is the continuance and enlargement of the evil state of man, resulting from man's alienation from God in the beginning. It is enlarged and aggravated. "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (I John 5:19), "dead in trespasses and sins … by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2:1–3), "without Christ, having no hope, and without God." (Eph. 2:12).

Now, what is the purpose concerning this state of things? We have seen it in previous lectures. It is briefly summarised in II Thes. 1:7, and Rev. 19:11–16, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking *vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel* of our Lord Jesus Christ." "In righteousness doth he *judge and make war … treading the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God*." When this work of judgment and destruction is done, the kingdom of God prevails on earth for a thousand years, leading the nations in ways of righteousness and peace; and after a brief renewal of conflict with the diabolism of human nature, there comes at last the day of complete restoration, the ungodly consumed off the earth; the servants of God saved. "No more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and *his servants* shall serve him; and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads" (Rev. 22:3).

Here, then, we have harmony with God at the beginning of things, and harmony with Him at the end of things, and the dark and dreadful interval of "the present evil world" between, in which God is not obeyed nor recognised, but the pleasures, gratifications, and interests of mere natural existence made the objects of universal pursuit. In this dark interval, however, the divine work goes on of separating a family from the evil, in preparation for the day of recovery and blessing. It is not easy, in view of these things, to realise the reasonableness of the divine command to His servants meanwhile, not to be conformed to an evil world, in which God is disowned, and to which they do not belong?

Now, how does Christendom look in this light? Is it not evident at a glance that this elementary axiom of the law of Christ is totally disregarded? The idea of a Christian of the

ordinary type being “not of the world” is an anomaly only calculated to excite the sarcastic smile of the cynic. If the ordinary “Christian” is not “of the world,” where are we to find the people that are? To call a man “a man of the world,” has, in fact, become one of the highest compliments that can be paid to a man’s judgment and culture: as a man at home everywhere, who sees good in everything; and nothing very wrong in anything. In the ears of such a man, the distinctions and scrupulosities enjoined by Christ and his apostles have an antiquated sound: and worse—a sound of uncharity, of harshness, of narrow-minded and bigoted sectarianism. The earnest recognition and observance of right and wrong, as arising out of the law of Christ, are in his eyes the symptoms of an odious fanaticism, disqualifying the subject of them for society or the commonest good fellowship.

Yet “the man of the world,” with his kindly unconcern about all things, is a good Christian by the popular standard. He is “of the world” essentially; and though Christ proclaimed himself as “not of the world” and commanded his disciples to accept a similar position, this man’s being of the world, is held to be no drawback to his Christian standing in the eyes of Christendom. No wonder! The church is the world. What is there in and of the world that the church does not mix with? (and by “the church” we may understand the dissenting bodies as well as the State establishment).

Take the political sphere. If there is anything characteristically “of the world,” it is politics, whether in the exercise or the discussion of temporal power, and its forms. It is written: “The KINGDOMS *of this world* are to become (at Christ’s return) the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.” Consequently, the kingdoms are meanwhile “of this world.” In modern usage “kingdom” has become “State,” because the political form of the State varies. Where is the church in relation to the State? The alliance of the church with the State is of itself a sufficient illustration of the departure of Christendom from the commandments of Christ. It is a proof that the modern church is “of this world,” even if the private practice of its members were in harmony with the mind of Christ.

The common private practice of those who consider themselves “Christians,” removes any doubt that the public form of things might leave. That common private practice may be summed up as an earnest discharge of all the parts and functions that belong, or could possibly belong, to citizens of the present world. There is no point, part or feature of the present evil world, in which they are not found incorporate. The bishops are part of the world-system in Britain, as they sit in their lawn sleeves in the House of Lords, to supervise the laws made for this world by the much jangling that goes on in “the lower house.” The clergy are “gentlemen,” eligible for the society of the world, and welcome in the drawing-rooms of the aristocracy and on the hunting field with the squires. Her church wardens and minor officials have the management of the world in hand in their several departments, whether exacting the tithes with the sword of the law in hand, or refusing a resting place in the parish churchyard to dead heretics. Her laity look on riches, place, and power as legitimate objects—with all of them—the most successful in attaining which, are the most honourable. In minuter details, they are voters (the secerning blood vessels of the political system); they are patriots and political spouters at public meetings (the thew and muscle of the system); they burn gunpowder on the battlefield, or compete for the civic or Parliamentary honours of the State in the boroughs (and become the organs of the system). They run in crowds to the public amusements, or in private indulge their liking without the least restraint or reference to the New Testament injunctions of sobriety, self-denial and holiness.

What is to be done in such a state of things by the man earnestly seeking to be the servant of Christ, and desiring to be found of him at his coming, in the attitude of a chaste and loyal bride, preparing for marriage? Common sense would supply the answer if it were not plainly given to us by God Himself: “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not

the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Cor. 6:17–18). The questions with which Paul prefaces this quotation strike home the reasonableness of this command at a blow: "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial: or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"

The believer of the gospel has no alternative but to step aside from the world. He cannot otherwise carry out the will of Christ concerning those whom he asks for his own. What this stepping aside from the world means, there need be no difficulty in the earnest man determining for himself. Christ and the apostles have in themselves furnished an example which we are invited to imitate (I Peter 2:21; John 13:15; 15:18–20; I Cor. 11:1; 4:17).

It does not mean seclusion: for they lived an open daily public life. It does not mean isolation: for they are always seen among men. It means abstinence from the aims and principles of the world, and from the movements and enterprises in which these find expression. The activities of Christ and the apostles were all in connection with and on behalf of, the work of God among men. They never appear in connection with the enterprises of the world. Their temporal avocations are all private. Christ was a carpenter; Paul a tent maker; but at these, both worked as the sons of God. Disciples of Christ may follow any occupation of good repute; (they are expressly prohibited from having to do with anything of an evil appearance or giving occasion of reproach to the adversary—Rom. 12:9; I Thess. 5:22). But in all they do, they are to remember they are the Lord's servants, and to act as if the matter they have in hand were performed directly to him (Col. 3:23–24). Even servants are to do their part to a bad master faithfully as "to the Lord" (I Peter, 2:18–20).

The sense in which they stand apart from the world is in the objects for which they work, and in the use to which they put the time and means which they call "their own." They are to "follow after (works of) righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (II Tim. 2:22). They are to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts," and "live soberly and righteously and godly" (Tit. 2:12). They are not to live in pleasure (Tit. 3:3; I Tim. 5:6). They are to live to give God pleasure, in which, as they grow, they will find their own highest pleasure. They are to be "holy in all manner of conversation," cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and walking as those who are the temple of God among men (I Pet. 1:15; II Cor. 13:7; II Cor. 6:16).

Guided by these apostolic principles, they will abstain from the defiling habits that are common to ungodly Christendom, amongst which smoking and drinking stand prominent. And as men waiting and preparing for the kingdom of God (whose citizenship is in heaven, and not upon the earth) they accept the position of "strangers and pilgrims" among men. They are not at home; they are passing on. They take no part with Caesar. They pay his taxes and obey his laws where they do not conflict with the laws of Christ; but they take no part in his affairs.

They do not vote; they do not ask the suffrages of his supporters; they do not aspire to Cæsar's honours or emoluments; they do not bear arms. They are sojourners in Cæsar's realms during the short time God may appoint for their probation; and as such, they sustain a passive and non-resisting attitude, bent only upon earning Christ's approbation at his coming, by their obedience to his commandments during his absence. They are not of the world, even as he was not of the world; and therefore they refuse to be conformed to it. The way is narrow and full of self-denial—too much so for those who would like to perform the impossible feat of "making the best of both worlds." But the destination is so attractive, and the results of the cross-bearing so glorious, that the enlightened pilgrim deliberately chooses the journey, and resolutely endures its hardships.

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2. "*They that are great* (*among the Gentiles*) *exercise authority upon them*. BUT IT SHALL NOT BE SO AMONG YOU. *But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant*" (Matt. 20:25–27). "BE NOT YE CALLED RABBI, *for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren*." Nothing is more natural than for men to seek honour and deference among their fellow men. It is the universal habit of society "to receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only" (John 5:44). Men everywhere "love the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:43). It is considered the right thing to nurse "ambition"—to indulge the desire for "fame"—which is the same thing in modern times. Jesus condemns it without qualification. He forbids men to aim at human approbation. It is his express commandment in almsgiving, for example, to "let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth" (Matt. 6:3); and in prayer, to "pray to thy Father which is in secret" (verse 6), and in the exercises of divine sorrow, "to appear not unto men to fast" (verse 18). The object is that "thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." For the same reason, he forbids us to accept honourable titles and honourable places, and enjoins us to take a low and serving place. In illustration of his meaning, he himself washed the feet of his disciples, remarking, "I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15). He expressly said, "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased" (Luke 14:11). His command by the apostles is, "All of you be clothed with humility"; put away pride: "mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate" (Rom. 12:3, 16; Phil. 2:3; I Pet. 5:5–6).

The object of these commandments must be apparent to every reflecting mind that realises Christ's object in the preaching of the gospel. It is to "purify unto himself a peculiar people" (Tit. 2:14), to show forth "the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light" (I Pet. 2:9). The celebration of this praise is not finally and effectually rendered until the summons comes forth from the throne, to the immortal multitude of the saints in the day of His appearing: "praise our God all ye His servants" (Rev. 19:5); who respond to the thrilling mandate in a tempest of enthusiastic acclamation, "as the voice of many waters and as the voice of mighty thunderings" (verse 6). How could a people be prepared for such a part except by the command to crucify the propensity that seeks the honour of men in this evil age?

The acceptance of that honour necessarily engenders self-absorption, and unfits the heart for that self-abasement which is the first ingredient of true glory to God. We can see what the cultivation of ambition does for its poor worshippers. Take the elegant crowd at a levee—the haughty, quick-glancing, susceptible sons and daughters of fashion: how would they be qualified to praise God in the heart-felt way required? It is the praise of men that fills and controls them—visible in their arrogance, and impatience and pride. They are eaten up with it as with a fever. The commandments of Christ have no acceptiblity to them. Their motto is "Who is Lord over us?" When the commandments of Christ obtain an entrance, they allay this fever, and bring the mind into a frame in harmony with true reason in the ennobling recognition that all things are derived, and that the glory and credit of everything is ultimately due to God alone, and not safe to be accepted, in however small a measure, at the hands of man in the present age of godlessness.

How is it with Christendom? Are names of honour repudiated? Are good deeds done in private? Is the praise of men deprecated? Is it not notoriously the reverse in all particulars? Have we not "Rev.", "Right Rev.", "Most Rev.", "Very Rev.", and "Fathers in God," and a legion of plain revs.?—a stupendous lying title in its plainest form. Have we not "Masters" and "Doctors" of all sorts—M.A's and B.A's, and D.D's, and the M.P's and T.C's, of Parliamentary and municipal dignities, impressing the crowd all the more as an abstraction reduced to what are to them mysterious monograms? And in more private ways, do we not

see the same aping after greatness, the same fawning to greatness, in all sorts of complimentary titles exacted and accorded by the millions who call themselves "Christian"?

And are the leaders better than the people? Are not the leaders first in the offence? Who so quick as they to resent the omission of conventional honours, which they call "courtesies," and who so irresponsive to the claims of benevolence and right when out of human sight? There may be, and doubtless are, exceptions; but as a rule, it is now, as Jesus said it was with the Scribes and Pharisees of his day, "All their works they do to be seen of men. They make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments. And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men 'Rabbi, Rabbi' " (Matt. 23:5–7).

Look at the public subscription lists: where would the contributions be if the names and amounts were not published? Is it not a fact that the contributors of Christendom as a class, aim to get their contributions advertised, and that those who ask them, pander to the popular weakness, in the certain knowledge that, if they do not soothe the unholy ambitions with public acknowledgements, the donations would stay in the pockets of the donors?

And as for the "praise of men," it is the inspiration of all public life, the incense of public worship, and the peculiar fragrance of all public proceedings. Who can read the report of a public meeting without having his senses sickened with fulsome eulogy, uncalled for presentations and testimonials, and the cheap, but indispensable vote of thanks? The motives of men are corrupted by breathing such an atmosphere. There is no remedy but the remedy of destruction and of reconstruction which is waiting to be applied at the coming of Christ. The individual remedy lies in "coming out," and doing the will of God in privacy and obscurity, in patient waiting for the glorious day of rectification and recompense which God will assuredly bring at the time of His purpose in fulfilment of His promise.

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3. *"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth"* Matt. 6:19). This is plainly expressed in another part of the word of wisdom thus: "Labour not to be rich" (Prov. 23:4). Nothing in the whole range of language could be plainer than this. Christ, who surely knew better than all, states a fact which constitutes a powerful reason for the commandment not to aim at riches. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:24). Riches he calls "the mammon of unrighteousness." He does not say their possession is absolutely inconsistent with divine favour and inheritance of life eternal. But He gives us to understand that the danger of their "choking the word" is extreme (Matt. 13:22), and that the only safety of those who have them, lies in turning them by use into friends and safeguards. His advice is: "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness" (Luke 16:9). How this is to be done, he indicates: "Give alms: provide yourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not" (Luke 12:33). This advice is repeated by the apostles, "Charge them that are rich in this world … that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come" (I Tim. 6:17). "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (I Peter 4:10).

The rich in Christendom do not conform to these divine prescriptions. On the contrary, they lavish their superabundance on themselves in a thousand ways that minister to "the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." If they get more, their plan is to enlarge the basis of their own individual aggrandisement. They would be considered fools if they did otherwise. How Christ regards the matter (that, in fact, he considers them fools for doing that which the world considers them wise for doing), they may learn beforehand from Luke 12:16:—

"The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do; I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, THOU FOOL, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then, whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? *So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich towards God*."

Here we have the law of Christ forbidding the poor to labour to be rich, and commanding the rich to use their abundance in the alleviation of the Want around them. What is the practice of Christendom with regard to these institutes? Is not "laying up treasure upon earth" the one thing aimed at, the one thing commended, the one thing needful and respectable on all hands? and do not the rich resent the suggestion of liberality to the poor as an impertinence, entitling them to fling the suggestor into the gutters? These things are true. But the commandment calmly remains, and we shall have to face it one day, as Jesus says:—"The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you at the last day." We may prosper in our diligent laying by, or pleasantly enjoy ourselves inside the ring-fence we set up for our unrighteous mammon—justifying.our course on the social economic theories yielded by the experience of a sinful generation; but where will both be in the day when we emerge empty-handed from the grave, to appear before Him who will "judge the living and the dead," and who will open our eyes to the fact that what we had in the day of our probation, was His? He will decide the issue on His own principles alone, and not on the principle that sinners have rendered popular among themselves.

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4. *Resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. Of him that taketh thy goods, ask them not again. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain* (Matt. 5:39–41; Luke 6:30). Of all the commandments of Christ, this of unresisting submission to legal and personal wrong is the one that most severely tests the allegiance of his disciples, and which accordingly is most decisively neglected in all Christendom. It would not be too much to say that it is deliberately refused and formally set aside by the mass of professing Christians, as an impracticable rule of life. That it stands there as the plainest of Christ's commandments, cannot be denied; and that it was reechoed by the apostles and carried out in the practice of the early Christians, is equally beyond contradiction. Yet, by all classes, it is ignored as much as if it had never been written. To what are we to attribute this deliberate disobedience of all ranks and classes of men, nominally professing subjection to Christ?

Something of it is doubtless due to a wrong conception of the object of the commandments. It is commonly imagined that the commandments of Christ apply, and are intended to supply, the best modes of life among men—that is, those modes that are best adapted to secure a beneficial adaptation of man to man in the present state of life upon earth. Doubtless they would prove such if all men acted on them. But in a world where the majority ignore them and act out their selfish instincts without scruple, it is otherwise. They expose the obedient to personal disadvantage. They were never intended to have any other effect. They were intended to develop "a peculiar people," whose peculiarity should consist in the restraint of natural impulse in submission to the will of God. They were designed to chasten and discipline and purify such a people by the exercise of patient submission to wrong in preparation for another time when such commandments will be no longer in force, but when it will be given to the developed and obedient saints to "execute judgment" upon the ungodly,

and “break in pieces the oppressor” as a preliminary to the blessing of all people (Rev. 2:26; Dan. 7:22; Psa. 149:9).

Men say society could not be carried on if these principles were acted on. Such a speech is not the speech of a disciple. Christ is not aiming at carrying on society on its present footing, but at “taking out a people” to carry it on rightly—that is, on divine principles—in the age to come. His own case illustrates the position. The people wanted to take him by force and make him a king, but he withdrew (John 6:15). A man wanted him to interfere in a will dispute. He declined, saying, “Who made me a judge and a divider?” (Luke 12:14). His part was to testify the truth, to do the will of the Father, to do all the good he could on divine grounds, and as for the world, to “testify of it that the works thereof are evil” (John 7:7). In this course he created hatred for himself, which finally took the form of personal violence. This violence he did not resist. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter; his life was taken from the earth. And he said, with regard to his whole experience. “The servant is not greater than his Lord. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you” (John 15:18, 20).

Christendom resists evil; sues at law; resents injury, brandishes the constable’s truncheon, and fights in the army, even if the men it is called upon to shoot are fellow Christians. If pointed to the law of Christ, it shakes its head. It speaks of “duty to society,” the “protection of life and property,” and the certain chaos that would set in if the law of Christ were in force. In this, Christendom speaks as the world, and not as “the church,” because it is not the church, but the world. The true church is composed of the brethren of Christ; and he tells us that his brethren are those who obey his commandments, and do the will of the Father, as expressed by his mouth (Matt. 12:50; John 12:49, 50). The question for such has no difficulties. The question is: “Does the law of Christ allow them to employ violence under any circumstances?” If not, the loss of life itself would not be a consequence to be considered by them. Thoughts of expediency or philanthropy are out of place when urged in defence of doing that which the law of Christ forbids. If riots must rage unless we disobey Christ, let riots rage. If life and property must be exposed to the ravages of wicked men, unless we do that which Christ tells us we are not to do, let all houses and all lives be unprotected. If we must incur and pay heavy penalties, unless we choose to break the law of God, let the penalties be paid. If we must be killed, and all our families with us, unless we forfeit the approbation of the Lord and Master, and lose eternal life at his coming, let us die at once.

It is a mistake to hamper the question of duty with any secondary consideration whatever. The time has not come for the saints to keep the world right. It has to be made right before even keeping it right can be in question. The position of the saints is that of sojourners on trial for eternal life. God will take care that their probation is not interfered with by murder and violence before the time. The matter is His. We are in His hands: so is all the world. We need not therefore be distressed by thoughts of what will be the effect of any course required by Christ. He will take care that His work comes out right at last. The simple and only question for us, is that which Paul put near Damascus: “Lord, what wouldst Thou have me do?” We may not do what involves disobedience to Him.

A special constable, for example, is required if need be, to break a man’s head with a truncheon. The question in such a case is, therefore, best put thus: “Does Christ allow his servants to break people’s heads with truncheons?” It is not a proper answer to this question to say that being commanded to obey magistrates (Titus 3:1), we are bound to act as special constables if the magistrates order us; because no one will deny that this exhortation is governed by the larger precept, that we are to “obey God rather than man” (Acts 4:19). No candid person will contend that Paul meant we were to obey magistrates when their order might be to disobey God. If any such contention is made, it is a sufficient answer to cite the

practice of the apostles, who must be allowed to be reliable interpreters. of their own exhortations.

They were constantly disobeying magistrates in the particular matter of preaching the gospel, and brought themselves to prison and death by this disobedience. There was no inconsistency between this course of theirs, and their exhortation to "obey magistrates"; for in the matters referred to in this exhortation, they were themselves obedient to magistrates. They paid tribute, honoured the ruling powers, and recognised the authority of the law, in all matters not affecting their allegiance to the law of God. This is a duty required of all saints, and cheerfully rendered by them, notwithstanding that they expect all such orders and institutions to be abolished in due time. That time is the Lord's time; and for this they patiently wait. The work is the Lord's work, and for Him they wait.

But are they to be induced or coerced by human law to do what Christ has expressly forbidden? The only question is, has he forbidden what is in question in this case? Has he forbidden violence? As to this, nothing is clearer, "*He hath left us an example that we should follow his steps*" (I Pet. 2:21). This is what Christ himself said to his disciples: "I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15). Now what is the example of Christ as to the matter in hand? The testimony is that *he did no violence*, neither was deceit found in his mouth (Isaiah 53:9). As Peter tells us, "When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (I Peter 2:23).

But some say, this refers only to circumstances of persecution: that when he said: "Resist not evil," he meant that his friends were not to fight against those who persecuted them for their faith, but patiently and unresistingly allow them to do their will. It will be found, upon investigation, that this is a mistake. Christ was not speaking of persecution at all. He was speaking of the legal maxims and practices of the Jewish nation. He says: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." By whom—to whom, for what purpose had this been said? It was said by Moses to Israel, as the principle that was to regulate *proceedings at law*. This will be apparent by referring to Exodus 21:22–24. "He (the offender) shall pay as THE JUDGES determine, and if any mischief follow, thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth," etc. When, therefore, Jesus enjoins non-resistance of evil, it is not with reference to persecutors, but with reference to legal proceedings, and the ordinary relations of man with man.

This is perhaps more evident in the next verse (Matt. 5:40). "If any man will *sue thee at law* and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also." Here is no persecutor but a man who simply wants your property and tries to dispossess you by legal process. "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." A persecutor would not be likely to want your company on the road. It is the case of a wayfarer who wants your comfort and protection on a lonely road, and to whom you are commanded to be liberal beyond his desires. "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away." Surely this is no persecutor, who would take without your leave.

The suggestion that these precepts apply only to circumstances of persecution, is the thought of a combative nature which rebels against Christ's flesh-crucifying precepts, but is not prepared to go the length of openly denying Christ. It is a suggestion that is absurd in itself; for why should we be allowed to fight for ourselves, and be forbidden to fight for the Lord? One would imagine that the distinction, if it existed, would lie in the other direction, viz., that we would be allowed to repel and retaliate when it was the authority of the Lord that was in question, but that we should be submissive when it was a mere question of taking our purse. But the fact is, no such distinction is made. The suggestion that it exists is gratuitous. It is a distinction that cannot, in fact, be made; for how are you to know when a man hurts you for your faith, and when from his own cupidity?

The command of the Lord is absolute, that we are to act the part of sheep in the midst of wolves; wise as serpents, but unharmful as doves. The faithful of the first century recognised this as involving non-resistance. This is evident from James's incidental remark to the wanton rich men of the twelve tribes: "Ye have condemned and killed the just, and *he doth not resist you*" (James 5:6). It is also distinctly evident from Paul's claim in 2nd Epistle Corinthians 11:20, to be heard on this ground: "For ye suffer, if a man *bring you into bondage*, if a man *devour you*, if a man *take of you*, if a man exalt himself, if a man *smite you on the face*."

As much as to say, "It is a usual thing with you to submit without resistance, to personal injury: how much more may you endure my words." He had expressly enjoined: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written: Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:19–21). Again, he says, "See that none render evil for evil" (I Thess. 5:15). Again, "Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" (I Cor. 6:7).

These principles exclude a resort to law on the part of those who obey the commandments of Christ. Going to law is inconsistent with submission to precepts requiring us to accept evil, and to refrain from vindicating ourselves. What is going to law but resorting to the utmost extremity of personal violence and coercion? Those who look on the surface may not see this, but they feel it readily enough when directed against themselves. They may imagine it is doing a very gentle deed to pay a visit to a quiet lawyer's office, and ask him to set the law in motion in a "legitimate" way, protesting you want only justice, etc., etc.

But follow the matter to its upshot: see what it means, and then judge whether, as a friend of Christ, you are at liberty to do such a bloody and forbidden thing. You get the judgment of the law in your favour: and let us suppose the debtor is unable to pay. What happens? Your servants (for the agents of the law are your servants, for the time being, and would not act a moment after your authority was withdrawn) enter his house and sell his bed, and cast him homeless on the street. But suppose he is able to pay and won't, and takes it into his head to resist, enlisting, let us suppose, a band of bold spirits to his aid. The myrmidons of the law arrive at the house; the door is locked; admission demanded in vain. Your agents knock the door down, but they find the passage barricaded. They demolish the barricades, but find the occupants of the house in an attitude of defiance. Your servants of the law push them; the debtor's friends smite your servants of the law. Your servants smite in return, but seeing they are over-matched, they withdraw.

The debtor exults and fearing a return of the myrmidons, he sends for and obtains a reinforcement of roughs. The bailiffs return with assistance. A mêlée ensues: heads are broken and property destroyed, and the bailiffs are repulsed. What next? A riot. Part of the people take sides with the debtor and part with the bailiffs. What next? The soldiers are sent for. The soldiers are now your servants. If the men in the house don't give in brains will be blown out and lives taken; and all this will be done because you have set the law in motion. In fact, this is the law in motion. What is commonly called "the law," is but the smooth end of the bludgeon. It is the fear of the other end that makes people cower at the sight of the handle. A bailiff goes and shews the handle, and this is generally sufficient; but the fact remains, that what is called the law is a terrible instrument of destruction, which will break skulls if there is any resistance. A battered house and blood-covered corpses, are elements in the picture to be considered. The fact that it is rarely needful to push matters to this length does not alter the nature of the transaction, or weaken the conclusion that saints are not at liberty to employ such an engine of offence.

The fact that a man does not personally employ the violence only makes the matter worse, so far as the nature of his act is concerned; for which is worse: to do the deed honestly and

bravely yourself, or to stand behind a curtain and whisper the words that set a lot of heartless ruffians to do it? If you were the personal actor, your debtor might have some chance of mercy by personal appeal; but when you set the law in motion, you hand him over to the tender mercies of men with hearts of stone, and without the power to be merciful even if they had the mind.

It is generally conceded that a brother has no right to resort to law against a brother, because of Paul's express words in I Cor. 6:1–4; but some conceive they may do so against a stranger. The first thought upon such a proposition is, that it is contrary to the entire spirit of Christ's teaching to suppose we are at liberty to apply any process of hurt to strangers which we are not to apply to brethren. His command to be absolutely harmless, extends even to any enemy, still more to a debtor, who may not necessarily be an enemy. The supposed distinction in favour of brethren in this matter would be a return to the spirit of things which said "Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy," which Christ expressly superseded.

How comes it that Paul mentions a "brother," in connection with law-going at all in I Cor 6? Is it to intimate that a brother may go to law with a stranger, while not at liberty to do so with a brother? There is no such hint in the context. It is rather to illustrate the great extent to which the Corinthians had gone in their disobedience. "Brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers." He commands the brethren to judge if there is anything wrong between brother and brother; but does he recommend a resort to even this judicature? On the contrary, he says, "Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?"

The command to be passive in relation to evil, is an ordinance for the present probation merely. In due time, the saints will trample the wicked as ashes under the soles of their feet, if they prove themselves worthy of the honour by a faithful submission to what God requires of them now. "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." (Rev. 2:26). In this view, it is of paramount importance that the saints remain true to the commandments of Christ; and do not suffer themselves to be led into the path of disobedience by glosses on his word, which while making the way smoother to the flesh will have the effect of depriving us of the crown in the day of glory to be revealed.

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5. There are other commands to which the everyday practice of Christendom is totally opposed, but to which, after the great length to which this lecture has already gone, we cannot do more than merely refer. Christ:—

a. Forbids all manner of oaths (Matt. 5:34; James 5:12).

b. Prohibits the taking of the sword (Matt. 26:52; Rev. 13:10).

c. Condemns retaliation and rough speech, and all evil speaking (Matt. 5:44; I Pet. 3:9; Rom. 12:14).

d. Insists on peace-making and personal private communication with the offended with this view (Matt. 5:24; 18:15; Col. 3:13).

e. Commands kindness to even the undeserving and the evil (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:35).

f. Allows marriage with believers only (I Cor. 7:39).

g. Enjoins modesty of dress and deportment even to shame-facedness and sobriety (I Tim. 2:9; I Pet. 3:3–4).

It is notorious that Christendom habitually violates all these commandments, without the violation of them being supposed to unchristianise the violators in the least degree, although Christ has plainly declared that it is vain for men to call him Lord who do not obey his commandments.

Oaths are regularly administered in public courts (not to speak of the profanities of private intercourse).

The military profession is cultivated as a fitting sphere for the Christian sons of Christian men. The countenance of the "church" is extended to the army in the appointment of chaplains, involving this fearful anomaly that when two so-called Christian nations go to war, Christians on one side cut the throats of Christians on the other side, as a perfectly legitimate business, and Christian "chaplains" on one side pray to the God of all Christians so considered, to prosper the deadly measures of one set of Christians against the prayer of Christian chaplains and the deadly efforts of another set of Christians, that the latter set may strew the field of strife with their corpses while the others march victoriously over their dead bodies, singing *Te Deums* to God for enabling them to butcher their Christian brethren!

Retaliation is both preached and practised among the masses of Christendom as the right and the noble and manly thing to do; and arrogant and resentful speech is excused on the score of necessity, while speaking evil and gloating on the frailties of your neighbours, is the daintiest luxury of common life.

Peace-loving and peace-making are looked upon as signs of effeminacy, and the man who should advocate and practise the duty of seeking a private interview with an enemy, with a view to reconciliation, would be regarded as a demented nuisance.

Kindness to the evil is almost unheard of. Ingratitude and unworthiness are invariably seized on as a reason for not helping anyone in distress. It is the rule to consider yourself justified in withholding help in such a case. It is only excellence (and that, too, carried to the heroic point) that propitiates the grace of Christendom in favour of private distress.

The idea of restricting matrimony to discipleship is scouted as the prejudice of fanaticism.

And as for dress, so far is Christendom astray from the apostolic standard that the mass of so-called Christian women (especially in the upper walks of society), consider it an honourable thing to enter into mutual rivalry in the style and magnificence of their attire. "Fashion" is a goddess whose sway is undisputed. No one owns to be a worshipper, but everyone acts the part of one. Ambition, the love of display, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, are not acknowledged as the ruling motives, though there is scarcely another at work. All is justified on the score of "taste."

This state of things is grievous to every mind in sympathy with divine aims in human life, as revealed in the Scriptures. There is no alternative but to fight the prevailing corruption. It is for earnest men, in private practice and in public inculcation, so far as there may be opportunity, to uphold the ideal exhibited in the apostolic writings. By no other course can we save ourselves from a generation which is as "untoward" as the one that listened to a similar exhortation from Peter. The fight may be hard, but the objects are supreme.

We can afford to shut our ears to cavils of the adversary. It is not true that the commandments of Christ enfeeble and deteriorate the character. What is considered enfeeblement and deterioration is only the discipline and restraint of the lower propensities, which re-act in the invigoration of all that is noble and pure. While excluding the animal energies and activities that go to make up what is popularly considered "manliness," the commandments of Christ draw us into the channel of higher and ennobling obligations in the direction of goodness and duty, activities unknown to the mere man of natural feelings. They give us the fear of God for deference to public-opinion; the enterprise of benevolence for the energy of self-assertion; the enlightening stimulus of a clear philosophy for the muddy impulse of self-gratification; the guidance of rectitude for the slavish and uncertain law of expediency; the virtue of self-restraint for the action of resentment; the power of motive for the caprice of feeling; principle for whim; knowledge for feeling; godliness for manliness; life for death.

The unpopularity of the commandments of Christ is due to their opposition to natural impulse; and their opposition to natural impulse constitutes their very power to educate men in obedience of God, that they may be disciplined and prepared for the great glory He has in store for those who please Him. Lot us not make the great mistake of following popular doctrines. If we are to continue in the disobedience which the world practices—(though called Christendom)—we had better hold on to their superstitious and theological monstrosities; for the abandonment of the latter, while holding on to the former, will only expose us to all the inconveniences of the faith of Christ, while securing for us none of its glorious benefits.

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These lectures must now be brought to a close. Where they may be instrumental in shewing the truth in contrast to prevalent error, the merit lies not with him who has delivered them, but with another—(John Thomas, M.D., of America; died, 1871)—who, under God, has been the means of opening the Scriptures in our generation, and removing from them the veil thrown over them by popular theology.

These lectures constitute a feeble attempt on the part of the author to render the service to others which has been rendered to himself; and if any mind be exorcised of error—if any taste attracted to the study of the Word of God—any judgment matured to the comprehension, belief, and obedience of the truth, the effort will have received a perfect recompense in that which shall have been accomplished for THE AGES BEYOND.

The only thing deserving a man's earnest attention in this state of existence, is the truth revealed in the Bible. It makes him free for the present, and safe for the future. Time devoted to anything else in preference, is wasted. The truth does that for a man which no other study can do: it sets him at ease with reference to the many questions which perplex the unenlightened; it gives a key for all the problems of life; it inspires him with confidence amid the uncertainties which distract other mortals; it guides him into a simple, one-hearted, peaceful direction of his affairs; it fills his mind with comforting assurance concerning the future, illuminating his prospect with a well-founded expectation of attaining the perfection which the yearning heart finds not in all the present; it subdues his propensities, corrects his natural tendency to moral obliquity, awakes his holiest affections, develops lagging interest, and improves and elevates and sanctifies his whole nature, while giving him a guarantee of, and making him meet for "the inheritance of the saints in light."

"It hath promise of the life that now is, and also of that which is to come." Its pursuit is more worthy than that of any secular object. Labour spent in its acquirement, or put forth in its dissemination, will develop results that will gloriously flourish, when the fruits of mere worldly effort will have perished in irrecoverable oblivion. "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the WORD OF THE LORD ENDURETH FOR EVER; *and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you*" (I Peter 1:24, 25).

A SUMMARY

OF THE

THINGS SET FORTH IN THE FOREGOING LECTURES.

shewn in contrast with

THE THEOLOGICAL TENETS OF THE BULK OF CHRISTENDOM.

THIS BOOK.	CHRISTENDOM.
1—. The Scriptures are to be read in their natural sense, except where natural fitness and necessity determine a metaphorical or symbolical construction.	1—. The Bible not to be read literally, but to be "spiritualised" or interpreted in a secondary and non-natural sense, according to the established rules of "divinity."
2—. The understanding of the Old Testament necessary to the understanding of New.	2—. The Old Testament done away with by the New, and only useful to supply texts for sermons.
3—. Man mortal, and made of the dust of the ground. The life of man not himself, but the power which enables him to exist, in the same way as the life of any animal sustains that animal in being. It is the very same life that is possessed by the beasts of the field.	3—. Man immortal and made of Spirit from heaven. The life of man, his immortal soul, which, inhabiting the body, gives it life, and when it leaves the body, continues to exist in a disembodied state as fully conscious as when the man is alive.
4—. Man in death in a state of non-existence for the time being, requiring resurrection and judgment to determine his future destiny.	4—. Man in death is not dead, but passes out of "his body," and enters upon happiness or woe, according to his deeds.
5—. Immortality a state of incorruptible and deathless bodily existence, developed by resurrection, and attainable only by the righteous, at the second appearing of Jesus Christ on earth.	5—. Immortality, the natural attribute of every human being, and in the highest sense, a state of happiness in heaven, to which the immortal souls of the righteous will ascend after death.
6—. The wicked will be put out of existence for ever, by the infliction of the "second death" at the judgment.	6—. The wicked will be tormented by the devil to all eternity in hell, a bottomless abyss of fire and brimstone.
7—. Judgment to come will be dispensed only to the responsible classes	7—. Every human immortal soul will be re-united to its body at the

of mankind, the rest never seeing the light of resurrection, but perishing for ever like beasts.

resurrection, and will appear before the judgment seat at the “last day,” to be judged.

8—. At the resurrection, the dead “come forth” in unquickened natural body, to have it determined whether they are worthy of the gift of immortality, or deserving of consignment, after punishment, to corruption and death.

8—. At the resurrection, disembodied immortal souls enter incorruptible and immortal bodies, before they appear at the judgment seat; and if found righteous, they take their immortal bodies to heaven, and if wicked they drag them to hell.

9—. God is ONE POWER, the Increate Father, by whom all things have been created, dwelling in unapproachable light.

9—. God is three co-equal, co-eternal elements or powers, styled “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,” in universal diffusion.

10—. Jesus Christ, the Son of God through the Holy Spirit’s begettal, of the Virgin Mary, raised up as a “last Adam,” to remove (by death and resurrection) the death brought by the first Adam.

10—. Jesus Christ, the eternal Son, a part of the eternal God from all eternity, who came into a body to suffer bodily death for the sins of immortal souls, doomed to the eternal pains of hell.

11—. The Spirit, the energy, or power of the Father in heaven, effluent from His person and presence, filling universal space. The “Holy Spirit,” the same power wielded by direct and specific will on the part of the Father.

11—. The Holy Ghost, one of the Trinity, co-equal, co-eternal, and identical with the Father and Son, though why styled the “Holy Ghost” there is no answer; and why sometimes Holy Spirit, while in other cases simply “Spirit,” equal silence.

12—. Angels, corporeal beings of incorruptible spirit-substance, employed throughout the universe in the accomplishment of the Father’s purposes—exalted to their present position after probation.

12—. Angels, incorporeal spirits, whose nature, origin, and function are equally incomprehensible—supposed to be largely recruited from the supposed immortal spirits of dead children.

13—. The devil, a Bible synonym for sin—abstract and concrete—existing as the spirit of disobedience in the children of men and embodied and manifested in the persons and institutions of the present order of things.

13—. The Devil, a fallen archangel, who notwithstanding his opposition to God, is allowed to retain possession of supernatural power and permitted to tempt, harass, and ensnare poor immortal souls to their destruction.

14—. The kingdom of God, the visible and personal administration of political affairs by Christ at his second appearing.

14—. The kingdom of God, a state of the human “soul,” in which the impulses are subjected to the divine supremacy?

15—. The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, yet to be fulfilled in the setting up of the kingdom of God on earth, when all nations will rejoice in the righteous government of the seed of Abraham, who shall save the children of the needy, and break in pieces the oppressor.

15—. The promises made to the Fathers fulfilled in the preaching of the Gospel in heathen lands by missionaries, and at home by ministers and clergymen, and more particularly in the experience of those who “get religion” at revivals and salvation army meetings.

16—. Christ, the coming destroyer of all human governments, and the appointed ruler of mankind; who will break the kingdoms of men in pieces, like a potter’s vessel, and raise the standard of universal dominion in Jerusalem, the Holy City.

16—. Christ, the spiritual king of his own people, reigning in their hearts now and for evermore, and having nothing further to do with Jerusalem, the Holy Land, or the earth, but to consign all to the perdition of unquenchable fire at the last day.

17—. The Saints—Christ’s people—the destined kings and priests of the world, destined to reign with Christ over all the earth, administering his authority, and dispensing blessings to all mankind.

17—. The doctrine of a “temporal” kingdom on earth, a carnal, “damnable doctrine.” The only reigning with Christ possible consists of the floating of immortal souls in celestial ether.

18—. The covenant made with David yet to be realised in the re-establishment of the kingdom of David in the Holy Land, in the personal hands of Christ.

18—. The covenant made with David fulfilled in Christ’s ascension to heaven, where he sits on the throne of David, and rules the kingdom of heaven.

19—. The second coming of Christ, the time when, and the event by which, Christ’s people will receive the promised salvation, even the gift of immortality, by resurrection, and the glory and honour of a throne in the kingdom of Christ, then to be established over all the earth.

19—. The death of the Christian the great epoch of his emancipation from this mortal coil, when his redeemed soul mounts to mansions in the skies, and is received at the portals of the celestial city by the angels, and conducted to the throne before which he casts his crown.

20—. The restoration of the Jews from their present dispersion to their own

20—. The Jews are greatly deluded in expecting a “temporal Messiah,” and as

land, a part of the divine purpose; and the enunciation of it, an element of the Gospel, as part and parcel of the "Gospel of the Kingdom."

for their restoration (which is an entirely doubtful affair) having anything to do with the Gospel, the whole suggestion is monstrous.

21—. Christ's coming will be prefaced by great wars, commotions, and distresses, and attended by terrible judgments which he will directly bring down upon men to teach the world righteousness, and prepare men for the government of the Prince of Peace.

21—. The Millennium will be brought about by the preaching of the gospel, which will subdue human propensities, and gradually bring mankind into a state of peace, harmony, and goodwill. The Church will then be triumphant on earth and in heaven.

22—. In the light of Daniel's visions, verified by history, and recommended for enlightenment by Christ, it is evident we are near the close of the human dispensation, and that Christ may be expected within the lifetime of the present generation.

22—. The prophets are a sealed book, and he who attempts to explain them, or to fix a time for the day of Christ, is guilty of presumption amounting almost to blasphemy. At the very least he is cracked and fit for the asylum.

23—. In order to be saved, men must believe the glad tidings (or gospel) of the Kingdom of God, set forth in the prophets, and preached by the apostles; and must accept the doctrine of immortality brought to light by Christ in his death, resurrection, and ascension.

23—. It is of no consequence what a man believes, if he be sincere in his course of life before God, and believe that Christ died for sin. Points of creed belong to by-gone days. As for immortality, every man, sane or idiotic, has an immortal soul to save.

24—. Upon believing the gospel, a man must be immersed in water for a union with the name of Christ, that his sins may be forgiven, that he may be placed in a position to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, by patient continuance in well-doing.

24—. It is a matter of insignificance whether a man be baptised or not. Christian baptism can be administered by dipping, pouring or sprinkling, and is equally efficacious to babies, or grown-up persons—the instructed or the ignorant—with or without faith.

25—. There is no salvation apart from a belief and obedience of the Gospel.

25—. Babies, heathens and idiots, and all sincere persons will be saved, irrespective of the Gospel.

26—. Ignorance alienates from eternal life, and makes death the certain and irretrievable lot of the subject thereof.

26—. A state of total darkness makes an immortal soul not responsible, and therefore qualified to enter heaven.

27—. The obedience of the commandments of Christ is essential to the salvation of those who believe the Gospel. While faith (made effectual in baptism) turns a sinner into a saint, obedience only will secure a saint's acceptance at the judgment seat of the Christ. A disobedient saint will be rejected more decisively than even an unjustified sinner.

27—. The obedience of the commandments of Christ is beyond human power. Salvation is not of works, lest any man should boast. if a man hath faith in the atoning blood of Christ, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and although the love of Christ will constrain him to good works, still his salvation in no way depends upon those.

28—. Forgiveness of errors and failures is secured for saints, by the intercession of Christ, when they confess and forsake them. Christ has no priestly function for the world of unjustified sinners. He is a priest for those only who become members of his house, in the belief and obedience of the Gospel.

28—. To the last moment, Christians have to say, "We have done those things that we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and there is no health in us." The priesthood of Christ avails for all mankind who are sorry for their sins.[1]

TO THE INTERESTED READER

THERE EXISTS a body of people, scattered throughout the English-speaking communities of the world, who hold the views advocated in this book of lectures.

They are formed into communities styled "ecclesias," which is the Greek word translated "churches." They uso that word in preference to "churches," because the word "church" does not express the idea of "ecclesia," either philologically or conventionally. "Church," in the abstract, means the portion of a lord, and in current use, denotes a building set apart for religious purposes, or any congregation professing the name of Christ, all of which meanings are totally foreign to the idea expressed by "ecclesia."

"Ecclesia" means *the assembly of the called out*, and is appropriately employed to designate those who by the truth have been called out both from the world and from the multitude of professing Christian bodies, who hold the traditions of a corrupt ecclesiasticism instead of the doctrines promulgated by Jesus and the apostles. It was the name bestowed by the Spirit upon the communities holding the truth of Christ in the early centuries; and as it has no proper English equivalent, there is no alternative but to use it in its original form.

[1] Roberts, R. (1984). *Christendom Astray from the Bible* (pp. 3–452). West Beach, South Australia: Logos Publications.

But there is another name by which those holding the faith herein set forth, are individually distinguished from the profession of orthodoxy. "Ecclesia" applies only to a number, and approximately answers to "church" of popular usage. But there is need for a name of individual application (having a generic significance) answering to the "Christian" of common parlance. The believers in Christ were called "Christians," at Antioch, in the first century, and afterwards, everywhere else. This was the name by which they were known—the nickname which their enemies originated, and which, at that time, was an epithet of disgrace, though from the disciples' point of view, a name of honour. But the purpose which the name served in ancient times is no longer answered by it; *it no longer distinguishes the brethren of Christ from those who reject the faith of Christ*. Everybody European is called "Christian." The word defines nothing beyond an adhesion to the historical tradition of Jesus Christ. It imports nothing doctrinal. A man can believe anything and be a Christian. For this reason, it has ceased to serve its original use.

But it may be argued, that the abuse of a right word—a New Testament word—does not justify its repudiation on the part of those apprehending it truly. The answer to this is: the word is not necessarily a right word, because it was invented by the enemies of the truth. The word is not a New Testament word, except that the New Testament records that it was used first in Antioch, in reference to Christ's brethren, and afterwards employs it only once as a current designation (I Peter 4:16), and then only in accommodation to popular usage, in the same way as Agrippa is recorded to have used it in reference to himself in Acts 26:28. No claim can be made for the name on the ground of its divine authority. We must deal with it on the other grounds. *It was a name employed for purposes of social distinction*. It could be employed with no other object. To call a man a "Christian," did not make him a saint; it only identified him in the popular eye with a sect which, at that time, was everywhere spoken against. This use of it is sanctioned by Peter, from which it follows that *it is Scriptural to acknowledge a distinctive designation if it accord with the truth*. "Christian" accorded with the truth in the days of Peter; it does not do so now.

What is to be substituted? Something expressive of the truth, something Scriptural—nothing of human derivation—nothing expressive of human affinities. Everything savouring of the Corinthian schisms must be reprobated. Let no man say, "I am of Paul," as against another, saying, "I am of Cephas," let us all say "I am of Christ," But how shall we do this in a name which shall be scriptural, and yet distinguish from the masses of "Christendom," who call themselves "Christians"? The answer is before the reader in the word

"CHRISTADELPHIAN."

This answers all the requirements of the case. It is the Anglicised form of the Greek phrase, *Christou adelphoi*, "brethren of Christ," and is unmistakably distinctive, never having been employed in the English tongue to designate those who are Christ's. It has an advantage over "Christian" in being more Scriptural and definite in its significance. "Christian merely expresses the world's dim and unintelligent apprehension of the position of Christ's brethren. The world understood not the nature of the relation subsisting between them and Christ. It merely saw the former had something to do with the latter, and called them Christ-ones; but "Christadelphians" goes closer, and reveals the fact that the disciples of Christ are not merely his servants, but his friends (John 15:14–15)—his "brethren" (Heb. 2:11, 17; Matt. 28:10; Rom. 8:29; John 20:17)—"joint heirs with him of the promises made to Abraham" (Gal. 3:29; Rom. 8:17).

But it may be asked, why not express that fact in plain English, and call them "brethren of Christ?" For the simple reason that in plain English these words would be as indistinctive as Christian, since all classes of professors would own to "brethren of Christ." No one will

acknowledge “Christadelphian” but those who, from a knowledge of the truth, realise the necessity of being distinguished from the great apostasy in all its sects and denominations.

If these considerations are not satisfactory to those who object to the Greek form of the phrase, and stickle for “Christian,” let them remember that “Christian” is as much a Greek word as “Christadelphian,” and that the choice really lies between a Greek appellative devised by the enemies of the truth in the first century, and one expressive of the truth affirmed by the Spirit in the same age of the world.

The Christadelphians scattered throughout the world have no ecclesiastical organisation beyond the simple arrangements necessary to conduct their assemblies as effectively as possible for the objects in view, which objects are, 1st—their mutual upbuilding in the faith, by observance of the Lord’s Supper, “upon the first day of the week” (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:2), and exhortation; 2nd—the setting forth of the truth for the enlightenment and salvation of the ignorant; and 3rd—a mutual care of each other in things spiritual and temporal. They have no “ministers” or paid officials of any kind, and in the absence of the Spirit, no rulers. Official brethren are merely servants for the conduct of the necessary business, and attendance to the general affairs and interests of the ecclesia. The brethren, one and ail, meet on the basis of brotherly love and good sense, all striving, without distinction, to promote the general objects of their union.

Any desiring acquaintance with a view to fraternity on the basis of the truth, can have their wishes gratified, by reference to the address from which this book is issued, where the applicant can procure the address of persons nearest his or her neighbourhood.[2]

[2] Roberts, R. (1984). *Christendom Astray from the Bible* (pp. 453–456). West Beach, South Australia: Logos Publications.